

Again, you may see, that she who is called Salome by Mark, is called by Matthew the mother of Zebedee's children; this, therefore, was Salome. It seems, then, that the same Mary of Cleophas, or Alphæus, was the mother of these four—viz., James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude. For Matthew and Mark (in the places already cited) call her the mother of James and Josès. But Jude was the brother of James, as he says himself in the beginning of his Epistle. Simon also, or Simeon, who succeeded his brother James at Jerusalem, was also a brother, for he was the son of Cleophas and Mary his wife. Moreover, Hegeſippus, S. Chryſoſtom, and ſeveral other Fathers aſſert that this Mary was not the daughter, but the wife of Cleophas. And the ſame Hegeſippus ſays this Cleophas was the brother of Joſeph, the ſpouſe of the Bleſſed Virgin. He is the ſame Cleophas to whom, with his companion, Chriſt made himſelf known on the way to Emmaus in the breaking of bread. He was ſlain by the Jews, in that very houſe of Emmaus, on account of His confeſſion of Chriſt. He died a martyr, on the 25th of Sept., as the Roman Martyrology has it.

You will aſk, why then do Matthew and Mark call this Mary the mother of James and Joſès, but not of Simon and Jude? I reply, for the ſake of brevity, and becauſe the two firſt, viz., James and Joſès were accounted at that time more celebrated than the other two. This Mary, the mother of ſo many ſaintly ſons and daughters, died in ſanctity, in Judea, on the 9th April.

And his ſiſters, &c. The ſiſters of James, Joſès, &c., are called by Hippolytus (*Ap. Niceph. l. 2. c. 3.*), Eſther, and Tama; but by S. Epiphanius (*Hæres 78.*) and Theophylact they are called Mary, Salome who was the wife of Zebedee, and the mother of S. John and S. James the great, the Apoſtles, who were therefore nephews, through their ſiſter, of James the leſs, Joſès, &c. (*See Chriſtophor. a Caſtro de Deipaz. c. 1.*), where he ſhows that Salome was older than her brothers James and Jude. For ſhe was the mother of John and James who were choſen by Chriſt, together with their uncles, James and Jude, to be Apoſtles. For John ſeems to have been only three years younger than Chriſt. Hence too, only James, Joſès, Simon and Jude, the ſons of Cleophas, are called brothers, *i.e.*, couſins of Chriſt, on the father's ſide. But John and James the ſons of Zebedee, are not called brethren of Chriſt, becauſe they were not firſt couſins of Chriſt, but children of His couſin Salome. Again Chriſtophor. gathers from hence, that James the leſs, who was the brother of Salome, was ſenior to James the greater, the ſon of Salome and Zebedee, by nine or ten years at the leaſt. James the leſs was the uncle of James the great. For they were not ſo called, in reſpect of age but of their vocation, by Chriſt. It is not doubtful that Chriſt had many other relations and connections, but theſe are ſpecially mentioned, both becauſe they were nearer in blood; and becauſe they at length believed on Him, and became His Apoſtles.

They were offended, &c. This is, they were indignant that Chriſt, who was but a workman, ſhould ſet himſelf up for a prophet and teacher; juſt as men would be offended and indignant now, if they ſaw any one jump out of a workſhop into a Cathedral, and act the Doctor; and would accuſe him of the utmoſt arrogance and folly. But the inhabitants of Nazareth were ignorant that Chriſt was the Son of God, who, out of His immense love, had not diſdained to be born among workmen, and to act as one, that He might redeem us, and teach us humility by His example. Therefore this charity and humility of Chriſt, which ought to have made them admire and venerate Him, was a ſtumbling-block to them, becauſe they would not believe that God would be willing to ſtoop ſo low.

But Jeſus ſaid unto them, &c. This is a common proverb, and generally, but not univerſally true; for John the Baptist, as well as Iſaiah, Elias, Elisha, Daniel, Hoſea, &c., were held in great honour by the Jews their countrymen.

Now the firſt cauſe why a prophet, that is a teacher, is frequently without honour among his own people, is what S. Jerome gives, "It is almoſt natural for citizens to have an invidious feeling towards their fellow citizens. For they do not conſider a man's preſent works, but call to mind his frail infancy, as though they themſelves had not arrived by the ſame gradations of age at mature years." Liſten to S. Ambroſe, (*c. 4. Luc.*). "No ſlight envy is that which betrays itſelf, which forgetful of the charity belonging to citizenship, turns the cauſes of love into bitter hatred. This is declared both by example and the oracle, that, in vain, do you look for the aſſiſtance of heavenly mercy, if you envy the progress of another's virtue. For the Lord deſpises the envious, and turns away the miracles of His power from thoſe who diſparage the divine bleſſings in others."

2. Becauſe too great familiarity breeds contempt as S. Chryſoſtom ſays. And Theophylact ſays, "We are wont to deſpiſe thoſe things which are very common, always paying greater regard to foreign and unaccuſtomed things. We admire what comes from abroad; we deſpiſe what we have at home—even when what we have at home is better. Thus, we turn up our noſe at our own phyſicians, however learned they may be; and we purchaſe herbs and flowers brought from India, when we have the very ſame, or better, in our own woods. Of a truth 'novelty is charming.'"

3. Becauſe by daily converſation with people, their faults, or natural infirmities, are readily diſcovered; and this is apt to leſſen our veneration for them. But it is otherwiſe in converſing with God, becauſe the greater conſequence we have with Him, the more does it conduce to reverence. The inhabitants of Nazareth ſeeing Chriſt eat, drink, ſleep, work like other men, deſpiſed Him, eſpecially when they beheld His relations mean and poor: Nor, indeed, could they believe that He was born of a Virgin Mother, and had God for His Father. Let, therefore, a teacher and preacher avoid familiarity with men, leſt he be deſpiſed; for, as S. Cyril ſays, "Preaching is not able to bring forth fruit where the preacher is deſpiſed."

