

For the account of such things, it is necessary to recall what has previously been said, that you may be able to know the cause of the manifestation in the body of such and so great Paternal Word, and not think that the Savior has worn a body as a consequence of nature, but that, being by nature bodiless and existing as the Word, by the love for humankind and goodness of his own Father he appeared to us in a human body for our salvation. As we give an account of this, it is first necessary to speak about the creation of the universe and its maker, God, so that one may thus worthily reflect that its recreation was accomplished by the Word who created it in the beginning. For it will appear not at all contradictory if the Father works its salvation in the same one by whom he created it.

The Divine Dilemma regarding Life and Death

2. The making of the world and the creation of all things have been taken differently by many, and each has propounded as each has wished. Some say that all things have come into being spontaneously and as by chance, such as the Epicureans who, according to themselves, fantasize that there is no providence over the universe, speaking in the face of the clear and apparent facts. For if all things came into being spontaneously without providence, as they claim, all things would necessarily have simply come into being and be identical and without difference. Everything would have been as a single body, sun or moon, and regarding human beings, the whole would have been a hand or eye or foot. But, now, this is not the case: we see, here, the sun, there the moon, there the earth; and again regarding human bodies, here a foot, there a hand, and there a head. Such order indicates that they did not come into being spontaneously, but shows that a cause preceded them, from which one can apprehend the God who ordered and created all things.

Others, amongst whom is Plato, that giant among the Greeks, declare that God made the universe from preexistent and uncreated

Treatise by the same author on the Incarnation of the Word and his Manifestation to us through the Body

1. In what preceded¹ we have sufficiently treated a few points from many, regarding the error of the Gentiles concerning idols and their superstition, how their invention was from the beginning, and that out of wickedness human beings devised for themselves the worship of idols. By the grace of God we also noted a few points regarding the divinity of the Word of the Father and his providence and power in all things, that through him the good Father arranges all things, by him all things are moved, and in him are given life (cf. Acts 17:28). Come now, blessed one and true lover of Christ, let us, with the faith of our religion, relate also the things concerning the Incarnation of the Word and expound his divine manifestation to us, which the Jews slander and the Greeks mock, but we ourselves venerate, so that, all the more from his apparent degradation, you may have an even greater and fuller piety towards him, for the more he is mocked by unbelievers by so much he provides a greater witness of his divinity, because what human beings cannot understand as impossible, these he shows to be possible (cf. Matt 19:26), and what human beings mock as unseemly, these he renders fitting by his own goodness, and what human beings through sophistry laugh at as merely human, these by his power he shows to be divine, overturning the illusion of idols by his own apparent degradation through the cross, invisibly persuading those who mock and disbelieve to recognize his divinity and his power.

¹That is, the treatise *Against the Gentiles*.

matter, as God is not able to make anything unless matter preexisted, just as a carpenter must already have wood so that it may be used. They do not realize that saying such things is to impute weakness to God: for if he is not himself the cause of matter, but simply makes things from pre-existent matter, then he is weak, not being able without matter to fashion any of the things that exist, just as the weakness of the carpenter is certainly his inability to make any required thing without wood. According to the argument, unless there were matter, God would not have made anything. How would he then still be called "Maker" and "Creator," if he had his ability to make from something else, I mean from the matter? And if this is so, as they thus have it, according to them God is only a craftsman and not the Creator of being, if he fashions underlying matter but is not himself the cause of matter. He could in no way be called "Creator," if he does not create matter, from which created things come into being.

Others, again, from the heretics fabricate for themselves another creator of all things besides the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, being greatly blinded even in what they say. For the Lord said to the Jews, "*Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and will cleave to his wife, and the two will be one flesh.'*" Then, referring to the Creator, he says, "*What God has put together, let not man put asunder*" (Matt 19.4-6). How then do they introduce a creation alien to the Father? For if, according to John, encompassing all things in saying, "*all things were made by him and without him was nothing made*" (Jn 1.3), how could there be another creator besides the Father of Christ?

