

Cyril of Jerusalem:

Catechetical Lecture (Lecture 13) (397-400 A.D.)

On the words, Crucified and Buried.

Isaiah 53:1, 7

Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?...He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, etc.

1. Every deed of Christ is a cause of glorying to the Catholic Church, but her greatest of all glorying is in the Cross; and knowing this, Paul says, But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of Christ. Galatians 6:14 For wondrous indeed it was, that one who was blind from his birth should receive sight in Siloam ; but what is this compared with the blind of the whole world? A great thing it was, and passing nature, for Lazarus to rise again on the fourth day; but the grace extended to him alone, and what was it compared with the dead in sins throughout the world? Marvellous it was, that five loaves should pour forth food for the five thousand; but what is that to those who are famishing in ignorance through all the world? It was marvellous that she should have been loosed who had been bound by Satan eighteen years: yet what is this to all of us, who were fast bound in the chains of our sins? But the glory of the Cross led those who were blind through ignorance into light, loosed all who were held fast by sin, and ransomed the whole world of mankind.

2. And wonder not that the whole world was ransomed; for it was no mere man, but the only-begotten Son of God, who died on its behalf. Moreover one man's sin, even Adam's, had power to bring death to the world; but if by the trespass of the one death reigned over the world, how shall not life much rather reign by the righteousness of the One Romans 5:17-18? And if because of the tree of food they were then cast out of paradise, shall not believers now more easily enter into paradise because of the Tree of Jesus? If the first man formed out of the earth brought in universal death, shall not He who formed him out of the earth bring in eternal life, being Himself the Life? If Phinees, when he waxed zealous and slew the evil-doer, staved the wrath of God, shall not Jesus, who slew not another, but gave up Himself for a ransom 1 Timothy 2:6, put away the wrath which is against mankind?

3. Let us then not be ashamed of the Cross of our Saviour, but rather glory in it. For the word of the Cross is unto Jews a stumbling-block, and unto Gentiles foolishness, but to us salvation: and to them that are perishing it is foolishness, but unto us which are being saved it is the power of God. For it was not a mere

man who died for us, as I said before, but the Son of God, God made man. Further; if the lamb under Moses drove the destroyer Exodus 12:23 far away, did not much rather the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world John 1:29, deliver us from our sins? The blood of a silly sheep gave salvation; and shall not the Blood of the Only-begotten much rather save? If any disbelieve the power of the Crucified, let him ask the devils; if any believe not words, let him believe what he sees. Many have been crucified throughout the world, but by none of these are the devils scared; but when they see even the Sign of the Cross of Christ, who was crucified for us, they shudder. For those men died for their own sins, but Christ for the sins of others; for He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. It is not Peter who says this, for then we might suspect that he was partial to his Teacher; but it is Esaias who says it, who was not indeed present with Him in the flesh, but in the Spirit foresaw His coming in the flesh. Yet why now bring the Prophet only as a witness? Take for a witness Pilate himself, who gave sentence upon Him, saying, I find no fault in this Man Luke 23:14: and when he gave Him up, and had washed his hands, he said, I am innocent of the blood of this just person. Matthew 27:24 There is yet another witness of the sinlessness of Jesus — the robber, the first man admitted into Paradise; who rebuked his fellow, and said, We receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing amiss ; for we were present, both you and I, at His judgment.

4. Jesus then really suffered for all men; for the Cross was no illusion , otherwise our redemption is an illusion also. His death was not a mere show , for then is our salvation also fabulous. If His death was but a show, they were true who said, We remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I rise again. Matthew 27:63 His Passion then was real: for He was really crucified, and we are not ashamed thereat; He was crucified, and we deny it not, nay, I rather glory to speak of it. For though I should now deny it, here is Golgotha to confute me, near which we are now assembled; the wood of the Cross confutes me, which was afterwards distributed piecemeal from hence to all the world. I confess the Cross, because I know of the Resurrection; for if, after being crucified, He had remained as He was, I had not perchance confessed it, for I might have concealed both it and my Master; but now that the Resurrection has followed the Cross, I am not ashamed to declare it.

5. Being then in the flesh like others, He was crucified, but not for the like sins. For He was not led to death for covetousness, since He was a Teacher of poverty; nor was He condemned for concupiscence, for He Himself says plainly, Whosoever shall look upon a woman to lust after her, has committed adultery with her already Matthew 5:28; not for smiting or striking hastily, for He turned the other cheek also to the smiter; not for despising the Law, for He was the fulfiller of the Law; not for reviling a prophet, for it was Himself who was proclaimed by the Prophets; not for defrauding any of their hire, for He ministered without reward and freely; not for sinning in words, or deeds, or thoughts, He who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not 1 Peter 2:22-23; who came to His passion, not unwillingly, but willing; yea, if any dissuading Him say even now, Be it far from You, Lord, He will say again, Get behind Me, Satan Matthew 16:22-23 .

