

On the Migration of Abraham

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Chapter I

And the Lord said to Abraham, "Depart from thy land, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house to a land which I will show thee; and I will make thee into a great nation. And I will bless thee, and I will magnify thy name, and thou shalt be blessed. And I will bless them that bless thee, and I will curse them that curse thee; and in thy name shall all the nations of the earth be Blessed."

God, wishing to purify the soul of man, first of all gives it an impulse towards complete salvation, namely, a change of abode, so as to quit the three regions of the body, the outward sense and speech according to utterance; for his country is the emblem of the body, and his kindred are the symbol of the outward sense, and his father's house of speech. Why so?

Because the body derives its composition from the earth, and is again dissolved into earth; and Moses is a witness of this when he says, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou Return." For he says, that man was compounded by God fashioning a lump of clay into the form of a man; and it follows of necessity that, a composite being, when dissolved, must be dissolved into its component parts. But the outward sense is nearly connected with and akin to the mind, the irrational part to the rational, since they are both parts of one soul; but speech is the abode of the father, because our father is the mind, which implants in each of its parts its own powers, and distributes its energies among them, undertaking the care and superintendence of them all; and the abode in which it dwells is speech, a dwelling separated from the rest of the house; for as the hearth is the abode of a man, so is speech of the mind:

at all events, it displays itself, and all the notions which it conceives, arranging them and setting them in order in speech, as if in a house. And you must not wonder that Moses has called speech in man the abode of the mind, for he also says, that the mind or the universe, that is to say, God, has for his abode his own word.

And the practiser of virtue, Jacob, seizing on this apprehension, confesses in express words that, "This is no other than the house of God," an expression equivalent to, The house of God is not this thing, or anything which can be made the subject of ocular demonstration, or, in short, anything which comes under the province of the outward senses, but is invisible, destitute of all

specific form, only to be comprehended by the soul as soul.

What, then, can it be except the Word, which is more ancient than all the things which were the objects of creation, and by means of which it is the Ruler of the universe, taking hold of it as a rudder, governs all things. And when he was fashioning the world, he used this as his instrument for the blameless argument of all the things which he was completing.

Chapter II

That he means by Abraham's country the body, and by his kindred the outward senses, and by his father's house uttered speech, we have now shown. But the command, "Depart from them," is not like or equivalent to, Be separated from them according to your essence, since that would be the injunction of one who was pronouncing sentence of death. But it is the same as saying, Be alienated from them in your mind, allowing none of them to cling to you, standing above them all;

they are your subjects, use them not as your rulers; since you are a king, learn to govern and not to be governed; know yourself all your life, as Moses teaches us in many passages where he says, "Take heed to Thyself." For thus you will perceive what you ought to be obedient to, and what you ought to be the master of.

Depart therefore from the earthly parts which envelop you, O my friend, fleeing from that base and polluted prison house of the body, and from the keepers as it were of the prison, its pleasures and appetites, putting forth all your strength and all your power so as to suffer none of thy good things to come to harm, but improving all your good faculties together and unitedly.

Depart also from thy kindred, outward senses; for now indeed you have given yourself up to each of them to be made use of as it will, and you have become a good, the property of others who have borrowed you, having lost your own power over yourself. But you know that, even though all men are silent on the subject, your eyes lead you, and so do your ears, and all the rest of the multitude of that kindred connection, towards those objects which are pleasing to themselves.

But if you choose to collect again those portions of yourself which you have lent away, and to invest yourself with the possession of yourself, without separating off or alienating any part of it, you will have a happy life, enjoying for ever and ever the fruit of good things which belong not to strangers but to yourself.

But now rise up also and quit speech according to utterance, which Moses here represents God as calling your father's house, that you may not be deceived by the specious beauty of words and names, and so be separated from that real beauty which exists in the things themselves which are intended by these names. For it is absurd for a shadow to be looked upon as of more importance than the bodies themselves, or for an imitation to carry off the palm from the model. Now the interpretation resembles a shadow and an imitation, but the nature of things signified under these expressions, thus interpreted, resemble the bodies and original models which the man who aims at being such and such rather than at appearing so must cling to, removing to a distance from the other things.

Chapter III

When therefore the mind begins to become acquainted with itself, and to dwell among the speculations which come under the province of the intellect, all the inclinations of the soul for the species which is comprehensible by the intellect will be repelled, which inclination is called by the Hebrews, Lot; for which reason the wise man is represented as distinctly saying, "Depart, and separate yourself from Me;" for it is impossible for a man who is overwhelmed with the love of incorporeal and imperishable objects to dwell with one, whose every inclination is towards the mortal objects of the outward senses.

Very beautifully therefore has the sacred interpreter of God's will entitled one entire holy volume of the giving of the law, the Exodus, having thus found out an appropriate name for the oracles contained therein. For being a man desirous of giving instruction and exceedingly ready to admonish and correct, he desires to remove the whole of the people of the soul as a multitude capable of receiving admonition and correction from the country of Egypt, that is to say, the body, and to take them out from among its inhabitants, thinking it a most terrible and grievous burden that the mind which is endowed with the

faculty of sight should be oppressed by the pleasures of the flesh, and should obey whatever commands the relentless desires choose to impose upon it.

Therefore, after the merciful God has instructed this people, groaning and bitterly weeping for the abundance of the things concerning the body, and the exceeding supply of external things (for it is said, “The children of Israel groaned by reason of the Works”) when, God, I say, had instructed them about their going out, the prophet himself led them forth in safety.

But there are some persons who have made a treaty with the body to last till the day of their death, and who have buried themselves in it as in a chest or coffin or whatever else you like to call it, of whom all the parts which are devoted to the slavery of the body and of the passions are consigned to oblivion and buried. But if anything well affected towards virtue has shot up by the side of it, that is preserved in the recollection, by means of which good things are naturally destined to be kept alive.

Chapter IV

Accordingly, the sacred scriptures command the bones of Joseph — I mean by this the only parts of such a soul as were left behind, being species which know no corruption and which deserve to have mention made of them — to be preserved, thinking it preposterous for pure things not to be united to pure things.

And what is especially worthy of being mentioned is this, that he believed that God would visit the race which was capable of Seeing,” and would not give it up for ever and ever to ignorance, that blind mistress, but would distinguish between the immortal and the mortal parts of the soul, and leave in Egypt those parts which were conversant about the pleasures of the body and the other immoderate indulgences of the passions; but with respect to those parts which are imperishable, would make a covenant that they should be conducted onwards with those persons who were going up to the cities of virtue and would further ratify this covenant with an oath.

What then are the parts which are imperishable? In the first place, a perfect alienation from pleasure which says, “Let us lie down Together,” and let us enjoy human enjoyments; secondly, presence of mind combined with fortitude, by means of which the soul separates and distinguishes from one

another those things which by vain opinions are accounted good things, as so many dreams, confessing that “the only true and accurate explanations of things are found with God;” and that all those imaginings, which exist in the unsteady, puffed up, and arrogant life of those men who are not yet purified, but who delight in those pleasures which proceed from bakers, and cooks, and wine-bearers, are uncertain and indistinct;

so that such a man is not a subject but a ruler of Egypt, that is to say of the whole region of the body; so that “he boasted of being of the race of the Hebrews,” who were accustomed to rise up and leave the objects of the outward senses, and to go over to those of the intellect; for the name Hebrew, being interpreted, means “one who passes over,” because he boasted that “here he had done Nothing.” For to do nothing of those things which are thought much of among the wicked, but to hate them all and reject them, is praiseworthy in no slight degree;

as it is to despise immoderate indulgence of the desires and all other passions; to fear God, if a man is not yet capable of loving him, and even while in Egypt to have a desire for real life.

and he also confessed that “it was the work of God,” and not of any created being, that he was recognised by his brethren, and so could put into commotion and agitation, and put to the rout by force, all the dispositions devoted to the body which flattered themselves that they could stand firmly on their own doctrines; he also said that “he had not been sent away by men, but had been appointed by God” for the legitimate overseeing of the body and of all external things;

but there are many other things also resembling these, being of a superior and more sacred kind of order; and they do not endure to abide in Egypt, the house of the body, and are never buried in a coffin at all, but depart to a distance outside of every thing mortal, and follow the words of the lawgiver, namely, Moses, who is the guide of their path.

For Moses, being the nurse as it were and tutor of good works, and good expressions, and good intentions, which, even if at times they are mingled with those of an opposite character by reason of the somewhat confused medley which exists in mortal man; are nevertheless distinguished when they have passed, so that all the seeds and plants of excellence may not be destroyed and

perish for ever and ever.

And he exhorts men very vigorously to quit that which is called the mother of every thing that is absurd, without any delay or sluggishness, but rather using exceeding swiftness; for he says that men “must sacrifice the pascha, in Haste,” and the word pascha, being interpreted, means a “passing over,” in order that the mind, exerting its reasonings without any doubt, and also an energetic willingness and promptness, may, without ever turning back make a passing over from the passions, to gratitude to God the Saviour, who has led it forth beyond all its expectations to freedom.

Chapter VI

And why do we wonder if he exhorts the man who is led away by the force of unreasonable passions, neither to yield, nor to allow himself to be carried away by the impetuosity of its onward course, but to exert all his strength, to resist, and if he is unable to resist effectually, then to flee. For the second advance towards safety on the part of those who are unable to make a good resistance is flight. When the occasion does not permit the man who is a combatant by nature, and who has never been a slave of the passions, but who is always undergoing the toil of resistance to every separate one of them, to put forth all his powers of antagonism at all times, lest from continuance of his struggles against them he may gradually contract a painful infection from them; for there have before now been many instances of men having become imitators of the wickedness to which they were previously antagonists, as, on the other hand, some opposers of virtue have become copiers of that.

And for this reason the following scripture has been given to men, “Return to the land of thy father and to thy family, and I will be with Thee;” which is equivalent to saying, you have been a perfect wrestler for me, and you have been thought worthy of the prize and crown of victory, virtue having been the establisher of the contest and prospering to give prizes of victory; and now get rid of your fondness for contention, that you may not be always labouring but that you may be able to enjoy the fruit of your labours,

which will never happen to you if you remain here dwelling among the objects of the external senses, and wasting your time among the distinctive qualities of the body, of which Laban is the leader (and this name means

“distinctive quality;”) but you must be an emigrant and must return to your native land, the land of the sacred word, and in some sense of the father of all those who practice virtue, which is wisdom, the best possible abiding place for those souls which love virtue.

In this country you have a race which learns everything of itself, and is self-taught, which has no share in the infantine food of milk, but which by the divine oracle “has been forbidden to go down to Egypt,” and to put itself in the way of the attractive pleasures of the flesh, surnamed Isaac;

and if you receive his inheritance, you will of necessity discard labour, for excessive abundance of things ready prepared, and of good things offered to your hand, will be the causes of cessation from toil. And the fountain from which good things are poured forth is the presence of the bounteous and beneficent God; on which account setting the seal to his loving kindness he says, “I will be with thee.”

