

Another reminder that December 24 is a day of fast and complete abstinence. December 25th is a Holy Day of Obligation.

Saint_Thomas_Explains_the_Gospels_for_Christmas

First Mass at Midnight

And it came to pass, that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that the whole world should be enrolled. This enrolling was first made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: because he was of the house and family of David, To be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the night watches over their flock. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them; and they feared with a great fear. And the angel said to them: Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people: For, this day, is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying: Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will. (St. Luke 2: 1-14)

THEOPHYL; The Son of God, about to be born in the flesh, as by His birth of a virgin He showed that the grace of virginity was most pleasing in His sight, is therefore begotten in the most peaceful time of the world, because He taught men to seek peace, and condescends to visit those who follow it. But there could be no greater sign of peace than for the whole world to be brought together under one taxing, while its ruler Augustus reigned with so great peace for the twelve years, about the time of our Lord's nativity, that war having been quelled throughout the whole world, there seemed to be a literal fulfillment of the Prophet's prediction, They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, &c.

GREEK EX. Christ is born also at a time when the princes of Judah had failed, and the kingdom was transferred to Roman governors, to whom the Jews paid tribute; and then was fulfilled the, prophecy, saying, There shall not fail a leader from Judah, nor a prince from between his feet, until he shall come who is to be sent. And now when Caesar Augustus was in the 42nd year of his reign, there went forth an edict from him that all the world should be taxed for the payment of tribute, the management of which he committed to a certain Cyrinus whom he made governor of Judea and Syria; and so it follows, This taxing was first made, &c.

THEOPHYL; St. Luke points out, that this taxing was either the first of those which comprehended the whole world, for before this very many parts of the earth are often mentioned as having been taxed; or first began at that time when Cyrinus was sent into Syria.

AMBROSE; He has rightly added the name of the governor, to mark the course of time. For if the names of the Consuls are affixed to the tables of prices, how much more ought the time to be noted down, of that event which was the redemption of all men?

THEOPHYL; Now the registration of property was so appointed by Divine guidance, that every one was ordered to go into his own country, as it follows, And they all went to be taxed, every one to his own city. Which so came to pass, in order that the Lord, conceived in one place, born in another, might the more easily escape the fury of the crafty Herod.

Hence it follows: Now Joseph also went up from Galilee.

CHRYS. It was the Lord who directed Augustus to give this edict, that he might minister to the coming of the Only-begotten; for it was this edict that brought Christ's mother into her country as the prophets had foretold, namely, to Bethlehem of Judea, according to the word, to a city of David, which is called Bethlehem.

GREEK EX. Now he added, a city of David, that he might declare that the promise made by God to David, namely, that from the fruit of his loins there should go before him a king for ever, was already fulfilled. Whence it follows, Because he was of the house and lineage of David. But since Joseph was of the family of David, it pleased the Evangelist to make known also that the Virgin herself was of the same family, because the Divine law enjoined marriages between those of the same line; and therefore it follows, With Mary his espoused wife.

CYRIL; It is said that she was espoused, to imply that nothing more than espousals preceded the conception; for it was not by man's seed that the Holy Virgin conceived.

GREG. But the registering of the whole world when our Lord was about to be born was mystical; for He appeared in the flesh Who should write down the names of His own elect in eternity.

AMBROSE; There is described a secular registration, implied a spiritual, to be laid before the King not of earth but of Heaven; a registering of faith: a census of souls. For the old census of the Synagogue was abolished, a new census of the Church was preparing. And to decide that the census was not of Augustus, but of Christ, the whole world is ordered to be registered. For who could demand the registration of the whole world but He who had dominion over it, for the earth is not of Augustus, but the earth is the Lord's?

THEOPHYL; And He most perfectly fulfilled what the name Augustus signifies, in that He was both desirous and able to increase His own.

THEOPHYL. Because it was fit also that at Christ's coming the worship of many Gods should cease, and one God only be worshipped, one king is described as ruling the world.

ORIGEN; To those who attentively consider it, there seems to be expressed a kind of sacrament, in its being necessary that Christ should be put down in the registration of the whole world; in order that His name being written with all, He might sanctify all, and

being placed in the census with the whole world, He might impart to the world the communion of Himself.

THEOPHYL; As at that time in the reign of Augustus and under the governorship of Cyrinus, every one went to his own city to make returns of his property; so now when Christ reigns through His teachers (the governors of the Church) ought we to make returns of righteousness.

AMBROSE; This was then the first public enrollment of souls to the Lord, to Whom all enroll themselves not at the voice of the crier, but of the Prophet, who says, O clap your hands, all you people. But in order that men might know that the taxing was just, there came up to it Joseph and Mary, the just man and the virgin. He who kept the word and she who obeyed it.

THEOPHYL; Our city and country is the resting-place of the blessed, to which we ought to be traveling with daily increasing virtues. But day by day does Holy Church wait upon her Teacher, and going up from the course of worldly business (which the name of Galilee signifies) to the city of Judah, i.e. the city of confession and praise, make returns of her devotion to the Eternal King. She, after the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a Virgin has conceived us of the Spirit. Though espoused to another, she is made fruitful by Him; and while visibly joined to the Pontiff who is placed over her, is invisibly filled with the graces of the Spirit. And hence Joseph is well interpreted increased, declaring by his very name, that the earnestness of the master speaking is of no avail, except he receive increasing help from above, that he may be heard.

AMBROSE; St. Luke has briefly explained the manner, time, and also the place in which Christ was born in the flesh; the manner, that is, in which the espoused has conceived, a virgin has born offspring.

GREG. NYSS. Though coming in the form of man, yet not in every thing is He subject to the laws of man's nature; for while His being born of a woman, tells of human nature; virginity becoming capable of childbirth betokens something above man. Of Him then His mother's burden was light, the birth immaculate, the delivery without pain, the nativity without defilement, neither beginning from wanton desire, nor brought to pass with sorrow. For as she who by her guilt engrafted death into our nature, was condemned to bring forth in trouble, it was meet that she who brought life into the world should accomplish her delivery with joy. But through a virgin's purity He makes His passage into mortal life at a time in which the darkness was beginning to fail, and the vast expanse of night to fade away before the exceeding brightness of the light. For the death of sin had brought an end of wickedness which from henceforth tends to nothing by reason of the presence of the true light which has illuminated the whole world with the rays of the Gospel.

THEOPHYL; He condescended to become incarnate at that time, that after His birth He might be enrolled in Caesar's taxing, and in order to bring liberty to us might Himself become subject to slavery. It was well also that our Lord was born at Bethlehem, not only as a mark of the royal crown, but on account of the sacrament of the name.

GREG. Bethlehem is by interpretation the house of bread. For it is the Lord Himself who says, I am the bread of life which came down from heaven. The place therefore where the Lord was born was before called the house of bread, because it was there that He was to appear in His fleshly nature who should refresh the souls of the elect with spiritual fullness.

THEOPHYL; But down to the very end of time, the Lord ceases not to be conceived at Nazareth, to be born at Bethlehem, whenever any of His hearers taking of the flour of the word makes himself a house of eternal bread. Daily in the Virgin's womb, i.e. in the mind of believers, Christ is conceived by faith, born by baptism. It follows, and she brought forth her firstborn son.

JEROME; From this Helvidius strives to prove that no one can be called firstborn who has not brothers, as he is called only-begotten who is the only son of his parents. But we thus determine the matter. Every only-begotten is firstborn, not every firstborn is only-begotten. We say not that he is first-begotten whom others follow, but before whom there is no one; (otherwise, supposing there is no firstborn but who has brothers following him, there are then no firstlings due to the priests as long as there are no others begotten;) lest perchance when no birth follows afterward, there should be an only-begotten and not a firstborn.

THEOPHYL; He is also only-begotten in the substance of His divinity, firstborn in the taking upon Himself humanity, firstborn in grace, only begotten in nature.

JEROME; Now here was no midwife, no tender anxiety of women; she wrapped the Child up in swaddling clothes, herself both mother and midwife.

THEOPHYL; He who clothes the whole world with its varied beauty, is wrapped up in common linen, that we might be able to receive the best robe; He by Whom all things are made, is folded both hands and feet, that our hands might be raised up for every good work, and our feet directed in the way of peace.

GREEK EX. Oh the wonderful straitening and banishment which He underwent, Who holds the whole world in His hands! From the very beginning He seeks for poverty, and ennobles it in His own person.

CHRYS. Surely if He had so willed it, He might have come moving the heavens, making the earth to shake, and shooting forth His thunderbolts; but such was not the way of His going forth; His desire was not to destroy, but to save; and to trample upon human pride from its very birth, therefore He is not only man, but a poor man, and has chosen a poor mother, who had not even a cradle where she might lay her new born Child; as it follows, and she laid him in the manger.

THEOPHYL; He is confined in the narrow space of a rude manger, whose seat is the heavens, that He may give us ample room in the joys of His heavenly kingdom. He Who is the bread of Angels is laid down in a manger, that He might feast us, as it were the sacred animals, with the bread of His flesh.

CYRIL; He finds man in his corrupt affections become like the beasts that perish, and therefore He is laid in the manger, in the place of food, that we changing the life of beasts,

might be brought to the knowledge that befits man, partaking not of hay, but of the heavenly bread, the life-giving body.

THEOPHYL; He who sits at His Father's right hand, finds no room in an inn, that He might prepare for us in His Father's house many mansions; He is born not in His Father's house, but in an inn and by the way side, because through the mystery of the incarnation He was made the way by which to bring us to our country, (where we shall enjoy the truth and the life.)

GREG. And that He might show that on account of the human form which He took upon Him, He was born as in a strange country, not according to His power but according to His nature.

AMBROSE; On your account then am I weak, in you am I strong. On your account am I poor, in you am I rich. Consider not what you see, but acknowledge that you are redeemed. I owe more, O Lord Jesus, to Your sufferings that I am redeemed, than to Your works that I am created. It were no advantage to be born, had it not advantaged me to be redeemed also.

