

Lecture 2: On Repentance and Remission of Sins, and concerning the Adversary

Ezekiel 28: 20-23

The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked will turn from all his sins, &c.

1. A fearful thing is sin, and the sorest disease of the soul is transgression, secretly cutting its sinews, and becoming also the cause of eternal fire; an evil of a man's own choosing, an offspring of the will. [492] For that we sin of our own free will the Prophet says plainly in a certain place: Yet I planted thee a fruitful vine, wholly true: how art thou turned to bitterness, (and become) the strange vine [493] ? The planting was good, the fruit coming from the will is evil; and therefore the planter is blameless, but the vine shall be burnt with fire since it was planted for good, and bore fruit unto evil of its own will. For God, according to the Preacher, made man upright, and they have themselves sought out many inventions [494] . For we are His workmanship, says the Apostle, created unto good works, which God afore prepared, that we should walk in them [495] . So then the Creator, being good, created for good works; but the creature turned of its own free will to wickedness. Sin then is, as we have said, a fearful evil, but not incurable; fearful for him who clings to it, but easy of cure for him who by repentance puts it from him. For suppose that a man is holding fire in his hand; as long as he holds fast the live coal he is sure to be burned, but should he put away the coal, he would have cast away the flame also with it. If however any one thinks that he is not being burned when sinning, to him the Scripture saith, Shall a man wrap up fire in his bosom, and not burn his clothes [496] ? For sin burns the sinews of the soul, [and breaks the spiritual bones of the mind, and darkens the light of the heart [497]].

2. But some one will say, What can sin be? Is it a living thing? Is it an angel? Is it a demon? What is this which works within us? It is not an enemy, O man, that assails thee from without, but an evil shoot growing up out of thyself. Look right on with thine eyes [498] , and there is no lust. [Keep thine own, and [499]] seize not the things of others, and robbery has ceased [500] . Remember the Judgment, and neither fornication, nor adultery, nor murder, nor any transgression of the law shall prevail with thee. But whenever thou forgettest God, forthwith thou beginnest to devise wickedness and to commit iniquity.

3. Yet thou art not the sole author of the evil, but there is also another most wicked prompter, the devil. He indeed suggests, but does not get the mastery by force over those who do not consent. Therefore saith the Preacher, If the

spirit of him that hath power rise up against thee, quit not thy place [501] . Shut thy door, and put him far from thee, and he shall not hurt thee. But if thou indifferently admit the thought of lust, it strikes root in thee by its suggestions, and enthrals thy mind, and drags thee down into a pit of evils. But perhaps thou sayest, I am a believer, and lust does not gain the ascendant over me, even if I think upon it frequently. Knowest thou not that a root breaks even a rock by long persistence? Admit not the seed, since it will rend thy faith asunder: tear out the evil by the root before it blossom, lest from being careless at the beginning thou have afterwards to seek for axes and fire. When thine eyes begin to be diseased, get them cured in good time, lest thou become blind, and then have to seek the physician.

4. The devil then is the first author of sin, and the father of the wicked: and this is the Lord's saying, not mine, that the devil sinneth from the beginning [502] : none sinned before him. But he sinned, not as having received necessarily from nature the propensity to sin, since then the cause of sin is traced back again to Him that made him so; but having been created good, he has of his own free will become a devil, and received that name from his action. For being an Archangel [503] he was afterwards called a devil from his slandering: from being a good servant of God he has become rightly named Satan; for "Satan" is interpreted the adversary [504] . And this is not my teaching, but that of the inspired prophet Ezekiel: for he takes up a lamentation over him and says, Thou wast a seal of likeness, and a crown of beauty; in the Paradise of God wast thou born [505] : and soon after, Thou wast born blameless in thy days, from the day in which thou wast created, until thine iniquities were found in thee. Very rightly hath he said, were found in thee; for they were not brought in from without, but thou didst thyself beget the evil. The cause also he mentions forthwith: Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty: for the multitude of thy sins wast thou wounded, and I did cast thee to the ground. In agreement with this the Lord says again in the Gospels: I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven [506] . Thou seest the harmony of the Old Testament with the New. He when cast out drew many away with him. It is he that puts lusts into them that listen to him: from him come adultery, fornication, and every kind of evil. Through him our forefather Adam was cast out for disobedience, and exchanged a Paradise bringing forth wondrous fruits of its own accord for the ground which bringeth forth thorns.