Chapter VII

How then should any good thing be wanting when the all-accomplishing God is at all times present with his graces, which are his virgin daughters, which he, the Father, who begot them, always cherishes as virgins, free from all impure contact and pollution? Then all cares, and labours, and exercises of practice, have a respite; and everything that is useful is at the same time given to everybody without the employment of art, by the prescient care of nature;

and the rapid influx of all these spontaneous blessings is called relaxation, since the mind is then relaxed and released from its energies as to its own peculiar objects, and is as it were emancipated from its yearly burdens, (here again Mangey supposes the text to be hopelessly corrupt. The word there is *ekousioun*, for which he proposes and translates *phortoun toyn eteψioun*.) by reason of the multitude of the things which are incessantly showered and rained upon it;

and these things are in their own nature most admirable and most beautiful; for of the things of which the soul is in travail by herself, the greater part are premature and abortive progeny; but those on which God pours his showers and which he waters, are produced in a perfect, and entire, and most excellent state.

I am not ashamed to relate what has happened to me myself, which I know from having experienced it ten thousand times. Sometimes, when I have desired to come to my usual employment of writing on the doctrines of philosophy, though I have known accurately what it was proper to set down, I have found my mind barren and unproductive, and have been completely unsuccessful in my object, being indignant at my mind for the uncertainty and vanity of its then existent opinions, and filled with amazement at the power of the living God, by whom the womb of the soul is at times opened and at times closed up;

and sometimes when I have come to my work empty I have suddenly become full, ideas being, in an invisible manner, showered upon me, and implanted in me from on high; so that, through the influence of divine inspiration, I have become greatly excited, and have known neither the place in which I was nor those who were present, nor myself, nor what I was saying, nor what I was writing; for then I have been conscious of a richness of interpretation, an enjoyment of light, a most penetrating sight, a most manifest energy in all that was to be done, having such an effect on my mind as the clearest ocular demonstration would have on the eyes.

Chapter VIII

That then which is shown is that thing so worthy of being beheld, so worthy of being contemplated, so worthy of being beloved, the perfect good, the nature of which is to change and sweeten the bitternesses of the soul, the most beautiful additional seasoning, full of all kinds of sweetnesses, by the addition of which, even those things which are not nutritious become salutary food; for it is said, that “the Lord showed him (Moses) a tree, and he cast it into the Water,” that is to say, into the mind dissolved, and relaxed, and full of bitterness, that it might become sweetened and serviceable.

But this tree promises not only food but likewise immortality; for Moses tells us, that the tree of life was planted in the midst of the paradise, being, in fact, goodness surrounded as by a body-guard by all the particular virtues, and by the actions in accordance with them; for it is virtue which received the inheritance of the most central and excellent place in the soul.

And he who sees is the wise man; for the foolish are blind, or at best dim sighted. On this account I have before mentioned, that the then prophets were called seers; and Jacob, the practiser of virtue, was desirous to give his ears in exchange for his eyes, if he could only see what he had previously heard described, and accordingly he receives an inheritance according to sight, having passed over that which was derived from hearing;

for the coin of learning and instruction, which is synonymous with Jacob, is re-coined into the seeing Israel, in consequence of which he, the faculty of seeing, beholds the divine light, which is in no respect different from knowledge, which opens the eye of the soul, and leads it on to embrace the most conspicuous and manifest comprehension of existing Things:(this again is Mangey's emendation. The Greek text has *option*, which is either nonsense, or at least the opposite of what must be meant.) for as it is through music that the principles of music are understood, and through each separate art that its principles are comprehended, so also it is owing to wisdom that what is contemplated:

but not only is wisdom like light, the instrument of seeing, but it does also behold itself. This, in God, is the light which is the archetypal model of the sun, and the sun itself is only its image and copy; and he who shows each thing is the only allknowing being, God; for men are called knowing only because they appear to know; but God, who really does know, is spoken of, as to his knowledge, in a manner inferior to its real nature, for everything that is ever spoken in his praise comes short of the real power of the living God.

And he recommends his wisdom, not merely by the fact that it was he who created the world, but also by that of his having established the knowledge of everything that has happened, or that has been created in the firmest manner close to himself;

for it is said, that "God saw all the things that he had Made," which is an expression equivalent not to, He directed his sight towards each thing, but to, He conceived a knowledge, and understanding, and comprehension, of all the things that he had made. It was very proper, therefore, to teach and to instruct, and to point out to the ignorant, each separate thing, but it was unnecessary to do so to the all-knowing God, who is not like man, benefited by art, but who is himself confessed to be the beginning and source of all arts and sciences.

Chapter IX

And Moses speaks very cautiously, inasmuch as he defines not the present time but the future in the promise which he records, when he says, "Not that which I do show you, but that which I will show You;" as a testimony to the faith with which the soul believed in God, showing its gratitude not by what had been already done, but by its expectation of the future;

for being kept in a state of suspense and eagerness by good hope, and thinking that even what was not present would beyond all question be present immediately, on account of its most certain faith in him who had promised, it found a reward, the perfect good; for in another passage it is said that Abraham believed in God. And in the same way, God, when showing Moses all the land, says that, "I have show it to thy eyes, but thou shalt not enter Therein."

Do not then fancy that this is spoken of the death of the all-wise Moses, as some inconsiderate persons believe; for it is a piece of folly to think that slaves should have the country of virtue assigned to them in preference to the friends of God.

But first of all, God wishes to make it understood by you that there is one place for infants and another for full-grown men, the one being called practice and the other wisdom; and secondly, that the most beautiful of all the things in nature are rather such as can be seen as can be acquired; for how can it be possible to acquire possession of those things which are endowed in the same degree with the diviner attributes? But it is not impossible to see them, though it may not be given to all men to do so, for this may be permitted only to the purest and most acute-sighted race, to whom the father of the universe, when he displays his own works, is giving the greatest of all gifts.

For what life can be better than that which is devoted to speculation, or what can be more closely connected with rational existence; for which reason it is that though the voices of mortal beings are judged of by the faculty of hearing, nevertheless the scriptures present to us the words of God, to be actually visible to us like light; for in them it is said that, "All people saw the voice of God; they do not say, "heard it," since what took place was not a beating of the air by means of the organs of the mouth and tongue, but a most exceedingly brilliant ray of virtue, not different in any respect from the source

of reason, which also in another passage is spoken of in the following manner, “Ye have seen that I spake unto you from out of Heaven,” not “Ye have heard,” for the same reason.

But there are passages where he distinguishes between what is heard and what is seen, and between the sense of seeing and that of hearing, as where he says, “Ye have heard the sound of the words, but ye saw no similitude, only ye heard a Voice;” speaking here with excessive precision; for the discourse which was divided into nouns and verbs, and in short into all the different parts of speech, he has very appropriately spoken of as something to be heard; for in fact that is examined by the sense of hearing; but that which has nothing to do with either with nouns or verbs, but is the voice of God, and seen by the eye of the soul, he very properly represents as visible;

and having previously reminded them, “Ye saw no similitude,” he proceeds to say, “ Only ye heard a voice, which ye all saw;” for this must be what is understood as implied in those words. So that the words of God have for their tribunal and judge the sense of sight, which is situated in the soul; but those which are subdivided into nouns, and verbs, and other parts of speech, have for their judge the sense of hearing.

But as the writer being new in all kinds of knowledge, has also introduced this novelty both in his accounts of domestic and of foreign matters, saying that the voice is a thing to be judged of by the sight, which in point of fact is almost the only thing in us which is not an object of sight, with the single exception of the mind; for the things which are the objects of the rest of the outward senses are, every one of them, visible to the sight, such as colours, tastes, smells, things that are hot or cold, things that are smooth or rough, things that are soft or hard, inasmuch as it is a body, if indeed it is a body at all, nor inasmuch as they are substantial bodies.

And what is meant by this I will explain more distinctly: a flavour is appreciable by the sight, not inasmuch as it is flavour, but so far it is a mere substance, for in so far as it is flavour the sense of taste will judge of it; again a smell, in so far as it is a smell, will be decided upon by the nostrils, but inasmuch as it is a bodily substance, it will also be judged of by the eyes: and the other objects of sense will be tested in this manner; but voice is not appreciable by the sense of sight, neither inasmuch as it can be heard; but there

are these two things in us which are wholly invisible — mind and speech;

but the sound that proceeds from us does not the least resemble the divine organ of voice; for one organ of voice is mingled with the air, and flies to a kindred region with itself, namely to the ears; but the divine organ consists of unmixed and unalloyed speech, which outstrips the sense of hearing by reason of its fineness, and which is discerned by a pure soul, by means of its acuteness in the faculty of sight.

Chapter X

Therefore, after having left all mortal things, God, as I have said before, gives, as his first gift to the soul, an exhibition and an opportunity of contemplating mortal things: and in the second place he gives it an improvement in the doctrines of virtue, in respect both of their numbers and of their importance; for he says, “And I will make thee into a mighty nation,” using this expression with reference to the multitude of the nation, and with reference to the increase and improvement of what was already great;

and that this quantity in each kind, that is to say, both as to magnitude and as to number, was greatly increased, is pointed out by the king of Egypt, where he says, “For behold,” says he, “the race of the children of Israel is a great Multitude.” Since both these facts bear witness to the race which had the power of beholding the living God, that it had derived increase both in manner and in magnitude, and as having done so, had met with prosperity, both in its life and in its language;

for he does not say here (as any one would say who paid attention to the connection of the words which he was using), a numerous multitude, but he says, “A great multitude,” knowing that the word numerous by itself implies an imperfect multitude, unless in addition to its numbers it has the attributes of intelligence and knowledge; for what advantage is it to comprehend many subjects of speculation, unless each of them receives a power of growth to a suitable size; for in like manner a field is not perfect in which there are innumerable plants growing on the ground, and no plant has grown up by means of the skill of the husbandman so as to arrive at perfection, unless it is now able to produce fruit.

But the beginning and the end of the greatness and numerousness of good things is the ceaseless and uninterrupted recollection of God, and an invocation of his assistance in the civil and domestic, confused and continual, warfare of life; for Moses says, "Behold, the people is wise and full of knowledge; this is a mighty nation; for what nation is there so great, that has God so near, as the Lord our God is to us in all the circumstances in which we call upon Him?"

Therefore it has been plainly shown that there is power with God, which is a suitable and useful helper and defender, and the ruler himself comes nearer to the assistance of those persons who are worthy to be assisted.

for these are the wise people and the people of knowledge of whom he speaks, each of whom may naturally be called great, since he aims at great things, and at one great thing with excessive earnestness and eagerness, namely, at never being separated from the Almighty God, but at being able to endure his approach when he comes near steadily, and without any amazement or display.

This is the definition of great, to be near to God, or at least to be near to that thing which God is near; forsooth the world and the wise citizen of the world are both full of many and great good things, but all the rest of the multitude of men is involved in numerous evils, and in but few good things; for the good is rare in the agitated and confused life of man.

On which account it is said in the sacred scriptures, "It is not because you are numerous beyond all the nations that the Lord has selected you above them all, and has chosen you out; for in truth you are but few in comparison of all nations, but it is because the Lord loves You;" for if any one were to choose to distribute the multitude of one soul as if according to nations, he would find a great many ranks totally destitute of all order, of which pleasures, or appetites or griefs, or fears, or again follies and iniquities, and all the other vices which are connected with or akin to them, are the leaders, and he would find but one rank alone well regulated, that namely which is under the leadership of right reason.