AMBROSE; Observe with what care God builds up our faith. An Angel teaches Mary; an Angel teaches Joseph; an Angel the shepherds also, of whom it is said, And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field.

CHRYS. To Joseph the Angel appeared in a dream, as to one who might be easily brought to believe, but to the shepherds in visible shape as to men of a ruder nature. But the Angel went not to Jerusalem, sought not for Scribes and Pharisees, (for they were corrupt and tormented with envy.) But these were simple men living in the ancient practices of Moses and the Patriarchs. There is a certain road which leads by innocence to Philosophy.

THEOPHYL; No where; in the whole course of the Old Testament do we find that the Angels who so constantly appear to the Patriarchs, came in the day time. This privilege was rightly kept for this time, when there arose in the darkness a light to them that were true of heart. Hence it follows, and the glory of God shone round about them. He is sent forth from the womb, but He shines from heaven. He lies in a common inn, but He lives in celestial light.

GREEK EX. They were alarmed at the miracle, as it follows, And they were afraid, &c.

But the Angel dispels their rising fears. He not only soothes their terrors, but pours gladness into their hearts; for it follows, For, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, &c. not to the Jewish people only, but to all. The cause of their joy is declared; the new and wonderful birth is made manifest by the very names.

It follows, For to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. The first of these, i.e. the Savior, has reference to the action, the third, i.e. the Lord, to the dignity of the person.

CYRIL; But that which is in the middle, namely, Christ, has reference to the adoration, and signifies not the nature, but the compound substance of two natures. For on Christ our Savior we confess the anointing to have been performed, not however figuratively, (as formerly on kings by the oil,) and as if by prophetic grace, nor for the accomplishment of

any work, as it is said in Isaiah, Thus said the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus; who although he was an idolater was said to be anointed, that he might by the decree of Heaven take possession of the whole province of Babylon; but the Savior as man in the form of a servant, was anointed by the Holy Spirit as God He Himself by His Holy Spirit anoints those that believe in Him.

GREEK EX. He marks the time of our Lord's nativity, when he says, Today, and the place when he adds In the city of David; and the signs thereof when it follows And there shall be a sign, &c. Now the Angels bring tidings to the shepherds of the Chief Shepherd, as of a lamb discovered and brought up in a cave.

THEOPHYL; The infancy of the Savior was impressed upon us, both by frequent heraldings of Angels and testimonies of Evangelists, that we might be the more deeply penetrated in our hearts by what has been done for us. And we may observe, that the sign given us of the newborn Savior was, that He would be found not clothed in Tyrian purple, but wrapped in poor swaddling clothes, not laying on gilded couches, but in a manger.

MAXIMUS; But if perhaps the swaddling clothes are mean in your eyes, admire the Angels singing praises together. If you despise the manger, raise your eyes a little, and behold the new star in heaven proclaiming to the world the Lord's nativity. If you believe the mean things, believe also the mighty. If you dispute about those which betoken His lowliness, look with reverence on what is high and heavenly.

GREG. It was in a mystery that the angel appeared to the shepherds while they were watching, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, implying that they are thought worthy above the rest to see sublime things who take a watchful care of their faithful flocks; and while they themselves are piously watching over them, the Divine grace shines widely round about them.

THEOPHYL; For in a mystery, those shepherds, and their flocks, signify all teachers and guides of faithful souls. The night in which they were keeping watch over their flocks, indicates the dangerous temptations from which they never cease to keep themselves, and those placed under their care. Well also at the birth of our Lord do shepherds watch over their flocks; for He was born who says, I am the good Shepherd: but the time also was at hand in which the same Shepherd was to recall His scattered sheep to the pastures of life.

ORIGEN; But if we would rise to a more hidden meaning, I should say, that there were certain shepherd angels, who direct the affairs of men, and while each one of them was keeping his watch, an angel came at the birth of the Lord, and announced to the shepherds that the true Shepherd had arisen. For Angels before the coming of the Savior could bring little help to those entrusted to them, for scarcely did one single Gentile believe in God. But now whole nations come to the faith of Jesus.

THEOPHYL; Lest the authority of a single Angel should appear small, as soon as one had revealed the sacrament of the new birth, straightway there was present a multitude of the heavenly host. Rightly has the attending Chorus of Angels received the name of heavenly host, seeing they both humbly bring their aid to that Leader mighty in battle, Who has appeared to put down the powers of the air, and also themselves by their celestial arms bravely vanquish those opposing powers lest they should prevail as they wish in

tempting men. But because He is both God and man, rightly do they sing Peace to men and Glory to God.

As it follows, Praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest. As soon as one Angel, one messenger, had brought the good tidings that God was born in the flesh, the multitude of the heavenly host broke forth in the praise of the Creator, in order both to fix their devotion on Christ, and to instruct us by their example, that as often as any of the brethren shall sound forth the word of sacred learning, or we ourselves shall have brought these holy things home to our minds, we should with our whole heart, our mouths and hands, return praise to God.

CHRYS. Of old, indeed, Angels were sent to punish, as, for instance to the Israelites, to David, to the men of Sodom, to the valley of weeping. Now on the other hand they sing the song of thanksgiving to God: because He has revealed to them His coming down to men.

GREG. At the same time they also give praises because their voices of gladness accord well with our redemption, and while they behold our acceptance, they rejoice also that their number is completed.

THEOPHYL; They wish also peace to men, as they add, On earth peace to men, because those whom they had before despised as weak and abject, now that our Lord has come in the flesh they esteem as friends.

CYRIL; This peace has been made through Christ, for He has reconciled us by Himself to God and our Father, having taken away our guilt, which was the ground of offense also. He has united two nations in one man, and has joined the heavenly and the earthly in one flock.

THEOPHYL; For whom they ask peace is explained in the words, Of good will. For them, namely, who receive the new born Christ. For there is no peace to the ungodly, but much peace to them that love the name of God.

ORIGEN; But the attentive reader will ask, How then does the Savior say, I came not to send peace on the earth, whereas now the Angels' song of His birth is, On earth peace to men? It is answered, that peace is said to be to men of goodwill. For the peace which the Lord does not give on the earth is not the peace of good will.

AUG. For righteousness belongs to good will.

CHRYS. Behold the wonderful full working of God. He first brings Angels down to men, and then brings men up to heaven. The heaven became earth, when it was about to receive earthly things.

ORIGEN; But in a mystery, the Angels saw that they could not accomplish the work committed to them without Him Who was truly able to save, and that their healing fell short of what the care of men required. And so it was as if there should come one who had great knowledge in medicine, and those who before were unable to heal, acknowledging now the hand of a master, grudge not to see the corruptions of wounds ceasing, but break forth into the praises of the Physician, and of that God who sent to them and to the sick a man of such knowledge; the multitudes of the Angels praised God for the coming of Christ.

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The Second Mass at dawn – The shepherd’s Mass.

And it came to pass, after the angels departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another: Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath shewed to us. And they came with haste; and they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. And seeing, they understood of the word that had been spoken to them concerning this child. And all that heard, wondered; and at those things that were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God, for all the things they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. (St. Luke 2: 15-20)

GREEK EX. The shepherds were filled with astonishment at the things that they saw and heard, and so they left their sheepfolds, and set out by night to Bethlehem, seeking for the light of the Savior; and therefore it is said, They spoke one to another, &c.

THEOPHYL; As men who were truly watching, they said not, Let us see (the child; but) the word which has come to pass, i.e. the Word which was from the beginning, let us see how it has been made flesh for us, since this very Word is the Lord. For it follows, Which the Lord has made, and has shown to us; i.e. Let us see how the Lord has made Himself, and has shown His flesh to us.

AMBROSE; How remarkably Scripture weighs the import of each word. For when we behold the flesh of the Lord, we behold the Word, which is the Son. Let not this seem to you a slight example of faith, because of the humble character of the shepherds. For simplicity is sought for, not pride. It follows, And they came in haste. For no one indolently seeks after Christ.

ORIGEN; But because they came in haste, and not with loitering steps, it follows, They found Mary, (i.e. her who had brought Jesus into the world,) and Joseph, (i.e. the guardian of our Lord’s birth,) and the babe lying in the manger, (i.e. the Savior Himself.)

THEOPHYL; It seems to succeed in due order, that after having rightly celebrated the incarnation of the Word, we should at length come to behold the actual glory of that Word. Hence it follows: But when they saw it, they made known the word which had been spoken to them.

GREEK EX. Beholding with hidden faith indeed the happy events which had been told them, and not content with marveling at the reality of those things which at the very first they saw and embraced when the Angel told them, they began to relate them not only to Mary and Joseph, but to the others also (and what is more they impressed them on their minds,) as it follows, And all who heard it marveled. For how could it be otherwise, at the sight of one of the heavenly host upon earth, and earth in peace reconciled to heaven; and that ineffable Child binding together in one, by His divinity, heavenly things, by His humanity, earthly things, and by this conjunction of Himself ejecting a wonderful union!

GLOSS. Not only do they marvel at the mystery of the incarnation, but also at so wonderful an attestation of the shepherds, men who could not have devised these unheard of things, but were with simple eloquence proclaiming the truth.

AMBROSE; Esteem not the words of the shepherds as mean and despicable. For from the shepherds Mary increases her faith, as it follows: Mary kept all these sayings, and pondered them in her heart. Let us learn the chastity of the sacred Virgin in all things, who no less chaste in her words than in her body, gathered up in her heart the materials of faith.

THEOPHYL; For keeping the laws of virgin modesty, she who had known the secrets of Christ would divulge them to no one, but comparing what she had read in prophecy with what she now acknowledged to have taken place, she did not utter them with the mouth, but preserved them shut up in her heart.

GREEK EX. Whatever the Angel had said to her, whatever she had heard from Zacharias, and Elisabeth, and the shepherds, she collected them all in her mind, and comparing them together, perceived in all one harmony. Truly, He was God who was born from her.

ATHANAS. But every one rejoiced in the nativity of Christ, not with human feelings, as men are wont to rejoice when a son is born, but at the presence of Christ and the luster of the Divine light. As it follows: And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for every thing they had heard, &c.