And He did not many mighty works there, &c. (*Arab.*), on account of the paucity of their faith. This cauſed them to be unworthy of miracles. S. Jerome gives another reaſon, "That He might not condemn their unbelief by working many miracles." For he who beholds many miracles, and does not believe, ſins more gravely than he who has beheld but few, and will be, therefore, more heavily condemned, and puniſhed in hell This was the cauſe why Chriſt wrought but few miracles among the Jews, ſays S. Jerome, "He works greater miracles among the Gentiles, day by day, by His apoſtles, not ſo much in healing men's bodies as in ſaving their ſouls"



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For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.*

Matthew writes his gospel account to give us the view of Jesus as the King. He records Jesus' authority in calling the disciples: "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19), and he also records more than any of the others about Jesus' teaching concerning God's kingdom and heavenly rule.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

Continuation of Matthew 13: 24-58

Verse 24- *Another parable put He forth, &c.* The Syriac adds, *enigmatically*. This means it is done in the kingdom of Heaven in the same way that it is done in a field—when a man sows his seed, and his enemy sows tares over it. Wherefore Mark has (iv. 26.) *So is the kingdom of God, as if a man cast seed into the earth, and while men slept, &c.* For the whole parable is compared with the whole of the things signified, not part with part: for otherwise the sower would not be like to a kingdom but to a king, the King of Heaven.

Verse 25- *Whilst men slept, &c.* That is to say by night, whilst men were sleeping, his enemy came unknown to everyone. He was envious of the prosperous crops of his rival, and in order to ruin them, he sowed tares among them. The expression, *whilst men slept*, adds to the elegance of the parable: for those who are envious are accustomed to frame such plots against those who sleep.

was doing;" answered wittily, "He is making a bier for Julian." This was shortly before Julian was slain, (*See Sozomen. l. 6. c. 2.*) Some however say that Christ did not exercise a workman's craft. But I have said more on this subject on S. Luke ii. 51.

Mystically: "God is the workman who is the Father of Christ, who framed the works of the whole world, who built the ark of Noah, who set in order the Tabernacle of Moses, who instituted the ark of the Covenant. You might call Him a carpenter, who planes down a rigid mind, and cuts away proud thoughts." (*Serm. de Nat.*) Moreover, says S. Chrysologus (*Serm. 48.*) "Christ was the son of a workman; but of Him, who made the frame of the universe, not by a hammer, but by His command; who disposed the composition of the elements, not by skill but by His command; who kindled the sun not by earthly fire, but by His supreme heat; who made all things out of nothing, and made them, O man, for thee, that thou mightest reflect upon the artificer by considering His work."

And His brethren, James, &c. Brethren, i.e., cousins, as I have said Chap. xii. 45. *James:* This is James the less, called the son of Alphæus, an Apostle, and first Bishop of Jerusalem. I have spoken more at length concerning him in the preface to his Canonical Epistle.

And Joseph: The Greek and Syriac have *Joses*. He was one of the seventy disciples. See what I have said about him on Acts i. 23.

And Simon: Many think from Abdia, Sophronius, Isidore. and Bede, that this was Simon the Canaanite, the Apostle. As though this last had been the brother of James the less and Jude. But Simon the Apostle came from Cana of Galilee; but these brethren, that is, cousins of Christ, were sprung from Nazareth, together with Christ Himself. Wherefore the inhabitants of Nazareth wondered from whence there was in Jesus, their fellow citizen, such great wisdom, since they knew his brethren and relations to be simple and unlearned persons, as is plain from Mark vi. 1., &c. It seems therefore more probable that this Simon is the S. Simeon who succeeded S. James as Bishop of Jerusalem. For Simeon was the son of Cleophas and his wife Mary, as Hegesippus testifies (*Eus. H.E. 3. 11.*), whom SS. Chrysostom and Theophylact teach to have been the brother of S. James the less. Although Hegesippus and Epiphanius (*Hæres. 66.*) are of opinion that he was not the brother, but the cousin of James. He was that Simeon, who was crucified in the tenth year of Trajan, when he was 120 years old, A.D. 109; and astonished everyone by his constancy and fortitude. From this it follows that those writers who thought him to be the same person as Simon the Canaanite are mistaken.

And Jude. He was a brother of James the less. I have spoken of him in the preface to his Epistle.

You will ask whether these four were brethren, strictly so called, born of the same father and mother? In the first place, it is plain that James and Joses were brothers. This appears from Matt. xxvii. 56. As to the other two, Simon and Jude, some think they were brothers of James and Joses, but on the mother's side only. They say that their mother was the Mary who was first married to Alphæus, to whom she bore James and Joses, and that therefore James is called *of Alphæus*, that is, *his son*; and after Alphæus was dead, she married Cleophas, to whom she bore Simon and Jude. Thus S. Thomas (*c. 1, ad. Galat. Lect 5*).

2. Baronius (*apparatus. Annal. c. 46*) considers there were three sisters—*i.e.*, cousins of the Blessed Virgin—the name of Mary. The first, Mary, the wife of Alphæus, and the mother of James and Jude (the Apostles), and Joses. 2. Mary, the wife of Cleophas, the mother of that S. Simeon who succeeded S. James in the Bishopric of Jerusalem. The third was Mary Salome, the wife of Zebedee and the mother of the Apostles James and John.