3 These things, then, they fantasize. But the inspired teaching and faith according to Christ casts out their vain talk as godlessness. For it knows that neither spontaneously, as it is not without providence, nor from pre-existent matter, as God is not weak, but from nothing and having absolutely no existence God brought the universe into being through the Word, which it says through Moses, "*In the begin-*

ning God made heaven and earth" (Gen 1.1), and through that most useful book of the Shepherd, "First of all believe that God is one, who created and framed all things, and made them from non-existence into being,"² as also Paul indicates when he says, "*By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which appear*" (Heb 11.3). For God is good, or rather the source of all goodness, and one who is good grudges nothing, so that grudging nothing its existence, he made all things through his own Word, our Lord Jesus Christ. Among these things, of all things upon earth he had mercy upon the human race, and seeing that by the principle of its own coming into being it would not be able to endure eternally, he granted them a further gift, creating human beings not simply like all the irrational animals upon the earth but making them according to his own image (cf. Gen 1.27), giving them a share of the power of his own Word, so that having as it were shadows of the Word and being made rational, they might be able to abide in blessedness, living the true life which is really that of the holy ones in paradise. And knowing again that free choice of human beings could turn either way, he secured beforehand, by a law and a set place, the grace given. For bringing them into his own paradise, he gave them a law, so that if they guarded the grace and remained good, they might have the life of paradise—without sorrow, pain, or care—besides having the promise of their incorruptibility in heaven; but if they were to transgress and turning away become wicked, they would know themselves enduring the corruption of death according to nature, and no longer live in paradise, but thereafter dying outside of it, would remain in death and in corruption. This also the Divine Scripture foretells, speaking in the person of God, "*You may eat from all the trees in paradise; from the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat. On the day you eat of it, you shall die by death*" (Gen 2.16-18). This "*you shall die by death*," what else might it be except not merely to die, but to remain in the corruption of death?

²Shepherd of Hermas, Mandate 1.1.

4 Perhaps you are wondering for what reason, having proposed to talk about the Incarnation of the Word, we are now expounding the origin of human beings. Yet this too is not distinct from the aim of our exposition. For speaking of the manifestation of the Savior to us, it is necessary also to speak of the origin of human beings, in order that you might know that our own cause was the occasion of his descent and that our own transgression evoked the Word's love for human beings, so that the Lord both came to us and appeared among human beings. For we were the purpose of his embodiment, and for our salvation he so loved human beings as to come to be and appear in a human body. Thus, then, God created the human being and willed that he should abide in incorruptibility; but when humans despised and overturned the comprehension of God, devising and contriving evil for themselves, as was said in the first work, then they received the previously threatened condemnation of death, and thereafter no longer remained as they had been created, but were corrupted as they had contrived; and, seizing them, death reigned. For the transgression of the commandment returned them to the natural state, so that, just as they, not being, came to be, so also they might rightly endure in time the corruption unto non-being. For if, having a nature that did not once exist, they were called into existence by the Word's advent [*parousia*] and love for human beings, it followed that when human beings were bereft of the knowledge of God and had turned to things which exist not—evil is non-being, the good is being, since it has come into being from the existing God—then they were bereft also of eternal being. But this, being decomposed, is to remain in death and corruption. For the human being is by nature mortal, having come into being from nothing. But because of his likeness to the One who Is, which, if he had guarded through his comprehension of him, would have blunted his natural corruption, he would have remained incorruptible, just as Wisdom says, "*Attention to the laws is the confirmation of incorruptibility*" (Wis 6.18). And being incorruptible, he would have lived thereafter like God, as somewhere the Divine Scripture also signals, saying

"I said you are gods, and all sons of the Most High; but you die like human beings and fall like any prince" (Ps 81.6-7).

5 For God has not only created us from nothing, but also granted us by the grace of the Word to live a life according to God. But human beings, turning away from things eternal and by the counsel of the devil turning us towards things of corruption, were themselves the cause of corruption in death, being, as we already said, corruptible by nature but escaping their natural state by the grace of participation in the Word, had they remained good. Because of the Word present in them, even natural corruption did not come near them, just as Wisdom says, "*God created the human being for incorruptibility and an image of his own eternity; but by the envy of the devil, death entered into the world*" (Wis 2.23-4). When this happened, human beings died and corruption thenceforth prevailed against them, becoming even stronger than its natural power over the whole race, the more so as it had assumed the threat of the Deity against them through the transgression of the commandment. For even in their transgressions human beings had not stopped short of any defined limits, but gradually pressing forward they had passed beyond all measure: from the beginning they were inventors of evil and called death and corruption down upon themselves; while later, turning to vice and exceeding all lawlessness, not stopping at one evil but continuing in time every new evil, they became insatiable in sinning. For there were adulteries and thefts everywhere, the whole earth was full of murders and plundering. There was no concern for law regarding corruption and vice; every wickedness, individually and jointly, was being carried out by all. Cities warred against cities, and nations rose up against nations; the whole world was torn apart by factions and battles, everyone competing in lawlessness. Even acts against nature were not far from them, but as the witness of Christ, the Apostle, said, "*Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural; and in the same way also the men, leaving aside natural relations with women, were consumed with their desire for one another, men com-*

...less acts with men and receiving in themselves the due
...eir error" (Rom 1.26-7).