5. What then? some one will say. We have been beguiled and are lost. Is there then no salvation left? We have fallen: Is it not possible to rise again? We have been blinded: May we not recover our sight? We have become crippled: Can we never walk upright? In a word, we are dead: May we not rise again? He that woke Lazarus who was four days dead and already stank, shall He not, O

man, much more easily raise thee who art alive? He who shed His precious blood for us, shall Himself deliver us from sin. Let us not despair of ourselves, brethren; let us not abandon ourselves to a hopeless condition. For it is a fearful thing not to believe in a hope of repentance. For he that looks not for salvation spares not to add evil to evil: but to him that hopes for cure, it is henceforth easy to be careful over himself. The robber who looks not for pardon grows desperate; but, if he hopes for forgiveness, often comes to repentance. What then, does the serpent cast its slough [507] , and shall not we cast off our sin? Thorny ground also, if cultivated well, is turned into fruitful; and is salvation to us irrecoverable? Nay rather, our nature admits of salvation, but the will also is required.

6. God is loving to man, and loving in no small measure. For say not, I have committed fornication and adultery: I have done dreadful things, and not once only, but often: will He forgive? Will He grant pardon? Hear what the Psalmist says: How great is the multitude of Thy goodness, O Lord [508] ! Thine accumulated offences surpass not the multitude of God's mercies: thy wounds surpass not the great Physician's skill. Only give thyself up in faith: tell the Physician thine ailment: say thou also, like David: I said, I will confess me my sin unto the Lord: and the same shall be done in thy case, which he says forthwith: And thou forgavest the wickedness of my heart [509] .

7. Wouldest thou see the loving-kindness of God, O thou that art lately come to the catechising? Wouldest thou see the loving-kindness of God, and the abundance of His long-suffering? Hear about Adam. Adam, God's first-formed man, transgressed: could He not at once have brought death upon him? But see what the Lord does, in His great love towards man. He casts him out from Paradise, for because of sin he was unworthy to live there; but He puts him to dwell over against Paradise [510] : that seeing whence he had fallen, and from what and into what a state he was brought down, he might afterwards be saved by repentance. Cain the first-born man became his brother's murderer, the inventor of evils, the first author of murders, and the first envious man. Yet after slaying his brother to what is he condemned? Groaning and trembling shalt thou be upon the earth [511] . How great the offence, the sentence how light!

8. Even this then was truly loving-kindness in God, but little as yet in comparison with what follows. For consider what happened in the days of Noe. The giants sinned, and much wickedness was then spread over the earth, and because of this the flood was to come upon them: and in the five hundredth year God utters His threatening; but in the six hundredth He brought the flood upon the earth. Seest thou the breadth of God's loving-kindness extending to a hundred years? Could He not have done immediately

what He did then after the hundred years? But He extended (the time) on purpose, granting a respite for repentance. Seest thou God's goodness? And if the men of that time had repented, they would not have missed the loving-kindness of God.

9. Come with me now to the other class, those who were saved by repentance. But perhaps even among women some one will say, I have committed fornication, and adultery, I have defiled my body by excesses of all kinds: is there salvation for me? Turn thine eyes, O woman, upon Rahab, and look thou also for salvation; for if she who had been openly and publicly a harlot was saved by repentance, is not she who on some one occasion before receiving grace committed fornication to be saved by repentance and fasting? For inquire how she was saved: this only she said: For your God is God in heaven and upon earth [512] . Your God; for her own she did not dare to say, because of her wanton life. And if you wish to receive Scriptural testimony of her having been saved, you have it written in the Psalms: I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon among them that know me [513] . O the greatness of God's loving-kindness, making mention even of harlots in the Scriptures: nay, not simply I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon, but with the addition, among them that know me. There is then in the case both of men and of women alike the salvation which is ushered in by repentance.