But it is clear that Mary, the wife of Alphæus is the same as Mary the wife of Cleophas, if we compare S. John xix. 25 with Matt. xxvii. 56, and Mark xv. 40. For John says. "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." But Matthew says: "Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children." And Mark: "There were also women looking on afar off; among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome."

We see here plainly, that she who is called by John *Mary of Cleophas* is called by Matthew and Mark, *Mary the mother of James and Joses*; James, I say, who is called (Acts i. and Matt. x.) not the son of Zebedee, but of Alphæus. Therefore, *Mary of Cleophas* and *Mary of Alphæus* are one and the same person. Cleophas and Alphæus are really one and the same Hebrew word, by a common interchange of letters. Unless you prefer to consider that one of them was the husband, the other the father, of this Mary.

Evangelical doctor well instructed to announce the Gospel, and lead believers to the kingdom of Heaven; such as ye are, and shall be, O ye Apostles, who are fully taught by Me and the Holy Spirit. He opposes His own Scribes, *i.e.*, Doctors and Preachers, His Apostles in fact, to the Scribes of the Jews, which last only preached the law of Moses, and the earthly advantages flowing from it.

Things new and old. This is a proverb, signifying every kind of food, substance, or goods necessary or useful for sustaining a family. Some of these things are best when new, others when old. Hence the proverb, “New honey, old wine;” *i.e.*, honey is best when fresh, but the oldest wine is the best. Hence too the verse in Pindar’s ninth Olympic Hymn, “Praise old wine, but the flowers of new Hymns.” The meaning is—As the father of a family provides for his household things new and old, *i.e.*, everything necessary and useful, so ought a Gospel teacher to bring forth, at suitable times, according to the capacity of his hearers, various discourses, knowledge of every kind; and especially to take care to teach them the new and unknown mysteries of the Gospel, by means of old examples, such as parables and similitudes, which his hearers can take in. Moreover, some of the ancients, as SS. Chrysostom, Augustine, Jerome, Hilary, and Bede apply *old and new* to the Old and New Testaments. For that is the best preaching when the New Testament is confirmed and illustrated from the Old, and proved to be in all points typically agreeable to it. For the Old Testament was the type of the New; the New Testament is the ante type of the Old.

Abul. objects that when Christ said this, the New Testament was not written. I reply that it was already spoken and taught by Christ, and was shortly about to be written by the four Evangelists; and that Christ knew this. Wherefore He bids the Apostles that they should preach themselves what they had heard, but that their successors should preach the same things as written by the Evangelists.

Verse 53- *Jesus passed on from thence, i.e.*, from His house which He had at Capernaum.

And came unto his own country, &c. This country was not Bethlehem where He was born, but Nazareth, where he was brought up.

Is not this the son of the carpenter, &c. The Gr. is, *the son of the workman*, the Arab. adds, *in wood*. S. Mark (vi. 3.) *Is not this she workman?* “Nor is it to be wondered at,” says S. Augustine, “since both might be said, for they believed Him to be a workman, in that he was the son of a workman.” This was because they were accustomed to see Him working with Joseph. It seems therefore that Christ wrought with His father Joseph until He was thirty years of age, when He began to teach and to preach. SS. Hilary and Ambrose think that Christ was a blacksmith; Hugo, a mason, or a goldsmith. The general opinion is that Christ was a carpenter, as S. Thomas, teaches out of S. Chrysostom. S. Justin (*Dial. c. Tryph.*) says, “He was accustomed to make ploughs and yokes for oxen.” Hence Christ in His preaching often takes His similitudes from those objects, as, “Take my yoke upon you,” and, “No man putting his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” Hence too when a Christian was asked in derision by Julian the Apostate, “what the Son of the Carpenter

Symbolically, S. Jerome and S. Augustine understand this sleeping to mean negligence and carelessness on the part of bishops and pastors of the Church. Or they understand it of the death of the Apostles, on which the heretics took occasion to sow the tares of their heresies and wickednesses. Hence let pastors learn to watch over their flocks. “The life of mortals is a watch.” For as Augustine says, “To sleep more than to watch is the life of dormice rather than of men.”

Tares, the Hebrew Gospel reads, חרולימים *charulim* *i.e.*, *nettles, thistles*. The word in Greek is *zizania*, a word peculiar to the Gospels, unknown to Cicero and Demosthenes, and signifying every kind of worthless and noxious weed. All impurity in seed is called *zizania*, as S. Augustine says. Tertullian (*de prescript. hæret. c. 31*) interprets *zizania* to mean *wild oats*. “In the parable,” he says, “The Lord first sowed his good seed, and it was afterwards that the devil sowed the spurious seed of his barren crop.” Whence he gathers that the fact of heresy being later in time is a mark of falsehood. Hence too (*l. de arima c. 16.*) he calls the sower of tares “the nocturnal interpolator of evil seed.”

Zizania then, or *tares* are whatsoever is injurious to the crops, or inimical to wheat, as *darnel*, for instance. Hear Pliny (*l. 18. c. 17.*) “I should reckon darnel and thistles and thorns and burrs, no less than brambles, among the diseases of the crops rather than among the pests of the ground.” Some are of opinion that *zizania* is a Syriac word. Others derive it from the Chaldee *zyz*, an *appearance, a figure*. For it has the appearance of nourishing corn, but is not. The Germans call *zizania, droncacert*, because it makes people drunk: it also gives vertigo and stupefaction to those who eat it. Hence *zizania* signifies mystically heretics and sinners, especially those who corrupt others by word or example, as SS. Augustine, Chrysostom, and Gregory teach. For *zizania* injure the wheat, and choke and kill it, because they draw away nourishment from it, and so as it were corrupt and strangle the wheat. This is Christ’s second parable of the tares, by which He tacitly rebukes the Scribes and Pharisees, His adversaries, who sowed the tares of their false accusations over the seed of the Word of God, *i.e.*, His preaching of the Gospel, by saying that Jesus was opposed to Moses, that He had a familiar spirit, and so on; by which they inferred that Jesus was not the Messiah, but a magician and an impostor. By this means they turned away the people from Him and His Gospel, and choked and destroyed the good seeds and desires of faith and piety which Christ had scattered in their hearts. Therefore they were tares, *i.e.*, the evil seed of the devil.