THEOPHYL; That is to say, from the Angels, and had seen, i.e. in Bethlehem, as it was told them, i.e. they glory in this, that when they came they found it even as it was told them, or as it was told them they give praise and glory to God. For this they were told by the Angels to do, not in very word commanding them, but setting before them the form of devotion when they sung glory to God in the highest.

THEOPHYL; To speak in a mystery, let the shepherds of spiritual flocks, (nay, all the faithful,) after the example of, these shepherds, go in thought even to Bethlehem, and celebrate the incarnation of Christ with due honors. Let us go indeed casting aside all fleshly lusts, with the whole desire of the mind even to the heavenly Bethlehem, (i.e. the house of the living bread,) that He whom they saw crying in the manger we may deserve to see reigning on the throne of His Father. And such bliss as this is not to be sought for with sloth and idleness, but with eagerness must we follow the footsteps of Christ. When they saw Him they knew Him; and let us haste to embrace in the fullness of our love those things which were spoken of our Savior, that when the time shall come that we shall see with perfect knowledge we may be able to comprehend them.

THEOPHYL; Again, the shepherds of the Lord's flock by contemplating the life of the fathers who went before them, (which preserved the bread of life,) enter as it were the gates of Bethlehem, and find therein none other than the virgin beauty of the Church, that is, Mary; the manly company of spiritual doctors, that is, Joseph; and the lowly coming of Christ contained in the pages of Holy Scripture, that is, the infant child Christ, laid in the manger.

ORIGEN; That was the manger which Israel knew not, according to those words of Isaiah, The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib.

THEOPHYL; The shepherds did not hide in silence what they knew, because to this end have the Shepherds of the Church been ordained, that what they have learned in the Scriptures they might explain to their hearers.

THEOPHYL; The masters of the spiritual flocks also, while others sleep, at one time by contemplation enter into the heavenly places, at another time pass around them by seeking the examples of the faithful, at another time by teaching return to the public duties of the pastoral office.

THEOPHYL; Every one of us, even he who is supposed to live as a private person, exercises the office of shepherd, if, keeping together a multitude of good actions and pure thoughts, he strive to rule them with due moderation, to feed them with the food of the Scriptures, and to preserve them against the snares of the devil.

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The Third Mass, during the day.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to give testimony of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name. Who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (St. John 1: 1-14)

CHRYS. While all the other Evangelists begin with the Incarnation, John, passing over the Conception, Nativity, education, and growth, speaks immediately of the Eternal Generation, saying, In the beginning was the Word.

AUG. The Greek word “logos” signifies both Word and Reason. But in this passage it is better to interpret it Word; as referring not only to the Father, but to the creation of things by the operative power of the Word; whereas Reason, though it produce nothing, is still rightly called Reason.

AUG. Words by their daily use, sound, and passage out of us, have become common things. But there is a word which remains inward, in the very man himself; distinct from the sound which proceeds out of the mouth. There is a word, which is truly and spiritually that, which you understand by the sound, not being the actual sound. Now whoever can conceive the notion of word, as existing not only before its sound, but even before the idea

of its sound is formed, may see enigmatically, and as it were in a glass, some similitude of that Word of Which it is said, In the beginning was the Word. For when we give expression to something which we know, the word used is necessarily derived from the knowledge thus retained in the memory, and must be of the same quality with that knowledge. For a word is a thought formed from a thing which we know; which word is spoken in the heart, being neither Greek nor Latin, nor of any language, though, when we want to communicate it to others, some sign is assumed by which to express it. . . Wherefore the word which sounds externally, is a sign of the word which lies hid within, to which the name of word more truly appertains. For that which is uttered by the mouth of our flesh, is the voice of the word; and is in fact called word, with reference to that from which it is taken, when it is developed externally.

BASIL; This Word is not a human word. For how was there a human word in the beginning, when man received his being last of all? There was not then any word of man in the beginning, nor yet of Angels; for every creature is within the limits of time, having its beginning of existence from the Creator. But what says the Gospel? It calls the Only-Begotten Himself the Word.

CHRYS. But why omitting the Father, does he proceed at once to speak of the Son? Because the Father was known to all; though not as the Father, yet as God; whereas the Only-Begotten was not known. As was meet then, he endeavors first of all to inculcate the knowledge of the Son on those who knew Him not; though neither in discoursing on Him, is he altogether silent on the Father. And inasmuch as he was about to teach that the Word was the Only-Begotten Son of God, that no one might think this a possible generation, he makes mention of the Word in the first place, in order to destroy the dangerous suspicion, and show that the Son was from God impassibly. And a second reason is, that He was to declare to us the things of the Father. But he does not speak of the Word simply, but with the addition of the article, in order to distinguish It from other words. For Scripture calls God's laws and commandments words; but this Word is a certain Substance, or Person, an Essence, coming forth impassibly from the Father Himself.

BASIL; Wherefore then Word? Because born impassibly, the Image of Him that begat, manifesting all the Father in Himself; abstracting from Him nothing, but existing perfect in Himself.

AUG. As our knowledge differs from God's, so does our word, which arises from our knowledge, differ from that Word of God, which is born of the Father's essence; we might say, from the Father's knowledge, the Father's wisdom, or, more correctly, the Father Who is Knowledge, the Father Who is Wisdom. The Word of God then, the Only-Begotten Son of the Father, is in all things like and equal to the Father; being altogether what the Father is, yet not the Father; because the one is the Son, the other the Father. And thereby He knows all things which the Father knows; yet His knowledge is from the Father, even as is His being: for knowing and being are the same with Him; and so as the Father's being is not from the Son, so neither is His knowing. Wherefore the Father begat the Word equal to Himself in all things as uttering forth Himself. For had there been more or less in His Word than in Himself, He would not have uttered Himself fully and perfectly. With

respect however to our own inner word, which we find, in whatever sense, to be like the Word, let us not object to see how very unlike it is also. A word is a formation of our mind going to take place, but not yet made, and something in our mind which we toss to and fro in a slippery circuitous way, as one thing and another is discovered, or occurs to our thoughts. When this, which we toss to and fro, has reached the subject of our knowledge, and been formed therefrom, when it has assumed the most exact likeness to it, and the conception has quite answered to the thing; then we have a true word. Who may not see how great the difference is here from that Word of God, which exists in the Form of God in such wise, that It could not have been first going to be formed, and afterwards formed, nor can ever have been unformed, being a Form absolute, and absolutely equal to Him from Whom It is. Wherefore; in speaking of the Word of God here nothing is said about thought in God; lest we should think there was any thing revolving in God, which might first receive form in order to be a Word, and afterwards lose it, and be canted round and round again in an unformed state.

AUG. Now the Word of God is a Form, not a formation, but the Form of all forms, a Form unchangeable, removed from accident, from failure, from time, from space, surpassing all things, and existing in all things as a kind of foundation underneath, and summit above them.

BASIL; Yet has our outward word some similarity to the Divine Word. For our word declares the whole conception of the mind; since what we conceive in the mind we bring out in word. Indeed our heart is as it were the source, and the uttered word the stream which flows therefrom.

CHRYS. Observe the spiritual wisdom of the Evangelist. He knew that men honored most what was as most ancient, and that honoring what is before every thing else, they conceived of it as God. On this account he mentions first the beginning, saying, In the beginning was the Word.

ORIGEN; There are many significations of this word beginning. For there is a beginning of a journey, and beginning of a length, according to Proverbs, The beginning of the right path is to do justice. There is a beginning too of a creation, according to Job, He is the beginning of the ways of God. Nor would it be incorrect to say, that God is the Beginning of all things. The preexistent material again, where supposed to be original, out of which any thing is produced, is considered as the beginning. There is a beginning also in respect of form: as where Christ is the beginning of those who are made according to the image of God. And there is a beginning of doctrine, according to Hebrews; When for the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God. For there are two kinds of beginning of doctrine: one in itself, the other relative to us; as if we should say that Christ, in that He is the Wisdom and Word of God, was in Himself the beginning of wisdom, but to us, in that He was the Word incarnate. There being so many significations then of the word, we may take it as the Beginning through Whom, i.e. the Maker; for Christ is Creator as The Beginning, in that He is Wisdom; so that the Word is in the beginning, i.e. in Wisdom; the Savior being all these excellences at once. As life then is in the Word, so the Word is in the Beginning, that

is to say, in Wisdom. Consider then if it be possible according to this signification to understand the Beginning, as meaning that all things are made according to Wisdom, and the patterns contained therein; or, inasmuch as the Beginning of the Son is the Father, the Beginning of all creatures and existences, to understand by the text, In the beginning was the Word, that the Son, the Word, was in the Beginning, that is, in the Father.

AUG. Or, In the beginning, as if it were said, before all things.

BASIL; The Holy Ghost foresaw that men would arise, who should envy the glory of the Only-Begotten, subverting their hearers by sophistry; as if because He were begotten, He was not; and before He was begotten, he was not. That none might presume then to babble such things, the Holy Ghost says, In the beginning was the Word.

HILARY; Years, centuries, ages, are passed over, place what beginning you will in your imagining, you grasp it not in time, for He, from Whom it is derived, still was.

CHRYS. As then when our ship is near shore, cities and port pass in survey before us, which on the open sea vanish, and leave nothing whereon to fix; the eye; so the Evangelist here, taking us with him in his flight above the created world, leaves the eye to gaze in vacancy on an illimitable expanse. For the words, was in the beginning, are significative of eternal and infinite essence.