6. And would you be persuaded that He came to His passion willingly? Others, who foreknow it not, die unwillingly; but He spoke before of His passion: Behold, the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. But

do you know wherefore this Friend of man shunned not death? It was lest the whole world should perish in its sins. Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed, and shall be crucified ; and again, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem. Luke 9:5 And would you know certainly, that the Cross is a glory to Jesus? Hear His own words, not mine. Judas had become ungrateful to the Master of the house, and was about to betray Him. Having but just now gone forth from the table, and drunk His cup of blessing, in return for that drought of salvation he sought to shed righteous blood. He who did eat of His bread, was lifting up his heel against Him ; his hands were but lately receiving the blessed gifts , and presently for the wages of betrayal he was plotting His death. And being reprov'd, and having heard that word, You have said Matthew 26:25, he again went out: then said Jesus, The hour has come, that the Son of man should be glorified. John 12:23 Do you see how He knew the Cross to be His proper glory? What then, is Esaias not ashamed of being sawn asunder , and shall Christ be ashamed of dying for the world? Now is the Son of man glorified. John 13:31 Not that He was without glory before: for He was glorified with the glory which was before the foundation of the world. He was ever glorified as God; but now He was to be glorified in wearing the Crown of His patience. He gave not up His life by compulsion, nor was He put to death by murderous violence, but of His own accord. Hear what He says: I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again : I yield it of My own choice to My enemies; for unless I chose, this could not be. He came therefore of His own set purpose to His passion, rejoicing in His noble deed, smiling at the crown, cheered by the salvation of mankind; not ashamed of the Cross, for it was to save the world. For it was no common man who suffered, but God in man's nature, striving for the prize of His patience.

7. But the Jews contradict this , ever ready, as they are, to cavil, and backward to believe; so that for this cause the Prophet just now read says, Lord, who has believed our report Isaiah 52:15? Persians believe , and Hebrews believe not; they shall see, to whom He was not spoken of, and they that have not heard shall understand , while they who study these things shall set at nought what they study. They speak against us, and say, Does the Lord then suffer? What? Had men's hands power over His sovereignty? Read the Lamentations; for in those Lamentations, Jeremias, lamenting you, wrote what is worthy of lamentations. He saw your destruction, he beheld your downfall, he bewailed Jerusalem which then was; for that which now is Galatians 4:25 shall not be bewailed; for that Jerusalem crucified the Christ, but that which now is worships Him. Lamenting then he says, The breath of our countenance, Christ the Lord was taken in our corruptions. Am I then stating views of my own? Behold he testifies of the Lord Christ seized by men. And what is to follow from this? Tell me, O Prophet. He says, Of whom we said, Under His shadow we shall live among the nations. Ibid For he signifies that the grace of life is no longer to dwell in Israel, but among the Gentiles.

8. But since there has been much gainsaying by them, come, let me, with the help of your prayers, (as the shortness of the time may allow,) set forth by the grace of the Lord some few testimonies concerning the Passion. For the things concerning Christ are all put into writing, and nothing is doubtful, for nothing is without a text. All are inscribed on the monuments of the Prophets; clearly written, not on tablets of stone, but by the Holy Ghost. Since then you have heard the Gospel speaking concerning Judas, ought you not to receive the testimony to it? You have heard that He was pierced in the side by a spear; ought you not to see whether this also is written? You have heard that He was crucified in a garden; ought you not to see whether this also is written? You have heard that He was sold for thirty pieces of silver; ought you not to

learn what prophet spoke this? You have heard that He was given vinegar to drink; learn where this also is written. You have heard that His body was laid in a rock, and that a stone was set over it; ought you not to receive this testimony also from the prophet? You have heard that He was crucified with robbers; ought you not to see whether this also is written? You have heard that He was buried; ought you not to see whether the circumstances of His burial are anywhere accurately written? You have heard that He rose again; ought you not to see whether we mock you in teaching these things? For our speech and our preaching is not in persuasive words of man's wisdom. We stir now no sophisticated contrivances; for these become exposed; we do not conquer words with words, for these come to an end; but we preach Christ Crucified 1 Corinthians 1:23, who has already been preached aforetime by the Prophets. But do thou, I pray, receive the testimonies, and seal them in your heart. And, since they are many, and the rest of our time is narrowed into a short space, listen now to a few of the more important as time permits; and having received these beginnings, be diligent and seek out the remainder. Let not your hand be only stretched out to receive, but let it be also ready to work. God gives all things freely. For if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who gives James 1:5, and he shall receive. May He through your prayer grant utterance to us who speak, and faith to you who hear.

9. Let us then seek the testimonies to the Passion of Christ: for we are met together, not now to make a speculative exposition of the Scriptures, but rather to be certified of the things which we already believe. Now you have received from me first the testimonies concerning the coming of Jesus; and concerning His walking on the sea, for it is written, Your way is in the sea. Also concerning various cures you have on another occasion received testimony. Now therefore I begin from whence the Passion began. Judas was the traitor, and he came against Him, and stood, speaking words of peace, but plotting war. Concerning him, therefore, the Psalmist says, My friends and My neighbours drew near against Me, and stood. And again, Their words were softer than oil, yet be they spears. Hail, Master Matthew 26:49; yet he was betraying his Master to death; he was not abashed at His warning, when He said, Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss Luke 22:48? For what He said to him was just this, Recollect your own name; Judas means confession; you have covenanted, you have received the money, make confession quickly. O God, pass not over My praise in silence; for the mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful, are opened against Me; they have spoken against Me with a treacherous tongue, they have compassed Me about also with words of hatred. But that some of the chief-priests also were present, and that He was put in bonds before the gates of the city, you have heard before, if you remember the exposition of the Psalm, which has told the time and the place; how they returned at evening, and hungered like dogs, and encompassed the city.