Verse 26- *When the blade was sprung up, &c.* For the first sprouts of *zizania* and of wheat are alike, so that one cannot be discerned from the other; but when they are grown up, they are easily distinguished.

Verse 27- *Servants of the householder, &c. Lest ye root up the wheat also it them.* For the tares are intertwined and interwoven among the roots of the

wheat, so that if you were to pull up the former, you must root up the latter also. This parable Christ will expound, in verse 31.

Verse 31- *The kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, &c.* Instead of the birds of the heaven lodge in the branches of it the Arabic has *they are overshadowed by its branches*. This is Christ's third parable, the occasion and cause of which S. Chrysostom gives as follows: "Because the Lord had said that of the seed three parts perish, and one is preserved, and again of that which is preserved, there is great loss on account of the tares which are sown above it, lest people should say, who then and how many will believe? he removes this fear by the parable of the grain of mustard seed, and therefore it is said, *Another parable put He forth unto them, the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, &c.*"

You will enquire in the first place, what it is which is here compared to the kingdom of Heaven, and likened to a grain of mustard seed? 1. S. Hilary understands it of Christ Himself. He says, "The Lord compares Himself to a grain of mustard seed, which is very sharp and the least of all seeds, and whose virtue and power are increased by bruising and pressure. After this grain had been sown in the field, when it was taken by the people and delivered to death, as though in a field by a sort of sowing, there was the burial of its body, it grew above the measure of all herbs, and exceeded the glory of all the prophets. For like a herb the preaching of the prophets was given to Israel as being sick: but now in the branches of the tree, raised from the ground on high, the birds of the air dwell: by these we understand the Apostles, lifted up by the power of Christ, and they overshadow the world with their branches. To them the Gentiles flew for the hope of life; and when they are vexed with whirlwinds, that is by the blasts of the devil, they rest as in the branches of a tree." In like manner S. Gregory (*lib. 19Moral. c. 11.*) expounds this whole parable, "Christ Himself is the grain of mustard seed, who was planted in the sepulchre of the garden, and rose again a mighty tree. He was but a grain when He died; a tree when He rose again. A grain through lowliness of the flesh; a tree by the power of His majesty. A grain, because we saw Him, and there was no comeliness; but a tree because He was fairer than the children of men. The branches of this tree are sacred preachers. And let us see how widely they are spread. For what is spoken concerning them? Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world. The birds rest in their branches, because holy souls who lift up themselves from earthly thoughts by the wings, as it were, of virtues are refreshed after the fatigue of this life by their words and their consolations." You will say, how can Christ be called the kingdom of Heaven, when He is not the kingdom, but its King? It is replied: as a king is as it were the head in a kingdom, so a kingdom is as the body of a king. Wherefore a king represents the whole state or kingdom. Hence according to the rule of Ticonius, often in Scripture what belongs to the Church, which is the kingdom of Christ, is attributed to Christ, and *vice versa*.

2. More plainly and aptly, the kingdom of Heaven and the grain of mustard seed are the Church, especially the Primitive Church.

You will enquire, (2). Why the Gospel is compared to a grain of mustard seed, and

Verse 47- *Again the kingdom of Heaven is like to a drag-net, &c.* The two preceding parables, those viz. of the Treasure and the Pearl denoted the value and dignity of the Gospel. This parable shows its capaciousness, viz. that it embraces all nations and people of the world, bad as well as good. Christ propounded the parable with this object, that the Apostles and Saints should not wonder, if among the faithful they beheld some living wickedly, just as in a great kingdom no one is surprised that murderers, thieves and adulterers are found. Again it was spoken in order that no one should flatter himself, simply on account of being a believing Christian since there are in the Church many who are wicked; but that he should give diligence to be just and holy in the Church.

A drag-net: Gr. *σαγήνη*, signifying the kind of net commonly called a *drag* or *trawling-net*, because of its sweeping the water or the sea in order to catch the fishes. Properly this *sagene* or *drag-net* is the bosom of the net. In like manner all the faithful are, as it were, received into the maternal bosom of the Church, and there are cherished, nourished and preserved.

Of every kind: for thus the Gospel is preached to all nations, and of them the Church is formed. The fishes are believers, the fisher-men are the Apostles, and the drag-net is the Church and the Gospel.

Verse 48- *Which, when it was full, &c., cast the bad away.* They cast them into the sea, or upon the shore. The Arabic is, *They colleted the select fish in their vessels*. The vessels denote the various mansions in the house of our Father, as Christ says, (John. xiv.), or the various abodes of Heaven, which, in another place are called *the eternal tabernacles*. *The bad*, Gr. *σαπρὰ*, i.e., *putrid, decaying, noisome*. From this passage S. Augustine rightly proves against the Donatists that in the Church there are not only good people, or as Calvin says, the elect, but bad and reprobate people.

Verse 49- *So shall it be in the end of the world, &c.* Arabic, *in the end of this time*, that is to say, in the day of judgment.

Verse 52- *He saith unto them, therefore every Scribe, &c.* It is as though He said, Forasmuch as ye, O ye Apostles, have understood by these My parables, how great a treasure the kingdom of Heaven is, ye ought to draw forth all things from this treasury, that ye may communicate them to others; yea, to the whole world. Again: because ye have understood my method of teaching the things of Heaven, and things which are new to men, by means of parables borrowed from things in common use; ye too ought to teach and preach the same things in the same manner, that from the old things, which they do understand, they may receive and learn those new things which ye preach.