AUG. They say, however, if He is the Son, He was born. We allow it. They rejoin: if the Son was born to the Father, the Father was, before the Son was born to Him. This the Faith rejects. Then they say, explain to us how the Son could; be born from the Father, and yet be coeval with Him from whom He is born: for sons are born after their fathers, to succeed them on their death. They adduce analogies from nature; and we must endeavor likewise to do the same for our doctrine. But how can we find in nature a coeternal, when we cannot find an eternal? However, if a thing generating and a thing generated can be found any where coeval, it will be a help to forming a notion of coeternals. Now Wisdom herself is called in the Scriptures, the brightness of Everlasting Light, the image of the Father. Hence then let us take our comparison, an from coevals form a notion of coeternals. Now no one doubts that brightness proceeds from fire: fire then we may consider the father of the brightness. Presently, when I light a candle, at the same instant with the fire, brightness arises. Give me the fire without the brightness, and I will with you believe that the Father was without the Son. An image is produced by a mirror. The image exists as soon as the beholder appears; yet the beholder existed before he came to the mirror. Let us suppose then a twig, or a blade of grass which has grown up by the water side. Is it not born with its image? If there had always been the twig, there would always have been the image proceeding from the twig. And whatever is from another thing, is born. So then that which generates may be coexistent from eternity with that which is generated from it. But some one will say perhaps, Well, I understand now the eternal Father, the coeternal Son: yet the Son is like the emitted brightness, which is less brilliant than the fire, or the reflected image, which is less real than the twig. Not so: there is complete equality between Father and Son. I do not believe, he says; for you have found nothing whereto to liken it. However, perhaps we can find something in nature by which we may understand that the Son is both coeternal with the Father, and in no respect inferior also: though we cannot

find any one material of comparison that will be sufficient singly, and must therefore join together two, one of which has been employed by our adversaries, the other by ourselves. For they have drawn their comparison from things which are preceded in time by the things which they spring from, man, for example, from man. Nevertheless, man is of the same substance with man. We have then in that nativity an equality of nature; an equality of time is wanting. But in the comparison which we have drawn from the brightness of fire, and the reflection of a twig, an equality of nature you do not find, of time you lost. In the Godhead then there is found as a whole, what here exists in single and separate parts; and that which is in the creation, existing in a manner suitable able to the Creator.

EX GESTIS CONCILII EPHESINI; Wherefore in one place divine Scripture calls Him the Son, in another the Word, in another the Brightness of the Father; names severally meant to guard against blasphemy. For, forasmuch as your son is of the same nature with yourself, the Scripture wishing to show that the Substance of the Father and the Son is one, sets forth the Son of the Father, born of the Father, the Only-Begotten. Next, since the terms birth and son, convey the idea of passibleness, therefore it calls the Son the Word, declaring by that name the impassability of His Nativity. But inasmuch as a father with us is necessarily older than his son, lest thou should think that this applied to the Divine nature as well, it calls the Only-Begotten the Brightness of the Father; for brightness, though arising from the sun, is not posterior to it. Understand then that Brightness, as revealing the co-eternity of the Son with the Father; Word as proving the impassability of His birth, and Son as conveying His consubstantiality.

CHRYS. But they say that In the beginning does not absolutely express in eternity: for that the same is said of the heaven and the earth: In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth. But are not made and was, altogether different For in like manner as the word is, when spoken of man, signifies the present only, but when applied to God, that which always and eternally is; so too was, predicated of our nature, signifies the past, but predicated of God, eternity.

ORIGEN; The verb to be, has a double signification, sometimes expressing the motions which take place in time, as other verbs do; sometimes the substance of that one thing of which it is predicated, without reference to time. Hence it is also called a substantive verb.

HILARY; Consider then the world, understand what is written of it. In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth. Whatever therefore is created is made in the beginning, and you would contain in time, what, as being to be made, is contained in the beginning. But, lo, for me, an illiterate unlearned fisherman is independent of time, unconfined by ages, advances beyond all beginnings. For the Word was, what it is, and is not bounded by any time, nor commenced therein, seeing It was not made in the beginning, but was.

ALCUIN. To refute those who inferred from Christ's Birth in time, that He had not been from everlasting, the Evangelist begins with the eternity of the Word, saying, In the beginning was the Word.

CHRYS. Because it is an especial attribute of God, to be eternal and without a beginning, he laid this down first: then, lest any one on hearing in the beginning was the

Word, should suppose the Word Unbegotten, he instantly guarded against this; saying, And the Word was with God.

HILARY; From the beginning He is With God: and though independent of time, is not independent of an Author.

BASIL; Again he repeats this, was, because of men blasphemously saying, that there was a time when He was not. Where then was the Word? Illimitable things are not contained in space. Where was He then? With God. For neither is the Father bounded by place, nor the Son by aught circumscribing.

ORIGEN; It is worth while noting, that, whereas the Word is said to come [be made] to some, as to Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, with God it is not made, as though it were not with Him before. But, the Word having been always with Him, it is said, and the Word was with God: for from the beginning it was not separate from the Father.

CHRYS. He has not said, was in God, but was with God: exhibiting to us that eternity which He had in accordance with His Person.

THEOPHYL. Sabellius is overthrown by this text. For he asserts that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one Person, Who sometimes appeared as the Father, sometimes as the Son, sometimes as the Holy Ghost. But he is manifestly confounded by this text, and the Word was with God; for here the Evangelist declares that the Son is one Person, God the Father another.

HILARY; You will say, that a word is the sound of the voice, the enunciation of a thing, the expression of a thought: this Word was in the beginning with God, because the utterance of thought is eternal, when He who thinks is eternal. But how was that in the beginning, which exists no time either before, or after, I doubt even whether in time at all? For speech is neither in existence before one speaks, nor after; in the very act of speaking it vanishes; for by the time a speech is ended, that from which it began does not exist. But even if the first sentence, in the beginning was the Word, was through your inattention lost upon you, why dispute you about the next; and the Word was with God? Did you hear it said, "In God," so that you should understand this Word to be only the expression of hidden thoughts? Or did John say with by mistake, and was not aware of the distinction between being in, and being with, when he said, that what was in the beginning, was not in God, but with God? Hear then the nature and name of the Word; and the Word was God. No more then of the sound of the voice, of the expression of the thought. The Word here is a Substance, not a sound; a Nature, not an expression; God, not a nonentity.

HILARY; But the title is absolute, and free from the offense of an extraneous subject. To Moses it is said, I have given you for a god to Pharaoh: but is not the reason for the name added, when it is said, to Pharaoh? Moses is given for a god to Pharaoh, when he is feared, when he is entreated, when he punishes, when he heals. And it is one thing to be given for a God, another thing to be God. I remember too another application of the name in the Psalms, I have said, you are gods. But there too it is implied that the title was but bestowed; and the introduction of, I said, makes it rather the phrase of the Speaker, than the name of the thing. But when I hear the Word was God, I not only hear the Word said to be, but perceive It proved to be, God.

BASIL; Thus cutting off the cavils of blasphemers, and those who ask what the Word is, he replies, and the Word was God.

THEOPHYL. Or combine it thus: From the Word being with God, it follows plainly that there are two Persons. But these two are of one Nature; and therefore it proceeds, In the Word was God: to show that Father and Son are of One Nature, being of One Godhead.

ORIGEN; We must add too, that the Word illuminates the Prophets with Divine wisdom, in that He comes to them; but that with God He ever is, because He is God. For which reason he placed and the Word was with God, before and the Word was God.

CHRYS. Not asserting, as Plato does, one to be intelligence, the other soul; for the Divine Nature is very different from this. . . But you say, the Father is called God with the addition of the article, the Son without it. What say you then, when the Apostle writes, The great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; and again, Who is over all, God; and Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father; without the article? Besides, too, it were superfluous here, to affix what had been affixed just before. So that it does not follow, though the article is not affixed to the Son, that He is therefore an inferior God.

HILARY; Whereas he had said, the Word was God, the fearfulness, and strangeness of the speech disturbed me; the prophets having declared that God was One. But, to quiet my apprehensions, the fisherman reveals the scheme of this so great mystery, and refers all to one, without dishonor, without obliterating [the Person], without reference to time, saying, The Same was in the beginning with God; with One Unbegotten God, from whom He is, the One Only-begotten God.

THEOPHYL. Again, to stop any diabolical suspicion, that the Word, because He was God, might have rebelled against His Father, as certain Gentiles fable, or, being separate, have become the antagonist of the Father Himself, he says, The Same was in the beginning with God; that is to say, this Word of God never existed separate from God.

CHRYS. Or, lest hearing that In the beginning was the Word, you should regard It as eternal, but yet understand the Father's Life to have some degree of priority, he has introduced the words, The Same was in the beginning with God. For God was never solitary, apart from Him, but always God with God. Or forasmuch as he said, the Word was God, that no one might think the Divinity of the Son inferior, he immediately subjoins the marks of proper Divinity, in that he both again mentions Eternity, The Same was in the beginning with God; and adds His attribute of Creator, All things were made by Him.

ORIGEN; Or thus, the Evangelist having begun with those propositions, reunites them into one, saying, The Same was in the beginning with God. For in the first of the three we learnt in what the Word was, that it was in the beginning; in the second, with whom, with God; in the third who the Word was, God. Having, then, by the term, The Same, set before us in a manner God the Word of Whom he had spoken, he collects all into the fourth proposition, viz. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; into, the Same was in the beginning with God. It may be asked, however, why it is not said, In the beginning was the Word of God, and the Word of God was with God, and the Word of God was God? Now whoever will admit that truth is one, must needs admit also that the demonstration of truth, that is wisdom, is one. But if truth is one,

and wisdom is one, the Word which enuntiates truth and develops wisdom in those who are capable of receiving it, must be One also. And therefore it would have been out of place here to have said, the Word of God, as if there were other words besides that of God, a word of angels, word of men, and so on. We do not say this, to deny that It is the Word of God, but to show the use of omitting the word God. John himself too in the Apocalypse says, And his Name is called the Word of God.

ALCUIN; Wherefore does he use the substantive verb, was? That you might understand that the Word, Which is coeternal with God the Father, was before all time.

ALCUIN; After speaking of the nature of the Son, he proceeds to His operations, saying, All things were made by him, i.e. every thing whether substance, or property.

HILARY; Or thus: [It is said], the Word indeed was in the beginning, but it may be that He was not before the beginning. But what says he; All things were made by him. He is infinite by Whom every thing, which is, was made: and since all things were made by Him, time is likewise.