Among men, then, the unjust multitude is usually honoured more than one single just person; but in the eye of God a small company that is good is preferred to an infinite number of persons who are unjust. And, on that

account, he warns men never to consent to a multitude of such a character; "For," says he, "thou shalt not join with a multitude to do Evil." May one, then, join a few to do so? One may never join a single bad man. But a bad man, though he be but a single individual, is a multitude of wickedness, and it is the greatest possible evil to join with him; for, on the contrary, it is becoming rather to oppose him and to make war upon him with fearless energy.

"For if," says Moses, "you go forth to war against your enemies and see a horse," the emblem of arrogant and restive passion which scorns all control, "and a rider," the symbol of the mind devoted to the service of the passions, riding upon it, "and a great body of your people," admirers of those before-mentioned passions, and following in a solid phalanx, "you shall not be terrified so as to flee from them," for you, though only a single person, shall have a single being for your ally, "because the Lord your God is on your Side;"

for his advance to battle puts an end to war, builds up peace again, overthrows numbers of longaccustomed evils, preserves the scanty race which loves God, to whom every one who becomes subject hates and abominates the ranks of the more earthly armies.

Chapter XII

"For," says Moses, "you shall not eat those animals which have a multitude of feet, being numbered among all the reptiles that are upon the earth; because they are an Abomination." But the soul is not deserving of being hated which goes upon the earth in one part of itself, but only that which does so with all or with the greatest proportion of its parts, and which is exceedingly greedy about the things of the body, and which, in short, is unable to penetrate into and contemplate the divine revolutions of the heaven.

And, moreover, as the animal with many feet is accursed among reptiles, so also is that which has no feet at all; the one for the cause already mentioned, and the other because it entirely falls upon the ground in all its parts, not being supported off the ground by anything, not even for the briefest minute. For Moses says that, "Everything which goes upon its belly is Unclean;" meaning, under this figurative expression, to point out those who pursue the pleasures of the belly.

But some go far beyond these persons in wickedness, not only indulge in every description of desire, but also acquire that passion which is akin to desire, namely, anger, wishing to excite the whole of the irrational part of the soul and to destroy the mind. For what has been said in words, indeed, is applicable to the serpent, but in reality it is meant to apply to every man who is irrational and a slave to his passions, being truly a divine oracle, "Upon thy breast and upon thy belly shalt thou Go;" for anger has its abode about the breast, and the seat of desire is in the belly.

But the foolish man proceeds always by means of the two passions together, both anger and desire, omitting no opportunity, and discarding reason as his pilot and judge. But the man who is contrary to him has extirpated anger and desire from his nature, and has enlisted himself under divine reason as his guide; as also Moses, that faithful servant of God, did. Who, when he is offering the burnt offerings of the soul, "washes out the Belly;" that is to say, he washes out the whole seat of desires, and he takes away "the breast of the ram of the Consecration;" that is to say, that whole of the warlike disposition, that so the remainder, the better portion of the soul, the rational part, having no longer anything to draw it in a different direction or to counteract its natural impulses, may indulge its own free and noble inclinations towards everything that is beautiful;

for, in this way, it will improve both in quantity and in magnitude. For it is said, "How long shall this people exasperate me? and till what time will they refuse to believe me in all the signs which I have done among them? I will smite them with death and I will destroy them, and I will make thee and thy father's house into a mighty nation, greater and mightier than This." For when the great multitude of the passions which indulge in anger and desire in the soul is put to the rout, then immediately those affections which depend on its rational nature rise up and become brilliant;

for as the reptile with many feet and that with no feet at all, though they are exactly opposite to one another in the race of reptiles, are both pronounced unclean, so also the opinion which denies any God, and that which worships a multitude of Gods, though quite opposite in the soul, are both profane. And of proof of this is that the law banishes them both "from the sacred Assembly," forbidding the atheistical opinion, as a eunuch and mutilated person, to come into the assembly; and the polytheistic, inasmuch as it

prohibits any one born of a harlot from either hearing or speaking in the assembly. For he who worships no God at all is barren, and he who worships a multitude is the son of a harlot, who is in a state of blindness as to his true father, and who on this account is figuratively spoken of as having many fathers, instead of one.

Chapter XIII

There have now been two gifts of God already mentioned: the hope of a life devoted to contemplation, and an improvement in good things in respect both of quantity and of magnitude. The third gift is blessing, without which it is not possible that the graces already mentioned can be confirmed; for the scriptures say, "And I will bless thee;" that is to say, I will give thee a word which shall be praised; for the portion *eu* (in *eulogeı̃son*, I will bless), is always applicable to virtue. And of speech, one kind is like a spring and another kind is like a stream;

that which is in the mind being like the spring, and the utterance through the medium of the mouth and tongue resembling a stream. And it is great riches for either species of speech to be improved, for the mind to be so by exerting soundness of reason in everything, whether important or unimportant, or for the utterance to be so when under the guidance of right instruction;

for many men think, indeed, most excellently, but are betrayed by a bad interpreter, namely, speech, because they have not thoroughly worked up the whole course of encyclical instruction. Others, again, have been exceedingly skilful in explaining their ideas, but very bad hands at forming intentions, as, for instance, those who are called sophists, for the mind of these sophists is destitute of all harmony and of all real learning; but their speeches, which are uttered by the organs of their voice, are full of music and beauty.

But God gives no imperfect gifts to his subjects, but all his presents are complete and perfect. On which account he now dispenses blessing not to one section only, that of speech, but to both portions; thinking it proper that the man who has received a benefit should also conceive the most excellent notions, and should also be able to explain what he has conceived in a powerful manner; for perfection, as it seems, consists in the two points, of

being able to form clear and just conceptions and intentions, and also of being able to interpret them correctly.

Do you not see that Abel (and the name Abel is the name of one who mourns over mortal things, and attributes happiness to immortal things), has a mind wholly free from all liability to reproach? And yet, from not being practised in discussions, he is defeated by one who is clever as an antagonist in such things, Cain being able to get the better of him more through superiority of skill than of strength;

for which reason, though I admire him on account of the good fortune with which he was endowed by nature, I nevertheless blame the disposition in him that, when he was challenged to a contest of discussion, he came forward to contend, when he ought to have abided by his usual tranquillity, discarding all love for contention. But if he was determined by all means to enter into such a contest, then still he ought not to have engaged in it until he had sufficiently practised himself in the exercises of the art; for men who have been long versed in political strife are usually accustomed to get the better of men of uncultivated acuteness.

Chapter XIV

For this reason also the allaccomplished Moss deprecates coming to a consideration of reasonable looking and plausible arguments, from the time that God began to cause the light of truth to shine upon him; through the immortal words of his knowledge and wisdom. But he is not the less led on to the contemplation of these arguments, not for the sake of becoming skilful in many things (for the contemplation of God himself and of his most sacred powers, are quite sufficient for a man who is fond of contemplation), but with a view to get the better of the sophists in Egypt, where fabulous and plausible inventions are looked upon as entitled to higher honour than a clear statement of truth.

When, therefore, the mind walks abroad among the affairs of the ruler of the universe, it requires nothing further as an object of contemplation, since the mind alone is the most piercing of all eyes as applied to the objects of the intellect; but when it is directed towards those things which are properly objects of the outward senses, or to any passion, or substance, of which the

land of Egypt is the emblem, then it will have need of skill and power in argument.

On which account Moses is directed also to take Aaron with him as an addition, Aaron being the symbol of uttered speech, "Behold," says God, "is not Aaron thy Brother?" For one rational nature being the mother of them both, it follows of course that the offspring are brothers, "I know that he will speak." For it is the office of the mind to comprehend, and of utterance to speak. "He," says God, "will speak for thee." For the mind not being able to give an adequate exposition of the part which is assigned to it, uses its neighbour speech as an interpreter, for the purpose of explaining what it feels.

Presently he further adds, "Behold he will come to meet thee," since in truth speech when it meets the conceptions, and embodies them in words, and names stamps what had before no impression on it, so as to make it current coin. And further on he says, "And when he seeth thee he will rejoice in himself;" for speech rejoices and exults when the conception is not indistinct, because it being clear and evident employs speech as an unerring and fluent expositor of itself, having a full supply of appropriate and felicitous expressions full of abundant distinctness and intelligibility.

Chapter XV

At all events when the conceptions are at all indistinct and ambiguous, speech is the treading as it were on empty air, and often stumbles and meets with a severe fall, so as never to be able to rise again. "And thou shalt speak to him, and thou shalt give my words into his mouth," which is equivalent to, Thou shalt speak to him, and thou shalt give my words into his mouth," which is equivalent to, Thou shalt suggest to him conceptions which are in no respect different from divine language and divine arguments.

For without some one to offer suggestions, speech will not speak; and the mind is what suggests to speech, as God suggests to the mind. "And he shall speak for thee to the people, and he shall be thy mouth, and thou shalt be to him as God." And there is a most emphatic meaning in the expression, "He shall speak for thee," that is to say, He shall interpret thy conceptions, and "He shall be thy mouth." For the stream of speech being borne through the tongue and mouth conveys the conceptions abroad. But speech is the interpreter of

the mind to men, while again mind is by means of speech the interpreter to God; but these thoughts are those of which God alone is the overseer.

Therefore it is necessary for any one who is about to enter into a contest of sophistry, to pay attention to all his words with such vigorous earnestness, that he may not only be able to escape from the manoeuvres of his adversaries, but may also in his turn attack them, and get the better of them, both in skill and in power.

Do you not see that conjurors and enchanters, who attempting to contend against the divine word with their sophistries, and who daring to endeavor to do other things of a similar kind, labour not so much to display their own knowledge, as to tear to pieces and turn into ridicule what was Done?(exodus 7:12.) For they even transform their rods into the nature of serpents, and change water into the complexion of blood, and by their incantations they attract the remainder of the frogs to the land, and, like miserable men as they are, they increase everything for their own destruction, and while thinking to deceive others they are deceived themselves.

And how was it possible for Moses to encounter such men as these unless he had prepared speech, the interpreter of his mind, namely Aaron? who now indeed is called his mouth; but in a subsequent passage we shall find that he is called a prophet, when also the mind, being under the influence of divine inspiration, is called God. "For," says God, "I give thee as a God to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy Prophet." O the harmonious and well-organised consequence! For that which interprets the will of God is the prophetic race, being under the influence of divine possession and frenzy.

Therefore "the rod of Aaron swallowed up their Rods," as the holy scripture tells us. For all sophistical reasons are swallowed up and destroyed by the varied skilfulness of nature; so that they are forced to confess that what is done is "the finger of God," an expression equivalent to confessing the truth of the divine scripture which asserts that sophistry is always subdued by wisdom. For the sacred account tells us that "the tables" on which the commandments were engraved as on a pillar, "were also written by the finger of God." On which account the conjurors were not able to stand before Moses, but fell down as in a wrestling match, being overcome by the superior strength of their antagonist.

