

On the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Against Apollinaris
Athanasius of Alexandria / Pseudo-Athanasius (authorship uncertain)

English Translation: *Later Treatises of S. Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria, with Notes, and an Appendix on S. Cyril of Alexandria and Theodoret* (translated by members of the English Church; Oxford: James Parker & Co., and London: Rivingtons, 1881)

Slight updates (Scripture from King James Version to modern English) by Mako A. Nagasawa
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Book 1

1. It is the persistent habit of a pious man, dear friend, to venerate the All in silence, and with loud thanksgivings to praise God his benefactor, according to that saying of Scripture which runs, he will sit alone, and be silent and quiet, and do his own business. The words “alone” and “his own business” mean that he will order his own conduct with judgment, and attend seriously to the commandment of God. But since you have become aware of a very heavy weariness among those who seem to say the same things, you have asked me about the faith that is in us, and wherein lies the fault of those who think themselves Orthodox, yet who in their great extravagance fear not to utter unhallowed opinions, whereby persons unstable in the faith are carried away, and know not that they are off the right path (for had they been established in the faith, they would not have yielded to language of that kind: but it is because their minds were unemployed that they have become capable of accepting such Traditions, from which arise extravagant conceit and vast wickedness: and they, being blinded by antipathy, pervert the revelations of the prophets, and the teachings of the Apostles, and the injunctions of the fathers, and the very and manifest sayings of the Master) it is necessary to undertake to confute them, in order that they may either wake up and see how the case stands, or may be disabled from deceiving any persons by promising them a very distinct comprehension of Christ, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.

2. For the fathers have said that the Son is coessential with the Father, and very God from very God, and perfect from perfect: and then that he quote came down for our salvation, was incarnate and made man, and then that he thus suffered and rose again. But lest any one, on hearing of suffering and resurrection, should think that God the Word was altered, they definitely assert the unchangeableness and unalterableness of the Son, with a condemnation (of the opposite opinion). But these men either imagine an alteration of the Word, or suppose the economy of the Passion to be unreal, calling the flesh of Christ sometimes uncreate and heavenly, sometimes co-essential with the Godhead. Then, they say, “in place of the inward man which is in us, there is in Christ a heavenly mind, for he used the outward form with which he was invested as instrumental: for it was not possible that he should become perfect man. For where there is perfect man, there is also sin: and two perfect things cannot become one: for otherwise that conflict of sin which is in us would take place also in Christ, and Christ would need the cleansing which we receive, if on becoming man he assumed the thinking element and that which in us directs the flesh.” But, they say, “He assumed that which is without mind, that he himself might be mind in himself, and might be wholly without experience of sin, in regard to the divine element, and to the mindless flesh. For the flesh would not sin unless that which directs the flesh, that is, the thinking element, had previously conceived the idea of committing the sin, and had carried it out, through the body, to the completion of sin. Wherefore Christ exhibited the flesh in a new condition, by way of likeness, and each man exhibits in himself the condition of the thinking element in us, by means of imitation, and likeness, and abstinence from sin.” And in this way is Christ understood to be “without sin.”

3. These are their sophisms, and perverse notions: and they use more than one argument; for many are the perversities of unbelief, invented by human reasonings. Let us then ask these men to consider the will of God’s good pleasure (for it is said, “The Lord swore, and will not repent” [Psalm 110:1]), and the completion of that economy which is most true, and the grace of that benefit which is most complete, questioning them in turn as to their notions, whether they all agree with the prophetic revelations, where they follow the apostolic teachings, whether they walk in the line of the injunctions of the fathers, whether they do not set aside the manifest declarations of the master; so that from the prophetic revelations, and the apostolic teachings, and the things fulfilled by the Lord, may be educed the acknowledgement of the truth and the confutation of error. Tell us, then, you inventors of that new gospel of yours, “which is not another” [Galatians 1:7], from what source it was announced to you that you should speak of a flesh uncreated, so as either to imagine the Godhead of the Word to have been converted into flesh, or to consider

the economy of the Passion, and of the Death, and of the Resurrection to be unreal. For the Holy Trinity of the Godhead is alone manifestly uncreate, and eternal, and unchangeable, and unalterable. But since "Christ, according to the flesh" [Romans 9:2], sprang from men, from our brethren, as it is written, and was passible, and "first-born from the resurrection of the dead" [Colossians 1:18], as the Law had announced beforehand, how is it that you call that which is uncreate "passible" or how is it that you name that which is passible "uncreate?" or when you call the uncreate essence of the Word passible, you blaspheme the Godhead, and when you apply to the passible flesh, adapted to the bones and blood and soul and throughout the whole of our body, and made palpable and visible, the term "uncreate," you break down in one of two ways; either by supposing the exhibition and the endurance of the Passion to be a mere appearance, according to the impiety of the Manicheans, or else you think the like of the essence of the uncreated Godhead. And then why do you censure those who imagine God to exist in a human form according to the flesh.

4. But you say, that "it became uncreate through the union with the uncreated One." But thereby your error will be exhibited as self-confuted: for the union of the flesh with the Godhead of the Word took place from the womb; for from thence did the Word establish it when he came from heaven; since it had not existed before His coming, or before Mary the Mother of God, whose descent alone is deduced from Adam, and traced in genealogy from Abraham, and from David, together with Joseph who was espoused to her, both of them being "one flesh" [Genesis 2:21], flesh, as it is written, not by cohabitation, but by their being derived from one, for it is well attested that they continued inviolate. Christ then is born in Bethlehem of Judea [Micah 5:2], calling Joseph, who together with Mary was from David, "father;" laid to rest in swathing-clothes, and held by Symeon in his arms in the Temple, and brought to circumcision of the flesh according to the law, and increasing in stature [Luke 2:52]. If then "it became uncreate through the union," how is it that it was not seen as fully complete, but, as the Word willed, as increase of the body took place? But to ascribe increase to him who is uncreate, is impious. For by "uncreate" we mean what is by nature uncreate, admitting neither increase nor diminution. But that which shared with, or was united with, the uncreate, is said to belong to the uncreate, but is not called itself uncreate, lest the benefit involved in the union should be forgotten, and the obligation of the benefit cancelled, and humanity, being still left in weakness, should fall into despair, being taught, as you hold, that it has no close tie to God, and the grace should be made to disappear. For who, on hearing that the Lord's body is uncreate, while he knows that he himself has been made and created, will not conceive the notion that the Holy Scriptures are false, and that he himself has no communion with Christ? If the Uncreated One assumed an uncreated body, the first creation is in that case annulled: the archetypal Adam, whose posterity we are to this day by succession of fleshly descent, has perished. How then did Christ render us partakers of himself? And how is it that the apostle saith, "For he who sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all from one?" [Hebrews 2:11]