10. Nay more, if a whole people sin, this surpasses not the loving-kindness of God. The people made a calf, yet God ceased not from His loving-kindness. Men denied God, but God denied not Himself [514] . These be thy gods, O Israel [515] , they said: yet again, as He was wont, the God of Israel became their Saviour. And not only the people sinned, but also Aaron the High Priest. For it is Moses that says: And the anger of the Lord came upon Aaron: and I prayed for him, saith he, and God forgave him [516] . What then, did Moses praying for a High Priest that sinned prevail with God, and shall not Jesus, His Only-begotten, prevail with God when He prays for us? And if He did not hinder Aaron, because of his offence, from entering upon the High Priesthood, will He hinder thee, who art come out from the Gentiles, from entering into salvation? Only, O man, repent thou also in like manner, and grace is not forbidden thee. Render thy way of life henceforth unblameable; for God is truly loving unto man, nor can all time [517] worthily tell out His loving kindness; nay, not if all the tongues of men unite together will they be able even so to declare any considerable part of His loving-kindness. For we tell some part of what is written concerning His loving-kindness to men, but how much He forgave the Angels we know not: for them also He forgives, since One alone is without sin, even Jesus who purgeth our sins. And of them we have said enough.

11. But if concerning us men thou wilt have other examples also set before thee [518] , come on to the blessed David, and take him for an example of repentance. Great as he was, he fell: after his sleep, walking in the eventide on the housetop, he cast a careless look, and felt a human passion. His sin was completed, but there died not with it his candour concerning the confession of his fault. Nathan the Prophet came, a swift accuser, and a healer of the wound. The Lord is wroth, he says, and thou hast sinned [519] . So spake the subject to the reigning king. But David the king [520] was not indignant, for he regarded not the speaker, but God who had sent him. He was not puffed up [521] by the array of soldiers standing round: for he had seen in thought the angel-host of the Lord, and he trembled as seeing Him who is invisible [522] ; and to the messenger, or rather by him in answer to God who sent him, he said, I have sinned against the Lord [523] . Seest thou the humility of the king? Seest thou his confession? For had he been convicted by any one? Were many privy to the matter? The deed was quickly done, and straightway the Prophet appeared as accuser, and the offender confesses the fault. And because he candidly confessed, he received a most speedy cure. For Nathan the Prophet who had uttered the threat, said immediately, The Lord also hath put away thy sin. Thou seest the swift relenting of a merciful God. He says, however, Thou hast greatly provoked the enemies of the Lord. Though thou hadst many enemies because of thy righteousness, thy self-control protected thee; but now that thou hast surrendered thy strongest armour, thine enemies are risen up, and stand ready against thee.

12. Thus then did the Prophet comfort him, but the blessed David, for all he heard it said, The Lord hath put away thy sin, did not cease from repentance, king though he was, but put on sackcloth instead of purple, and instead of a golden throne, he sat, a king, in ashes on the ground; nay, not only sat in ashes, but also had ashes for his food, even as he saith himself, I have eaten ashes as it were bread [524] . His lustful eye he wasted away with tears saying, Every night will I wash my couch, and water my bed with my tears [525] . When his officers besought him to eat bread he would not listen. He prolonged his fast unto seven whole days. If a king thus made confession oughtest not thou, a private person, to confess? Again, after Absalom's insurrection, though there were many roads for him to escape, he chose to flee by the Mount of Olives, in thought, as it were, invoking the Redeemer who was to go up thence into the heavens [526] . And when Shimei cursed him bitterly, he said, Let him alone, for he knew that "to him that forgiveth it shall be forgiven [527] ."