Chapter XVI

What then is the fourth gift? The having a great name, for God says, "I will magnify thy Name;" and the meaning of this, as it appears to me, is as follows; as to be good is honourable, so also to appear to be so is advantageous. And truth is better than appearance, but perfect happiness is when the two are combined. For there are great numbers of people who apply themselves to virtue in genuine honesty and sincerity, and who admire its genuine beauty, having no regard to the reputation which they may have with the multitude, and who in consequence have been plotted against, being thought wicked though in reality they are good.

And indeed there is no advantage whatever in seeming, unless being has also been added long before, as in the case with respect to bodies; for if all men were to fancy that one who was labouring under a disease was in good health, or that one in good health was labouring under a disease, still their opinion would not of itself create either disease or good health.

But the man to whom God has given both things, namely both to be good and virtuous and also to appear so, that man is truly happy, and has a name which is really magnified. And one must have a prudent regard for a good reputation as a thing of great importance, and one which greatly benefits the life which is dependent on the body. And it falls to the lot of every one who, rejoicing with contentment, changes none of the existing laws, but zealously preserves the constitution of his native land.

For there are some men, who, looking upon written laws as symbols of things appreciable by the intellect, have studied some things with superfluous accuracy, and have treated others with neglectful indifference; whom I should blame for their levity; for they ought to attend to both classes of things, applying themselves both to an accurate investigation of invisible things, and also to an irreproachable observance of those laws which are notorious.

But now men living solitarily by themselves as if they were in a desert, or else as if they were mere souls unconnected with the body, and as if they had no knowledge of any city, or village, or house, or in short of any company of men whatever, overlook what appears to the many to be true, and seek for plain naked truth by itself, whom the sacred scripture teaches not to neglect a good reputation, and not to break through any established customs which divine

men of greater wisdom than any in our time have enacted or established.

For although the seventh day is a lesson to teach us the power which exists in the uncreated God, and also that the creature is entitled to rest from his labours, it does not follow that on that account we may abrogate the laws which are established respecting it, so as to light a fire, or till land, or carry burdens, or bring accusations, or conduct suits at law, or demand a restoration of a deposit, or exact the repayment of a debt, or do any other of the things which are usually permitted at times which are not days of festival.

Nor does it follow, because the feast is the symbol of the joy of the soul and of its gratitude towards God, that we are to repudiate the assemblies ordained at the periodical seasons of the year; nor because the rite of circumcision is an emblem of the excision of pleasures and of all the passions, and of the destruction of that impious opinion, according to which the mind has imagined itself to be by itself competent to produce offspring, does it follow that we are to annul the law which has been enacted about circumcision. Since we shall neglect the laws about the due observance of the ceremonies in the temple, and numbers of others too, if we exclude all figurative interpretation and attend only to those things which are expressly ordained in plain words.

But it is right to think that this class of things resembles the body, and the other class the soul; therefore, just as we take care of the body because it is the abode of the soul, so also must we take care of the laws that are enacted in plain terms: for while they are regarded, those other things also will be more clearly understood, of which these laws are the symbols, and in the same way one will escape blame and accusation from men in general.

Do you not see that Abraham also says, that both small and great blessings fell to the share of the wise man, and he calls the great things, "all that he had," and his possessions, which it is allowed to the legitimate son alone to receive as his inheritance; but the small things he calls gifts, of which the illegitimate children and those born of concubines, are also accounted worthy. The one, therefore, resemble those laws which are natural, and the other those which derive their origin from human enactment.

Chapter XVII

I also admire Leah, that woman endued with all virtue, who, at the birth of Asher, who is the symbol of that bastard wealth, which is perceptible by the outward senses, says, "Blessed am I, because all women shall call me Happy." For she sees plainly that she will have a favourable reputation, thinking that she deserves to be praised, not only by those reasonings which are really masculine and manly, which have a nature free from all spot and stain, and which honour that which is really honest and incorrupt, but also by those more feminine reasonings which are in every respect overcome by those things which are visible, and which are unable to comprehend any object of contemplation which is beyond them.

But it is the part of a perfect soul to set up a claim, not only to be, but to also appear to be, and, to labour earnestly not merely to have a good reputation in the houses of the men, but also in the secret chambers of the women.

On which account Moses also committed the preparation of the sacred works of the tabernacle not only to men, but also to women, who were to aid in making them; for all "the woven works of hyacinthine colour, and of purple and of scarlet work, and of fine linen, and of goats' hair, do the women make;" and they also contribute their own ornaments without hesitation, "seals, and ear-rings, and finger-rings, and armlets, and tablets, all jewels of gold,"⁴⁹ — everything, in short, of which gold was the material, gladly giving up the ornaments of their person in exchange for piety;

and, moreover, carrying their zeal to a still higher degree, they likewise consecrated even their mirrors, that a laver might be made of Them," in order that those who were about to assist at the sacrifices, washing their hands and their feet, that is to say, those works about which the mind is occupied and on which it is fixed, may have a view of themselves in a mirror according to the recollection of those mirrors of which the laver was made; for in this way they will never permit anything disgraceful to remain in any portion of the soul. And now they will dedicate the offering of fasting and patience, the most beautiful and sacred, and perfect of offerings.

But these real citizens and virtuous women are really as it were the outward senses, by whom Leah, that is virtue, desires to be honoured. But they who kindle an additional fire against the miserable mind are destitute of any city.

For we read in the scripture that even, “women still burnt additional fire to Moab.”

But may we not in this way say that so each of the outward senses of the foolish man when set on fire by the appropriate objects of outward sense, does also set fire to the mind, spreading over it an exceeding and interminable flame with irresistible vigour and impetuosity. At all events it is best to propitiate the array of women, that is to say, of the outward senses in the soul, just as it is desirable to do so with respect to the men, that is to say, with respect to the particular reasonings. For in this manner we shall arrange a more excellent system of life in a very beautiful manner.

Chapter XVIII

On this account also the selfinstructed Isaac prays to the lover of wisdom, that he may be able to comprehend both those good things which are perceptible by the outward senses, and those which are appreciable only by the intellect. For he says, “May God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the Earth,” a prayer equivalent, to May he in the first place pour upon thee a continual and heavenly rain appreciable by the intellect, not violently so as to wash thee away, but mildly and gently like dew, so as to benefit thee. And in the second place, may he bestow upon thee that earthly wealth which is perceptible by the outward senses, fat and fertile, having drained off its opposite, namely poverty, from the soul and from all its parts.

But if you examine the great a high priest, that is to say reason, you will find him entertaining ideas in harmony with these, and having his sacred garments richly embroidered by all the powers which are comprehensible either by the outward senses or by the intellect; the other portion of which clothing would require a more prolix explanation than is practicable on the present occasion, and we must pass it by for the present. But the extreme portions, those namely at the head and at the feet, we will examine.

There is then on the head “a golden Leaf,” pure, having on it the impression of a seal, “Holiness to the Lord.” And on the feet there are, “on the fringe of the inner garment, bells and small Flowerets.” But this seal is an idea of ideas, according to which God fashioned the world, being an incorporeal idea, comprehensible only by the intellect. And the flowerets and the bells are

symbols of distinctive qualities perceptible by the outward senses; of which the faculties of hearing and of seeing are the judges.

And he adds, with exceeding accuracy of investigation, "The voice of him shall be heard as he enters into the holy place," in order that when the soul enters into the places appreciable by the intellect, and divine, and truly holy, the very outward senses may likewise be benefited, and may sound in unison, in accordance with virtue; and our whole system, like a melodious chorus of many men, may sing in concert one wellharmonised melody composed of different sounds well combined, the thoughts inspiring the leading notes (for the objects of intellect are the leaders of the chorus); and the objects of the external senses, singing in melodies, accord the symphonies which follow, which are compared to individual members of the chorus.

For, in short, as the law says, it was not right for the soul to be deprived of "its necessities, and its garments, and its place of Abode,"(exodus 21:10.) these three things; but it ought rather to have had each of them allotted to it in a durable manner. Now the necessities of the soul are those good things which are perceptible only by the intellect, which ought, and indeed are bound by the law of nature, to be attached to it; and the clothing means those things which relate to the exterior and visible ornament of human life; and the place of abode is continued diligence and care respecting each of the species before mentioned, in order that the objects of the outward senses may appear as the invisible objects of the intellect do also.

Chapter XIX

There is, also, a fifth gift, which consists only in the bare fact of existence; and it is mentioned after all the previous ones, not because it is inferior to them, but rather because it overtops and excels them all; for what can be a greater blessing than to be formed by nature, and to be, without any falsehood or fictitious pretence, really good and worthy of the most perfect praise?

"For," says God, "thou shalt be Blessed" (eulogeutos); not merely a person who is blessed (eulogeumenos), for this latter fact is estimated by the opinions and reports of the multitude, but the other depends on a person being, in real truth, deserving of blessings;

for as the being praiseworthy (to epaineton einai) differs from being praised, being superior to it; and as the being blameworthy differs from being blamed, in being worse; for the one depends upon a person's natural character, while the other is affirmed only with reference to his being considered such and such. And real genuine nature is a more reliable thing than opinion; so, also, to be blessed by men, that is to say, to be celebrated by their praises and benedictions, is of less value than to be formed by nature so as to be worthy of blessing, even though all men should be silent respecting one, and this last is what is meant in the scriptures by the term blessed (eulogeutos).

Chapter XX

These are the good things which are given to him who is about to be wise. But let us now examine what God, for the sake of the wise man, bestows on the rest of mankind also. He says, "I will bless those who bless thee, and curse those who curse Thee."

Now that this is said by way of doing honour to the good man, is plain to every one. And this, too, is not the only reason why it is said, but it is said also on account of the harmonious consequence which exists in things; for he who praises a good man is himself worthy of encomium, and he who blames him is, on the other hand, deserving of blame. But it is not so much the power of those who utter or who write praise or blame that is trusted to, as the real character of what is due; so that those persons would not really appear to praise or to blame at all who, in either case, adopt or introduce any falsehood of their own.

Do you not see flatterers who, day and night, weary and annoy the ears of those to whom they address their flatteries, and who not only nod assent to every word that they say, but who also string together long sentences, and connect rhapsodies, and often pray to them with their mouths, but who are continually cursing them in their hearts?

What, then, would any one in his senses say? Would he not pronounce that those who speak thus are, in reality, enemies rather than friends, and do in reality blame them rather than praise them, even if they put together whole dramas full of panegyric and sing them in their honour?

Therefore, the vain Balaam, although he sang hymns of exceeding sublimity to God, among which, also, is that one beginning, "God is not as a Man," the most beautiful of all songs, and who uttered panegyrics on the seeing multitude, Israel, going through a countless body of particulars, is rightly judged by the wise lawgiver to have been an impious man and accursed, and to have been cursing rather than blessing;

for he says that he was hired for money by the enemy, and so became an evil prophet of evil things, bearing in his soul most bitter curses against the God loving nature, but being compelled to utter prophetically with his mouth and tongue the most exquisite and sublime prayers in their favour; for the things that he said, being very excellent, were, in fact, suggested by the God who loves virtue; but the curses which he conceived in his mind (for they were wicked) were the offspring of his mind, which hated virtue.