CHRYSS. Moses indeed, in the beginning of the Old Testament, speaks to us in much detail of the natural world, saying, In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth; and then relates how that the light, and the firmament, and the stars, and the various kinds of animals were created. But the Evangelist sums up the whole of this in a word, as familiar to his hearers; and hastens to loftier matter, making the whole of his book to bear not on the works, but on the Maker.

AUG. Since all things were made by him, it is evident that light was as also, when God said, Let there be light. And in like manner the rest. But if so, that which God said, viz. Let there be light, is eternal. For the Word of God, God with God, is coeternal with the Father, though the world created by Him be temporal. For whereas our when and sometimes are words of time, in the Word of God, on the contrary, when a thing ought to be made, is eternal; and the thing is then made, when in that Word it is that it ought to be made, which Word has in It neither when, or at sometime, since It is all eternal.

AUG. How then can the Word of God be made, when God by the Word made all things? For if the Word Itself were made, by what other Word was It made? If you say it was the Word of the Word by Which That was made, that Word I call the Only-Begotten Son of God. But if thou dost not call It the Word of the Word, then grant that that Word was not made, by which all things were made.

AUG. And if It is not made, It is not a creature; but if It is not a creature, It is of the same Substance with the Father. For every substance which is not God is a creature; and what is not a creature is God.

THEOPHYL. The Arians are wont to say, that all things are spoken of as made by the Son, in the sense in which we say a door is made by a saw, viz. as an instrument; not that He was Himself the Maker. And so they talk of the Son as a thing made, as if He were made for this purpose, that all things might be made by Him. Now we to the inventors of this lie reply simply: If, as you say, the Father had created the Son, in order to make use of Him as an instrument, it would appear that the Son were less honorable than the things made, just as things made by a saw are more noble than the saw itself; the saw having been

made for their sake. In like way do they speak of the Father creating the Son for the sake of the things made, as it; had He thought good to create the universe, neither would He have produced the Son. What can be more insane than such language? They argue, however, why was it not said that the Word made all things, instead of the preposition by being used. For this reason, that you might not understand an Unbegotten and Unoriginate Son, a rival God.

CHRYS. If the preposition by perplex you, and you would learn from Scripture that the Word Itself made all things, hear David, You, Lord, in the beginning has laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. That he spoke this of the Only-Begotten, you learn from the Apostle, who in the Epistle to the Hebrews applies these words to the Son.

CHRYS. But if you say that the prophet spoke this of the Father, and that Paul applied it to the Son, it comes to the same thing. For he would not have mentioned that as applicable to the Son, unless he fully considered that the Father and the Son were of equal dignity. If again you dream that in the preposition by any subjection is implied, why does Paul use of the Father? as, God is faithful, by Whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son; and again, Paul an Apostle by the will of God.

ORIGEN; Here too Valentines errs, saying, that the Word supplied to the Creator the cause of the creation of the world. If this interpretation is true, its should have been written that all things had their existence from the Word through the Creator, not contrariwise, through the Word from the Creator.

CHRYS. That you may not suppose, when he says, All things were made by Him, that he meant only the things Moses had; spoken of, he seasonably brings in, And without Him was not any thing made, nothing, that is, cognizable either by the senses, or the understanding. Or thus; Lest you should suspect the sentence, All things were made by Him, to refer to the miracles which the other Evangelists had related, he adds, and without Him was not any thing made.

HILARY; Or thus; That all things were made by him, is pronouncing too much, it may be said. There is an Unbegotten Who is made of none, and there is the Son Himself begotten from Him Who is Unbegotten. The Evangelist however again implies the Author, when he speaks of Him as Associated; saying, without Him was not any thing made. This, that nothing was made without Him, I understand to mean the Son's not being alone, for 'by whom' is one thing, 'not without whom' another.

ORIGEN: Or thus, that you might not think that the things made by the Word had a separate existence, and were not contained in the Word, he says, and without Him was not any thing made: that is, not any thing was made externally of Him; for He encircles all things, as the Preserver of all things.

AUG. Or, by saying, without Him was not any thing made, he tells us not to suspect Him in any sense to be a thing made. For how can He be a thing made, when God, it is said, made nothing without Him?

ORIGEN; If all things were made by the Word, and in the number of all things is wickedness, and the whole influx of sin, these too were made by the Word; which is false.

Now 'nothing' and 'a thing which is not,' mean the same. And the Apostle seems to call wicked things, things which are not, God calls those things which be not, as though they were. All wickedness then is called nothing, forasmuch as it is made without the Word. Those who say however ever that the devil is not a creature of God, err. In so far as he is the devil, he is not a creature of God; but he, whose character it is to be the devil, is a creature of God. It is as if we should say a murderer is not a creature of God, when, so far as he is a man, he is a creature of God.

AUG. For sin was not made by Him; for it is manifest that sin is nothing, and that men become nothing when they sin. Nor was an idol made by the Word. It has indeed a sort of form of man, and man himself was made by the Word; but the form of man in an idol was not made by the Word: for it is written, we know that an idol is nothing. These then were not made by the Word; but whatever things were made naturally, the whole universe, were; every creature from an angel to a worm.

ORIGEN; Valentinus excludes from the things made by the Word, all that were made in the ages which he believes to have existed before the Word. This is plainly false; inasmuch as the things which he accounts divine are thus excluded from the "all things," and what he deems wholly corrupt are properly 'all things!'

AUG. The folly of those men is not to be listened to, who think nothing is to be understood here as something because it is placed at the end of the sentence: as if it made so any difference whether it was said, without Him nothing was made, or, without Him was made nothing.

ORIGEN; If 'the word' be taken for that which is in each man, inasmuch as it was implanted in each by the Word, which was in the beginning then also, we commit nothing without this 'word' [reason] taking this word 'nothing' in a popular sense. For the Apostle says that sin was dead without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived; for sin is not imputed when there is no law. But neither was there sin, when there was no Word, for our Lord says, If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin. For every excuse is without drawn from the sinner, if, with the Word present, and enjoining what is to be done, he refuses to obey Him. Nor is the Word to be blamed on this account; any more than a master, whose discipline leaves no excuse open to a delinquent pupil on the ground of ignorance. All things then were made by the Word, not only the natural world, but also whatever is done by those acting without reason.

BEDE; The Evangelist having said that every creature was made by the Word, lest perchance any one might think that His will was changeable, as though He willed on a sudden to make a creature, which from eternity he had not made; he took care to show that, though a creature was made in time, in the Wisdom of the Creator it had been from eternity arranged what and when He should create.

AUG. 'The passage can be read thus: What was made in Him was life. Therefore the whole universe is life: for what was there not made in Him? He is the Wisdom of God, as is said, In Wisdom have You made them all. All things therefore are made in Him, even as they are by Him. But, if whatever was made in Him is life, the earth is life, a stone is life. We must not interpret it so unsoundly, lest the sect of the Manicheans creep in upon us,

and say, that a stone has life, and that a wall has life; for they do insanely assert so, and when reprehended or refuted, appeal as though to Scripture, and ask, why was it said, That which was made in Him was life?

Read the passage then thus: make the stop after What was made, and then proceed, In Him was life. The earth was made; but, the earth itself which was, as made is not life. In the Wisdom of God however there is spiritually a certain Reason after which the earth is made. This is Life. A chest in workmanship is not life, a chest in art is, inasmuch as the mind of the workman lives wherein that original pattern exists. And in this sense the Wisdom of God, by Which all things are made, contains in art 'all things which are made, according to that art.' And therefore whatever is made, is not in itself life, but is life in Him.

ORIGEN; It may also be divided thus: That which was made in him; and then, was life; the sense being, that all things that were made by Him and in Him, are life in Him, and are one in Him. They were, that is, in Him; they exist as the cause, before they exist in themselves as effects. If you ask how and in what manner all things which were made by the Word subsist in Him vitally, immutably, causally, take some examples from the created world.

See how that all things within the arch of the world of sense have their causes simultaneously and harmoniously subsisting in that sun which is the greatest luminary of the world: how multitudinous crops of herbs and fruits are contained in single seeds: how the most complex variety of rules, in the art of the artificer, and the mind of the director, are a living unit, how an infinite number of lines coexist in one point. Contemplate these several instances, and you will be able as it were on the wings of physical science, to penetrate with your intellectual eye the secrets of the Word, and as far as is allowed to a human understanding, to see how all things which were made by the Word, live in Him, and were made in Him.

HILARY; Or it can be understood thus. In that he had said, without Him was not anything thing made, one might have been perplexed, and have asked, Was then any thing made by another, which yet was not made without Him? If so, then though nothing is made without, all things are not made by Him: it being one thing to make, another to be with the maker.

On this account the Evangelist declares what it was which was not made without Him, viz. what was made in Him. This then it was which was not made without Him, viz. what was made in Him. And that which was made in Him, was also made by Him. For all things were created in Him and by Him. Now things were made in Him, because He was born God the Creator. And for this reason also things that were made in Him, were not made without Him, viz. that God, in that He was born, was life, and He who was life, was not made life after being born. Nothing then which was made in Him, was made without Him, because He was life, in Whom they were made; because God Who was born of God was God, not after, but in that He was born.

CHRYS Or to give another explanation. We will not put the stop at without Him was not any thing made, as the heretics do. For they wishing to prove the Holy Ghost a creature,

read, That which was made in Him, was life. But this cannot be so understood. For first, this was not the place for making mention of the Holy Ghost. But let us suppose it was; let us take the passage for the present according to their reading, we shall see that it leads to a difficulty. For when it is said, That which was made in Him, was life; they say the life spoken of is the Holy Ghost. But this life is also light; for the Evangelist proceeds, The life was the light of men.

Wherefore according to them, he calls the Holy Ghost the light of all men. But the Word mentioned above, is what he here calls consecutively, God, and Life, and Light. Now the Word was made flesh. It follows that the Holy Ghost is incarnate, not the Son. Dismissing then this reading, we adopt a more suitable one, with the following meaning: All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made which was made: there we make a stop, and begin a fresh sentence: In Him was life. Without Him was not any thing made which was as made; i.e. which could be made. You see how by this short addition, he removes any difficulty which might follow. For by introducing without Him was not any thing made, and adding, which was made, he includes all things invisible, and excepts the Holy Spirit: for the Spirit cannot be made.