13. Thou seest that it is good to make confession. Thou seest that there is salvation for them that repent. Solomon also fell but what saith he?

Afterwards I repented [528] . Ahab, too, the King of Samaria, became a most wicked idolater, an outrageous man, the murderer of the Prophets [529] , a stranger to godliness, a coveter of other men's fields and vineyards. Yet when by Jezebel's means he had slain Naboth, and the Prophet Elias came and merely threatened him, he rent his garments, and put on sackcloth. And what saith the merciful God to Elias? Hast thou seen how Ahab is pricked in the heart before Me [530] ? as if almost He would persuade the fiery zeal of the Prophet to condescend to the penitent. For He saith, I will not bring the evil in his days. And though after this forgiveness he was sure not to depart from his wickedness, nevertheless the forgiving God forgave him, not as being ignorant of the future, but as granting a forgiveness corresponding to his present season of repentance. For it is the part of a righteous judge to give sentence according to each case that has occurred.

14. Again, Jeroboam was standing at the altar sacrificing to the idols: his hand became withered, because he commanded the Prophet who reprov'd him to be seized: but having by experience learned the power of the man before him, he says, Entreat the face of the Lord thy God [531] ; and because of this saying his hand was restored again. If the Prophet healed Jeroboam, is Christ not able to heal and deliver thee from thy sins? Manasses also was utterly wicked, who saw'd Isaiah asunder [532] , and was defiled with all kinds of idolatries, and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood [533] ; but having been led captive to Babylon he used his experience of misfortune for a healing course of repentance: for the Scripture saith that Manasses humbled himself before the Lord, and prayed, and the Lord heard him, and brought him back to his kingdom. If He who saw'd the Prophet asunder was saved by repentance, shall not thou then, having done no such great wickedness, be saved?

15. Take heed lest without reason thou mistrust the power of repentance. Wouldst thou know what power repentance has? Wouldst thou know the strong weapon of salvation, and learn what the force of confession is? Hezekiah by means of confession routed a hundred and fourscore and five thousand of his enemies. A great thing verily was this, but still small in comparison with what remains to be told: the same king by repentance obtained the recall of a divine sentence which had already gone forth. For when he had fallen sick, Esaias said to him, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live [534] . What expectation remained, what hope of recovery, when the Prophet said, for thou shalt die? Yet Hezekiah did not desist from repentance; but remembering what is written, When thou shalt turn and lament, then shalt thou be saved [535] , he turned to the wall, and from his bed lifting his mind to heaven (for thickness of walls is no hindrance to prayers sent up with devotion), he said, "Remember me, O Lord, for it is

sufficient for my healing that Thou remember me. Thou art not subject to times, but art Thyself the giver of the law of life. For our life depends not on a nativity, nor on a conjunction of stars, as some idly talk; but both of life and its duration. Then art Thyself the Lawgiver according to Thy Will." And he, who could not hope to live because of the prophetic sentence, had fifteen years added to his life, and for the sign the sun ran backward in his course. Well then, for Ezekias' sake the sun turned back but for Christ the sun was eclipsed, not retracing his steps, but suffering eclipse [536] , and therefore shewing the difference between them, I mean between Ezekias and Jesus. The former prevailed to the cancelling of God's decree, and cannot Jesus grant remission of sins? Turn and bewail thyself, shut thy door, and pray to be forgiven, pray that He may remove from thee the burning flames. For confession has power to quench even fire, power to tame even lions [537] .

16. But if thou disbelieve, consider what befel Ananias and his companions. What streams did they pour out [538] ? How many vessels [539] of water could quench the flame that rose up forty-nine cubits high [540] ? Nay, but where the flame mounted up a little [541] too high, faith was there poured out as a river, and there spake they the spell against all ills [542] : Righteous art Thou, O Lord, in all the things that Thou hast done to us: for we have sinned, and transgressed Thy law [543] . And their repentance quelled the flames [544] . If thou believest not that repentance is able to quench the fire of hell, learn it from what happened in regard to Ananias [545] . But some keen hearer will say, Those men God rescued justly in that case: because they refused to commit idolatry, God gave them that power. And since this thought has occurred, I come next to a different example of penitence [546] .