And the sacred scripture bears testimony to this fact; for it says, "God did not grant to Balaam leave to curse thee, but turned his curses into Blessing;" though, in fact, all the words that he uttered were full of good omen. But he who looks into all that is laid up in the recesses of the heart, and who alone has the power to see those things which are invisible to created beings, from these secret things has passed a condemnatory decree, being in his own person at once the most indubitable of witnesses and the most incorruptible of judges, since even the contrary thing is praised, namely, for a man who appears to calumniate and to accuse with his mouth, in his heart to be blessing, and praising, and speaking words of good omen.

This, as it would seem, is the custom of those who correct youth, and of preceptors, and of parents, and of elders and of rulers, and of laws; for they, at times, do each of them reprove and punish, and by these means render the souls of those who are under their instruction better. And of these men no one is an enemy to his pupil, but they are all of them friendly to all of them; but it is the office of friends who have a genuine and unalloyed good will to others to speak freely, without any unfriendly purpose.

Therefore, as far as blessings, and praises, and prayers, or, on the other hand, reproaches and curses are concerned, one must not so much be guided by what proceeds out of the mouth by utterance, as by what is in the heart, by which, as by the original source of them all, both kinds of speeches are

estimated.

Chapter XXI

These, then, are the things which, he says, happen in the first instance to others on account of the good man, when they seek to load him with either praise or blame, or with blessings or curses. But that which comes next in order is the most important thing; that when they are silent, still no portion of the rational nature is left without a participation in the benefits; for God says that, "In thee shall all the nations of the world be blessed."

And this is a promise exceedingly full of doctrine; for if the mind is always free from disease and from injury, it then exerts all the tribes of feelings which affect it, and all its powers in a state of sound health, namely, its of seeing and of hearing, and all those which belong to the outward senses; and, moreover, all its appetites which are conversant about pleasures and desires, and all those feelings likewise which being reduced from a state of agitation to one of tranquillity, receive a better character from the change.

Before now, indeed, cities, and countries, and peoples, and nations of the earth, have enjoyed the greatest happiness and prosperity in consequence of the virtue and prudence of the individual; especially so when, in addition to a good disposition and wisdom, God has also given him irresistible power, as he may have given to a musician or to any artist the proper instruments for music, or for carrying out any other art, or as wood is supplied as a material for fire;

for in good truth the just man is the prop of all the human race; and he, bringing all that he has into a common stock for the advantage of these who can use it, bestows his treasures ungrudgingly, and whatever he finds that he has not got in himself, he prays for to the only giver of all wealth, the all-bounteous God. And God, opening the treasures of heaven, pours forth and showers down upon him all kinds of good things together; so that all the channels on earth are filled with them to overflowing.

And these blessings he at all times freely bestows, never rejecting the prayer of supplication which is addressed to him; for it is said in another passage, when Moses addresses him with supplication: "I am favourable to them according to thy Word." And this expression, as it seems, is equivalent to the

other: "In thee all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." On which account also the wise Abraham, who had had experience of the goodness of God in all things, believes that even if all other things are destroyed, still a small fragment of virtue would be preserved, like a spark of fire, and that for the sake of this little spark, he pities those other things also, so as to raise them up when fallen, and rekindled them when extinct.

For even the slightest spark of fire that is still smouldering, when it is fanned and re-kindled will set fire to a large pile: and so too the smallest spark of virtue, when it beams up, being wakened into life by good hopes, gives light to what has previously been dim-sighted and blind, and causes what has been withered to shoot up again, and whatever is barren and unproductive it transforms and brings to abundance of prolific power. Thus a good, which is but rare, is, by the kindness of God, made abundant and showered upon men, making everything else to resemble itself.

Chapter XXII

Let us therefore pray that the mind may be in the soul like a pillar in a house, and, in like manner, that the just man may be firmly established in the human race for the relief of all diseases; for while he is in vigorous health, one must not abandon all hope of complete safety, as through the medium of him, I imagine God the Saviour extending his all-healing medicine, that is to say, his propitious and merciful power to his suppliants and worshippers, bids them employ it for the salvation of those who are sick; spreading it like a salve over the wounds of the soul, which folly, and injustice, and all the other multitude of vices, being sharpened up, have grievously inflicted upon it.

And a most visible example of this is the righteous Noah, who, when so many portions of the soul were swallowed up in the great deluge, himself vigorously overtopped the waves and floated on their surface, and so rose above all the dangers which threatened him; and when he had escaped in safety, he sent out great and beautiful roots from himself, from which, like a tree, the whole crop of wisdom sprang up, which, bearing useful fruit, put forth the three fruits of the seeing creature, Israel, the measures of time, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

For, virtue is, and will be, and has been in everything; which virtue perhaps is at times obscured among men by the want of opportunity, but which opportunity the minister of God again brings to light. Since Sarah, that is to say, prudence, brings forth a male child, flourishing, not according to the periodical seasons of the year, but according to those seasons and felicitous occasions which have no connection with time; for it is said, “I will surely return and visit thee according to the time of life; and Sarah, thy wife, shall have a Son.”

Chapter XXIII

We have now, then, said enough about gifts which God is accustomed to bestow on those who are to become perfect, and through the medium of them on others also. In the next passage it is said, that “Abraham went as the Lord commanded Him.”

And this is the end which is celebrated among those who study philosophy in the best manner, namely, to live in accordance with nature. And this takes place when the mind, entering into the path of virtue, treads in the steps of right reason, and follows God, remembering his commandments, and at all times and in all places confirming them both by word and deed;”

for “he went as the Lord commanded him.” And the meaning of this is, as God commands (and he commands in a beautiful and praiseworthy manner), in that very manner does the virtuous man act, guiding the path of his life in a blameless way, so that the actions of the wise man are in no respect different from the divine commands.

At all events, God is represented in another passage as saying, “Abraham has kept all my Law.” And law is nothing else but the word of God, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is not right, as he bears witness, where he says, “He received the law from his Words.” If, then, the divine word is the law, and if the righteous man does the law, then by all means he also performs the word of God. So that, as I said before, the words of God are the actions of the wise man.

Accordingly, the end is according to the most holy Moses, to follow God; and he says also in another passage, “Thou shalt walk after the Lord thy God;” not meaning that he should employ the motion of his legs; for the earth is the

support of a man, but whether the whole world is sufficient to be the support of God, I do not know; but he seems here to be speaking allegorically, intending to represent the way in which the soul follows the divine doctrines, which has a direct reference to the honour due to the great cause of all things.

Chapter XXIV

And he also, with a wish further to excite an irresistible desire of what is good, enjoins one to cleave to it; for he says, “Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve; and thou shalt cleave to Him.” What, then, is this cleaving? What? Surely it is piety and faith; for these virtues adapt and invite the mind to incorruptible nature. For Abraham also, when he believed, is said to have “come near to God.”

If, therefore, while you are walking you are neither fatigued, so as to give way and stumble, nor are so careless as to turn to either the right hand or to the left hand, and so to stray and miss the direct road which lies between the two; but if, imitating good runners, you finish the course of life without stumbling or error, you will deservedly obtain the crown and worthy prize of victory when you have arrived at your desired end.

For is not this the crown and the prize of victory not to miss the proposed end of one’s labours, but to arrive at that goal of prudence which is so difficult to be reached? What, then, is the object of having right wisdom? To be able to condemn one’s own folly and that of every created being. For to be aware that one knows nothing is the end of all knowledge, since there is only one wise being, who is also the only God.

On which account Moses very beautifully has represented the father of the universe as being also the inspector and superintendent of all that he has created, saying, “God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very Good.” For it was not possible for any one to have an accurate view of all that had been created, except for the Creator.

Come, then, ye who are full of arrogance, and ignorance, and of exceeding insolence, ye that are wise in your own conceit, and who say not only that ye know accurately what each thing is, but that you are also able to explain the causes why it is so, showing daring with great rashness, as if ye had either been present at the creation of the world, and had actually seen how and from what

each separate thing was made, or had been counsellors of the Creator concerning the things which were created.

Come, and at once abandoning all other things, learn to know yourselves, and tell us plainly what ye yourselves are in respect of your bodies, in respect of your souls, in respect of your external senses, and in respect of your reason. Tell us now with respect to one, and that the smallest, perhaps, of the senses, what sight is, and how it is that you see; tell us what hearing is, and how it is that you hear; tell us what

For do not tell me long stories about the moon and the sun, and all the other things in heaven and in the world, which are at such a distance from us and which are so different in their natures, empty-minded creatures that you are, before you examine into and become acquainted with yourselves; for when you have learnt to understand yourselves, then perhaps one may believe you when you enter into explanations respecting other things. But till you are able to tell what you yourselves are, do not expect ever to be looked upon as truth-telling judges or witnesses with respect to others.

Chapter XXV

Since, then, these things are in this state, the mind, when it is rendered perfect, will pay its proper tribute to the God who causes perfection, according to that most sacred scripture, "For the law is, that tribute belongs to the Lord." When does the mind pay it? When? "On the third day it comes to the place which God has told it Of," having passed by the greater portions of the differences of time, and being now passing over to that nature which has no connection with time;

for then it will sacrifice its beloved son, not a man (for the wise man is not a slayer of his children), but the male offspring of a virtuously living soul, the fruit which germinates from it, as to which it knows not how it bore it, the divine shoot, which, when it appears, the soul then having appeared to be pregnant, confesses that it does not understand the good which has happened to it saying, "Who will tell to Abraham?" as if, in fact, he would refuse to believe about the rising up of the self-taught race, that "Sarah was suckling a child," not that the child was being suckled by Sarah. For the self-taught offspring is nourished by no one, but is itself the nourishment of others as

being competent to teach, and having no need to learn;

for “I have brought forth a son,” not like the Egyptian women, in the flower of my age and in the height of my bodily vigour, but like the Hebrew souls, “in my old Age,” when all the objects of the outward senses and all mortal things are faded, and when the objects of the intellect and immortal things are in their full vigour and worthy of all estimation and honour.

And I have brought forth, too, without requiring the aid of the midwife’s skill; for we bring forth even before any skill or knowledge of man can come to us, without any of the ordinary means of assistance to help us, God having sown and generated an excellent offspring, which, in accordance with the law made concerning gratitude, very properly requites its creator with gratitude and honour. For, says God, “My gifts, and my offerings, and my first fruits, you have taken care to bring to Me.”

Chapter XXVI

This is the end of the path of those who follow the arguments and injunctions contained in the law, and who walk in the way which God leads them in; but he who falls short of this, on account of his hunger after pleasure and his greediness for the indulgence of his passions, by name Amalek; for the interpretation of the name Amalek is, “the people that licks up” shall be cut off.

And the sacred scriptures teach us that this disposition is an insidious one; for when it perceives that the most vigorous portion of the power of the soul has passed over, then, “rising up from its ambush, it cuts to pieces the fatigued portion like a rearguard.” And of fatigue there is one kind which easily succumbs through the weakness of its reason which is unable to support the labours, which are to be encountered in the cause of virtue, and so, like those who are surprised in the rearguard, it is easily overcome. But the other kind is willing to endure honourable toil, vigorously persevering in all good things, and not choosing to bear anything whatever that is bad, not even though it be ever so trifling, but rejecting it as though it were the heaviest of burdens.