To the mention of creation, succeeds that of providence. In Him was life. As a fountain which produces vast depths of water, and yet is nothing diminished at the fountain head; so works the Only-Begotten. How great so ever His creations be, He Himself is none the less for them. By the word life here is meant not only creation, but that providence by which the things created are preserved. But when you are told that in Him was life, do not suppose Him confounded; for, as the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself. As then you would not call the Father compounded, so neither should you the Son.

ORIGEN; Or thus: Our Savior is said to be some things not for Himself, but for others; others again, both for Himself and others. When it is said then, That which was as made in Him was life; we must inquire whether the life is for Himself and others, or for others only; and if for others, for whom? Now the Life and the Light are both the same Person: He is the light of men: He is therefore their life. The Savior is called Life here, not to Himself, but to others; whose Light He also is. This life is inseparable from the Word, from the time it is added on to it.

For Reason or the Word must exist before in the soul, cleansing it from sin, till it is pure enough to receive the life, which is thus engrafted or inborn in every one who renders himself fit to receive the Word of God. Hence observe, that though the Word itself in the beginning was not made, the Beginning never having been without the Word; yet the life of men was not always in the Word. This life of men was made, in that It was the light of men; and this light of men could not be before man was; the light of men being understood relatively to men. And therefore he says, That which was made in the Word was life; not That which was in the Word was life. Some copies read, not amiss, "That which was made, in Him is life." If we understand the life in the Word, to be He who says below, 'I am the life,' we shall confess that none who believe not in Christ live, and that all who live not in God, are dead.

THEOPHYL. He had said, In him was life, that you might not suppose that the Word was without life. Now he shows that that life is spiritual, and the light of all reasonable creatures. And the life was the light of men: i.e. not sensible, but intellectual light, illuminating the very soul.

AUG. Life of itself gives illumination to men, but to cattle not: for they have not rational souls, by which to discern wisdom: whereas man, being made in the image of God, has a rational soul, by which he can discern wisdom. Hence that life, by which all things are made, is light, not however of all animals whatsoever, but of men.

THEOPHYL. He said not, the Light of the Jews only, but of all men: for all of us, in so far as we have received intellect and reason, from that Word which created us, are said to be illuminated by Him. For the reason which is given to us, and which constitutes us the reasonable beings we are, is a light directing us what to do, and what not to do.

ORIGEN; We must not omit to notice, that he puts the life before the light of men. For it would be a contradiction to suppose a being without life to be illuminated; as if life were an addition to illumination. But to proceed: if the life was the light of men, meaning men only, Christ is the light and the life of men only; an heretical supposition. It does not follow then, when a thing is predicated of any, that it is predicated of those only; for of God it is written, that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and yet He is not the God of those fathers only. In the same way, the light of men is not excluded from being the light of others as well. Some moreover contend from Genesis, Let us make man after our image, that man means whatever is made after the image and similitude of God. If so, the light of men is the light of any rational creature whatever.

AUG. Whereas that life is the light of men, but foolish hearts cannot receive that light, being so encumbered with sins that they cannot see it; for this cause lest any should think there is no light near them, because they cannot see it, he continues: And the light shines in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. For suppose a blind man standing in the sun, the sun is present to him, but he is absent from the sun. In like manner every fool is blind, and wisdom is present to him; but, though present, absent from his sight, forasmuch as sight is gone: the truth being, not that she is absent from him, but that he is absent from her.

ORIGEN; This kind of darkness however is not in men by nature, according to the text in the Ephesians, You were some time darkness, but now are you light in the Lord.

ORIGEN; Or thus, The light shines in the darkness of faithful souls, beginning from faith, and drawing onwards to hope; but the deceit and ignorance of undisciplined souls did not comprehend the light of the Word of God shining in the flesh. That however is an ethical meaning. The metaphysical signification of the words is as follows. Human nature, even though it sinned not, could not shine by its own strength simply; for it is not naturally light, but only a recipient of it; it is capable of containing wisdom, but is not wisdom itself. As the air, of itself, shines not, but is called by the name of darkness, even so is our nature, considered in itself; a dark substance, which however admits of and is made partaker of the light of wisdom. And as when the air receives the sun's rays, it is not said to shine of itself, but the sun's radiance to be apparent in it; so the reasonable part of

our nature, while possessing the presence of the Word of God, does not of itself understand God, and intellectual things, but by means of the divine light implanted in it. Thus, The light shines in darkness: for the Word of God, the life and the light of men, ceases not to shine in our nature; though regarded in itself, that nature is without form and darkness. And forasmuch as pure light cannot be comprehended by any creature, hence the text: The darkness comprehended it not.

CHRYS. Or thus: throughout the whole foregoing passage he, had been speaking of creation; then he mentions the spiritual; benefits which the Word brought with it: and the life was the light of men. He said not, the light of Jews, but of all men without exception; for not the Jews only, but the Gentiles also have come to this knowledge. The Angels he omits, for he is speaking of human nature, to whom the Word came bringing glad tidings.

ORIGEN; But they ask, why is not the Word Itself called the light of men, instead of the life which is in the Word? We reply, that the life here spoken of is not that which rational and irrational animals have in common, but that which is annexed to the Word which is within us through participation of the primeval Word. For we must distinguish the external and false life, from the desirable and true. We are first made partakers of life: and this life with some is light potentially only, not in act; with those, viz. who are not eager to search out the things which appertain to knowledge: with others it is actual light, those who, as the Apostle said, covet earnestly the best gifts, that is to say, the word of wisdom. (If the life and the light of men are the same, whoso is in darkness is proved not to live, and none who lives abides in darkness.)

CHRYS. Life having come to us, the empire of death is dissolved; a light having shone upon us, there is darkness no longer: but there remains ever a life which death, a light which darkness cannot overcome. Whence he continues, And the light shines in darkness: by darkness meaning death and error, for sensible light does not shine in darkness, but darkness must be removed first; whereas the preaching of Christ shone forth amidst the reign of error, and caused it to disappear, and Christ by dying changed death into life, so overcoming it, that, those who were already in its grasp, were brought back again. Forasmuch then as neither death nor error has overcome his light, which is every where conspicuous shilling forth by its own strength; therefore he adds, And the darkness comprehended it not.

ORIGEN; As the light of men is a word expressing two spiritual things, so is darkness also. To one who possesses the light, we attribute both the doing the deeds of the light, and also true understanding, inasmuch as he is illuminated by the light of knowledge: and, on the other hand, the term darkness we apply both to unlawful acts, and also to that knowledge, which seems such, but is not. Now as the Father is light, and in Him is no darkness at all, so is the Savior also. Yet, inasmuch as he underwent the similitude of our sinful flesh, it is not incorrectly said of Him, that in Him there was some darkness; for He took our darkness upon Himself, in order that He might dissipate it. This Light therefore, which was made the life of man, shines in the darkness of our hearts, when the prince of this darkness wars with the human race. This Light the darkness persecuted, as is clear from what our Savior and His children suffer; the darkness fighting against the children of

light. But, forasmuch as God takes up the cause, they do not prevail; nor do they apprehend the light, for they are either of too slow a nature to overtake the light's quick course, or, waiting for it to come up to them, they are put to flight at its approach. We should bear in mind, however, that darkness is not always used in a bad sense, but sometimes in a good, as in Psalm xvii. He made darkness His secret place: the things of God being unknown and incomprehensible. This darkness then I will call praiseworthy, since it tends toward light, and lays hold on it: for, though it were darkness before, while it was not known, yet it is turned to light and knowledge in him who has learned.

AUG. A certain Platonist once said, that the beginning of this Gospel ought to be copied in letters of gold, and placed in the most conspicuous place in every church.

BEDE; The other Evangelists describe Christ as born in time; John witnesses that He was in the beginning, saying, In the beginning was the Word. The others describe His sudden appearance among men; he witnesses that He was ever with God, saying, And the Word was with God. The others prove Him very man; he very God, saying, And the Word was God. The others exhibit Him as man conversing with men for a season; he pronounces Him God abiding with God in the beginning, saying, The Same was in the beginning with God. The others relate the great deeds which He did amongst men; he that God the Father made every creature through Him, saying, All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made.

AUG. What is said above, refers to the Divinity of Christ. He came to us in the form of man, but man in such sense, as that the Godhead was concealed within Him. And therefore there was sent before a great man, to declare by his witness that He was more than man. And who was this? He was a man.

THEOPHYL. Not an Angel, as many have held. The Evangelist here refutes such a notion.

AUG. And how could he declare the truth concerning God, unless he were sent from God.

CHRYS. After this esteem nothing that he says as human; for he speaks not his own, but his that sent him. And therefore the Prophet calls him a messenger, I send My messenger, for it is the excellence of a messenger, to say nothing of his own. But the expression, was sent, does not mean his entrance into life, but to his office. As Esaias was sent on his commission, not from any place out of the world, but from where he saw the Lord sitting upon His high and lofty throne; in like manner John was sent from the desert to baptize; for he says, He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said to me, Upon Whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Ghost.

AUG. What was he called? whose name was John?

ALCUIN. That is, the grace of God, or one in whom is grace, who by his testimony first made known to the world the grace of the New Testament, that is, Christ. Or John may be taken to mean, to whom it is given: because that through the grace of God, to him it was given, not only to herald, but also to baptize the King of kings.

AUG. Wherefore came he? The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light.

ORIGEN; Some try to undo the testimonies of the Prophets to Christ, by saying that the Son of God had no need of such witnesses; the wholesome words which He uttered and His miraculous acts being sufficient to produce belief; just as Moses deserved belief for his speech and goodness, and wanted no previous witnesses. To this we may reply, that, where there are a number of reasons to make people believe, persons are often impressed by one kind of proof; and not by another, and God, Who for the sake of all men became man, can give them many reasons for belief in Him. And with respect to the doctrine of the Incarnation, certain it is that some have been forced by the Prophetical writings into an admiration of Christ by the fact of so many prophets having, before His advent, fixed the place of His nativity; and by other proofs of the same kind. It is to be remembered too, that, though the display of miraculous powers might stimulate the faith of those who lived in the same age with Christ, they might, in the lapse of time, fail to do so; as some of them might even get to be regarded as fabulous. Prophecy and miracles together are more convincing than simply past miracles by themselves. We must recollect too that men receive honor themselves from the witness which they bear to God. He deprives the Prophetical choir of immeasurable honor, whoever denies that it was their office to bear witness to Christ. John when he comes to bear witness to the light, follows in the train of those who went before him.