...e reasons, then, with death holding greater sway and
...remaining fast against human beings, the race of humans
...ng, and the human being, made rational and in the
...disappearing, and the work made by God was being
...For as I said earlier, by the law death thereafter prevailed
...and it was impossible to escape the law, since this had
...shed by God on account of the transgression. And what
...as truly both absurd and improper. It was absurd, on the
...that, having spoken, God should prove to be lying: that
...gislated that the human being would die by death if he
...gress the commandment, yet after the transgression he
...die but rather this sentence dissolved. For God would
...if, after saying that we would die, the human being did
...he other hand, it was improper that what had once been
...al and partakers of his Word should perish, and once
...to non-being through corruption. It was not worthy of
...s of God that those created by him should be corrupted
...deceit wrought by the devil upon human beings. And
...nely improper that the workmanship of God in human
...ld disappear either through their own negligence or
...deceit of the demons.

...e, since the rational creatures were being corrupted and
...were perishing, what should God, being good, do? Per-
...sorption prevailing against them and death to seize them?
...was there for their coming into being at the beginning?
...r not to have come into being rather than to have come
...be neglected and destroyed. The weakness, rather than
...s, of God is made known by neglect, if, after creating,
...d his own work to be corrupted, rather than if he had
...he human being in the beginning. For not making him,
...have been no one considering the weakness, but once

The next step is to recount the end of his life and dealings in the body and to relate also of what kind was the death of the body, especially because this is the chief point of our faith and absolutely all human beings discuss it, so that you may know that also from this, the more rather than less, Christ is known to be God and Son of God.

The Death of Christ and the Resurrection of the Body

20 We have spoken above in part, as far as was possible and as far as we were able to understand, the cause of his bodily manifestation, that it was not for another to turn what was corruptible to incorruptibility except the Savior himself, who in the beginning created the universe from nothing; and that it was not for another to recreate again the "in the image" for human beings, except the Image of the Father; and that it was not for another to raise up the mortal to be immortal, except our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Life itself; and that if was not for another to teach about the Father and destroy the worship of idols, except the Word who arranges all things and is alone the true only-begotten Son of the Father. But since what was required from all still had to be rendered (for, as I said earlier, it was absolutely necessary to die and for this, in particular, he sojourned amongst us), for this reason, after the demonstrations of his divinity from his works, he now offered the sacrifice on behalf of all, delivering his own temple to death in the stead of all, in order to make all not liable to and free from the ancient transgression, and to show himself superior to death, displaying his own body as incorruptible, the first-fruits of the universal resurrection.

And do not be surprised if we frequently say the same things about the same matters. For since we are speaking of the counsel of God, therefore we expound the same sense in many ways, lest we appear to be omitting anything and incur the charge of speaking inadequately. For it is better to submit to the blame of repetition than to omit anything that should be laid down.

Therefore the body, as it had the common substance of all bodies, was a human body. If it was constituted by a new miracle from a virgin only, yet being mortal it died in conformity with those like it. Yet by the coming of the Word into it, it was no longer corruptible by its own nature but because of the indwelling Word of God it became immune from corruption. And thus it happened that both things occurred together in a paradoxical manner: the death of all was completed in the lordly body, and also death and corruption were destroyed by the Word in it. For there was need of death, and death on behalf of all had to take place, so that what was required by all might occur. Therefore, as I said earlier, the Word, since he was not able to die—for he was immortal—took to himself a body able to die, that he might offer it as his own on behalf of all and as himself suffering for all, through coming into it "*he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage*" (Heb 2.14–15).