On which account, the law has also, by a very felicitous appellation, called virtue Leah, which name, being interpreted, means “wearied;” for she very

naturally thought the life of the wicked heavy and burdensome, and in its own nature wearisome; and did not choose even to look upon it, turning her eyes only on what is beautiful;

and let the mind labour not only to follow God without any relaxation or want of vigour, but also to walk onwards by the straight path, turning to neither side, neither to the right nor yet to the left, as the earthly Edom did, seeking out of the way lurking places, at one time being full of excesses and superfluities, and at another of differences and short comings; for it is better to proceed along the middle road, which is that which is really the royal road, and which the great and only King, God, has widened to be a most suitable abode for the souls that love virtue.

On which account some also of those who prosecute a gentle kind of philosophy, which is conversant chiefly about the society of mankind, have pronounced the virtues to be means, placing them on confines between two extremes. Since, on the one hand, excessive pride, being full of much insolence is an evil, and to take up with a humble and self-abasing demeanour is to expose one's self to be trampled upon; but the mean, which is compounded of both, in a gentle manner is advantageous.

Chapter XXVII

We must also inquire what the meaning of the expression, "He went with Lot," is. Now, the name Lot, being interpreted, means "declination;" and the mind declines or inclines, at one time rejecting what is good, and at another time what is evil. And both these declinations are often seen in one and the same thing. For there are some hesitating and wavering people who incline to both sides in turn, like a ship which is tossed about by different winds, or like the different sides of a scale, being unable to rest firmly on one thing; people whom one cannot praise even when they turn to the better side, for they are influenced by impulse, and not by deliberate meaning.

Now, of these men Lot is a spectator, who Moses here says went with the lover of wisdom. But it was very well that when he began to accompany him he should unlearn ignorance, and should never again return to it. But still he goes with him, not in the hope of deriving improvement from an imitation of a better man, but with a view of persecuting him also with a counter attraction

and allurements in an opposite direction, and of leading him where there was a chance of his falling.

And a proof of this is, that the one, having fallen back again into his ancient disease, departs, having been taken prisoner by those enemies who are in the soul; but the other, having guarded against all his designs, concealed in ambuscade, took every imaginable care to live at a distance from him. But the separate habitation he will arrange hereafter, but not yet. For at present, his speculations, as would be likely to be the case with a man who has but lately begun to apply himself to divine contemplation, have a want of solidity and steadiness in them. But when they have become more compact, and are established on a firmer footing, then he will be able to separate from himself the alluring and flattering disposition as an irreconcilable enemy, and one difficult to subdue:

for this is that disposition which attaches itself to the soul in such a manner as to be difficult to shake off, hindering it from proceeding swiftly on its progress towards virtue. This, too, when we leave Egypt, that is to say, the whole of the district connected with the body, being anxious to unlearn our subjection to the passions, in accordance with the language and precepts of the prophet Moses, follows us close, checking and impeding our zeal in the departure, and out of envy causing delay to the rapidity of setting forth;

for it is said, “And a great mixed multitude went up with them, and sheep, and oxen, and very much Cattle.” But this mixed multitude, if one is to speak the plain truth, are the cattle-like and irrational doctrines of the soul.

on which account, besides the word “mixed,” there is also added the epithet “great;” for he who looks at one end only is truly simple, and unmixed, and plain; but he who proposes to himself many objects of life is manifold, and mixed, and rough, in real truth: on which account the sacred scriptures say, that the practiser of virtue, Jacob, was a smooth man, and that Esau, the practiser of what is shameful, was a hairy or rough man.

On account, then, of this mixed and rough multitude collected together from mixed opinions collected from all imaginable quarters, the mind which was able to exert great speed when it was fleeing from the country of the body, that is, from Egypt, and which was able in those days to receive the inheritance of virtue, being assisted by a threefold light, the memory of past things, the

energy of present things, and the hope of the future, passed that exceeding length of time, forty years, in going up and down, and all around, wandering in every direction by reason of the diversity of manners, when it ought rather to have proceeded by the straight and most advantageous way.

This is he who not only rejoiced in a few species of desire, but who also chose to pass by none whatever entirely, so that he might obtain the whole entire genus in which every species is included; for it is said that, “the mixed multitude that was among them desired all kinds of Concupiscence,” that is to say, the very genus of concupiscence itself, and not some one species; and sitting down they wept. For the mind is conscious that it is possessed of but slight power, and when it is not able to obtain what it desires, it weeps and groans; and yet it ought to rejoice when it fails to be able to indulge its passions, or to become infected with diseases, and it ought to think their want and absence a very great piece of good fortune.

But it very often happens to the followers of virtue, also, to become languid and to weep, either because they are bewailing the calamities of the foolish, on account of their participation in their common nature, and their natural love for their race, or through excess of joy. And this excess of joy arises whenever on a sudden an abundance of all kinds of good coming together are showered down to overflowing, without having been previously expected; in reference to which kind of joy it is that the poet appears to me to have used the expression — Smiling amid her Tears.(Homer’s Iliad 6.484.)

For exceeding joy, the best of all feelings, falling on the soul when completely unexpected, makes it greater than it was before, so that the body can no longer contain it by reason of its bulk and magnitude; and so, being closely packed and pressed down, it distils drops which it is the fashion to call tears, concerning which it is said in the Psalms, “Thou shalt give me to eat bread steeped in Tears;”(psalm 80:5.) and again, “My tears have been my bread day and Night;”(psalm 42:3.) for the food of the mind are tears as are visible, proceeding from laughter seated internally and excited by virtuous causes, when the divine desire instilled into our hearts changes the song which was merely the lament of the creature into the hymn of the uncreated God.

Chapter XXIX

Some persons then repudiate this mixed and rough multitude, and raise a wall of fortification to keep it from them, rejoicing only in the race which loves God; but some, on the other hand, form associations with it, thinking it desirable to arrange their own lives according to such a system that they can place them on the confines between human and divine virtues, in order that they may touch both those which are virtues in truth and those which are such in appearance.

Now the disposition which concerns itself in the affairs of state adheres to this opinion, which disposition it is usual to call Joseph, with whom, when he is about to bring his father, there go up “all the servants of Pharaoh, and the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, and all the whole family of Joseph, himself, and his brothers, and all his father’s House.”(genesis 50:7.)

You see here that this disposition which is conversant about affairs of state is placed between the house of Pharaoh and his father’s house, in order that it might equally reach the affairs of the body, that is to say, of Egypt; and those of the soul, which are all laid up in his father’s house as in a treasury; for when he says, “I am of God,” and all the other things which are akin to or connected with him abide among the established laws of his father’s house; and when he mounts up into the second chariot of the mind, which appears to bear sovereign sway, namely, Pharaoh, he is again establishing Egyptian pride.

And he is more miserable who is looked upon as a king of considerable renown, and who is born along in the chariot which has the precedence; for to be pre-eminent in what is not honourable is the most conspicuous disgrace, just as it is a lighter evil to come off second best in such a contest.

But you may learn to perceive how wavering a disposition such a man has from the oaths which he swears, swearing at one time “by the health of Pharaoh,” and then again, on the contrary, “not by the health of Pharaoh.” But this latter formula of oath, which contains a negation, looks as if it were the injunction of his father’s house, which is always meditating the destruction of the passions, and wishing that they should die; but the other brings us back to the discipline of Egypt, which desires that these passions should be preserved;

on which account, although so great a multitude went up together, he still does not call it a mixed multitude, since to a person who is endowed with a real power of seeing, and who is a lover of virtue, every thing which is not virtue nor an action of virtue, appears to be mixed and confused; but to him who still loves the things of earth, the prizes of earth do by themselves seem to be worthy of love and worthy of honour.

Chapter XXX

Accordingly, as I have already said, the lovers of wisdom will raise a wall of exclusion against the man who, like a drone, has resolved to injure his profitable labours, and who follows him with this object, and he will receive those who, out of their admiration of what is honorable, follow him with a view to imitating him; assigning to each of them that portion which is suited to them; for, says he, “of the men who went with me, Eschol, Annan, and Mamre, shall receive a Share.” And by these names of persons he means dispositions which are good by nature and fond of contemplation;

for Eschol is an emblem of good disposition, having a name of fire, since a good disposition is full of good daring and fervour, and adheres to what it has ever applied itself. And Annan is the symbol of a man fond of contemplation; for the name, being interpreted, means “the eyes,” from the fact that the eyes of the soul also are opened by cheerfulness; and of both of these persons a life of contemplation is the inheritance, which is entitled Mamre, which name is derived from seeing; and to the contemplative man, the faculty of seeing is most appropriate and most peculiarly belonging.

But when the mind, having been under the tuition of these trainers, finds nothing wanting for practice, it then proceeds onwards with and accompanies perfect wisdom, not outstripping it or not being outstripped by it, but marching alongside of it step by step, with equal pace. And the words of scripture show this, in which it is distinctly stated that “they both of them went together, and came to the plain which God had mentioned to them;”

a most excellent equality of virtues, better than any rivalry, an equality of labour with a natural good condition of body, and an equality of art with self-instructed nature, so that both of them are able to carry off equal prizes of virtue; as if the arts of painting and statuary were not only able, as they are at

present, to make representations devoid of motion or animation, but were able also to invest the objects which they paint or form with motion and life; for in that case the arts which were previously imitative of the works of nature would appear now to have become the natures themselves.

Chapter XXXI

But whoever is raised on high to such a sublime elevation will never any more allow any of the portions of his soul to dwell below among mortal men, but will draw them all up to himself as if they were suspended by a rope; for which reason a sacred injunction of the following purport was given to the wise man, “Go thou up to the Lord, thou, and Aaron, and Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel.”

And the meaning of this injunction is as follows, “Go up, O soul, to the view of the living God, in an orderly manner, rationally, voluntarily, fearlessly, lovingly, in the holy and perfect numbers of seven multiplied tenfold.” For Aaron is described in the law as the prophet of Moses, being loudly uttered speech prophesying to the mind. And Nadab is interpreted “voluntary,” that is to say, the man who honours the Deity without compulsion; and the interpretation of the name Abihu is, “my father.” This man is one who has not need of a master by reason of his folly, more than of a father by reason of his wisdom, namely such a father as God the ruler of the world.

And these powers are the body-guards of the mind which is worthy to bear sovereign sway, which ought also to attend upon the king, and conduct him on his way. But the soul is afraid by itself to rise up to the contemplation of the living God, if it does not know the road, from being lifted up by a union of ignorance and audacity; and the falls which are caused by such a union of ignorance and great rashness are very serious;

on which account Moses prays that he may have God himself as his guide to the road which leads to him. For he says, “If thou wilt not thyself go with me, then do not thou lead me Hence.”(exodus 33:5.) Because every motion which is without the divine approbation is mischievous, and it is better for men to remain here wandering about in this mortal life, as the great portion of the human race does, than raising themselves up to heaven in pride and arrogance, to encounter an overthrow, as has happened to countless numbers

of sophists, who have looked upon wisdom as only a discovery of plausible arguments, and not, as it is, a certain belief in and well-assured knowledge of facts.