10. Listen also for the thirty pieces of silver. And I will say to them, If it be good in your sight, give me my price, or refuse Zechariah 11:12, and the rest. One price is owing to Me from you for My healing the blind and lame, and I receive another; for thanksgiving, dishonour, and for worship, insult. Do you see how the Scripture foresaw these things? And they weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver. How exact the prophecy! How great and unerring the wisdom of the Holy Ghost! For he said, not ten, nor twenty, but thirty, exactly as many as there were. Tell also what becomes of this price, O Prophet! Does he who received it keep it? Or does he give it back? And after he has given it back, what becomes of it? The Prophet says then, And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them into the house of the Lord, into the foundry. Compare the Gospel with the Prophecy: Judas, it says, repented himself, and cast down the

pieces of silver in the temple, and departed.

11. But now I have to seek the exact solution of this seeming discrepancy. For they who make light of the prophets, allege that the Prophet says on the one hand, And I cast them into the house of the Lord, into the foundry, but the Gospel on the other hand, And they gave them for the potter's field. Hear then how they are both true. For those conscientious Jews forsooth, the high-priests of that time, when they saw that Judas repented and said, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood, reply, What is that to us, see thou to that. Is it then nothing to you, the crucifiers? But shall he who received and restored the price of murder see to it, and shall you the murderers not see to it? Then they say among themselves, It is not lawful to cast them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. Out of your own mouths is your condemnation; if the price is polluted, the deed is polluted also: but if you are fulfilling righteousness in crucifying Christ, why do you not receive the price of it? But the point of iniquity is this: how is there no disagreement, if the Gospel says, the potter's field, and the Prophet, the foundry? Nay, but not only people who are goldsmiths, or brass-founders, have a foundry, but potters also have foundries for their clay. For they sift off the fine and rich and useful earth from the gravel, and separate from it the mass of the refuse matter, and temper the clay first with water, that they may work it with ease into the forms intended. Why then do you wonder that the Gospel says plainly the potter's field, whereas the Prophet spoke his prophecy like an enigma, since prophecy is in many places enigmatical?

12. They bound Jesus, and brought Him into the hall of the High-priest. And would you learn and know that this also is written? Esaias says, Woe unto their soul, for they have taken evil counsel against themselves, saying, Let us bind the Just, for He is troublesome to us. And truly, Woe unto their soul! Let us see how Esaias was sawn asunder, yet after this the people was restored. Jeremias was cast into the mire of the cistern, yet was the wound of the Jews healed; for the sin was less, since it was against man. But when the Jews sinned, not against man, but against God in man's nature, Woe unto their soul!— Let us bind the Just; could He not then set Himself free, some one will say; He, who freed Lazarus from the bonds of death on the fourth day, and loosed Peter from the iron bands of a prison? Angels stood ready at hand, saying, Let us burst their bands in sunder ; but they hold back, because their Lord willed to undergo it. Again, He was led to the judgment-seat before the Elders; you have already the testimony to this, The Lord Himself will come into judgment with the ancients of His people, and with the princes thereof Isaiah 3:14 .

13. But the High-priest having questioned Him, and heard the truth, is angry; and the wicked officer of wicked men smites Him; and the countenance, which had shone as the sun, endured to be smitten by lawless hands. Others also come and spit on the face of Him, who by spittle had healed the man who was blind from his birth. Do ye thus requite the Lord? This people is foolish and unwise. Deuteronomy 32:6 And the Prophet greatly wondering, says, Lord, who has believed our report Isaiah 53:1? For the thing is incredible, that God, the Son of God, and the Arm of the Lord Ibid, should suffer such things. But that they who are being saved may not disbelieve, the Holy Ghost writes before, in the person of Christ, who says, (for He who then spoke these things, was afterward Himself an actor in them,) I gave My back to the scourges; (for Pilate, when he had scourged Him, delivered Him to be crucified ;) and My cheeks to

smittings; and My face I turned not away from the shame of spittings; saying, as it were, Though knowing before that they will smite Me, I did not even turn My cheek aside; for how should I have nerved My disciples against death for truth's sake, had I Myself dreaded this? I said. He that loves his life shall lose it John 12:25: if I had loved My life, how was I to teach without practising what I taught? First then, being Himself God, He endured to suffer these things at the hands of men; that after this, we men, when we suffer such things at the hands of men for His sake, might not be ashamed. You see that of these things also the prophets have clearly written beforehand. Many, however, of the Scripture testimonies I pass by for want of time, as I said before; for if one should exactly search out all, not one of the things concerning Christ would be left without witness.