17. What thinkest thou of Nabuchodonosor? Hast thou not heard out of the Scriptures that he was bloodthirsty, fierce [547] , lion-like in disposition? Hast thou not heard that he brought out the bones of the kings from their graves into the light [548] ? Hast thou not heard [549] that he carried the people away captive? Hast thou not heard that he put out the eyes of the king, after he had already seen his children slain [550] ? Hast thou not heard that he brake in pieces [551] the Cherubim? I do not mean the invisible [552] beings;--away with such a thought, O man [553] ,--but the sculptured images, and the mercy-seat, in the midst of which God spake with His voice [554] . The veil of the Sanctuary [555] he trampled under foot: the altar of incense he took and carried away to an idol-temple [556] : all the offerings he took away: the Temple he burned from the foundations [557] . How great punishments did he deserve, for slaying kings, for setting fire to the Sanctuary, for taking the people captive, for setting the sacred vessels in the house of idols? Did he not deserve ten thousand deaths?

18. Thou hast seen the greatness of his evil deeds: come now to God's loving-kindness. He was turned into a wild beast [558] , he abode in the wilderness, he was scourged, that he might be saved. He had claws as a lion [559] ; for he was a ravager of the Sanctuary. He had a lion's mane: for he was a ravening and a roaring lion. He ate grass like an ox: for a brute beast he was, not knowing Him who had given him the kingdom. His body was wet from the dew; because after seeing the fire quenched by the dew he believed not [560] . And what happened [561] ? After this, saith he, I, Nabuchodonosor, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and I blessed the Most High, and to Him that liveth for ever I gave praise and glory [562] . When, therefore, he recognised the Most High [563] , and sent up these words of thankfulness to God, and repented himself for what he had done, and recognised his own weakness, then God gave back to him the honour of the kingdom.

19. What then [564] ? When Nabuchodonosor, after having done such deeds, had made confession, did God give him pardon and the kingdom, and when thou repentest shall He not give thee the remission of sins, and the kingdom of heaven, if thou live a worthy life? The Lord is loving unto man, and swift to pardon, but slow to punish. Let no man therefore despair of his own salvation. Peter, the chiefest and foremost of the Apostles, denied the Lord thrice before a little maid: but he repented himself, and wept bitterly. Now weeping shews the repentance of the heart: and therefore he not only received forgiveness for his denial, but also held his Apostolic dignity unforfeited.

20. Having therefore, brethren, many examples of those who have sinned and repented and been saved, do ye also heartily make confession unto the Lord, that ye may both receive the forgiveness of your former sins, and be counted worthy of the heavenly gift, and inherit the heavenly kingdom with all the saints in Christ Jesus; to Whom is the glory for ever and ever. Amen [565] .

[492] For references to Cyril's doctrine of Free-will, see Index, "Soul."

[493] Jer. ii. 21.

[494] Eccles. vii. 29.

[495] Eph. ii. 10.

[496] Prov. vi. 27.

[497] Milles and the Benedictine Editor omit these clauses, but the more recent editions of Reischl and Alexandrides insert them on the authority of Munich, Jerusalem, and other good mss.

[498] Prov. iv. 25.

[499] Omitted by recent editors with the best mss.

[500] Gr. kekoimetai "has fallen asleep."

[501] Eccles. x. 4. Compare Eph. iv. 27: "Neither give place to the devil."

[502] 1 John iii. 8; John viii. 44.

[503] On Cyril's doctrine of the Angels, see Index, "Angels."

[504] 1 Kings v. 4, &c.