5. But let no one venture to think of the Godhead of the Word, that in the same sense as it is from God, so too are we, as the most impious Arians venture to say, or that at any rate it is so in reference to the exhibition of the flesh, and to that "form of the servant" [Philippians 2:6 - 7] that is of the protoplast Adam, which he assumed who was in "the form of God" [Philippians 2:7] (as) God. Now generally, among things made, the term "uncreated" is applied to that which never yet existed, because it has not come into being. Are you then, while you hold that flesh never did "come into being" at all in the Word, actually intending to make a negation under a well-sounding phrase, so as not to acknowledge anything in that which is "uncreated?" For it is only the being of the Godhead which is thought of as uncreate: so that to call the uncreated being "passible," and the passible "uncreate," is impious. For to think that it is not by means of the union that the nature of manhood, which has been made, belongs to the Word, but that it is coeternal, and is made equal to the nature of God by identity of nature, is impious. For the Lord exhibited flesh and blood and bones, and a soul in pain and agitation and distress. Now one cannot say that these things are natural to Godhead: but they came to belong to God by nature, when it pleased the Word to undergo human birth, and to reconstitute in himself, (as) in an image of newness, that handiwork of his own which had been disorganized by sin, and corruption, and death. Therefore, he effected on earth the condemnation of sin, and on the tree the abolition of the curse, and in the sepulchre the redemption of corruption, and in Hades, the dissolution of death: having visited every place, that he might effect the salvation of the whole of man, exhibiting in himself a form resembling our own. For what need was there for God to be "born of a woman" [Galatians 4:4], for the Maker of the ages to "increase in stature" [Luke 2:52] and have His years numbered, or again to have experience of the cross, or the sepulchre, or Hades, to which we all had become subject, unless he was seeking us, giving us life through his form which was like our own, and inviting us to imitate and resemble a perfect image? And how would imitation of perfection be possible, if there had not preexisted the perfection which knows no defect, as the apostle says, "Having put off the

old man, and put on the new man, which according to God has been created in holiness and righteousness of truth” [Ephesians 4:21; Colossians 3:9]

6. Who then taught you to say “uncreated?” If therefore a nature “becomes uncreate” by means of change, then it may become also invisible and immortal, not after death, but as being incapable of death. How then was it that the Lord died, if it was uncreatedly that the Uncreate One sojourned on earth? Or how did he become visible and tangible, as it is written, “That which we have seen and our hands have handled” [1 John 1:1]? How is it, then, that you say what is not written - what is not lawful even to think of? For you will furnish all heretics with an opinion like to that most impious one of him who was once called Rhetorius, whose impiety it is fearful even to mention. Either then, deny the Divine Scriptures, or, if you acknowledge them, do not think of uttering, beside what is in Scripture, other words of incurable deceit. But you say again, “We do not worship a creature.” O unthinking men! Why do you not take account of this, that the Lord’s body, though it was made, receives that worship which is not due to what is created, for it is to him whose body it has become that you address the worship. Therefore it is both worshiped as of right, and worshiped as divine, for the Word to whom the body belongs, is God, since, when the women approached the Lord, he said, by way of hindering them, “Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father” [John 20:17], indicating that an ascension was necessary, and that such ascension would be one. Nevertheless, they approached, and “took hold of his feet, and worshiped him” [Matthew 28:9]. They took hold of feet, they worshiped God. It was feet of bones and flesh that they were handling, but feet that were God’s; it was God that they worshiped. And elsewhere the Lord said, “Handle me and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bones, as you see me have” [Luke 24:39]; and yet he himself was Spirit, for “God is Spirit” [John 4:21]. And when saying that he had them, and exhibiting them, how was it that he said, “A spirit has not flesh and bones, as you see me” - he said not “being,” but “having” - if it were not to teach us, that the nature of Spirit is ineffable, while this handling relates to a body like ours, which he acquired for himself from the virgin not by a form of operation, but by natural birth, that his body might both be natural, and also by way of nature inseparable from the Godhead of the Word? For thus also did the death take place; the body was undergoing it by way of nature, but the Word permitting it by His will, and in the exercise of a right delivering his own body to death that he might suffer for us naturally, and rise again for us divinely. And the whole transaction of his nativity and death looks to the object of seeking and recovering us.

7. This being so, and being acknowledged in the Catholic Church of God, how is it that you again say that the body was brought down from heaven, and why did Christ do this? Tell us, was it that he might bring down a body from heaven upon earth, and make the invisible visible, and that which could not be outraged susceptible of outrage, and the impassible passible and mortal? And what benefit was involved in this, O thoughtless men, if you say that that took place in Christ which took place in the protoplast Adam, unless Christ, having appeared “in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned sin in the flesh” [Romans 8:3], had restored by an incomparable restoration that which fell in Adam: so that he both lived in flesh on earth, and exhibited the flesh as incapable of sin, and fell down into corruption and death? This flesh he raised up in a condition of being by nature sinless, that he might show that the Maker was not the cause of sin, and he established it in accordance with the original creation of its own nature, that he himself might be the exhibition of sinlessness. Vain, then, are their imaginations who go astray and say that the Lord’s body was from heaven. Rather, what Adam brought down from heaven to earth, Christ carried up from earth to heaven: and what Adam brought down into corruption, and condemnation to death, when it had been sinless and uncondemned, that did Christ show forth as incorruptible, and capable of delivering from death, so that he had “authority on earth to forgive sins” [Matthew 9:6], to exhibit incorruption (by rising) out of the sepulchre, and by visiting Hades to destroy death, and to proclaim to all the good tidings of resurrection, because “God created man to be immortal, and made him the image of His own eternity, but by the devil’s envy, death came into the world” [Wisdom 2:23 - 24], and when it was under the reign of death into corruption, he did not overlook it, for he himself became man; not that he was turned into the form of man, nor that, as if neglecting real human existence, he exhibited himself merely under a shadow - but he who is by nature God was born man, that these two might be one, perfect in all things, exhibiting his birth as natural and most true. Therefore it is said, “And He gave to him the name which is above every name” [Philippians 2:9], to reign over the heavens and have “authority to execute judgment” [John 5:27].