14. Having been bound, He came from Caiaphas to Pilate — is this too written? yes; And having bound Him, they led Him away as a present to the king of Jarim. But here some sharp hearer will object, Pilate was not a king, (to leave for a while the main parts of the question,) how then having bound Him, led they Him as a present to the king? But read the Gospel; When Pilate heard that He was of Galilee, he sent Him to Herod Luke 23:6-7; for Herod was then king, and was present at Jerusalem. And now observe the exactness of the Prophet; for he says, that He was sent as a present; for the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together, for before they were at enmity. For it became Him who was on the eve of making peace between earth and heaven, to make the very men who condemned Him the first to be at peace; for the Lord Himself was there present, who reconciles the hearts of the princes of the earth. Mark the exactness of the Prophets, and their true testimony.

15. Look with awe then at the Lord who was judged. He suffered Himself to be led and carried by soldiers. Pilate sat in judgment, and He who sits on the right hand of the Father, stood and was judged. The people whom He had redeemed from the land of Egypt, and oftentimes from other places, shouted against Him, Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him. Joshua 19:15 Wherefore, O you Jews? Because He healed your blind? Or because He made your lame to walk, and bestowed His other benefits? So that the Prophet in amazement speaks of this too, Against whom have you opened your mouth, and against whom have you let loose your tongue Isaiah 57:4? And the Lord Himself says in the Prophets, Mine heritage became unto Me as a lion in the forest; it gave its voice against Me; therefore have I hated it. Jeremiah 12:8 I have not refused them, but they have refused Me; in consequence thereof I say, I have forsaken My house.

16. When He was judged, He held His peace; so that Pilate was moved for Him, and said, Do You not hear what these witness against You Matthew 27:13? Not that He knew Him who was judged, but he feared his own wife's dream which had been reported to him. And Jesus held His peace. The Psalmist says, And I became as a man that hears not; and in whose mouth are no reproofs ; and again, But I was as a deaf man and heard not; and as a dumb man that opens not his mouth. You have before heard concerning this, if you remember.

17. But the soldiers who crowd around mock Him, and their Lord becomes a sport to them, and upon their

Master they make jests. When they looked on Me, they shook their heads. Yet the figure of kingly state appears; for though in mockery, yet they bend the knee. And the soldiers before they crucify Him, put on Him a purple robe, and set a crown on His head; for what though it be of thorns? Every king is proclaimed by soldiers; and Jesus also must in a figure be crowned by soldiers; so that for this cause the Scripture says in the Canticles, Go forth, O you daughters of Jerusalem, and look upon King Solomon in the crown wherewith His mother crowned Him. Song of Songs 3:11 And the crown itself was a mystery; for it was a remission of sins, a release from the curse.

18. Adam received the sentence, Cursed is the ground in your labours; thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to you. For this cause Jesus assumes the thorns, that He may cancel the sentence; for this cause also was He buried in the earth, that the earth which had been cursed might receive the blessing instead of a curse. At the time of the sin, they clothed themselves with fig-leaves; for this cause Jesus also made the fig-tree the last of His signs. For when about to go to His passion, He curses the fig-tree, not every fig-tree, but that one alone, for the sake of the figure; saying, No more let any man eat fruit of you Mark 11:1; let the doom be cancelled. And because they aforetime clothed themselves with fig-leaves, He came at a season when food was not wont to be found on the fig-tree. Who knows not that in winter-time the fig-tree bears no fruit, but is clothed with leaves only? Was Jesus ignorant of this, which all knew? No, but though He knew, yet He came as if seeking; not ignorant that He should not find, but showing that the emblematical curse extended to the leaves only.

19. And since we have touched on things connected with Paradise, I am truly astonished at the truth of the types. In Paradise was the Fall, and in a Garden was our Salvation. From the Tree came sin, and until the Tree sin lasted. In the evening, when the Lord walked in the Garden, they hid themselves Genesis 3:8; and in the evening the robber is brought by the Lord into Paradise. But some one will say to me, You are inventing subtleties; show me from some prophet the Wood of the Cross; unless you give me a testimony from a prophet, I will not be persuaded. Hear then from Jeremias, and assure yourself; I was like a harmless lamb led to be slaughtered; did I not know it? (for in this manner read it as a question, as I have read it; for He who said, You know that after two days comes the passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified Matthew 26:2, did He not know?) I was like a harmless lamb led to be slaughtered; did I not know it? (but what sort of lamb? Let John the Baptist interpret it, when he says, Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world John 1:29.) They devised against Me a wicked device, saying Jeremiah 11:19 — (He who knows the devices, knew He not the result of them? And what said they?)— Come, and let us place a beam upon His bread — (and if the Lord reckon you worthy, you shall hereafter learn, that His body according to the Gospel bore the figure of bread;)— Come then, and let us place a beam upon His bread, and cut Him off out of the land of the living;— (life is not cut off, why do you labour for nought?)— And His name shall be remembered no more. Vain is your counsel; for before the sun His Name abides in the Church. And that it was Life, which hung on the Cross, Moses says, weeping, And your life shall be hanging before your eyes; and you shall be afraid day and night, and you shall not trust your life. Deuteronomy 28:66 And so too, what was just now read as the text, Lord, who has believed our report?