[505] Ezek. xxviii. 12-17, an obscure passage, addressed to the Prince of Tyre, and meaning that he was "the perfect pattern" of earthly glory, set in a condition like that of Adam in Paradise, and, seemingly, blameless as Adam before his fall. Cyril seems to regard the Prince of Tyre as an embodiment of Satan, because he was deified as the object of national worship: v. 1, "Thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God."

[506] Luke x. 18.

[507] Literally, "its old age" (to geras). Compare iii. 7, and Dict. Chr. Biogr., Macarius, p. 770 a.

[508] Ps. xxxi. 20.

[509] Ps. xxxii. 5.

[510] This is the reading of the Septuagint instead of--"He placed at the east of the garden of Eden."

[511] Gen. iv. 12: "A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be upon the earth."

[512] Josh. ii. 11.

[513] Ps. lxxxvii. 4. "Rahab" is there a poetical name of Egypt, and the passage has nothing to do with Rahab the harlot. The Benedictine Editor rightly

disregards S. Jerome's suggestion, that Rahab is, like Egypt, a type of the Gentile Church.

[514] 2 Tim. ii. 13.

[515] Ex. xxxii. 4.

[516] Deut. ix. 20.

[517] For "all time," the reading of the best mss., the Benedictine text has "all mankind."

[518] The Benedictine has, "But if thou wilt I will set before thee other examples also of our state? Come on to the blessed David."

[519] 2 Sam. xii.

[520] Bened. "The king, the wearer of the purple."

[521] Bened. "blinded."

[522] Heb. xi. 27.

[523] 2 Sam. xii. 13.

[524] Ps. cii. 10.

[525] Ib. vii. 7.

[526] 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11.

[527] Resch. (*Agrapha*, p. 137) quotes various forms of this saying from early writers, and regards it as a fragment of an extracanonical Gospel. But see Lightfoot, *Clem. Rom.* c. xiii.

[528] Prov. xxiv. 32, Sept. Heb. "Set my heart." The passage has no reference to repentance: it means, "I considered the field of the slothful." Hilary, *Ps. lii.*; Ambrose, *Apolog.* 1, *Prophetæ David*, c. iii. and other Fathers affirm the repentance of Solomon. Augustine (*c. Faustum*, *Lib. xxii.* c. 88) maintains that Scripture says nothing of his repentance or forgiveness. See Dante, *Paradiso*, Canto x. 109.

[529] 1 Kings xviii. 4.

[530] Ib. xxi. 29.

[531] 1 Kings xiii. 6.

[532] Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho, § 120 charges the Jews with having cut out a passage referring to the death of Isaiah. Theophylact commenting on Heb. xi. 37, says: "They were sawn asunder, as Isaiah by Manasses: and they say that he was sawn with a wooden saw, that his punishment might be the more painful to him from being prolonged." Jerome on Is. i. 10, says that he was slain because of his calling the Jews "princes of Sodom and people of Gomorra," and because he said, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up."

[533] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13.

[534] 2 Kings xx. 1.

[535] Is. xxx. 15.

[536] Isaiah xxxviii. 8.

[537] From this point the mss. differ so widely that the Benedictine Editor gives two complete recensions of the whole Lecture. The Codd. Coislin, Ottob. 2, and Grodec, with the editions of Prevot and Milles, forming as it were one family of mss., constitute the received text. On the other hand the older Munich Codex, with Codd. Roe and Casaubon, exhibit a recension of the Lecture differing from the editions. Reischl wishing to retain the received text unaltered, though preferring the other in particular passages, intended to append the other recension complete, but having left his work half finished, failed to do so. The chief variations are given in the following notes.

[538] Roe and Casaubon (R.C.) add: "into the furnace of fire."

[539] R.C. "What measure."

[540] Song of the Three Children, v. 24.

[541] R.C. "Much."

[542] R.C. "A great stream of repentance was poured forth, when they said, For Thou art righteous," &c.

[543] Song of the Three Children, v. 4.