8. For the Word, who is the Maker of the universe, was seen as Son of Man, not as having become someone different, but a second Adam, that even from that name we might understand the truth. And the apostle shows the protoplast to have been the elder, showing that what is “psychical is first, what is spiritual” second [1 Corinthians 15:16]. But in speaking of psychical and spiritual, he does not show us two different bodies, but the same body: the first under the authority and belonging to the nature of soul, therefore psychical, but the second under the authority

and belonging to the nature of Spirit, therefore spiritual: for God the Word “is a Spirit” [John 4:21]. For so also we can understand what is said of our case, in the words, “The spiritual man searches out all things, but the psychical man receives not the things of the Spirit” [1 Corinthians 3:14]. And yet, while the body of both men is one, he shows that that which partakes of the Spirit is to be understood as spiritual, whereas he who has continued in the soul’s power alone is shown to be psychical. And if the truth be on your side, why in the world is it that Christ is not merely Man, as if he were some new one who had come among us from heaven, but he became Son of Man? If then he became Son of Man on earth, and yet was born not of the seed of man, but of the Holy Spirit, he must be understood to be thought of as Son of one, the protoplast Adam. For besides that Adam who is from earth, no other man is regarded as having existed in heaven, so as both to have his body from heaven, and also be a Son of Man irrespectively of Adam. Therefore Matthew records him as son of Abraham and David according to the flesh, but Luke ranks him in the genealogy as Son of Adam and of God. If then you are disciples of the gospel, do not speak unrighteousness against God, but keep close to what is in Scripture, and to what took place. But if you choose to say things contrary to what is in Scripture, why do you fight against us, who do not consent to hear or say anything contrary to what is in Scripture, as the Lord says, “If you continue in my word, you shall be free indeed”? [John 8:31, 36]

9. How then can you any longer be deemed faithful, or Christians, who neither keep close to the words of Scripture, nor believe in what took place, but venture to define what is beyond nature? “Is it a small thing for you to enter into a contest with men, and how do you enter on a contest with God?” [LXX Isaiah 7:13] For if those who disbelieved the prophets were condemned, how much more those who do not put faith in the Master himself? For how is it that you dare to think or to speak in a different way of the things which he himself willed and was pleased to do, for the putting away of sin and death? If we confess him, he will also confess us: if we deny him, he also will deny us, if we believe not, yet he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.” [2 Timothy 2:12; Matthew 10:32] For what means this extreme and wild extravagance of yours, to say that is not in Scripture, and to think what is alien from religion? For you attempt to call the flesh coessential with the Godhead, not considering that the impiety in which you involve yourselves is thus doubled. For it has come into your mind to say this, so that you should either deny the flesh or blaspheme the Godhead, saying, in your words, “We say that he who was born of Mary is coessential with the Father.” But this phrase of yours, which you deem reverential, shall be shown to be either superfluous or foolish. For who among the faithful will not admit that God the Word, who came among us, and proceeded as man from the holy virgin Mary, being coessential with the Father, became man of the seed of Abraham, whose son also he is regarded to have been, and that the coessential Word of God became, according to the flesh, Son of David? Therefore also do prophets and apostles and evangelists reckon Christ in the genealogy, according to the flesh, as of the seed of David. How then can you without a blush assert that flesh, which is genealogically described as David’s seed, to be coessential with the Word, or, on the other hand, as we said, you say this foolishly, not considering that what is coessential has indeed identity of nature, but exhibits its own perfection in itself. For as the Son, who is confessedly coessential with the Father, is confessed to be perfect in regard to the Perfect One - as is the Holy Spirit: for the Trinity is coessential - you then will assign perfection also to the “coessential flesh,” in addition to the perfection of the Word, and on your theory Quaternity instead of a Trinity will be proclaimed. And what is to be said of such an impious notion?

10. But you say, the flesh became coessential with the Word. How did it become coessential? Tell me. “It became the Word, and even became Spirit.” But if that which is not by nature Godhead became in fact Godhead by conversion, why do you blame Arians, who put forward the same notion as to the Word? And yet Scripture says, “The Word became flesh” [John 1:14], not, “The flesh became Word.” But it is said, “The Word became flesh” because the flesh became that of the Word, and not of some man; that is, God became man; and it is said, he “became flesh” lest you should pass by the name of flesh. If then you are not content with the natural union, apart from all confusion between the Word and the flesh that became his own, and with the statement that God became man; in that case, you neither hear nor wish to believe, since you are not content when you hear of that which is above all the praise that we can think of, a body of God, according to him who says, “Who will transform the body of our humiliation, that it may become conformed to the body of His glory” [Philippians 3:21], which is an indication of the age to come: and further it is called “the body of his glory.” And the Lord also says, “When the Son of Man shall come” [Matthew 25:31], he means that Son of God, who became Son of Man, being both judge of living and dead, and king, and sovereign, and very God. But you wish to proscribe the word “body” or any application of the term “man” for Christ. How can you go on reading the divine Scriptures, when Matthew writes, “the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, Son of David, Son of Abraham,” [Matthew 1:1] and John, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” [John 1:1]? Now if you mean to

consider “Word” and “God” and “Son of David” as separately existing, you will have to speak of two Words: but if, being taught by the divine Scriptures, you believe that the Word, being God, became Son of Man, you will know that the Christ is one, the self-same, both God and man: that the twofold aspect of the announcement of his coming might involve a convincing proof alike of the passion and the impassibility, as when the apostle says, “The man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, God blessed for ever” [1 Timothy 2:5 - 6]. And writing to Timothy, he says, “Remember Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, who was raised from the dead” [2 Timothy 2:8]. And the same apostle says again, “We announce his death, until he come” [1 Corinthians 11:26].