CHRYS. Not because the light wanted the testimony, but for the reason which John himself self gives, viz. that all might believe on Him. For as He put on flesh to save all men from death; so He sent before Him a human preacher, that the sound of a voice like their own, might the readier draw men to Him.

BEDE; He says not, that all men should believe in him; for, cursed be the man that trusts in man; but, that all men through him might believe; i.e. by his testimony believe in the Light.

THEOPHYL. Though some however might not believe, he is not accountable for them. When a man shuts himself up in a dark room, so as to receive no light from the sun's rays, he is the cause of the deprivation, not the sun. In like manner John was sent, that all men might believe; but if no such result followed, he is not the cause of the failure.

CHRYS. Forasmuch however as with us, the one who witnesses, is commonly a more important, a more trustworthy person, than the one to whom he bears witness, to do away with any such notion in the present case the Evangelist proceeds; He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. If this were not his intention, in repeating the words, to bear witness of that Light, the addition would be superfluous, and rather a verbal repetition, than the explanation of a truth.

THEOPHYL. But it will be said, that we do not allow John or any of the saints to be or ever to have been light. The difference is this: If we call any of the saints light, we put light without the article. So if asked whether John is light, without the article, you may allow without hesitation that he is: if with the article, you allow it not. For he is not very, original, light, but is only called so, on account of his partaking of the light, which comes from the true Light.

AUG. What Light it is to which John bears witness, he shows himself, saying, That was the true Light.

CHRYS. Or thus; Having said above that John had come, and was sent, to bear witness of the Light, lest any from the recent coming of the witness, should infer the same of Him who is witnessed to, the Evangelist takes us back to that existence which is beyond all beginning, saying, That was the true Light.

AUG. Wherefore is there added, true? Because man enlightened is called light, but the true Light is that which lightens. For our eyes are called lights, and yet, without a lamp at night, or the sun by day, these lights are open to no purpose. Wherefore he adds: which lightens every man: but if every man, then John himself. He Himself then enlightened the person, by whom He wished Himself to be pointed out. And just as we may often, from the reflection of the sun's rays on some object, know the sun to be risen, though we cannot fool; at the sun itself; as even feeble eyes can look at an illuminated wall, or some object of that kind: even so, those to whom Christ came, being too weak to behold Him, He threw His rays upon John; John confessed the illumination, and so the illuminator Himself was discovered. It is said, that comes into the world. Had man not departed from Him, he had not had to be enlightened; but therefore is he to be here enlightened, because he departed thence, when he might have been enlightened.

THEOPHYL. Let the Manichean blush, who pronounces us the creatures of a dark and malignant creator: for we should never be enlightened, were we not the children of the true Light.

CHRYS. Where are those too, who deny Him to be very God? We see here that He is called very Light. But if He lightens every man that comes into the world, how is it that so many have gone on without light? For all have not known the worship of Christ. The answer is: He only enlightens every man, so far as pertains to Him. If men shut their eyes, and will not receive the rays of this light, their darkness arises not from the fault of the light, but from their own wickedness, inasmuch as they voluntarily deprive themselves of the gift of grace. For grace is poured out upon all; and they, who will not enjoy the gift, may impute it to their own blindness.

AUG. Or the words, lightens every man, may be understood to mean, not that there is no one who is not enlightened, but that no one is enlightened except by Him.

BEDE; Including both natural and divine wisdom; for as no one can exist of himself, so no one can be wise of himself.

ORIGEN; Or thus: We must not understand the words, lightens every man that comes into the world, of the growth from hidden seeds to organized bodies, but of the entrance into the invisible world, by the spiritual regeneration and grace, which is given in Baptism. Those then the true Light lightens, who come into the world of goodness, not those who rush into the world of sin.

THEOPHYL. Or thus: The intellect which is given in us for our direction, and which is called natural reason, is said here to be a light given us by God. But some by the ill use of their reason have darkened themselves.

AUG. The Light which lightens every man that comes into the world, came here in the flesh; because while He was here in His Divinity alone, the foolish, blind, and unrighteous could not discern Him; those of whom it is said above, The darkness comprehended it not. Hence the text; He was in the world.

ORIGEN; For as, when a person leaves off speaking, his voice ceases to be, and vanishes; so if the Heavenly Father should cease to speak His Word, the effect of that Word, i.e. the universe which is created in the Word, shall cease to exist.

AUG. You must not suppose however, that He was in the world in the same sense in which the earth, cattle, men, are in the world; but in the sense in which an artificer controls his own work; whence the text, And the world was made by Him. Nor again did He make it after the manner of all artificer; for whereas an artificer is external to what he fabricates, God pervades the world, carrying on the work of creation in every part, and never absent from any part: by the presence of His Majesty He both makes and controls what is made. Thus He was in the world, as He by Whom the world was made.

CHRYS. And again, because He was in the world, but not coeval with the world, for this cause he introduced the words, and the world was made by Him: thus taking you back again to the eternal existence of the Only-Begotten. For when we are told that the whole of creation was made by Him, we must be very dull not to acknowledge that the Maker existed before the work.

THEOPHYL. Here he overthrows at once the insane notion of the Manichaeon, who says that the world is the work of a malignant creature, and the opinion of the Arian, that the Son of God is a creature.

AUG. But what means this, The world was made by Him? The earth, sky, and sea, and all that are therein, are called the world. But in another sense, the lovers of the world are called the world, of whom he says, And the world knew Him not. For did the sky, or Angels, not know their Creator, Whom the very devils confess, Whom the whole universe has borne witness to? Who then did not know Him? Those who, from their love of the world, are called the world; for such live in heart in the world, while those who do not love it, have their body in the world, but their heart in heaven; as said the Apostle, our conversation is in heaven. By their love of the world, such men merit being called by the name of the place where they live. And just as in speaking of a bad house, or good house, we do not mean praise or blame to the walls, but to the inhabitants; so when we talk of the world, we mean those who live there in the love of it.

CHRYS. But they who were the friends of God, knew Him even before His presence in the body; whence Christ said below, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day. When the Gentiles then interrupt us with the question, Why has He come in these last times to work our salvation, having neglected us so long? we reply, that He was in the world before, superintending what He had made, and was known to all who were worthy of Him; and that, if the world knew Him not, those of whom the world was not worthy knew Him. The reason follows, why the world knew Him not. The Evangelist calls those men the world, who are tied to the world, and savor of worldly things; for there is nothing that disturbs the mind so much, as this melting with the love of present things.

CHRYS. When He said that the world knew Him not, he referred to the times of the old dispensation, but what follows has reference to the time of his preaching; He came to his own.

AUG. Because all things were made by Him.

THEOPHYL. By his own, understand either the world, or Judea, which He had chosen for His inheritance.

CHRYS. He came then to His own, not for His own good, but for the good of others. But whence did He Who fills all things, and is every where present, come? He came out of condescension to us, though in reality He had been in the world all along. But the world not seeing Him, because it knew Him not, He deigned to put on flesh. And this manifestation and condescension is called His advent. But the merciful God so contrives His dispensations, that we may shine forth in proportion to our goodness, and therefore He will not compel, but invites men, by persuasion and kindness, to come of their own accord: and so, when He came, some received Him, and others received Him not. He desires not an unwilling and forced service; for no one who comes unwillingly devotes himself wholly to Him. Whence what follows, And his own received him not. He here calls the Jews His own, as being his peculiar people; as indeed are all men in some sense, being made by Him. And as above, to the shame of our common nature, he said, that the world which was made by Him, knew not its Maker: so here again, indignant at the ingratitude of the Jews, he brings a heavier charge, viz. that His own received Him not.

AUG. But if none at all received, none will be saved. For no one will be saved, but he who received Christ at His coming; and therefore he adds, As many as received Him.

CHRYS. Whether they be bond or free, Greek or Barbarian, wise or unwise, women or men, the young or the aged, all are made meet for the honor, which the Evangelist now proceeds to mention. To them gave He power to become the sons of God.

AUG. O amazing goodness! He was born the Only Son, yet would not remain so; but grudged not to admit joint heirs to His inheritance. Nor was this narrowed by many partaking of it.

CHRYS. He said not that He made them the sons of God, but gave them power to become the sons of God: showing that there is need of much care, to preserve the image, which is formed by our adoption in Baptism, untarnished: and showing at the same time also that no one can take this power from us, except we rob ourselves of it. Now, if the delegates of worldly governments have often nearly as much power as those governments themselves, much more is this the case with us, who derive our dignity from God. But at the same time the Evangelist wishes to show that this grace comes to us of our own will and endeavor: that, in short, the operation of grace being supposed, it is in the power of our free will to make us the sons of God.

THEOPHYL. Or the meaning is, that the most perfect sonship will only be attained at the resurrection, as said the Apostle, Wailing for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. He therefore gave us the power to become the sons of God, i.e. the power of obtaining this grace at some future time.

CHRYS. And because in the matter of these ineffable benefits, the giving of grace belongs to God, but the extending of faith to man, He subjoins, even to those who believe on his name. Why then declare you not, John, the punishment of those who received Him not? Is it because there is no greater punishment than that, when the power of becoming the sons of God is offered to men, they should not become such, but voluntarily deprive themselves of the dignity? But besides this, inextinguishable fire awaits all such, as will appear clearly farther on.