20. This was the figure which Moses completed by fixing the serpent to a cross, that whoever had been bitten by the living serpent, and looked to the brazen serpent, might be saved by believing. Does then the brazen serpent save when crucified, and shall not the Son of God incarnate save when crucified also? On each occasion life comes by means of wood. For in the time of Noe the preservation of life was by an ark of wood. In the time of Moses the sea, on beholding the emblematical rod, was abashed at him who smote it; is then Moses' rod mighty, and is the Cross of the Saviour powerless? But I pass by the greater part of the types, to keep within measure. The wood in Moses' case sweetened the water; and from the side of Jesus the water flowed upon the wood.

21. The beginning of signs under Moses was blood and water; and the last of all Jesus' signs was the same. First, Moses changed the river into blood; and Jesus at the last gave forth from His side water with blood. This was perhaps on account of the two speeches, his who judged Him, and theirs who cried out against Him; or because of the believers and the unbelievers. For Pilate said, I am innocent and washed his hands in water; they who cried out against Him said, His blood be upon us Matthew 27:24-25: there came therefore these two out of His side; the water, perhaps, for him who judged Him; but for them that shouted against Him the blood. And again it is to be understood in another way; the blood for the Jews, and the water for the Christians: for upon them as plotters came the condemnation from the blood; but to you who now believe, the salvation which is by water. For nothing has been done without a meaning. Our fathers who have written comments have given another reason of this matter. For since in the Gospels the power of salutary Baptism is twofold, one which is granted by means of water to the illuminated, and a second to holy martyrs, in persecutions, through their own blood, there came out of that saving Side blood and water, to confirm the grace of the confession made for Christ, whether in baptism, or on occasions of martyrdom. There is another reason also for mentioning the Side. The woman, who was formed from the side, led the way to sin; but Jesus who came to bestow the grace of pardon on men and women alike, was pierced in the side for women, that He might undo the sin.

22. And whoever will inquire, will find other reasons also; but what has been said is enough, because of the shortness of the time, and that the attention of my hearers may not become sated. And yet we never can be tired of hearing concerning the crowning of our Lord, and least of all in this most holy Golgotha. For others only hear, but we both see and handle. Let none be weary; take your armour against the adversaries in the cause of the Cross itself; set up the faith of the Cross as a trophy against the gainsayers. For when you are going to dispute with unbelievers concerning the Cross of Christ, first make with your hand the sign of Christ's Cross, and the gainsayer will be silenced. Be not ashamed to confess the Cross; for Angels glory in it, saying, We know whom you seek, Jesus the Crucified. Matthew 28:5 Might you not say, O Angel, I know whom you seek, my Master? But, I, he says with boldness, I know the Crucified. For the Cross is a Crown, not a dishonour.

23. Now let us recur to the proof out of the Prophets which I spoke of. The Lord was crucified; you have received the testimonies. You see this spot of Golgotha! You answer with a shout of praise, as if assenting. See that you recant not in time of persecution. Rejoice not in the Cross in time of peace only, but hold fast the same faith in time of persecution also; be not in time of peace a friend of Jesus, and His foe in time of

wars. You receive now remission of your sins, and the gifts of the King's spiritual bounty; when war shall come, strive thou nobly for your King. Jesus, the Sinless, was crucified for you; and will you not be crucified for Him who was crucified for you? You are not bestowing a favour, for you have first received; but you are returning a favour, repaying your debt to Him who was crucified for you in Golgotha. Now Golgotha is interpreted, the place of a skull. Who were they then, who prophetically named this spot Golgotha, in which Christ the true Head endured the Cross? As the Apostle says, Who is the Image of the Invisible God; and a little after, and He is the Head of the body, the Church. And again, The Head of every man is Christ 1 Corinthians 11:3; and again, Who is the Head of all principality and power. Colossians 2:10 The Head suffered in the place of the skull. O wondrous prophetic appellation! The very name also reminds you, saying, Think not of the Crucified as of a mere man; He is the Head of all principality and power. That Head which was crucified is the Head of all power, and has for His Head the Father; for the Head of the man is Christ, and the Head of Christ is God 1 Corinthians 11:3 .

24. Christ then was crucified for us, who was judged in the night, when it was cold, and therefore a fire of coals John 18:18 was laid. He was crucified at the third hour; and from the sixth hour there was darkness until the ninth hour Matthew 27:45; but from the ninth hour there was light again. Are these things also written? Let us inquire. Now the Prophet Zacharias says, And it shall come to pass in that day, that there shall not be light, and there shall be cold and frost one day; (the cold on account of which Peter warmed himself;) And that day shall be known unto the Lord Zechariah 14:6-7; (what, knew He not the other days? Days are many, but this is the day of the Lord's patience, which the Lord made ;)— And that day shall be known unto the Lord, not day, and not night: what is this dark saying which the Prophet speaks? That day is neither day nor night? What then shall we name it? The Gospel interprets it, by relating the event. It was not day; for the sun shone not uniformly from his rising to his setting, but from the sixth hour till the ninth hour, there was darkness at mid-day. The darkness therefore was interposed; but God called the darkness night. Genesis 1:5 Wherefore it was neither day nor night: for neither was it all light, that it should be called day; nor was it all darkness, that it should be called night; but after the ninth hour the sun shone forth. This also the Prophet foretels; for after saying, Not day, nor night, he added, And at evening time it shall be light. Do you see the exactness of the prophets? Do you see the truth of the things which were written aforetime?