21 Indeed, with the common Savior of all dying for us, we, the faithful in Christ, no longer die by death as before according to the threat of the law, for such condemnation has ceased. But with corruption ceasing and being destroyed by the grace of the resurrection, henceforth according to the mortality of the body we are dissolved only for the time which God has set for each, that we may be able "*to attain a better resurrection*" (Heb 11.35). For as seeds sown in the ground, we do not perish when we are dissolved, but as sown we shall arise again, death having been destroyed by the grace of the Savior. For this reason, the blessed Paul, who became a guarantor of the resurrection to all, said, "*For the corruptible must put on incorruptibility and the mortal must put on immortality. And when the mortal puts on immortality then shall come to pass the word that has been written: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory: O death, where is thy sting?'*" (1 Cor 15:53–5).

Why, then, one might ask, if it were necessary for him to deliver the body to death on behalf of all, did he not lay it aside privately

as a human being, instead of going so far as to be crucified? For it would have been more fitting for him to have laid his body aside honorably, than to endure such a death with ignominy. Consider again whether such an objection is not human, whereas what was done by the Savior is truly divine and worthy of his divinity for many reasons. First, because the death which befalls human beings comes to them according to the weakness of their own nature, for not being able to remain for long, in time they are dissolved. For this reason also diseases come upon them, and, weakening, they die. But the Lord is not weak, but the Power of God, and the Word of God, and himself Life. If, then, it was in some private place that he laid his body upon a bed in the manner of human beings, it would have been supposed that he also suffered this through the weakness of nature and because he had nothing more than other humans. But since he was Life, and Word of God, and because death on behalf of all had to take place, therefore, on the one hand, as being life and power he strengthened the body in him, and as, on the other hand, death had to occur, he took the occasion, provided not from himself but from others, to complete the sacrifice. For it was neither fitting for the Lord to be ill, he who healed the illnesses of others, nor again for the body to be weakened, in which he strengthened the weaknesses of others. Why, then, did he not prevent death, just as he did illness? Because it was for this that he had the body, and it was unfitting to prevent it, lest the resurrection should also be hindered. Moreover, it was again unfitting for illness to precede death, lest it be thought a weakness of him who was in the body. Did he not then hunger? Yes, he hungered because of the property of the body, but he did not perish of starvation, because of the Lord wearing it. Therefore, if he died for the ransom of all, yet "*he saw not corruption*" (cf. Acts 2:31; 13:35; Ps 15:10). For he rose whole, since the body belonged to none other but Life itself.

22 But, one might say, he should have hidden from the counsel of the Jews, in order to preserve his own body altogether immortal.

Let such a one hear that this also was unfitting for the Lord. For as it was not fitting for the Word of God, being Life, to give death to his own body by himself, so neither was it suitable to flee from that given by others, but rather to follow it to destruction, whence it was right that he neither laid aside the body himself nor fled when the Jews took counsel. Such action did not show weakness on the part of the Word, but rather made him known to be Savior and Life, in that he both waited for death to destroy it and hastened to complete the death given to him for the salvation of all. And, besides, it was not his own death that the Savior came to complete; but that of human beings. Therefore he did not lay aside the body by his own death—for he had none, being Life—but he accepted that death coming from human beings, in order to destroy it completely when it came to his own body.

Again, from the following one might see the lordly body having such an end as consistent. The Lord was especially concerned for the resurrection of the body that he was to accomplish; for the trophy of victory over death was this [resurrection] being shown to all and all being persuaded of the removal of corruption effected by him and of the incorruptibility henceforth of [their] bodies, as a pledge of which for all and proof of the resurrection in store for all, he preserved his own body incorruptible. If, then, once again, his body had fallen ill, and the Word been loosened from it in the sight of all, it would have been unfitting that the one who heals the illness of others should permit his own instrument to waste in illness. How, then, would he have been believed to drive out the weaknesses of others, when his own temple was weak in him? For either he would have been mocked as one not able to drive out illness, or, being able but not doing so, he would have been reckoned to lack love of human beings towards others.