And perhaps too there is some such meaning as this intended to be conveyed by these words, — do not raise me up on high, bestowing on me riches, or glory, or honours, or authority, or any other of those things which are usually ranked as good, unless you intend also to go with them and me yourself; for these things are often calculated to cause either great mischief, or great advantage to their possessors; advantage when God is the guide of their mind; injury when the contrary is the case. For to great numbers of people the things which are called good not being so in reality have been the causes of irremediable evils,

but the man who follows God does of necessity have for his fellow travellers all those reasons which are the attendants of God, which we are accustomed to call angels. At all events, it is said that “Abraham went with them conducting them on their Way.” Oh the admirable praise! according to which, he who was conducting others was himself conducted by them, giving what he was receiving; not giving one thing instead of another, but only that one single thing, which was prepared as a retributory gift,

for until a man is made perfect he uses divine reason as the guide of his path, for that is the sacred oracle of scripture: “Behold, I send my angel before thy face that he may keep thee in the road, so as to lead thee into the land which I have prepared for thee. Attend thou to him, and listen to him; do not disobey him; for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in Him.”

But when he has arrived at the height of perfect knowledge, then, running forward vigorously, he keeps up with the speed of him who was previously leading him in his way; for in this way they will both become attendants of God who is the guide of all things; no one of those who hold erroneous opinions accompanying them any longer, and even Lot himself, who turned on one side the soul, which might have been upright and inflexible, removing and living at a distance.

Chapter XXXII

And “Abraham,” says Moses, “was seventy-five years of age, when he departed out of Charren.” Now concerning the number of seventy-five years (for this contains a calculation corresponding to what has been previously advanced,) we will enter into an accurate examination hereafter. But first of all we will examine what Charran is, and what is meant by the departure from this country to go and live in another.

Now it is not probable that any one of those persons who are acquainted with the law are ignorant that Abraham had previously migrated from Chaldaea when he came to live in Charran. But after his father died he then departed from this land of Chaldaea, so that he has now migrated from two different places.

What then shall we say? The Chaldeans appear beyond all other men to have devoted themselves to the study of astronomy and of genealogies; adapting things on earth to things sublime, and also adapting the things of heaven to those on earth, and like people who, availing themselves of the principles of music, exhibit a most perfect symphony as existing in the universe by the common union and sympathy of the parts for one another, which though separated as to place, are not disunited in regard of kindred.

These men, then, imagined that this world which we behold was the only world in the existing universe, and was either God himself, or else that it contained within itself God, that is, the soul of the universe. Then, having erected fate and necessity into gods, they filled human life with excessive impiety, teaching men that with the exception of those things which are apparent there is no other cause whatever of anything, but that it is the periodical revolutions of the sun, and moon, and other stars, which distribute good and evil to all existing beings.

Moses indeed appears to have in some degree subscribed to the doctrine of the common union and sympathy existing between the parts of the universe, as he has said that the world was one and created (for as it is a created thing and also one, it is reasonable to suppose that the same elementary essences are laid at the foundations of all the particular effects which arise, as happens with respect to united bodies that they reciprocally contain each other);

but he differs from them widely in their opinion of God, not intimating that either the world itself, or the soul of the world, is the original God, nor

that the stars or their motions are the primary causes of the events which happen among men; but he teaches that this universe is held together by invisible powers, which the Creator has spread from the extreme borders of the earth to heaven, making a beautiful provision to prevent what he has joined together from being dissolved; for the indissoluble chains which bind the universe are his powers.

On which account even though it may be said somewhere in the declaration of the law, "God is in the heaven above, and in the earth beneath," let no one suppose that God is here spoken of according to his essence. For the living God contains everything, and it is impiety to suppose that he is contained by any thing, but what is meant is, that his power according to which he made, and arranged, and established the universe, is both in heaven and earth.

And this, to speak correctly, is goodness, which has driven away from itself envy, which hates virtue and detests what is good, and which generates those virtues by which it has brought all existing things into existence and exhibited them as they are. Since the living God is indeed conceived of in opinion everywhere, but in real truth he is seen nowhere; so that divine scripture is most completely true in which it is said, "Here am I," speaking of him who cannot be shown as if he were being shown, of "him who is invisible as if he were visible, before thou Existedst." For he proceeds onward before the created universe, and outside of it, and not contained or borne onward in any of the things whose existence began after his.

Chapter XXXIII

These things then having been now said for the purpose of overturning the opinion of the Chaldeans; he thinks that it is desirable to lead off and invite away those who are still Chaldaizing in their minds to the truth of his teaching, and he begins thus:— "Why," says he, "my excellent friends do you raise yourselves up in such a sudden manner from the earth, and soar to such a height? and why do ye rise above the air, and tread the ethereal expanse, investigating accurately the motions of the sun, and the periodical revolutions of the moon, and the harmonious and much-renowned paths of the rest of the stars? for these things are too great for your comprehension, inasmuch as they

have received a more blessed and divine position.

Descend therefore from heaven, and when you have come down, do not, on the other hand, employ yourselves in the investigation of the earth and the sea, and the rivers, and the natures of plants and animals, but rather seek to become acquainted with yourselves and your own nature, and do not prefer to dwell anywhere else, rather than in yourselves. For by contemplating the things which are to be seen in your own dwelling, that which bears the mastery therein, and that which is in subjection; that which has life, and that which is inanimate; that which is endowed with and that which is destitute of reason; that which is immortal, and that which is mortal; that which is better, and that which is worse; you will at once arrive at a correct knowledge of God and of his works.

For you will perceive that there is a mind in you and in the universe; and that your mind, having asserted its authority and power over all things in you, has brought each of the parts into subjection to himself. In like manner also, the mind of the universe being invested with the supremacy, governs the world by independent law and justice, having a providential regard not only for those things which are of more importance, but also for those which appear to be somewhat obscure.

Chapter XXXIV

Abandoning therefore your superfluous anxiety to investigate the things of heaven, dwell, as I said just now within yourselves, forsaking the land of the Chaldeans, that is, opinion, and migrating to Charran the region of the outward sense, which is the corporeal abode of the mind.

For the name Charran, being interpreted, means “a hole;” and holes are the emblems of the places of the outward sense. For in some sense they are all holes and caves, the eyes being the caves in which the sight dwells, the ears those of hearing, the nostrils of those smelling, the throat the cavern of taste, and the whole frame of the body, being the abode of touch.

Do ye therefore, dwelling among these things, remain tranquil and quiet, and investigate with all the exactness in your power the nature of each, and when you have learnt what there is good and bad in each part, avoid the one and choose the other. And when you have thoroughly and perfectly

considered the whole of your own habitation, and have understood what relative importance each of its parts possesses, then rouse yourselves up and seek to accomplish a migration from hence, which shall announce to you, not death, but immortality;

the evident proofs of which you will see even while involved in the corporeal cares perceptible by the outward senses, sometimes while in deep slumber (for then the mind, roaming abroad, and straying beyond the confines of the outward senses, and of all the other affections of the body, begins to associate with itself, looking on truth as at a mirror, and discarding all the imaginations which it has contracted from the outward senses, becomes inspired by the truest divination respecting the future, through the instrumentality of dreams), and at other times in your waking moments.

For when, being under the influence of some philosophical speculations, you are allured onwards, then the mind follows this, and forgets all the other things which concern its corporeal abode; and if the external senses prevent it from arriving at an accurate sight of the objects of the intellect, then those who are fond of contemplation take care to diminish the impetuosity of its attack, for they close their eyes and stop up their ears, and check the rapid motion of the other organ, and choose to abide in tranquillity and darkness, that the eye of the soul, to which God has granted the power of understanding the objects of the intellect, may never be overshadowed by any of those objects appreciable only by the outward senses.

Chapter XXXV

Having then in this manner learnt to accomplish the abandonment of mortal things, you shall become instructed in the proper doctrines respecting the uncreated God, unless indeed you think that our mind, when it has put off the body, the external senses, and reason, can, when destitute of all these things and naked, perceive existing things, and that the mind of the universe, that is to say, God, does not dwell outside of all material nature, and that he contains everything and is not contained by anything; and further, he does not penetrate beyond things by his intellect alone, like a man, but also by his essential nature, as is natural for a God to do;

for it is not our mind which made the body, but that it is the work of something else, on which account it is contained in the body as in a vessel; but the mind of the universe created the universe, and the Creator is better than the created, therefore it can never be contained in what is inferior to itself; besides that it is not suitable for the father to be contained in the son, but rather for the son to derive increase from the love of the father.

And in this manner the mind, migrating for a short time, will come to the father of piety and holiness, removing at first to a distance from genealogical science, which originally did erroneously persuade it to fancy that the world was the primary god, and not the creature of the first God, and that the motions and agitations of the stars were the cause to men of disaster, or, on the contrary, of good fortune.

After that the mind, coming to a due consideration of itself, and studying philosophically the things affecting its own abode, that is the things of the body, the things of the outward sense, the things of reason, and knowing, as the line in the poet has it — That in those halls both good and ill are planned; (homer, *Odyssey*, 4.392.) Then, opening the road for itself, and hoping by travelling along it to arrive at a notion of the father of the universe, so difficult to be understood by any guesses or conjectures, when it has come to understand itself accurately, it will very likely be able to comprehend the nature of God; no longer remaining in Charran, that is in the organs of outward sense, but returning to itself. For it is impossible, while it is still in a state of motion, in a manner appreciable by the outward sense rather than by the intellect, to arrive at a proper consideration of the living God.

Chapter XXXVI

On which account also that disposition which is ranked in the highest class by God, by name Samuel, does not explain the just precepts of kingly power of Saul, while he is still lying among the pots, but only after he has drawn him out from thence: for he inquires whether the man is still coming hither, and the sacred oracle answers, “Behold, he is hidden among the stuff.”(1 Samuel 10:22.)

What, then, ought he who hears this answer, and who is by nature inclined to receive instruction, to do, but to draw him out at once from thence?

Accordingly, we are told, “He ran up and took him out from thence, because he who was abiding among the vessels of the soul, that is, the body and the outward senses, was not worthy to hear the doctrines and laws of the kingdom (and by the kingdom, we mean wisdom, since we call the wise man a king); but when he has risen up and changed his place, then the mist around him is dissipated, and he will be able to see clearly. Very appropriately, therefore, does the companion of knowledge think it right to leave the region of the outward sense, by name Charran;

and he leaves it when he is seventy-five years old; and this number is on the confines of the nature discernible by the outward senses, and that intelligible by the intellect, and of the older and younger, and also of perishable and imperishable nature;

for the elder, the imperishable ratio, that comprehensible by the intellect, exists in the seventy; the younger ratio, discernible by the outward senses, is equal in number to the five outward senses. In this latter also the practiser of virtue is seen exercising himself when he has not yet been able to carry off the perfect prize of victory; — for it is said, that all the souls which came out of Jacob were seventy and Five;” —

for to him, while wrestling, and not shrinking at all from the truly sacred contest, for the acquisition of virtue, belong the souls which are the offspring of the body, and which have not yet acquired reason, but are still attracted by the multitude of the outward senses. For Jacob is the name of one who is wrestling and engaged in a contest and trying to trip up his antagonist, not of one who has gained the victory.