25. But do you ask exactly at what hour the sun failed ? Was it the fifth hour, or the eighth, or the tenth? Tell, O Prophet, the exact time thereof to the Jews, who are unwilling to hear; when shall the sun go down? The Prophet Amos answers, And it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord God, that the sun shall go down at noon (for there was darkness from the sixth hour;) and the light shall grow dark over the earth in the day. What sort of season is this, O Prophet, and what sort of day? And I will turn your feasts into mourning; for this was done in the days of unleavened bread, and at the feast of the Passover: then afterwards he says, And I will make Him as the mourning of an Only Son, and those with Him as a day of anguish Amos 8:10; for in the day of unleavened bread, and at the feast, their women were wailing and weeping, and the Apostles had hidden themselves and were in anguish. Wonderful then is this prophecy.

26. But, some one will say, Give me yet another sign; what other exact sign is there of that which has

come to pass? Jesus was crucified; and He wore but one coat, and one cloak: now His cloak the soldiers shared among themselves, having rent it into four; but His coat was not rent, for when rent it would have been no longer of any use; so about this lots are cast by the soldiers; thus the one they divide, but for the other they cast lots. Is then this also written? They know, the diligent chanters of the Church, who imitate the Angel hosts, and continually sing praises to God: who are thought worthy to chant Psalms in this Golgotha, and to say, They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture they did cast lots. The lots were what the soldiers cast.

27. Again, when He had been judged before Pilate, He was clothed in red; for there they put on Him a purple robe. Is this also written? Esaias says, Who is this that comes from Edom? The redness of His garments is from Bosor Isaiah 63:1-2; (who is this who in dishonor wears purple? For Bosor has some such meaning in Hebrew.) Why are Your garments red, and Your raiment as from a trodden wine-press? But He answers and says, All day long have I stretched forth Mine hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

28. He stretched out His hands on the Cross, that He might embrace the ends of the world; for this Golgotha is the very centre of the earth. It is not my word, but it is a prophet who has said, You have wrought salvation in the midst of the earth. He stretched forth human hands, who by His spiritual hands had established the heaven; and they were fastened with nails, that His manhood, which here the sins of men, having been nailed to the tree, and having died, sin might die with it, and we might rise again in righteousness. For since by one man came death, by One Man came also life ; by One Man, the Saviour, dying of His own accord: for remember what He said, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again John 10:18 .

29. But though He endured these things, having come for the salvation of all, yet the people returned Him an evil recompense. Jesus says, I thirst — He who had brought forth the waters for them out of the craggy rock; and He asked fruit of the Vine which He had planted. But what does the Vine? This Vine, which was by nature of the holy fathers, but of Sodom by purpose of heart —(for their Vine is of Sodom, and their tendrils of Gomorrha Deuteronomy 32:32;)— this Vine, when the Lord was thirsty, having filled a sponge and put it on a reed, offers Him vinegar. They gave Me also gall for My meat, and in My thirst, they gave Me vinegar to drink. You see the clearness of the Prophet.' description. But what sort of gall put they into My mouth? They gave Him, it says, wine mingled with myrrh. Mark 15:23 Now myrrh is in taste like gall, and very bitter. Are these things what you recompense unto the Lord? Are these your offerings, O Vine, unto your Master? Rightly did the Prophet Esaias aforetime bewail you, saying, My well-beloved had a vineyard in a hill in a fruitful place; and (not to recite the whole) I waited, he says, that it should bring forth grapes; I thirsted that it should give wine; but it brought forth thorns Isaiah 5:1-2; for you see the crown, wherewith I am adorned. What then shall I now decree? I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the clouds which are the Prophets were removed from them, and are for the future in the Church; as Paul says, Let the Prophets speak two or three, and let the others judge 1 Corinthians 14:29; and again, God gave in the Church, some, Apostles, and some, Prophets. Ephesians 4:11 Agabus, who bound his own feet and hands, was a prophet.

30. Concerning the robbers who were crucified with Him, it is written, And He was numbered with the transgressors. Isaiah 53:12 Both of them were before this transgressors, but one was so no longer. For the one was a transgressor to the end, stubborn against salvation; who, though his hands were fastened, smote with blasphemy by his tongue. When the Jews passing by wagged their heads, mocking the Crucified, and fulfilling what was written, When they looked on Me, they shook their heads, he also reviled with them. But the other rebused the reviler; and it was to him the end of life and the beginning of restoration; the surrender of his soul a first share in salvation. And after rebuking the other, he says, Lord, remember me; for with You is my account. Heed not this man, for the eyes of his understanding are blinded; but remember me. I say not, remember my works, for of these I am afraid. Every man has a feeling for his fellow-traveller; I am travelling with You towards death; remember me, Your fellow-wayfarer. I say not, Remember me now, but, when You come in Your kingdom.