23 But if, without any illness and without any pain, he had hidden his body away by itself privately and "*in a corner*" (Acts 26:26), or in a desert place or a house or anywhere at all, and afterwards suddenly

appearing again said he had raised himself from the dead, he would have been supposed by all to be telling tall tales and would have been distrusted even more when speaking about the resurrection, as there would be no one at all to witness to his death. Death must precede resurrection, for there would be no resurrection without death preceding, so that if the death of the body took place somewhere in secret, death neither appearing nor taking place before witnesses, its resurrection also would be unseen and unwitnessed. Or why would he, arising, proclaim the resurrection, yet cause his death to take place invisibly? Or why did he drive out the demons in the sight of all, and cause the man blind from birth to see again, and change the water into wine, that through these works he might be believed to be the Word of God, yet not show in the sight of all the mortal to be incorruptible that he might be believed to be Life himself? And how could his disciples have had boldness with the message of the resurrection, were they not able to say that he first died? Or how would they be believed when saying that death first took place, and then the resurrection, if they did not have as witnesses of the death those to whom they were speaking with boldness? For if, when the death and resurrection had thus occurred in the sight of all, the Pharisees of the time did not wish to believe but compelled even those who had seen the resurrection to deny it, surely, if these things had taken place in secret, how many pretexts would they have devised for disbelief? How then could the end of death, and the victory over it, be demonstrated, unless summoning it in the sight of all he proved it to be dead, being annulled thereafter by the incorruptibility of the body?

24 But we must also offer answers to questions that others might ask. Perhaps someone might even say this, "If it was necessary that his death occur in the sight of all and be witnessed that the account of the resurrection might be believed, then he ought to have contrived a glorious death for himself, if only to escape the ignominy of the cross." But if he had done this, it would provide the suspicion against him that he was not powerful over every form of death but only

concerning that which he devised, and then the pretext for disbelief regarding the resurrection would again be no less. So, death came to the body not from him but from plotting, that he might destroy that death which they brought upon the Savior. And as a noble wrestler, great in skill and courage, does not choose opponents for himself, lest he cause suspicion that he is fearful of some, but leaves it to the choice of the spectators, especially if they are hostile, so that when he has overthrown the one they have chosen, he may be believed to be superior to all, so also, the Life of all, our Lord and Savior Christ, did not contrive death for his own body, lest he should appear fearful of some other death, but he accepted and endured on the cross that inflicted by others, especially by enemies, which they reckoned fearful and ignominious and shameful, in order that this being destroyed, he might himself be believed to be Life, and the power of death might be completely annihilated. So something wonderful and marvelous happened: that ignominious death which they thought to inflict, this was the trophy of his victory over death. Therefore he neither endured the death of John by being beheaded, nor as Isaiah was he sawn in part, that in death he might keep his body undivided and whole and that there be no pretext for those wishing to divide the Church.

25 These comments are for outsiders, who pile up arguments for themselves. But if any one from among us asks, not as a lover of contention but as a lover of learning, why he endured the cross rather than some other way, then let him hear that in no other way than this was it beneficial for us, and that it was good that the Lord endured this for us. For if he came himself to bear the curse which lay upon us, how else could he have "*become a curse*" (Gal. 3.13) if he had not accepted the death occasioned by the curse? And that is the cross, for thus it is written, "*cursed is he who hangs from the tree*" (Deut. 21.23). Moreover, if the death of the Lord is a ransom for all and by his death "*the wall of partition*" (Eph. 2.14) is broken down, and the call of the Gentiles effected, how would he have called us if

he had not been crucified? For only upon the cross does one die with hands stretched out. Therefore it was fitting for the Lord to endure this, and to stretch out his hands, that with the one he might draw the ancient people and with the other those from the Gentiles, and join both together in himself. This he himself said when he indicated by what manner of death he was going to redeem all, "*When I am lifted up, I shall draw all to myself*" (Jn 12.32). And again, if the enemy of our race, the devil, having fallen from heaven, wanders around these lower airs and, lording it here over the demons with him, similar in disobedience, through them works illusions in those who are deceived and attempts to prevent them rising upwards—about this the Apostle also says, "*Following the prince of the power of the air, who is now at work in the sons of disobedience*" (Eph 2.2)—yet Christ came that he might overthrow the devil, purify the air, and open up for us the way to heaven, as the Apostle said, "*through the veil, that is, his flesh*" (Heb 10.20), this must have been by death, and by what other death would these things have happened except that which takes place in the air, I mean the cross? For only he that completes his life on the cross dies in the air. Therefore it was right that the Lord endured it. For being thus lifted up, he purified the air from the diabolical plots of all demons, saying "*I saw Satan falling as lightning*" (Lk 10.18), and blazing the trail he made anew the way up to heaven, saying again, "*Lift up your gates, O princes of yours, and be raised up, everlasting gates*" (Ps 23.7). For it was not the Word himself who needed the gates to be opened, since he is the Lord of all, nor was any made thing closed to its Maker; but we were those who needed it, who he himself carried up through his own body. For as he offered to death on behalf of all, so though it he opened up again the way to heaven.