11. If, then, on the strength of your acknowledging “the coessential,” you take away the name of the flesh, and the application of the name “man” to Christ, either you no longer “announce his death until he come” [1 Corinthians 11:26], and then you nullify the Scriptures; or else, announcing, in your view, the death of him who is coessential with the Father and the Holy Spirit, without acknowledging that Christ “suffered in the flesh” [1 Peter 4:1], you will say that even the Godhead of the Father and of the Holy Spirit is itself capable of death; and then you become more impious than all the heretics. For it was the death of the flesh which became that of the coessential Word. For it was not the Father nor the Holy Spirit that wore flesh as those who hold the impiety of Valentinus imagine, but “the Word became flesh” [John 1:14]. Wherefore we, in confessing Christ to be God and man, do not say this for the sake of making a division, God forbid! But on the contrary, according to the Scriptures, to the end that, since passion and death have taken place, and are being “announced until he come” [1 Corinthians 11:26], we may confess the passion and the death to have taken place in regard to the flesh of the Word, but may believe the Word himself to be unchangeable and unalterable. Therefore it is he who suffered and who did not suffering; being impassible and unchangeable and unalterable in the divine nature, but having “suffered in flesh” [1 Peter 4:1], as Peter said, and willed to taste of death: because “he became a mediator between God and men, the man Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all” [1 Timothy 2:5], and again, because he became a mediator between God and men. “Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one” [Galatians 3:20].

12. Wherefore they are in error who say that the Son who suffered is one, and he that suffered not is another. For beside the Word there is no other that underwent death and the passion: but the impassible and incorporeal Word himself endured to be born in the flesh of man, and fulfilled all things, that “he might have something to offer” [Hebrews 8:3] for us. And he is said to have “become superior to the angels” [Hebrews 1:4]: it was not the Word himself, the maker of the angels, that became their superior, as if he had ever been inferior; but that “form of the servant” [Philippians 2:7], which the Word himself made his own by natural birth, rose up as superior out of the generation of the protoplast, and brought us into intimacy with itself, as has been said, when we became “fellow-citizens with the saints, and members of the household of God”: and it became by nature God’s own flesh, not as being coessential with the Godhead of the Word, as if it were coeternal, but as having become his own by nature, and inseparable by virtue of the union, which it was from the seed of David and of Abraham and of Adam, from whom we also are descended. But if the flesh is “coessential with the Word,” and coeternal, you will next have to say, in consequence, that all the creatures also are coeternal with the God who created all things. And how will you continue to be Christians, if you entangle yourselves in such knots as these? For that which is coessential, impassible, and incapable of death, does not admit of union with what is “coessential” in regard to “hypostasis,” but in regard to “nature”; whereas in regard to hypostasis it exhibits its own perfection. So that, by that invention of yours, which you consider pious, you either deny the flesh derived from the virgin mother of God, or you blaspheme the Godhead. But if your confession of the Son and of the Holy Spirit as coessential with the Father has reference to the flesh that suffered, why do you continue to blame us, as if we spoke of a Quaternity instead of a Trinity, by saying that the flesh is coessential with the Trinity? Your faith, therefore, is vain: for you are of the same mind with the impious Arians, while you misinterpret the text, “the Word became flesh” [John 1:14]. Now the Word became flesh, not that the Word might be no longer Word, but that the Word might be always Word, and at the same time, the Word might have flesh, in which he accepted the passion and death in his human form, having gone as far as to the sepulchre and Hades; and in which also God the Word effected the resurrection from the dead, having made “exhibition” of flesh and blood and soul through flesh that was his own and inseparable from him, as it is written, “from the seed of David” [Matthew 1:1]. For wherein did Marcion’s statement differ from yours? Did he not say that the body appeared from heaven, “in likeness of man” [Philippians 2:7], but not in reality? What else did Manichaeus say? Did not he speak of it as divine in form, as the body which had a mere resemblance to ours, but was foreign to that human flesh of which he impiously asserts sin to be the nature, not the operation? Such is the character of their impiety.

13. Therefore he who is religious ought not to employ such devices as these, but to say that the Word who before the ages was coessential with the Father did in the last times, from the holy virgin mother of God, restore that which was formed and made in Adam's likeness, making it his own by union: and thus he who was God before the ages appeared as man, the Christ. And we are members of Christ, as it is written, "from his flesh and from his bones" [Ephesians 5:30]. What then is the meaning of all these contentious inventions of yours, in that you employ human wisdom to make definitions beyond the scope of human thought, saying, "Instead of the inward man which belongs to us there is in Christ a heavenly mind?" O what an unhallowed opinion, what weak and unbecoming words of men who do not understand in the first place this fact, that "Christ" is not spoken of in one way only, but by that one name itself is exhibited an indication of two things, Godhead and manhood! Therefore "Christ" is called man and "Christ" is called God, and "Christ" is God and man, and "Christ" is one. Vain then is your sophism, whereby you attempt to contemplate something else in him beside "Christ." For those who are in an improper sense called "Christs" may perhaps be contemplated as such from your point of view, but he who is by nature the only real Christ will not be described by human reasoning, as you, who have become presumptuous, dare to describe him. For neither prophet, nor apostle, nor any of the evangelists, has uttered these things which you who have become shameless in mind undertake to say. For if Christ is another than the "heavenly mind" that has come to exist in him, and the "mind" is perfect, then on your own showing there are two (perfects) and you are convicted of holding that opinion which you seem to denounce. As for a "heavenly mind," even the prophets had it, for they spoke of things heavenly, and of things future as if present. But why do you so much as think of saying this, as if the existence of an inward man in Christ were not a thing acknowledged? Why then will you say of the soul, that the body and the soul are the outward man, as one might say of the blood and the flesh? But as the body and the blood, being visible, do not escape handling and also wounding, you have to prove to us that the soul does not escape these things, inasmuch as it is also visible. Or, if you cannot prove this, the conclusion is plain, that the soul is neither seen, nor killed by man, like the body, as the Lord has said [Matthew 10:28]. Be convinced, then, that the soul is our inward man, as is shown by the original formation, and made manifest by the subsequent dissolution, this also being shown not only in our own case, but also in the death of Christ itself, when the body went (only) as far as the sepulchre, but the soul went on to Hades: and since the interval which separates these places was great, and the sepulchre admitted the presence of the body, it was there that the body was present, while the incorporeal presence was admitted by Hades.