A Scribe; Arabic, *a Scribe, who teathes for the kingdom of heaven, i.e., an*

Symbolically. The precious pearl is Christ, also the Blessed Virgin, also the religious state, also charity: “for charity is a precious pearl, without which nothing can profit thee, whatsoever thou mayst have,” says S. Augustine. For charity is the necklace of Christ. Also a precious pearl is the contemplative life, concerning which Christ said of the Magdalene, “Mary hath chosen the good part.” A pearl is, also, the soul of every man. It is also eternal felicity, as our Salmeron appositely shows (*tom. vii. tract. 11*); for all these are principal parts of the kingdom of Heaven, *i.e.*, of the doctrine of the Gospel. Such, likewise, is humility, even as our Thomas teaches, being taught of God himself (*Imitat. Christi. l. 1, c. 2*): “If thou wishest profitably to know and to learn anything, love to be unknown, and to be counted as nothing. This is the loftiest and most useful knowledge—truly to know and despise thy self.” This is the most precious Gospel pearl, but its worth is unknown to the proud children of Adam. Such also is the Cross of Christ, and to suffer for Christ. See Hab. chap. iii. 4: “There were horns in His hands; there was His strength hid.” (*Vulg.*)

The chief and most precious pearl of all, from which all virtues and all the Saints, like pearls are sprung, and from which they derive their beauty and their value, is Christ Himself. For His Deity in His Humanity is as a pearl hid in a shell. It issued forth of the substance of the Virgin, and the dew of the Spirit, most white, through innocence of life. It was exceeding bright through wisdom; round through the possession of all perfection; having the weight of conscience, the smoothness of meekness, the price of blessedness. For says Pliny, “The value of pearls consists in whiteness, size, rotundity, smoothness and weight.” Hear what S. Augustine says, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God: for the Word of the Lord shines with the brightness of truth, and is solid with the firmness of eternity, and is every where alike with the beauty of Divinity: when the shell of the flesh is pierced through, God may be perceived.” This pearl of Christ, says our Salmeron, is small by humility, but precious in value. Let us bear it on the head of our mind by way of ornament; on our forehead by confessing the faith; in our ears by obedience to the Law, obedience rendered to God in Himself, and our Superiors; on our necks and breasts by love; on our arms by the exercise of good works; in rings on our hands by the gift of discerning spirits; in our girdles by chastity; on our garments by modesty and holy devotion to eternal life; but we ourselves also may become precious pearls, and by this means may induce others to imitate the most holy life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally Christ is not only a very precious pearl, but He is also the gem of gems. He is a carbuncle, because He is the light of the world. He is an emerald because He delights the angels by the verdure of His grace. He is strong and invincible as a diamond. He produces joy as a sardius. He heals the leprosy of sin as a chrysoprasus. He assists the bringing forth of good works as a spiritual jasper; He sharpens the intellect as a beryl; He has celestial colour and life, as a sapphire; He resists sleep and drunkenness, as an amethyst; and all the infirmities of the mind, as a hyacinth; He sustained the worry of the passions, as a topaz; He is a sardonyx in brightness and splendour; He is a chrysolite in His golden charity. Whence the foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem are laid with these twelve precious stones, which signify the twelve Apostles of Christ.

what are the resemblances between the two things? I answer, the first is that Christ by this parable intends to signify the immense power and fruitfulness of Evangelical preaching, insomuch that what had a very small beginning with Christ, and by a few Apostles, diffused itself over the whole world. For a grain of mustard seed is *less than all seeds, i.e.*, the least of all seeds; as the Syriac and Arabic have it. The Greek is *μικρότερον πάντων σπερμάτων, i.e.*, *less than all seeds*, meaning *very little*. This must be understood according to the common usage of speech, by which we call what is very little, or one of very small things, *the least*; for otherwise to speak precisely, poppy seed, and the seed of rue, and of some other herbs, is less than mustard seed. Thus the preaching of the Gospel by Christ and the Apostles was at first very circumscribed.

2. A grain of mustard seed, especially in Syria, grows into a tree, so that *birds dwell*—Syriac, *build their nests*—in its branches. Thus the Gospel grew, and filled the whole world, so that the birds of Heaven, *i.e.*, men lofty in knowledge and understanding as well as kings and princes dwelt in its branches. (See Dan. iv. 9 and 19). Some understand by *the birds*, the angels, because they have wings, and are very swift. Hear S. Augustine (*Serm. 33de Sanc.*). “Peter is a branch; Paul is a branch; blessed Laurence, whose festal day we are celebrating, is a branch. All the Apostles and martyrs of the Saviour are branches; and if anyone will bravely lay hold of them, they will escape being drowned in the waves of the world. He who dwells under their shadow shall not feel the fire of hell, and shall be secure from the storm of the tempest of the devil, and from being burnt up in the day of judgment.”

3. And chiefly by mustard is denoted the igneous force and efficacy of the Gospel. “Pythagoras,” says Pliny (*l. 20, c. 22*), “considered that mustard holds the chief place amongst those things whose force is borne upward; since there is nothing which more thoroughly penetrates the nose and the brain.” A grain of mustard refers to the fervour of faith, says S. Augustine.

4. Mustard seed must be bruised; for when it is bruised it emits its igneous force and flavour. Thus the preaching of the Gospel was as it were, bruised by a thousand oppressions and persecutions, which the Apostles suffered; and then it breathed forth its igneous force and strength.