26 Therefore death upon the cross for our sakes was fitting and suitable, and its cause appeared to be consistent in every way, and there are solid arguments that the salvation of all had to take place in no other way than by the cross. And not even thus, not even on the

cross, did he leave himself unseen, but rather by far he made creation witness to the advent of her own Creator, not tolerating his temple, the body, to remain [dead] for long, but having only shown it to be dead by the conjunction of death with it, on the third day he immediately raised it up, bearing the incorruptibility and impassibility of the body as trophies and victory over death. He could have raised the body immediately upon death and shown it alive again, but foreseeing well the Savior did not do this. For someone might have said that he had not died at all, or that death had not fully touched him, if he had shown the resurrection immediately. Had the interval between death and resurrection been within the same day, the glory of incorruptibility would have been obscure. So, in order that the body might be shown to be dead, the Word waited one intermediary day, and on the third day showed it to all as incorruptible. So that death might be shown in the body, he raised in on the third day. Yet lest, by raising it up when it had remained for a long time and been completely corrupted, he should be disbelieved, as though he bore not his own but another body—for, because of the length of time, one might distrust what appeared and forget what happened—therefore he waited no more than three days nor put off for long those who had heard from him about the resurrection, but while the word was still echoing in their ears and their eyes were still expecting and their minds were in suspense, and those who put him to death and witnessed the death of the lordly body were still living upon earth and in the same place, the Son of God himself, after an interval of three days, showed the body which had been dead as immortal and incorruptible; and it was demonstrated to all that the body died not by the weakness of the nature of the indwelling Word, but in order that death might be destroyed in it through the power of the Savior.

27 That death has been dissolved, and the cross has become victory over it, and it is no longer strong but is itself truly dead, no mean proof but an evident surety is that it is despised by all Christ's disciples, and everyone tramples on it, and no longer fears

Refutation of the Jews

33 These things being so, and the proof of the resurrection of the body and the victory wrought by the Savior over death being clear, come now and let us also refute the unbelief of the Jews and the mockery of the Greeks. Perhaps the Jews do not believe and the Greeks mock for these reasons, disparaging the unseemliness of the cross and the incarnation of the God Word. But our argument will not shrink from advancing to both, especially as it has clear proofs against them.

The unbelieving Jews have their rebuttal from the scriptures which they also read. From beginning to end, and simply every inspired book proclaims these things, as also the very words themselves are obvious. For the prophets previously foretold the miracle regarding the Virgin and the birth occurring from her, saying, "*Behold a virgin will conceive and bear a son, and they will call his name Emmanuel, which is interpreted as 'God with us'*" (Isa 7.14). And Moses, that truly great man, believed by them to be true, considering the saying concerning the incarnation of the Savior as something great, and recognizing it to be true, established this saying, "*A star will rise from Jacob and a human being from Israel, and he will break down the princes of Moab*" (Num 24.17), and again, "*How fair are your tents, O Jacob, and your encampments, O Israel; like shady valleys and like gardens beside rivers, and like tents set up by the Lord, like cedars beside the waters. There will come forth a human being from his seed, and he shall rule over many peoples*" (Num 24.5-7). And again Isaiah "*Before the child knows how to cry out 'father' or 'mother,' he will take the power of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria before the King of Assyria*" (Isa 8.4). That a human being shall appear then is foretold by these. And that the coming one is Lord of all they again predict, saying, "*Behold, the Lord sits upon a swift cloud, and he will come to Egypt, and the graven images of Egypt will be shaken*" (Isa 19.1). For from there also the Father called him, saying, "*From Egypt have I called my Son*" (Hos 11.1).