14. How was it that when the Lord was present there incorporeally, he was regarded by death as man? It was in order that, by presenting to the souls detained in bondage that form of his own soul which was incapable of the bondage of death, as if capable of it, as present in their presence, he might fix the boundary-mark of the resurrection, and break the bonds of the souls detained in Hades; that the Fashioner and Maker of man, and he who had subjected man to condemnation, might by his own presence, and his own act in his own form, set man entirely free. For neither did death prevail so utterly as to bring the human soul of the Word under its dominion, to be detained in bondage; nor again did corruption tyrannically rend asunder the body so as to produce its dissolution, as if events were not under the control of Providence. For to entertain such a thought as to such a thing, is impious: but he who held the enquiry into the transgression, and gave judgment, passed the general doom in a twofold form, saying to the earthly part, "Earth you are, and to earth will you depart" [Genesis 3:19] - and so, the Lord having pronounced sentence, corruption receives the body - but to the soul, "You will die the death" [Genesis 2:18], and thus man is divided into two parts, and is condemned to go to two places. For this reason the action of him who had pronounced sentence became necessary, that he might be his own act annul his own sentence, after he had been seen in the form of him that was condemned, but in that form as uncondemned and sinless; that the reconciliation of God to man might come to pass, and the freedom of the whole of man might be effected by means of man, in the newness of the image of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Now if you can point out another place of condemnation, you may with reason say that man is divided into three parts, and that the recall from two places has come to pass, but that in the third that which was bound remains in bonds. But if you cannot point out another place, beside the sepulchre and Hades, from which places man has been perfectly set free, because Christ set us free in his own form which was like to ours, perfect and most real; how can you go on saying this, as if God had not yet been reconciled to mankind? How then was it that the Saviour came among us? Was it as if he were unable to set free the whole of man? Or as if he abhorred the mind which had once sinned, or if he, being God, were to become perfect man? But those who form this notion of the case are full of impiety. For what definition of sin is that which you give when you say this, asserting like the most impious Manichaeans, that sin is natural?

15. When you hold these sentiments, you become accusers of the Maker of nature. When God at the beginning formed Adam, did He make sin innate in him? If so, what need was there then of a commandment? And how was it that He condemned man after he had sinned? And how was it also that Adam did not know good and evil before his

transgression? Him, “whom God formed for incorruption, and as an image of His own eternity” [Wisdom 2:21], He made with a nature sinless and a will free to choose: “but through the devil’s envy came death into the world,” after he had found out the device of producing the transgression. And thus, from disobedience to God’s commandment, man became receptive of “the seed sown by the enemy” [Matthew 13:25], and thenceforward sin was active in man’s nature, in the direction of every appetite: not that the devil had fashioned a nature in him, God forbid! For the devil could not be a maker of a nature, as Manichaeans impiously think: but he out of a transgression produced a perversion of nature, and thus it was that “death reigned over all men” [Romans 5:11, 14]. “For this purpose then, it is said, “the Son of God came that he might destroy the works of the devil” [1 John 3:8]. What sort of works of the devil did the Son of God destroy? Because after God had made a nature in a sinless state, the devil perverted it into transgressing his commandment, and finding out deadly sin, therefore did God the Word restore for himself this nature in a state which it was incapable of being perverted by the devil and of finding out sin: and therefore did the Lord say, “The prince of the world comes, and finds nothing in me” [John 14:20]. But if the ruler of the world found in Christ not a single thing that was his, much more did Christ abandon to the ruler of this world nothing of his own handy-work. Or this was another reason for his finding nothing in him - because Christ exhibited the principle of newness in its perfection, that he might accomplish in perfection the salvation of the whole of man, of reasonable soul and body, that resurrection also might be perfect. In vain, then, do Arians use sophistry, suggesting that the Savior assumed flesh only, and impiously referred to the impassible Godhead the notion of suffering. And in vain do you also, from another point of view, but with the same thought as theirs, say that he used the form with which he was invested, that is, which was “instrumental,” and (that) “in place of the inward man that is in us, there was in Christ a heavenly mind.” And how then was he in pain, and in heaviness, and praying? And it is written, “He was troubled in spirit” [John 14:21]. Now these things do not belong to a flesh without mind, nor to an unchangeable Godhead, but to a soul possessing thought, feeling pain, and trouble, and in heaviness, and intellectually sensible of suffering.

16. But if, then, you do not choose to think thus of this matter, there are three possible conceptions, unreality, and blasphemy, and reality; and which will you choose? For if you suppose that what was said was said in mere appearance, then what took place must also be deemed unreal. And if it was really said, but the soul of the Lord had become altogether estranged from its own thought, in that it possessed God the Word as a mind, then to think that the Unchangeable was changed so as to feel pain, and heaviness, and trouble, is impious: and if the Gospels do say that Jesus “was troubled in spirit” [John 13:21], yet the Lord indicates his “mind” in the words, “My soul is troubled” [John 12:27]. Now if the Lord indicates a thought of his own soul, he does so in order to sympathize with our soul, that so we also may at the same time consider the passion to have been his, and confess him to be impassible. For as he redeemed us by the blood of his flesh, so too by the thought of his soul, he “exhibits” his victory in our behalf, saying, “I have overcome the world” [John 16:33]; and, in another place, “To him who gives us the victory” [1 Corinthians 15:57]. But as the blood will not be thought by religious persons, as it is thought by the unbelievers, to be common, but to be effectual for salvation, so also what is called the thought is not beset with human weakness, but exhibits the nature of God. And so Christ will be called perfect God and perfect man: not as if the divine perfection had been converted into a human perfection, which is an impious notion; nor as if we acknowledged two “perfections” separate from each other, which is alien to true religion; nor again by way of “advance” in virtue, and an accession of righteousness, God forbid! But by way of an unfailing existence, so that the two should be one, perfect in all things, the self-same God and man. For on account also did the Lord say, “Now is my soul troubled” [John 12:27] and is in pain. This word “now” means, when he willed; but nevertheless it exhibited what was in existence, for he was not mentioning what existed not as if it were present, as if what took place was spoken of in mere appearance, for all things took place by nature and in reality.