5. Mustard seed, as Pliny says, is sharp and biting. It draws tears, purges away phlegm and cerebral secretions; it is masticated for toothache; when bruised and mixed with vinegar it is applied to the stings of scorpions and the bites of snakes; it is an antidote to the poison of fungi; it is beneficial for the breast and lungs; it is useful against epilepsy, dropsy, asthma, lethargy, and many other diseases. Thus the Gospel expels poisons, that is sins, by the emetic of confession; it is sharp and biting, because it teaches penance and the cross; it excites the tears of compunction; it is medicine for all the faculties of the soul, and especially it dries up concupiscence, and

animates to virtue. “The bitterness of its words is the medicine of souls,” says S. Augustine.

6. Mustard seed by its sharpness seasons food, and renders it palatable. So also the Gospel renders palatable everything which is hard and difficult by means of the example of Christ, and by the hope of future glory which it promises.

S. Augustine says, “A grain of mustard seed is great, not in appearance, but in virtue. At first appearance it seems small, worthless, despised, not possessing savour, nor odour, nor sweetness; but when it is bruised, it sheds abroad its odour and exhales nourishment of a fiery taste. It is so inflamed with the fervour of heat that there might be enclosed in it so much fire, by which men could (especially in the winter-time) drive away cold, and warm themselves inwardly.” After this he applies the qualities of mustard to the Gospel and the Christian faith, thus: “Thus too the Christian faith, at first sight, appears small and worthless, not manifesting its power, not carrying any semblance of pride, neither furnishing grace. But as soon as it begins to be bruised by divers temptations, immediately it manifests its vigour, it indicates its sharpness, it breathes the warmth of belief in the Lord, and is possessed with so great ardour of divine fire, that both itself is hot and it compels those who participate to be fervent also. As the two disciples said in the Gospel, when the Lord spoke with them after His Passion, “Did not our hearts burn within us by the way, while the Lord Jesus opened to us the Scriptures?” A grain of mustard, then, warms the inward members of our body, but the power of faith burns up the sins of our heart. The one indeed takes away piercing cold; the other expels the devil’s frost of transgressions. A grain of mustard, I say, purges away corporeal humours, but faith puts an end to the flux of lusts. By the one, medicine is gained for the head; but by faith our spiritual Head, Christ the Lord, is often refreshed. Moreover, we enjoy the sacred odour of faith, according to the analogy of mustard seed, as the blessed Apostle saith, “We are a sweet savour of Christ unto God.”

Tropologically; All these things may be applied to a faithful soul, and especially to an Apostle, and to a suffering Christian, or to a martyr. Wherefore the Church adapts this parable to S. Laurence, as the Gospel for his festival. As S. Augustine says, in the work already cited, “We may compare the holy martyr Laurence to a grain of mustard seed; for he, being bruised by various sufferings, deserved to become fragrant throughout the whole world by the grace of his martyrdom. He, when he was in the body, was humble, unknown, and held in low estimation; but after he had been bruised, torn, and burnt he diffused the odour of his nobleness in the churches in all the world. Rightly, therefore, is the comparison applied to him. For Laurence, when he suffers, is inflamed. The fervour of its attrition moves the one; Laurence breathes forth fire in his manifold tribulations. Mustard, I say, is cooked in a small vessel; Laurence is roasted on the gridiron by the fiery flame. Blessed Laurence the martyr was burnt outwardly by the flames of the raging tyrant, but he was inflamed inwardly by the far greater fire of the love of Christ.” The Arabians have a proverb—“A grain of pepper is more powerful than many large gourds;” because if it be bruised it emits a fiery force, and makes itself felt in everyone’s nostrils. You may say the same of a grain of mustard. A believer, therefore, should be a grain of pepper or mustard, and

Verse 44- *The kingdom of Heaven is like, &c.* For he who knows that a treasure is lying hid in any place, and buys the place, becomes the master of the treasure, and is not bound to point it out to the former owner, but may use his knowledge for his own advantage by buying the field for as much as it is worth by common estimation; with which the hid treasure has nothing to do.

Which when a man has found. The Greek has the Aorist, εὕρων. Observe: Christ, in the preceding four parables (namely, of the Sower, of the Seed, of the Grain of Mustard, and of Leaven) has declared the nature, power, and efficacy of the Gospel; now, in the two following parables, of the Treasure, and of the Pearl, He declares its price, how great it is, that all things are deservedly counted as loss in comparison of it. So SS. Chrysostom, Hilary, and others. In a similar way, Wisdom is spoken of by Solomon in the Proverbs (viii. 11, 19): “For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it . . . My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.”

Literally. By this treasure S. Jerome understands Christ Himself; and S. Augustine, Holy Scripture. (*Quest. in Matt. q. 13*). “For when anyone has attained partly to the understanding of it, he feels great mysteries lie hid in it, and he sells all he has, and buys it; that is, by despising things temporal, he procures rest for himself, that he may be rich in the knowledge of God.”

Tropologically. S. Gregory, by the treasure, understands heavenly desire. He says: “The treasure being found is hid that it may be preserved, because it is not enough for a man to guard the zeal of his heavenly desire from the wicked spirits, who does not hide the same from the praise of men. In this present life we are, as it were, in a road, by which we are going to our country. Wicked spirits, like robbers, beset our path. He, therefore, who openly carries his treasure in the way desires to be robbed of it.”

Verse 45- *Again the kingdom of Heaven, &c.—goodly; Syriac, the best; Arabic, a good gem.* He means the faithful ought with as great zeal to provide themselves with the doctrine and life of the Gospel (which is the way and the price of the kingdom of Heaven) as a merchant seeks for pearls, and buys the one of them which is most precious: for otherwise the kingdom, or the Gospel itself, is properly compared to a pearl rather than to a merchant man.