34 Nor is even his death passed over in silence, but rather it is indicated exceedingly clearly in the divine scriptures. For they were not fearful to speak even of the cause of his death—that he endured it not for himself, but for the incorruptibility and salvation of all, and the plotting of the Jews, and the indignities that came upon him from them—in order that no one should be uninformed or in error about what happened. Thus they say, "*A man in affliction and knowing how to bear sorrows, because his face was turned away. He was despised and esteemed not. He bears our sins and suffers for our sake; we considered him to be in distress and affliction, and suffering. He was wounded for our sins and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace is upon him, by his bruise we have been healed*" (Isa 53.3-5). Marvel at the Word's love for human beings, that he is dishonored for our sake, that we might be honored. "*For all we,*" it says, "*like sheep have gone astray; the human being has gone astray from his way, and the Lord has delivered him to our sins. And he, though being in affliction, opens not his mouth. Like a sheep led to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearers is dumb, so opens he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away*" (Isa 53.6-8). Then, lest anyone suppose him, from his suffering, to be a mere human being, scripture anticipates the suspicions of human beings, and relates his power beyond human and the unlikeness of nature to us, saying, "*Who will declare his generation? For his life was taken from the earth. By the iniquities of the people he was brought to death. And I shall give the wicked in exchange for his burial and the rich for his death, for he committed no iniquity, nor was deceit found in his mouth. And the Lord wishes to heal him from his iniquity*" (Isa 53.8-10).

35 But perhaps, having heard the prophecy of his death, you ask to learn what is indicated regarding the cross. For not even this is passed over in silence; but is expounded with great clarity by the saints. For first Moses, in a loud voice, predicts it saying, "*You will see your life hanging before your eyes, and you will not believe*" (Deut 28.66). And after him the prophets again witness to this, saying, "*But*

I, as a gentle lamb led to the slaughter, knew it not. And they plotted wickedly against me saying, 'Come, let us cast wood in his bread and efface him from the land of the living' (Jer 11.19). And again, "They pierced my hands and my feet; they numbered all my bones, they divided my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots" (Ps 21.17-19). But death in the air, taking place on wood, could be none other than the cross; in no other death are the hands and feet pierced, except on the cross. Since by the sojourn of the Savior all nations everywhere have begun to recognize God, they did not even leave out this undeclared, for there is also mention of it in the holy letters, "He will be," it says, "the root of Jesse and he that rises to rule the nations, and in him will the nations hope" (Isa 11.10).

These few things contribute to the proof of what happened. But all scripture is full of things which refute the Jews' unbelief. For which of the righteous and the holy prophets and the patriarchs mentioned in the divine scriptures ever had the creation [*genesis*] of his body from a virgin only? Or what woman without a man was sufficient to produce human beings? Was not Abel from Adam, Enoch from Jared, Noah from Lamech, Abraham from Tarrah, Isaac from Abraham, and Jacob from Isaac? Was not Judah from Jacob, and Moses and Aaron from Amram? Was not Samuel from Helcana, David from Jesse, Solomon from David, Hezekiah from Achaz, Josiah from Amos, Isaiah from Amos, Jeremiah from Hilciah, Ezekiel from Buzi? Did not each of these have his father as the author of his being [*genesis*]? Who then is born of a virgin only? For much care about this sign was taken by the prophet. And before whose birth did a star run in the heavens and indicate to the inhabited world the one born? For when Moses was born, he was hidden by his parents; nor was David heard of by those in the neighborhood, since even the great Samuel did not know him but asked whether Jesse had another son; and Abraham had already become great when he was known to his kin. No human being was a witness of the birth of Christ but a star appearing in heaven, whence also he descended.

36 Whatever king that ever was, "before he was able to cry out 'father' or 'mother,'" reigned and gained trophies over his enemies? Was not David thirty years old when he began to reign, and did not Solomon begin to reign when he had become a young man? Did not Joas come into the kingdom when he was seven, and did not Josiah, a later king, receive the government when he was about seven? And yet they, being of that age, were able to call out "father" and "mother." Who then is there that almost before birth was reigning and despoiling his enemies? And who was such a king in Israel and in Judah—let the Jews who have searched this out tell us—in whom all the nations placed their hope and had peace? Were they not rather opposing them from every side? For as long as Jerusalem stood, there was war without respite between them, and they all fought with Israel: the Assyrians oppressing them, the Egyptians persecuting them, the Babylonians falling upon them; and what is strange is that they even had the Syrians, their neighbors, at war with them. Or did not David wage war against those in Moab, and smite the Syrians, Josiah guard against his neighbors, Hezekiah fear the posturing of Sennacherib, Amalek fight against Moses, and the Amorites oppose Joshua son of Nun, and the inhabitants of Jericho array themselves in opposition? There was absolutely no treaty of friendship between the Gentiles and Israel. It is worthwhile seeing, then, who it is upon whom the Gentiles have placed their hope. He must exist, as the prophets cannot lie. Which of the holy prophets or patriarchs of old died on the cross for the salvation of all? Or who was wounded and destroyed for the healing of all? Which of the righteous or kings went down to Egypt, and at his descent the idols of the Egyptians fell? Abraham went down, but idolatry was still universal. Moses was born there, yet the superstition of those led astray was no less there.