31. What power, O robber, led you to the light? Who taught you to worship that despised Man, your companion on the Cross? O Light Eternal, which gives light to them that are in darkness! Therefore also he justly heard the words, Be of good cheer; not that your deeds are worthy of good cheer; but that the King is here, dispensing favours. The request reached unto a distant time; but the grace was very speedy. Verily I say unto you, This day shall you be with Me in Paradise; because today you have heard My voice, and hast not hardened your heart. Very speedily I passed sentence upon Adam, very speedily I pardon you. To him it was said, In the day wherein you eat, you shall surely die Genesis 2:17; but thou today hast obeyed the faith, today is your salvation. Adam by the Tree fell away; thou by the Tree art brought into Paradise. Fear not the serpent; he shall not cast you out; for he is fallen from heaven. Luke 10:18 And I say not unto you, This day shall you depart, but, This day shall you be with Me. Be of good courage: you shall not be cast out. Fear not the flaming sword; it shrinks from its Lord. O mighty and ineffable grace! The faithful Abraham had not yet entered, but the robber enters! Moses and the Prophets had not yet entered, and the robber enters though a breaker of the law. Paul also wondered at this before you, saying, Where sin abounded, there grace did much more abound. Romans 5:20 They who had borne the heat of the day had not yet entered; and he of the eleventh hour entered. Let none murmur against the goodman of the house, for he says, Friend, I do you no wrong; is it not lawful for Me to do what I will with My own? The robber has a will to work righteousness, but death prevents him; I wait not exclusively for the work, but faith also I accept. I have come who feed My sheep among the lilies Song of Songs 6:3, I have come to feed them in the gardens. I have found a sheep that was lost Luke 15:5-6, but I lay it on My shoulders; for he believes, since he himself has said, I have gone astray like a lost sheep; Lord, remember me when You come in Your kingdom.

32. Of this garden I sang of old to My spouse in the Canticles, and spoke to her thus. I have come into My garden, My sister, My spouse Song of Songs 5:1; (now in the place where He was crucified was a garden John 19:41;) and what takest Thou thence? I have gathered My myrrh; having drunk wine mingled with myrrh, and vinegar, after receiving which, He said, It is finished. For the mystery has been fulfilled; the things that are written have been accomplished; sins are forgiven. For Christ having come an High-Priest of the good things to come, by the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, nor yet by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, entered in once for all

into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption; for if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh, how much more the blood of Christ Hebrews 9:11? And again, Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. And because His flesh, this veil, was dishonoured, therefore the typical veil of the temple was rent asunder, as it is written, And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom Matthew 27:51; for not a particle of it was left; for since the Master said, Behold, your house is left unto you desolate, the house broke all in pieces.

33. These things the Saviour endured, and made peace through the Blood of His Cross, for things in heaven, and things in earth. Colossians 1:20 For we were enemies of God through sin, and God had appointed the sinner to die. There must needs therefore have happened one of two things; either that God, in His truth, should destroy all men, or that in His loving-kindness He should cancel the sentence. But behold the wisdom of God; He preserved both the truth of His sentence, and the exercise of His loving-kindness. Christ took our sins in His body on the tree, that we by His death might die to sin, and live unto righteousness. 1 Peter 2:24 Of no small account was He who died for us; He was not a literal sheep; He was not a mere man; He was more than an Angel; He was God made man. The transgression of sinners was not so great as the righteousness of Him who died for them; the sin which we committed was not so great as the righteousness which He wrought who laid down His life for us — who laid it down when He pleased, and took it again when He pleased. And would you know that He laid not down His life by violence, nor yielded up the ghost against His will? He cried to the Father, saying, Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit Luke 23:46; I commend it, that I may take it again. And having said these things, He gave up the ghost Matthew 27:50; but not for any long time, for He quickly rose again from the dead.

34. The Sun was darkened, because of the Sun of Righteousness Malachi 4:2. Rocks were rent, because of the spiritual Rock. Tombs were opened, and the dead arose, because of Him who was free among the dead; He sent forth His prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water Zechariah 9:11. Be not then ashamed of the Crucified, but be also bold to say, He bears our sins, and endures grief for us, and with His stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53:4-5 Let us not be unthankful to our Benefactor. And again; for the transgression of my people was He led to death; and I will give the wicked for His burial, and the rich for His death. Therefore Paul says plainly, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He has risen again the third day according to the Scriptures 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

35. But we seek to know clearly where He has been buried. Is His tomb made with hands? Is it, like the tombs of kings, raised above the ground? Is the Sepulchre made of stones joined together? And what is laid upon it? Tell us, O Prophets, the exact truth concerning His tomb also, where He is laid, and where we shall seek Him? And they say, Look into the solid rock which you have hewn. Isaiah 51:1 Look in and behold. You have in the Gospels In a sepulchre hewn in stone, which was hewn out of a rock. And what happens next? What kind of door has the sepulchre? Again another Prophet says, They cut off My life in a dungeon, and cast a stone upon Me. I, who am the Chief corner-stone, the elect, the precious 1 Peter 2:6,

lie for a little time within a stone — I who am a stone of stumbling to the Jews, and of salvation to them who believe. The Tree of life , therefore was planted in the earth, that the earth which had been cursed might enjoy the blessing, and that the dead might be released.