Verse 46- *And when he had found, &c.* For as this pearl was beyond all price, so is the Gospel. See Pliny on the price of pearls (*l. 9, 35*), where he says, among other things, that pearls have greater affinity with the sky than with the sea. See what I have said on the Apocalypse xxi. 21, where I have enumerated thirteen properties of pearls.

commands impious persons, especially false teachers, to be taken away and extirpated. Thus Origen and S. Augustine—the latter indeed was at first of opinion that heretics ought not to be put to death, yea, that they ought not even to be compelled to resume the faith, which they have professed in baptism. But afterwards, which he had been taught by experience how perverse and obstinate heretics are, he changed his opinion and taught the contrary. He says, “I had not yet learnt either what great wickedness they would venture upon, if they could do it with impunity; or how much careful discipline could effect to make a change in them for the better.” (*l. 2, cont. Parmen. c. 2, and 2 Retract. c. 5*).

Verse 39- *The harvest*, &c. For then shall God by the angels reap the harvest of all men, bad as well as good; and shall sever them in the day of judgment, gathering the good into the heavenly barn, and delivering the evil to the fire of hell. Whence it follows that separation shall be effected by the ministry of the angels. Therefore it is said below, that the Son of Man shall come to judgment with the angels.

Verse 41- *And shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend; Gr. scandals, stumbling-blocks.* The wicked, whom Christ previously called *tares*, and *children of the devil*, He here calls *scandals*; because they are, by their wickednesses, a cause of offence and ruin both to themselves and others. S. Chrysostom observes, that the twofold punishment of the wicked is here signified—the *pain of loss* (in that it is said, *they shall collect out of His kingdom*), because they shall be shut out of Heaven; and *of sense*, in that it is said, *and shall cast them into the furnace of fire*. S. Chrysostom adds: “See the unspeakable love of God to man! He is prompt to bless them, slow to punish. When He soweth, He soweth by Himself; but when He punishes, He punishes by others: for this latter work He sends His angels.” Christ adds, in verse 30, *bind them together in bundles*, which S. Gregory explains thus: “The angel-reapers bind the tares in bundles for burning, when they join like with like in similar torments—as the proud with the proud, the luxurious with the luxurious, liars with liars, unbelievers with unbelievers—that they may burn together.”

Verse 42- *And shall cast them*, &c. *The furnace* denotes that the damned shall be confined in hell as in a furnace, as wood and straw are confined in a furnace.

Verse 43- *Then shall the righteous*, &c. *Then*, because now, says Remigius the just shine for an example to others; but then they shall shine as the sun for the praise of God. He alludes to Daniel xii 3:

“They that are learned (Heb. *mascilim*, i.e., *wise and prudent*—such, namely, as shall live wisely and prudently) shall shine as the splendour of the firmament; and they that shall instruct many to justice, as the stars for everlasting eternities.” See what I have there said. From this passage some heretics were of opinion, that in the resurrection our bodies will be transformed into globes, so as to be like the solar orb. The emperor Justinian ascribes this heresy to Origen, and condemns it. (See Baronius, *tom. 7, A. C. 538, pp. 289 and 293.*)

breathe everywhere, and upon all, a divine fire, and so pepper all men, and make them like himself, zealous that is, and ardent in the love of God.

Verse 33- *Another parable*, &c. This is Christ’s fourth parable, of leaven, by which (as by the former parable) He shows the power and efficacy of the preaching of the Gospel. As S. Chrysostom says, “Like as leaven communicates its own virtue to a great quantity of meal, so shall ye, O ye Apostles, transform the whole world.” S. Chrysostom observes, with regard to the word *hid*: “Thus also ye, when ye shall be subjected to your persecutors, shall overcome them. And as leaven indeed is buried but not destroyed, but by degrees transforms everything to its own state; so shall it happen with your preaching. Do not ye, therefore, fear because I said, Many troubles shall happen unto you; for by this means shall ye shine, and shall overcome all.” You will ask why Christ compares the Gospel to leaven? I reply, because leaven is a portion of the meal that has become a little sour, which takes place through fermentation. Hear how Pliny describes the manner in which leaven is made (*l. 18, c. 11*): “Now” (because formerly it was made in another way, as he had related a little before) “leaven is made of the meal itself, which is first kneaded before salt is added, after the manner of pottage, and left until it becomes a little sour. Commonly, indeed, they do not warm it, but only make use of what has been kept from the day before. And evidently it is the nature of heat to cause fermentation; as of bodies that are nourished with fermented bread to become stronger. Thus it was, that among our ancestors the greatest healthiness was attributed to the heaviest wheat.”

Again, leaven, although it be small in bulk, with its heat moistens the whole mass of dough; and as it were effects a change in its entire substance. It makes it palatable and digestible, so that it becomes wholesome bread for nourishing, sustaining and strengthening man. In like manner the Gospel by means of a few Apostles, who suffered many tribulations, converts the whole world to itself and makes the heart of each to be warmed with the love of God. The woman who kneads is the Church, or the power and wisdom of God says S. Augustine.

Tropologically: S. Augustine says, “Christ calls love leaven, because it excites to warmth. The woman he calls wisdom. By the three measures of meal we may understand either these three things in man—the whole heart, the whole soul, and the whole mind; or the three degrees of fruit-bearing, an hundred, sixty, and thirty fold; or the three sorts of men, represented by Noah, Daniel and Job.” (*l. 1. q. q. Evang. q. 12.*) Rabanus adds, “He says until the whole was leavened: because charity being hid in our minds ought to grow there until it transmutes the whole mind into its own perfection: that which is begun here, is perfected hereafter.”