37 Which of those borne witness to in the scriptures was pierced in his hands and feet, or was hung at all upon a tree, and completed his life on the cross for the salvation of all? Abraham died, expiring on a bed; Isaac and Jacob also died with feet raised upon a bed.

Moses and Aaron on the mountain; David died in his house, without being the object of any plotting by the people. Even if he was sought by Saul, yet he was preserved unharmed. Isaiah was sawn asunder, but he was not hanged upon the wood; Jeremiah was abused, but he did not die under condemnation; Ezekiel suffered, but not for the people, but indicating what would happen to the people. Moreover, these, although suffering, were human beings, like everyone else in the similarity of nature; but he who is declared by the scriptures to suffer on behalf of all is not simply human, but is called the Life of all, even if similar in nature to human beings. "You will see," it says, "your life hanging before your eyes" (Deut 28.66) and "Who will declare his generation?" (Isa 53.8) For one could study the generation of all the saints, to expound from of old who and whence each one was, but the generation of the one who is Life the divine words declare to be inexpressible.

Who then is this of whom the divine scriptures say these things? Or who is so great, that the prophets also foretell such things about him? For no one else is found in the scriptures except the Savior common to all, the God Word, our Lord Jesus Christ. For he it is who came forth from a virgin, and appeared on earth as a human being, and has an inexpressible generation in the flesh. For there is no one who can speak of his father in the flesh, his body not being from a man but from a virgin alone. Just as one can, therefore, trace the genealogy of David and Moses and all the patriarchs, so no one can tell of the generation in the flesh of the Savior from man. For he it is who made the star tell of the birth [genesis] of his body. For as the Word came down from heaven, it was necessary to have a sign from heaven too; and as the king of creation came forth, it was necessary that he be clearly known by the whole inhabited world. He was born in Judaea and they came from Persia to worship him. He it is who even before his bodily manifestation took the victory against the opposing demons and the trophy over idolatry. So all Gentiles from everywhere, rejecting the inherited customs and the godlessness of idols, place their hope henceforth in Christ and dedicate

themselves to him, so that one can also see such things with the eyes themselves. For at no other time did the godlessness of the Egyptians cease, except when the Lord of all, riding as upon a cloud, went down there in the body, destroyed the error of the idols, and brought all to himself and through himself to the Father. He it is that was crucified, with the sun and creation as witnesses together with those who inflicted death upon him; and by his death salvation has come to all, and all creation been ransomed. He it is who is the Life of all, and who like a sheep delivered his own body to death as a substitute for the salvation of all, even if the Jews do not believe.

38 If they do not think these passages sufficient, let them be persuaded by others, from the oracles which they themselves possess. For of whom do the prophets say, "I was made manifest to them that sought me not; I was found by those who did not ask for me. I said, 'Here am I to the Gentiles who did not call upon my name. I stretched out my hands to a disobedient and rebellious people'" (Isa 65.1-2)? One might say to the Jews, who then is it that was made manifest? For if it is the prophet, let them say when he was hidden so as later to appear? And what manner of prophet is this, who becomes manifest after being unseen, and stretched out his hands upon the cross? None of the righteous, but only the Word of God, who is incorporated by nature and was manifest in a body for our sake and suffered on our behalf. Even if this is not sufficient for them, let them at least be silenced from other passages, seeing that their rebuttal is so clear. For scripture says, "Be strong, weak hands and feeble knees; be consoled, faint-hearted in spirit; be strong, fear not, for behold our God requites judgment; he will come and save us. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf will hear; then will the lame leap like a hart and the tongue of those who stammer will be clear" (Isa 35.3-6). What, then, can they say about this, or how can they dare to face this at all? For the prophecy indicates the sojourn of God and makes known the signs and time of his advent: they say that at the divine advent the blind regain sight, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the