36. Let us not then be ashamed to confess the Crucified. Be the Cross our seal made with boldness by our fingers on our brow, and on everything; over the bread we eat, and the cups we drink; in our comings in, and goings out; before our sleep, when we lie down and when we rise up; when we are in the way, and when we are still. Great is that preservative; it is without price, for the sake of the poor; without toil, for the sick; since also its grace is from God. It is the Sign of the faithful, and the dread of devils: for He triumphed over them in it, having made a show of them openly Colossians 2:15; for when they see the Cross they are reminded of the Crucified; they are afraid of Him, who bruised the heads of the dragon. Despise not the Seal, because of the freeness of the gift; out for this the rather honour your Benefactor.

37. And if you ever fall into disputation and have not the grounds of proof, yet let Faith remain firm in you; or rather, become thou well learned, and then silence the Jews out of the prophets, and the Greeks out of their own fables. They themselves worship men who have been thunderstricken : but the thunder when it comes from heaven, comes not at random. If they are not ashamed to worship men thunderstricken and abhorred of God, are you ashamed to worship the beloved Son of God, who was crucified for you? I am ashamed to tell the tales about their so-called Gods, and I leave them because of time; let those who know, speak. And let all heretics also be silenced. If any say that the Cross is an illusion, turn away from him. Abhor those who say that Christ was crucified to our fancy only; for if so, and if salvation is from the Cross, then is salvation a fancy also. If the Cross is fancy, the Resurrection is fancy also; but if Christ be not risen, we are yet in our sins. 1 Corinthians 15:17 If the Cross is fancy, the Ascension also is fancy; and if the Ascension is fancy, then is the second coming also fancy, and everything is henceforth unsubstantial.

38. Take therefore first, as an indestructible foundation, the Cross, and build upon it the other articles of the faith. Deny not the Crucified; for, if you deny Him, you have many to arraign you. Judas the traitor will arraign you first; for he who betrayed Him knows that He was condemned to death by the chief-priests and elders. The thirty pieces of silver bear witness; Gethsemane bears witness, where the betrayal occurred; I speak not yet of the Mount of Olives, on which they were with Him at night, praying. The moon in the night bears witness; the day bears witness, and the sun which was darkened; for it endured not to look on the crime of the conspirators. The fire will arraign you, by which Peter stood and warmed himself; if you deny the Cross, the eternal fire awaits you. I speak hard words, that you may not experience hard pains. Remember the swords that came against Him in Gethsemane, that you feel not the eternal sword. The house of Caiaphas will arraign you, showing by its present desolation the power of Him who was erewhile judged there. Yes, Caiaphas himself will rise up against you in the day of judgment, the very servant will rise up against you, who smote Jesus with the palm of his hand; they also who bound Him, and they who led Him away. Even Herod shall rise up against you; and Pilate; as if saying, Why do you deny Him who was slandered before us by the Jews, and whom we knew to have done no wrong? For I Pilate then washed my hands. The false witnesses shall rise up against you, and the

soldiers who arrayed Him in the purple robe, and set on Him the crown of thorns, and crucified Him in Golgotha, and cast lots for His coat. Simon the Cyrenian will cry out upon you, who bore the Cross after Jesus.

39. From among the stars there will cry out upon you, the darkened Sun; among the things upon earth, the Wine mingled with myrrh; among reeds, the Reed; among herbs, the Hyssop; among the things of the sea, the Sponge; among trees, the Wood of the Cross;— the soldiers, too, as I have said, who nailed Him, and cast lots for His vesture; the soldier who pierced His side with the spear; the women who then were present; the veil of the temple then rent asunder; the hall of Pilate, now laid waste by the power of Him who was then crucified; this holy Golgotha, which stands high above us, and shows itself to this day, and displays even yet how because of Christ the rocks were then riven ; the sepulchre near at hand where He was laid; and the stone which was laid on the door, which lies to this day by the tomb; the Angels who were then present; the women who worshipped Him after His resurrection; Peter and John, who ran to the sepulchre; and Thomas, who thrust his hand into His side, and his fingers into the prints of the nails. For it was for our sakes that he so carefully handled Him; and what thou, who were not there present, would have sought, he being present, by God's Providence, did seek.

40. You have Twelve Apostles, witnesses of the Cross; and the whole earth, and the world of men who believe in Him who hung thereon. Let your very presence here now persuade you of the power of the Crucified. For who now brought you to this assembly? What soldiers? With what bonds were you constrained? What sentence held you fast here now? Nay, it was the Trophy of salvation, the Cross of Jesus that brought you all together. It was this that enslaved the Persians, and tamed the Scythians; this that gave to the Egyptians, for cats and dogs and their manifold errors, the knowledge of God; this, that to this day heals diseases; that to this day drives away devils, and overthrows the juggleries of drugs and charms.

41. This shall appear again with Jesus from heaven ; for the trophy shall precede the king: that seeing Him whom they pierced Zechariah 12:10, and knowing by the Cross Him who was dishonoured, the Jews may repent and mourn; (but they shall mourn tribe by tribe , for they shall repent, when there shall be no more time for repentance;) and that we may glory, exulting in the Cross, worshipping the Lord who was sent, and crucified for us, and worshipping also God His Father who sent Him, with the Holy Ghost: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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