17. Since then the Lord became man by nature, and not by a fiction, it is not possible for you to raise an objection with regard to “sin,” either natural or actual, as in the Maker. For in our nature the strife of invention (of sin) and the introduction of the (evil) seed sown, are still going on, through our weakness; but the Incarnation of the Lord, having taken place in connection with the nature of God, involved an incapacity for those ways of acting which go on in us in consequence of our “old man,” and on this account we are taught to “put off the old man, and to put on the new” [Ephesians 4:21 – 22/Colossians 3:9]. And in this consists the marvel - that the Lord became man, and yet “apart from sin” [Hebrews 4:15]: for he became wholly a new man to exhibit what he could do. And all things that he willed by (his) nature, and arranged, he took upon himself, whatever things he willed, that is, the birth from a woman, increase of stature, numbering of years, labor, and hunger and thirst, and sleep, and pain, and death, and resurrection. Therefore also into the place where man’s body underwent corruption did Jesus introduce his own body; and where the human soul was held fast in death, there did Christ exhibit the human soul as his own, that he

who could not be held fast in death might at the same time be present as man, and unloose the grasp of death as God: that where corruption was sown, there incorruption might spring up, and where death reigned in the form of a human soul, the Immortal One might be present and exhibit immortality, and so make us partakers of his own incorruption and immortality, by the hope of resurrection from the dead: so that “the corruptible might put on incorruption, and this mortal might put on immortality” [1 Corinthians 15:53]; “that as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, even so by one man Jesus Christ might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life” [Romans 5:12], as it is written. What then do you mean by saying, “Instead of the inward man that is in us, there is in Christ a heavenly mind?” Do you grant that having separated the outward and the inward into two, he thus exhibited himself both in the sepulchre and in Hades? But it was not possible to pay one thing as a ransom in exchange for a different thing on the contrary, he gave body for body, and soul for soul, and a perfect existence for the whole of man: this is Christ’s exchange, which the Jews, the foes of life, insulted at the crucifixion, “as they passed by and shook their heads” [Matthew 27:39]. For neither did Hades endure the approach of a Godhead unveiled [Psalm 16; Acts 2:31]; this is attested both by prophets and apostles.

18. Further, the truth of these observations will be seen at a glance when we consider the dispensation of the cross, how the Lord exhibited the reality of his flesh by the pouring forth of his blood, and by the addition of water indicated its spotless purity, and that it was the body of God: and by “crying aloud, and bowing the head” [Matthew 27:50], and “yielding up his spirit” [John 19:30], he indicated that which was within his own body, that is, the soul; of which also he said, “I lay it down for my sheep” [John 10:15]. So that one would not call his breathing his last a withdrawal of Godhead, but a departure of the soul. For if the death, and the dying of the body, took place in virtue of a withdrawal of Godhead, then the death which he died was one peculiar to himself, and not that which is ours. And how could he descend into Hades with his Godhead not under a veil? In that case, where then was the soul, which the Lord promised to “lay down for the sheep” [John 10:15], and concerning which the prophets made revelations beforehand? But if what took place was a departure of the soul, then on this account it was said that he underwent the death that was ours, that is, by enduring the dissolution that befalls us, as he also endured our birth.

19. Vain, then, is your sophism: for how could his death have taken place, if the Word had not constituted for himself both our outward and inward man, that is, body and soul? And how then did he pay “a ransom for all” [1 Timothy 2:6], or how was the loosening of the grasp of death completely effected, if Christ had not constituted for himself, in a sinless state, that which had sinned intellectually, the soul? In that case, death still “reigns” over the inward man: for over what did it ever reign, if not over the soul, which had sinned intellectually, as it is written, “The soul that sins, it shall die” [Ezekiel 18:4] on behalf of which Christ laid down his own soul, thus paying a ransom? But what was it that God originally condemned that which the Father fashioned, or the action of what was fashioned? If God condemned that which the Fashioner fashioned, he condemned himself, and he would then be like to men. But if it is impious to think this of God, and if He condemned the action of the thing fashioned, in that case he annuls the action, and renews the thing fashioned. “For we are a thing of His making, created unto good works” [Ephesians 2:10].

20. But again, you say, “It is we who call him to was from Mary, God.” Why then do you speak as Marcion did, of God as having come to “visit” us, and of God as having come to us intangibly, as having a nature not receptive of human flesh? Or why do you speak of God like Paul of Samosata? For this was the face which he put on his impiety, to acknowledge him that was from Mary as “God” in this sense, that he was pre-ordained before the ages, but derived from Mary the beginning of his existence. And he acknowledges in him an operative Word, from heaven, and Wisdom (thereby granting him, on his own impious theory, more than you do), just as you speak of a heavenly mind in an animated body. But neither is an animated body in itself perfect man, nor is a “heavenly mind” in itself God. For we mean by an animated body one in regard to which the name of “soul” is used with the notion of real existence. Now a man’s body is called body, and not soul: and a man’s soul is called (soul), and not body, each being in relation to the other, that is, spirit to body. For it is said, “who knows the mind of the Lord?” [1 Corinthians 2:10]. The “mind of the Lord” is not of itself the Lord, but is the Lord’s will or counsel, or action towards something. Why then do you desire such language, “adulterating the word of God” [2 Corinthians 2:17] by made-up words? But the church of God has neither received nor handed down this notion, but rather, as it is written, that that God the Word was before the ages with God [John 1:1] came among us “at the consummation of the ages” [Hebrews 9:26], and was born of the holy virgin and of the Holy Spirit, Son of Man, as it is written, “Until she brought forth her firstborn son” [Matthew 1:25], “that he might become firstborn among many brethren” [Romans 8:29], being himself very God; that he might both suffer for us as man, and redeem us from suffering and death as God. Vainly, then do you imagine that you can effect in yourselves the renewal of that which thinks and directs the flesh: imagining that you

can do it by imitation; not considering that imitation is limitation of a preceding piece of work, for otherwise it could not be called imitation. But in that it is only flesh which you acknowledge to be renewed in Christ, you go astray and blaspheme. For if it were possible for men to effect for themselves, apart from Christ, the renewal of that which directs the flesh, and what is directed follows that which directs it, what was the use of Christ's coming amongst us?