[544] R.C. "Did then repentance quench the flames of the furnace, and dost thou disbelieve that it is able also to quench the fire of hell?"

[545] The Gospel only says, "There was darkness over all the land." An eclipse of the sun was impossible at the time of the Paschal full moon.

[546] R.C. "That the narrative is not appropriate to those who are here present. For it was because Ananias and his companions refused to worship the idol, that God gave them that marvellous power. Adapting myself, therefore, to such a hearer, and looking to the profusion of instances, I come next to a different example of repentance."

[547] R.C. "most impious, and most fierce in temper."

[548] Jer. viii. 1; Baruch ii. 25.

[549] "Knowest thou not..."

[550] 2 Kings xxv. 7.

[551] R.C. "carried off."

[552] noeta. R.C. add "and heavenly."

[553] Omitted by R.C.

[554] R.C. "But those which had been constructed in the Temple, which were over the mercy-seat of the Ark." Besides the two Cherubim of solid gold which Moses placed on the two ends of the Mercy-seat (Ex. xxxvii. 7 ff.), Solomon set "within the oracle" two Cherubim of olive wood overlaid with gold, ten feet high with outstretched wings overshadowing the Ark (1 Kings vi. 23-26; viii. 6, 7). All these were either carried off or destroyed, when Nebuchadnezzar took away "all the treasures of the house of the Lord" and "cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon, King of Israel, had made in the Temple of the Lord" (2 Kings xxiv. 13; 1 Esdras i. 54; 2 Esdras x. 22). The Benedictine editor is concerned because Cyril has paid no attention to the strange fiction in 2 Maccabees ii. 4 that Jeremy the Prophet "commanded the Tabernacle and the Ark to go with him" to Mount Horeb, and there hid them, with the Altar of Incense, in a hollow cave, to remain "unknown until the time that God gathers His people again together." [555] The Greek word rendered "Sanctuary" is *hagiosune*, literally "the holiness."

[556] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7.

[557] R.C. "The veil of the Sanctuary he tore down, he overturned the altar, and took all the vessels and carried them away to an idol temple. The Temple itself he burned."

[558] R.C. Afterwards he was turned into a wild beast: "he who was like a wild beast and most cruel in disposition; but he was turned into a wild beast, not that he might perish, but that by repentance he might be saved."

[559] R.C. "of birds." See Dan. iv. 33.

[560] R.C. "after the midst of the furnace had become to Ananias and his companions as the tinkling breath of rain, he saw and believed not."

[561] R.C. "But afterwards he came to his senses and repented, as he says himself."

[562] Dan. iv. 34.

[563] R.C. "And after he had been scourged many years, he gave praise to Him that liveth for ever, and acknowledged Him that had given him the kingdom, and recognised the King of kings. And though he had often sinned in deeds, on making confession only in words, he received the benefit of God's unspeakable loving kindness. He who was of all men most wicked, by the Divine judgment and loving-kindness of God who chastised him, crowned himself again with the royal diadem, and recovered his imperial throne."

[564] R.C. "If then there is present among you any from among the Heathen who has ever spoken evil against Christians, or in times of persecution plotted against the Holy Churches, let him take Nabuchodonsor as an example of salvation: let him confess in like manner, that he may also find the like forgiveness. If any has been defiled by lust and passions, let him take up the repentance of the blessed David: if any has denied like Peter, let him die like him for the sake of the Lord Jesus. For He who to his tears begrudged not the Apostleship, will not refuse thee the gospel mysteries. And for women let Rahab be a pattern unto salvation, and for men the manifold examples mentioned of the men of old times.

[565] R.C. "And be ye all of good hope, having regard to the lovingkindness of God; not that we may fall back into the same sins, but that having had the benefit of redemption, and lived in a manner worthy of His grace, we may be able to blot out the handwriting that is against us by good works; in the power of the Only-begotten, the Son of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be glory to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, both now and ever, and unto all the ages of eternity. Amen."