S. Ambrose says, that like as leaven is disseminated through the whole mass of the meal, being as it were broken up; “so Christ was broken, torn

and dissolved by His various sufferings: and His moisture, that is His precious Blood was poured out for our salvation, that it might by mingling itself with the whole human race, consolidate that race, which lay scattered abroad." See also S. Chrysostom, who says among other things, "If twelve men leavened nearly all the meal of the world, consider diligently in your minds, how great must be our wickedness and sloth, who, although we are so many, are not able to convert the remnant of the Gentiles, when we ought to be sufficient for a thousand worlds." S. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, was wont to weep over the same thing. His was the saying, "That formerly priests of gold celebrated in chalices of wood, but now wooden priests celebrate in golden chalices."

Three measures: a measure was equal in quality to a *bath* which is a liquid measure, containing an Italian bushel, or as S. Jerome and Josephus say, a bushel and a half. The *measure* contained three Attic bushels. These three measures are the quarters of the world, Asia, Africa, Europe. These were designated by the three sons of Noah. For the posterity of Shem inhabited Asia; the posterity of Ham, Africa; and of Japhet, Europe. So Cæsarius, brother of S. Gregory Nazianzen. (*Dial.* 4.)

Symbolically; S. Hilary says, the grace of the Gospel was hid in the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets; now it hath appeared in the faith, hope and love of the Holy Trinity, that what the Law constituted, and the Prophets announced, the same might be fulfilled by the advent of the Gospels. Or as others say, that it might be confirmed by the threefold work of God, viz. of creation, redemption and glorification.

Allegorically: S. Bernard, (*l.* 5. *de Consider.*) says the Blessed Virgin joined and united in her womb the three natures of Christ, namely soul, body and divinity to the one Hypostasis of the *Word*.

Verse 34- *All these things spake Jesus in parables*, meaning in a parabolical manner: *things kept secret*, Heb. *חידות chidoth*, i.e. *enigmas*, as the Chaldee trans. and S. Jerome (Ps. lxxviii. 2.). The Arabic has, *I will speak things hidden before the foundation of the world*. Christ cites the psalm of David, lxxviii. 2, who, according to the letter, through the whole psalm, celebrates God's benefits to the Synagogue, i.e., the people of Israel, *from the beginning*, i.e. from their going forth out of Egypt under Moses their leader, until David's own time, in order that he might stir up the people to be grateful to God, and to love and worship Him. But mystically, says S. Jerome, David was there a type of Christ, who celebrates the benefits granted by God through Himself to His Church, and before-time hid. These things were concerning the promised land in heaven, mysteries declared by parables. Observe that the Hebrew word for *parables* is *mashal*, which signifies any weighty and famous saying, such a one as predominates over others. For *mashal* means to rule: thus it came to signify what was obscure and recondite, whether it were an enigma, an allegory, a parable, or a sentence properly so called. Therefore the sentences in that seventy-eighth Psalm are not properly parables, but only weighty sentences. But here there are like weighty sentences and parables properly so called. Thus this verse of the Psalm applies to Christ in both its meanings, but to David only one of them. For in Scripture many

things are spoken which are more suitable to the things signified by the allegory, than to the allegory itself and its literal meaning.

Verse 36- *When the multitudes were sent away, &c., . . . declare unto us the parable of the tares*. For this seemed more obscure than the others, and to contain severer threats.

Verse 38- *The field is the world, &c.* The field is the *world*, not the Church; for by the tares of this field many understand heretics, who are not in the Church, especially when they are public and manifest.

Children of the kingdom: These are faithful, righteous, and persevering in justice, and therefore elected by God to be heirs of the kingdom of Heaven. Whence, in verse 43, they are called *the righteous*. These are the sons of the Heavenly Father, "which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13).

Observe: the *righteous* are here called *seed*, because although the seed which Christ sows is the Word of God, spoken as well outwardly by the lips, as inwardly in the heart by grace; nevertheless, because the fruit of this seed is the conversion of the faithful, and their justification, therefore the righteous also are called seed, i.e., the fruit of the seed, and the harvest. *But the tares, &c.* Gr. *υιοι του̃ πονηρου̃*, i.e., *the sons of that wicked, namely the devil*: thus the Syriac and Arabic. Therefore they themselves are evil, for the offspring follow their father. As the sons of God are good and divine, so are the sons of the devil wicked and diabolical.

Observe: by tares and children of the wicked one, some understand heretics, because they are the most injurious kind of tares, inasmuch as they choke and destroy the faithful and faith from their foundation. So S. Chrysostom, Euthymius, and S. Augustine (*4 quest. in Matth. q. 11*) who, however, retracts (*l. 2 Retract. c. 27*) and teaches from S. Cyprian, that tares denote all the wicked in the Church. SS. Gregory, Ambrose, and Theophylact teach the same. For all wicked persons, by their evil life, hurt the faithful and the Church, as tares injure wheat, and choke it. Falsely then from this passage (*verse 29*), where Christ forbids these tares to be plucked up, and subjoins, *Let both grow together*, the Innovators infer that heretics are not to be punished and extirpated. For by parity of reasoning they might conclude that murderers and thieves must not be punished; for they too are tares. And I say that Christ does not here absolutely forbid these tares to be plucked up, but says that no one must attempt to root them all up together; nor at a time when they came to be distinguished from the wheat; or when there is danger of pulling up the wheat at the same time with them. But all this does not apply when anyone is a manifest heretic, especially if he teaches and infects others with his heresy. For such a one does more harm to the Church than a murderer, for the one only kills the body, but the other the soul. See 1 Cor. v. 13, Gal. v. 12, where the Apostle