21. Those also talk groundlessly who say, that the Word so came, as he did to one of the prophets. For of which of the prophets is it true that he, being God, became man? On that theory, why did "the Law make nothing perfect" [Hebrews 9:19]? And why too did "death reign over those who had not sinned in like manner" [Romans 5:14] to the protoplasts? And why again, did the Lord say, "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" [John 8:36]? Was it not in reference to that newness which was in him, and the perfection by which we also, who have believed, are made new, as we imitate and participate in the perfect newness of Christ? But you have resorted to every device, for the sake of making out one conclusion, that of negation. And you call the soul paraphrastically, sometimes a "mind distracted," sometimes "sin subsisting," and sometimes you thrust it out as "a worker of sin," and the flesh you call sometimes "uncreate," sometimes "heavenly," sometimes "coessential with the Word," in order that you may completely confirm your negation. And as Arius, having lapsed from the belief in the ineffable and most true generation of the Son from the Father, found out such terms as "passion," "cutting," and "flux," in order that by these unhallowed words he might cast down the unstable into the pit of transgression; "for the mouth of the transgressor is a deep pit" [LXX Proverbs 22:11] so also Sabellius, who supposed the Son to have no real subsistence, and the Holy Spirit to be non-existent, and charged his opponents with dividing the Godhead, and making a member of principles and gods, settled himself in Judaical sentiments; so also Manichaeus, disbelieving in the Lord's Incarnation, and in his becoming man, became altogether impious, saying that man was subject to two Makers, an evil and a good: in like manner you also calumniously say, that we say there are two Sons, and call us "man-worshippers," or make an objection on the score of "sin," not in order that you may be truly religious, but that you may show off your own error as making good way by help of your evil inventions, and turn away the unstable from the faith by means of your impious words. "Yet the solid foundation of the God stands, having this seal." [2 Timothy 2:19]

22. This I have written, dear friend, although in the truest sense, the Evangelic tradition being sufficient, nothing more was necessary to be written: but I have written because you asked about the faith that is in us, and also for the sake of those who like to talk at random about their inventions, and do not consider that "he who speaks from what is his own, speaks a lie" [John 8:44]. For it does not come within the reach of man's mind to express the beauty or glory of Christ's body; but at any rate, it is possible to acknowledge what has taken place as it is described in Scripture, and to worship the God who is, that his love may be glorified and acknowledged, and we may have a hope of salvation, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Book 2

1. Let those who do not acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ as one, from God and man, as it is written in the Gospel, "who was Son of Adam, who was Son of God" [Luke 3:28], tell us in what light they regard him who existed as God "in the form of God" and "took the form of a servant" [Philippians 2:6 - 7], or how they understand the text, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" [John 1:14]. For he who said, "The Word became flesh," said that "he gave his life for us" [1 John 3:16]. Do they suppose the Word to have undergone a conversion into flesh, or been made "like" to soul, or to have exhibited the human form in mere semblance, as the other heretics erroneously say? But the apostle does not allow of this, having told us who he was, and what he received. For as "the form of God" is understood to mean the fulness of the Word's Godhead, so too "the form of the servant" is acknowledged to mean the intellectual nature of man's constitution, with its instrumental system so that by "was" the Word should be understood, and "became" should be acknowledged to refer to the flesh, with the soul, which is called "form of a servant," being understood to be a certain intellectual constitution. On this account, man, when reduced to a state of death, is called "formless," and is wholly distorted, since the soul, whose nature is indissoluble, has withdrawn from the body. Wherefore Paul adduces the evidence of the intellectual nature, but John of the "instrumental exhibition" of the body; so that both might proclaim the whole mystery of the economy. For it is plan that the preexistent God the Word, before he came among us in flesh, was not man, but was God with God, being invisible and impassible.

2. Nor is the name "Christ" employed without reference to the flesh: for the name implies the passion and death, as Paul writes, "If the Christ was passible, if he was first to rise from the dead" [Acts 26:23]: and elsewhere he says,

“Christ our Passover has been sacrificed” [1 Corinthians 5:7], and “the man Jesus Christ who gave himself a ransom for us” [1 Timothy 2:5 - 6]. Not that Christ is not God, but that he is also man. Therefore he says, “Remember Jesus Christ raised from the dead, of the seed of David according to the flesh” [2 Timothy 2:8]. And therefore Scripture, when setting forth his being, introduces both names, inasmuch as invisibly he is thought of as, and really is, God, but visibly he is handled as, and really is, man: not by a division of persons or names, but by natural generation, and indissoluble union: so that while the passion is truly acknowledged to have taken place in him, he the self-same should be at the same time really acknowledged to be both passible and impassible. How then could the Word being God, become “Christ” before he became man? For if the name “Christ” belongs to the Godhead apart from flesh, it must also be applied to the Father and the Holy Spirit: and the passion itself will be common to Them, as some erroneously say. Will you say that God the Word himself, who is impassible and incorporeal, was capable of suffering and death, even before he was incarnate and became man? But how could the Son, who is coessential with the Father, and inseparable from him in regard to the divine nature, be called passible, whereas he is unchangeable and unalterable, unless he had taken from the virgin’s womb the entire form of man’s constitution in himself, and become man, that he might alone be man in suffering, and unchangeable as being God?

3. For therefore also did the anointing take place; not as if God needed an anointing, nor again as if the anointing took place without God, but that God both applied the anointing, and received it in the body which was receptive of it. It is plain then that the Word did not become Christ apart from human flesh, by dividing himself into a “show” of flesh or a “likeness” of soul; but remaining what he was, he took “the form of the servant” [Philippians 2:7], that form not being devoid of a real existence openly manifested by means of passion, and resurrection, and the whole economy, as has been written and made clear. Tell us then, how you suppose “God” to have come into being at Nazareth: for all heretics are wont to say this, as Paul of Samosata acknowledges “God” from the virgin, “God,” seen as from Nazareth and as having from thence had the beginning of His existence and received the beginning of Kingship: and he acknowledges in him a Word “operating” from heaven, and a Wisdom, and that He existed in predestination before the ages, but was manifested in actual being from Nazareth, so that, as he says, the “God over all” might be one, the Father. Such is his impious theory. And Marcion and Manichaeus say that God has come among us through the virgin, and come forth intangibly and as being incapable of communication with human nature, which had fallen into sin, and was subject to the ruler of wickedness: for that if Christ had taken this nature in himself, he would both be subject to the ruler of wickedness, and would not be free from sin: but that he exhibited from himself at his pleasure a flesh of his own “like to ours” [Philippians 2:7?], which was seen as having come from heaven, and which passed into the heavens, and was whole Godhead. Valentinus, again, speaks of suffering as common to the Trinity, imagining the flesh to be a part of Godhead. And Arius acknowledges flesh alone, in order to a concealment of the Godhead, and says that instead of that inward man which is in us, that is, the soul, the Word came to exist in the flesh: for he dares to ascribe to the Godhead the idea of suffering and the resurrection from Hades. And Sabellius expresses the opinions of Paul of Samosata and his followers: for, dreading the division invented by Arius, he fell into the error which destroys (the personal distinctions). Now to whom do you attach yourselves, or whom do you mean to assist? Or are you as the saying is, “of a mixed race”? For by disbelieving the union, you have come to terms with all the above named heretics: and by denying the “completeness,” you have gone the length of destroying, while professing to dread “division.”