But when he appeared to have gained ability to behold God, his name was changed to Israel, and then he uses only the computation of seventy, having extirpated the number five, the number of the outward senses; for it is said, that “thy fathers went down to Egypt, being seventy Souls.” This is the number which is familiar to Moses the wise man: for it happened that those who were selected as carefully picked men out of the whole multitude, were seventy in number; and those all elders, not only in point of age, but also in wisdom and counsel, and in prudence, and in ancient integrity of manners.

And this number is consecrated and dedicated to God when the perfect fruits of the soul are offered up. For, on the feast of tabernacles, besides all

other sacrifices, it is ordered that the priest should offer up seventy heifers for a burnt offering. Again, it is in accordance with the computation of seventy that the phials of the princes are provided, for each of them is of the weight of seventy shekels; since whatever things are associated and confederate together in the soul, and dear to one another, have a power which is truly attractive, namely, the sacred computation of seventy, which Egypt, the nature which hates virtue, and loves to indulge the passions, is introduced as lamenting; for mourning among them is computed at seventy Days.

Chapter XXXVII

This number, therefore, as I have said before, is familiar to Moses, but the number of the five outward senses is familiar to him who embraces the body and external things, which it is customary to call Joseph; for he pays such attention to those things, that he presents his own uterine brother, the offspring of the outward sense, for he had no acquaintance at all with those who were only his brothers as sons of the same father, with five exceedingly beautiful garments, thinking the outward senses things of exceeding beauty, and worthy of being adorned and honoured by him.

Moreover, he also enacts laws for the whole of Egypt, that they should honour them, and pay taxes and tribute to them every year as to their kings; for he commands them to take a Fifth part of the corn, that is to say, to store up in the treasury abundant materials and nourishment for the five outward senses, in order that each of them might rejoice while filling itself unrestrainedly with suitable food, and that it might weigh down and overwhelm the mind with the multitude of things which were thus brought upon it; for during the banquet of the outer senses; the mind is labouring under a famine, as, on the contrary, when the outward senses are fasting, the mind is feasting.

Do you not see that the five daughters of Salpaad, which we, using allegorical expressions, call the outward senses, were born of the tribe of Manasseh, who is the son of Joseph, the elder son in point of time, but the younger in rank and power? and very naturally, for he is so called from forgetfulness, which is a thing of equal power with an outward sense. But recollection is placed in the second rank, after memory, of which Ephraim is

the namesake; and the interpretation of the name of Ephraim is, “bearing fruit;” and the most beautiful and nutritious fruit in souls is a memory which never forgets;

therefore the virgins speak to one another in a becoming manner, saying, “Our father is dead.” Now the death of recollection is forgetfulness: “And he has died not for his own Sin,” speaking very righteously, for forgetfulness is not a voluntary affection, but is one of those things which are not actually in us, but is one of those things which are not actually in us, but which come upon us from without. And they were not his sons, but his daughters; since the power of memory, as being what has its existence by its own nature, is the parent of male children; but forgetfulness, arising from the slumber of reason, is the parent of female children, for it is destitute of reason; and the outward senses are the daughters of the irrational part of the soul.

But if any one has outrun him in speed, and has become a follower of Moses, though he is not yet able to keep pace with him, he will use a compound and mixed number, namely, that of five and seventy, which is the symbol of the nature which is both perceptible by the outward senses and intelligible by the intellect, the two uniting together for the production of one irreproachable species.

Chapter XXXVIII

I very much admire Rebecca, who is patience, because she, at that time, recommends the man who is perfect in his soul, and who has destroyed the roughnesses of the passions and vices, to flee and return to Charran; for she says, “Now, therefore, my child, hear my voice, and rise up and depart, and flee away to Laban, my brother, to Charran, and dwell with him certain days, until the anger and rage of thy brother is turned from being against thee, and till he forgets what thou hast done to Him.”

And it is with great beauty that she here calls going by the road, which leads to the outward senses, a fleeing away; for, in truth, the mind is then a fugitive, when, having left its own appropriate objects which are comprehensible to the understanding, it turns to the opposite rank of those which are perceptible by the outward senses. And there are cases in which to run away is useful, when a person adopts this line of conduct, not out of

hatred to his superior, but in order to avoid the snares which are laid for him by his inferior.

What, then, is the recommendation of patience? A most admirable and excellent one. If ever, she says, you see the passion of rage and anger highly provoked and excited to ferocity either in thyself or in any one else, which is nourished by irrational and unmanageable nature, do not excite it further and make it more savage, for then perhaps it will inflict incurable wounds; but cool its fervour, and pacify its too highly inflamed disposition, for if it be tamed and rendered tractable it will do you less injury.

What, then, are the means by which it can be tamed and pacified? Having, as far as appearance goes, assumed another form and another character, follow it, first of all, wherever it pleases, and, opposing it in nothing, admit that you have the same objects of love and hatred with itself, for by these means it will be rendered propitious; and, when it is pacified, then you may lay aside your pretence, and, not expecting any longer to suffer any evil at its hand, you may with indifference return to the care of your own objects;

for it is on this account that Charran is represented as full of cattle, and as having tenders of flocks for its inhabitants. For what region could be more suitable for irrational nature, and for those who have undertaken the care and superintendence of it, than the external senses which exist in us?

Accordingly, when the practiser of virtue asks, "From whence come ye?" the shepherds answer him truly, that they come "from Charran." For the irrational powers come from the external sense, as the rational ones come from the mind. And when he further inquires whether they know Laban, they very naturally assert that they do know him, for the outward sense is acquainted with complexion and with every distinctive quality, as it thinks; and of complexion and distinctive qualities Laban is the symbol.

And he himself, when at last he is made perfect, will quit the abode of the outward senses, and will set up the abode of the soul as belonging to the soul, which, while still among labours and among the external senses, he gives a vivid description of; for he says, "When shall I make myself, also, a House." When, disregarding the objects of the external senses and the external senses themselves, shall I dwell in mind and intellect, being, in name, going to and fro among and dwelling among the objects of contemplation, like those souls

which are fond of investigating invisible objects,

which it is usual to call midwives? For they also make suitable coverings and phylacteries for souls which are devoted to virtue; but the strongest and most defensible abode was the fear of God, to those, at least, who have him for an impregnable fortress and wall. "For," says Moses, "when the midwives feared God they made themselves Houses."

Chapter XXXIX

The mind, therefore, going forth out of the places which are in Charran, is said "to have travelled through the land until it came to the place of Sichem, to a lofty Oak." And let us now consider what this travelling through the land means. The disposition which is fond of learning is inquisitive and exceedingly curious by nature, going everywhere without fear or hesitation and prying into every place, and not choosing to leave anything in existence, whether person or thing, not thoroughly investigated; for it is by nature extraordinarily greedy of everything that can be seen or heard, so as not only not to be satisfied with the things of its own country, but even to desire foreign things which are established at a great distance.

At all events, they say that it is an absurd thing for merchants and dealers to cross the seas for the sake of gain, and to travel all round the habitable world, not allowing any considerations of summer, or winter, or violent gales, or contrary winds, or old age, or bodily sickness, or the society of friends, or the unspeakable pleasures arising from wife, or children, or one's other relations, or love of one's country, or the enjoyment of political connections, or the safe fruition of one's money and other possessions, or, in fact, anything whatever, whether great or small, to be any hindrance to them;

and yet for men, for the sake of that most beautiful and desirable of all possessions, the only one which is peculiar to the human race, namely, wisdom, to be unwilling to cross over every sea and to penetrate every recess of the earth, inquiring whenever they can find anything beautiful either to see or to hear, and tracing out such things with all imaginable zeal and earnestness, until they arrive at the enjoyment of the things which are thus sought for and desired.

Do thou then, O my soul, travel through the land, and through man, bringing if you think fit, each individual man to a judgment of things which concern him; as, for instance, what the body is, and under what influences, whether active or passive, it co-operates with the mind; what the external sense is, and in what manner that assists the dominant mind; what speech is, and of what it becomes the interpreter so as to contribute to virtue; what are pleasure and desire; what are pain and fear; and what art is capable of supplying a remedy for these things; by the aid of which a man when infected with these feelings may easily escape, or else perhaps may never be infected at all: what folly is, what intemperance, what committing injustice, what the whole multitude of other diseases, which it is the nature of all destructive vice to engender; and also what are the means by which they can be averted. And also, on the contrary, what justice is, what prudence is, and temperance, and manly courage, and deliberate wisdom, and in short what each virtue is, and what the mastery over the passions is, and in what way each of these virtues is usually produced.

Travel also through the greatest and most perfect being, namely this world, and consider all its parts, how they are separated in respect of place and united in respect of power; and also what is this invisible chain of harmony and unity, which connects all those parts; and if while considering these matters, thou canst not easily comprehend what thou seekest to know, persevere and be not wearied; for these matters are not attainable without a struggle, but they are only found out with difficulty and by means of great labour;

on which account the man fond of learning is taken up to the field of Sichem; and the name Sichem, being interpreted means, “a shoulder,” and intimates labour, since it is on the shoulders that men are accustomed to bear burdens. As Moses also mentions in another passage, when speaking of a certain athlete he proceeds in this manner, “He put his shoulder to the labour and became a Husbandman.”

So that never, O my mind, do thou become effeminate and yield; but even if any thing does appear difficult to be discovered by contemplation, still opening the seeing faculties that are in thyself, look inwards and investigate existing things more accurately, and never close the eyes whether intentionally or unintentionally; for sleep is a blind thing as wakefulness is a sharp-sighted thing. And it is well to be content if by assiduity in investigation it is granted

to thee to arrive at a correct conception of the objects of thy search.

Do you not see that the scripture says that a lofty oak was planted in Sichem? meaning under this figurative expression to represent the labour of instruction which never gives in, and never bends through weariness, but is solid, firm, and invincible, which the man who wishes to be perfect must of necessity exert, in order that the tribunal of the soul, by name Dinah, for the interpretation of the name Dinah is “judgment” may not be seized by the exertions of that man who, being a plotter against prudence, is labouring in an opposite direction.

For he who bears the same name as this place, namely Sichem, the son of Hamor, that is, of irrational nature; for the name Hamor means “an ass;” giving himself up to folly and being bred up with shamelessness and audacity, infamous man that he was, attempted to pollute and to defile the judicial faculties of the mind; if the pupils and friends of wisdom, Sichem and Levi, had not speedily come up, having made the defences of their house safe, and destroyed those who were still involved in the labour devoted to pleasure and to the indulgence of the passions and uncircumcised. For though there was a sacred scripture that, “There should be no harlot among the daughters of the seer, Israel,” these men, having ravished a virgin soul, hoped to escape notice;

for there is never a scarcity of avengers against those who violate treaties; but even though some persons fancy there may be, they will only fancy it, and will in the reality of the fact be proved to entertain a false opinion. For justice hates the wicked, and is implacable, and a relentless avenger of all unrighteous actions, overthrowing the ranks of those who defile virtue, and when they are overthrown, then again the soul, which before appeared to be defiled, changes and returns to its virgin state. I say, which appeared to be defiled, because, in fact, it never was defiled; for of involuntary accidents that which affects the patient is not in reality his suffering, just as what is done by a person who does wrong unintentionally, the wrong is not really his action.