AUG. To be made then the sons of God, and brothers of Christ, they must of course be born; for if they are not born, how can they be sons? Now the sons of men are born of flesh and blood, and the will of man, and the embrace of wedlock; but how these are born, the next words declare: Not of bloods; that is, the male's and the female's. Bloods is not correct Latin, but as it is plural in the Greek, the translator preferred to put it so, though it be not strictly grammatical, at the same time explaining the word in order not to offend the weakness of one's hearers.

BEDE; It should be understood that in holy Scripture, blood in the plural number, has the signification of sin: thus in the Psalms, Deliver me from blood-guiltiness.

AUG. In that which follows, Nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, the flesh is put for the female; because, when she was made out of the rib, Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh. The flesh therefore is put for the wife, as the spirit sometimes is for the husband; because that the one ought to govern, the other to obey. For what is there worse than a house, where the woman has rule over the man? But these that we speak of are born neither of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God.

BEDE; The carnal birth of men derives its origin from the embrace of wedlock, but the spiritual is dispensed by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

CHRYS. The Evangelist makes this declaration, that being taught the vileness and inferiority of our former birth, which is through blood, and the will of the flesh, and understanding the loftiness and nobleness of the second, which is through grace, we might hence receive great knowledge, worthy of being bestowed by him who begat us, and after this show forth much zeal.

AUG. Having said, Born of God; to prevent surprise and trepidation at so great, so apparently incredible a grace, that men should be born of God; to assure us, he says, And the Word was as made flesh. Why marvel you then that men are born of God? Know that God Himself was born of man.

CHRYS. Or thus, After saying that they were born of God, who received Him, he sets forth the cause of this honor, viz. the Word being made flesh, God's own Son was made the son of man, that he might make the sons of men the sons of God. Now when you hear that the Word was made flesh, be not disturbed, for He did not change His substance into flesh, which it were indeed impious to suppose; but remaining what He was, took upon Him the form of a servant. But as there are some who say, that the whole of the incarnation was only in appearance, to refute such a blasphemy, he used the expression, was made, meaning to represent not a conversion of substance, but an assumption of real flesh. But if

they say, God is omnipotent; why then could He not be changed into flesh? we reply, that a change from an unchangeable nature is a contradiction.

AUG. As our word becomes the bodily voice, by its assumption of that voice, as a means of developing itself externally, so the Word of God was made flesh, by assuming flesh, as a means of manifesting Itself to the world. And as our word is made voice, yet is not turned into voice; so the Word of God was made flesh, but never turned into flesh. It is by assuming another nature, not by consuming themselves in it, that our word is made voice, and the Word, flesh.

EX GESTIS CONC. EPH. The discourse which we utter, which we use in conversation with each other, is incorporeal, imperceptible, impalpable; but clothed in letters and characters, it becomes material, perceptible, tangible. So too the Word of God, which was naturally invisible, becomes visible, and that comes before us in tangible form, which was by nature incorporeal.

ALCUIN. When we think how the incorporeal soul is joined to the body, so as that of two is made one man, we too shall the more easily receive the notion of the incorporeal Divine substance being joined to the soul in the body, in unity of person; so as that the Word is not turned into flesh, nor the flesh into the Word; just as the soul is not turned into body, nor the body into soul.

THEOPHYL. Apollinarius of Laodicea raised a heresy upon this text; saying, that Christ had flesh only, not a rational soul; in the place of which His divinity directed and controlled His body.

AUG. If men are disturbed however by its being said that the Word was made flesh, without mention of a soul; let them know that the flesh is put for the whole man, the part for the whole, by a figure of speech; as in the Psalms, Unto you shall all flesh come; and again in Romans, By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified. In the same sense it is said here that the Word was made flesh; meaning that the Word was made man.

THEOPHYL. The Evangelist intends by making mention of the flesh, to show the unspeakable condescension of God, and lead us to admire His compassion, in assuming for our salvation, what was so opposite and incongenial to His nature, as the flesh: for the soul has some propinquity to God. If the Word, however, was made flesh, and assumed not at the same time a human soul, our souls, it would follow, would not be yet restored: for what He did not assume, He could not sanctify. What a mockery then, when the soul first sinned, to assume and sanctify the flesh only, leaving the weakest part untouched! This text overthrows Nestorius, who asserted that it was not the very Word, even God, Who the Self-same was made man, being conceived of the sacred blood of the Virgin: but that the Virgin brought forth a man endowed with every kind of virtue, and that the Word of God was united to him: thus making out two sons, one born of the Virgin, i.e. man, the other born of God, that is, the Son of God, united to that man by grace, and relation, and love. In opposition to him the Evangelist declares, that the very Word was made Man, not that the Word fixing upon a righteous man united Himself to him.

CYRIL; The Word uniting to Himself a body of flesh animated with a rational soul, substantially, was ineffably and incomprehensibly made Man, and called the Son of man,

and that not according to the will only, or good-pleasure, nor again by the assumption of the Person alone. The natures are different indeed which are brought into true union, but He Who is of both, Christ the Son, is One; the difference of the natures, on the other hand, not being destroyed in consequence of this coalition.

THEOPHYL; From the text, The Word was made flesh, we learn this farther, that the Word Itself is man, and being the Son of God was made the Son of a woman, who is rightly called the Mother of God, as having given birth to God in the flesh.

HILARY; Some, however, who think God the Only-Begotten, God the Word, Who was in the beginning with God, not to be God substantially, but a Word sent forth, the Son being to God the Father, what a word is to one who utters it, these men, in order to disprove that the Word, being substantially God, and abiding in the form of God, was born the Man Christ, argue subtilely, that, whereas that Man (they say) derived His life rather from human origin than from the mystery of a spiritual conception, God the Word did not make Himself Man of the womb of the Virgin; but that the Word of God was in Jesus, as the spirit of prophecy in the Prophets. And they are accustomed to charge us with holding, that Christ was born a Man, not of our body and soul; whereas we preach the Word made flesh, and after our likeness born Man, so that He Who is truly Son of God, was truly born Son of man; and that, as by His own act He took upon Him a body of the Virgin, so of Himself He took a soul also, which in no case is derived from man by mere parental origin. And seeing He, The Self-same, is the Son of man, how absurd were it, besides the Son of God, Who is the Word, to make Him another person besides, a sort of prophet, inspired by the Word of God; whereas our Lord Jesus Christ is both the Son of God, and the Son of man.

CHRYS. Lest from it being said, however, that the Word was made flesh, you should infer improperly a change of His incorruptible nature, he subjoins, And dwelt among us. For that which inhabits is not the same, but different from the habitation: different, I say, in nature; though as to union and conjunction, God the Word and the flesh are one, without confusion or extinction of substance.

ALCUIN; Or, dwelt among us, means, lived amongst men.

CHRYS. Having said that we are made the sons of God and in no other way than because the Word was made flesh; he mentions another gift, And we saw His glory. Which glory we should not have seen, had He not, by His alliance with humanity, become visible to us. For if they could not endure to look on the glorified face of Moses, but there was need of a veil, how could soiled and earthly creatures, like ourselves, have borne the sight of undisguised Divinity, which is not vouchsafed even to the higher powers themselves.

AUG. Or thus; in that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, His birth became a kind of ointment to anoint the eyes of our heart, that we might through His humanity discern His majesty; and therefore it follows, And we saw His glory. No one could see His glory, who was not healed by the humility of the flesh. For there had flown upon man's eye as it were dust from the earth: the eye had been diseased, and earth was sent to heal it again; the flesh had blinded you, the flesh restores you. The soul by consenting to carnal affections had become carnal; hence the eye of the mind had been blinded: then the

physician made for thee ointment. He came in such wise, as that by the flesh He destroyed the corruption of the flesh. And thus the Word was made flesh, that you might be able to say, We saw His glory.

CHRYS. He subjoins, As of the Only-Begotten of the Father: for many prophets, as Moses, Elijah, and others, workers of miracles, had been glorified, and Angels also who appeared to men, shining with the brightness belonging to their nature; Cherubim and Seraphim too, who were seen in glorious array by the prophets. But the Evangelist withdrawing our minds from these, and raising them above all nature, and every preeminence of fellow servants, leads us up to the summit Himself; as if he said, Not of prophet, or of any other man, or of Angel, or Archangel, or any of the higher powers, is the glory which we beheld; but as that of the very Lord, very King, very and true Only-Begotten Son.

GREG. In Scripture language as, and as it were, are sometimes put not for likeness but reality; whence the expression, As of the Only-Begotten of the Father.

CHRYS. As if he said: We saw His glory, such as it was becoming and proper for the Only-Begotten and true Son to have. We have a form of speech, like it, derived from our seeing kings always splendidly robed. When the dignity of a man's carriage is beyond description, we say, In short, he went as a king. So too John says, We saw His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father. For Angels, when they appeared, did every thing as servants who had a Lord, but He as the Lord appearing in humble form. Yet did all creatures recognize their Lord, the star calling the Magi, the Angels the shepherds, the child leaping in the womb acknowledged Him: yes the Father bore witness to Him from heaven, and the Paraclete descending upon Him: and the very universe itself shouted louder than any trumpet, that the King of heaven had come. For devils fled, diseases were healed, the graves gave up the dead, and souls were brought out of wickedness, to the utmost height of virtue. What shall one say of the wisdom of precepts, of the virtue of heavenly laws, of the excellent institution of the angelical life?

ORIGEN; Full of grace and truth. Of this the meaning is twofold. For it may be understood of the Humanity, and the Divinity of the Incarnate Word, so that the fullness of grace has reference to the Humanity, according to which Christ is the Head of the Church, and the first-born of every creature: for the greatest and original example of grace, by which man, with no preceding merits, is made God, is manifested primarily in Him. The fullness of the grace of Christ may also be understood of the Holy Spirit, whose sevenfold operation filled Christ's Humanity. The fullness of truth applies to the Divinity but if you had rather understand the fullness of grace and truth of the New Testament, you may with propriety pronounce the fullness of the grace of the New Testament to be given by Christ, and the truth of the legal types to have been fulfilled in Him.

THEOPHYL. Or, full of grace, inasmuch as His word was gracious, as said David, Full of grace are your lips; and truth, because what Moses and the Prophets spoke or did in figure, Christ did in reality.

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