4. Why then do you employ sophistical pretexts? Why do you use hypocritical concealments, and not say openly that he did not “become man, having taken the form of the servant” [Philippians 2:6 - 7], but that he “was seen as (if) man”? This question is suggested by your language, when you repeat, by way of pretext, “the same” and “the same.” For this reason you calumniously attempt to run down the true economy, saying, “They call Christ a man who was deified.” And what do they make of the text, “In the beginning was the Word” [John 1:1] and “He took the form of a servant” [Philippians 2:7] and became man? It is said to mean either a man who was with God, or a man closely linked to God, or a man who died for the world, and was part of the world, or a man not separate from sin, or a man holding sovereignty over angels, or a man worshiped by the creation, or a man who is Lord, as the apostle says, “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ” [Romans 1:1], or a man crucified, being also Lord of glory, or a man to whom is said, “Sit on my right hand” [Psalm 110], or a man coming to pronounce judgment.” This is your “thick and upsetting potion” [Habakkuk 2:15] which you give to men and make them drink. Question then the Jews, so that after hearing from their lips these words uttered against Christ and those who have believed on him, you may blush; and learn too from the other heretics who say and think the same things. Let us have a full view of the dogmas of the heretics, and the conclusions of your own “intelligence,” and the doctrine of our faith, and the definite rule of the gospel, and the preaching of the apostles, and the general view of the economy as fulfilled.

5. Tell us then, how is it that you say that “God” came into being from Nazareth, affirming with Paul of Samosata a sort of beginning of existence for the Godhead, or with Marcion and the other heretics denying the nativity of the flesh: not walking in a line with the definite teaching of the Gospel, but choosing to “speak from your own” [John 8:41] resources. For this is your motive for saying, “God was born of the virgin,” instead of “God” and “man,” according to the gospel definition, that you may not, while acknowledging a nativity of flesh, call it “natural,” and in so speaking keep to the truth, but may speak of a “God” as having been born, and having “shown” flesh of his own, as if in mere appearance. For God does not “exhibit” a beginning of existence from Nazareth: but he who existed before the ages, God the Word, was seen as man from Nazareth, having been born of Mary the virgin, and the Holy Spirit, in Bethlehem of Judaea, from the seed of David and Abraham, and of Adam, as it is written: having taken from the virgin all that God originally fashioned and made in order to the constitution of man, yet without sin, as also the apostle says, “In all points like to us, yet without sin” [Hebrews 4:15]: not “exhibiting” a conversion of the Godhead, but effecting a renewal of the manhood, according to his own will: so that the “Gentiles should be of the same body and jointly partakers of Christ” [Ephesians 3:6], as also the apostle writes: that man might be truly God, and God might be truly man, that he might be truly man and truly God: not that “a man was with God,” as you calumniously say, disparaging the mystery of Christians: but that God, the Only-Begotten, was pleased by the fulness of his Godhead, to set up again for himself, from the virgin’s womb, through a natural birth and an indissoluble union, the originally formed man, and to make a new handywork, that he might perform the business of salvation in men’s behalf, working out the salvation of men by suffering and death and resurrection.

6. But you say, “If he assumed all, then assuredly he had human thoughts: but it is impossible that in human thoughts there should not be sin: and how then will Christ be “without sin” [Hebrews 4:15]? Tell us then: If God is the maker of thoughts which lead to sin, to God we must refer His own production: for He came to refer to Himself what He Himself had made; but in that case the judgment which condemns the sinner will be unjust, for if God made thoughts which lead to sin, how can He condemn the sinner? And how is it possible for any such judgment to proceed from God? And if Adam was subject to such thoughts before he disobeyed God’s commandment, he became subject to thoughts leading to sin; not that God made the thoughts which were taking him captive, but that the devil by deceit sowed them in the rational nature of man, which had come into transgression, and was thrust away from God; so that the devil established in man’s nature both a “law of sin” [Romans 7:23, 7], and death as reigning through sinful actions; “for this cause,” then, did the Son of God come “that he might destroy the works of the devil” [1 John 3:8]. But you say, “He destroyed them in that he sinned not.” But that is not a destruction of sin. For the devil did not originally produce sin in man in order that when he came into the world, and sinned not, sin might be destroyed: but the devil produced sin by sowing it in the rational and intellectual nature of man. Therefore it became impossible for that nature, being rational, and having sinned voluntarily, and incurred condemnation to death, to recall itself to freedom: as the apostle says, “What was impossible for the law, in that it was weak through the flesh” [Romans 8:3]. Therefore the Son of God came to restore it by his own act, in his own nature, by a new beginning and a wondrous generation: not by making a partition of the original constitution, but by contradicting that principle of contradiction which had been “sown in” with it, as the prophet testifies saying, “Before the child shall know good or evil” [Isaiah 7:16] he refuses evil in order to choose good. But if sinlessness had not been seen in the nature which had sinned, how could sin have been “condemned in the flesh” [Romans 8:3], when that flesh had no capacity for action, and the Godhead knew not sin? And why did the apostle say, “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” [Romans 5:20], (not as if describing a place, but indicating a nature) that, he says, “as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so by one man, Jesus Christ, might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life” [Romans 5:12]: so that the nature by which the advance of sin took place, might be the very nature through which the exhibition of righteousness should take place; and in this way, the works of the devil might be destroyed by the emancipation of man’s nature from sin, and God might be glorified?

7. But again you say, “If Christ is man, he must be part of the world: and a part of the world cannot save the world.” What a fallacious notion. What a blasphemous absurdity! For let them say from what Scripture comes this dictum, or sophism of the devil, since the prophet says, “A brother redeems not, a man shall redeem” [Psalm 49:8] and elsewhere, “And a man was born in her, and the Most High Himself founded her” [Psalm 87:3]. How then can it be that Christ, who became man, did not save the world when it is plain indeed that the nature in which sin was generated is the nature in which “the abundance of grace” [Romans 5:17] has taken place. Now what is “the abundance of grace”? It consists in this, that the Word, remaining God, became man, in order that having become man, he might be believed to be God: as Christ, being man, is God, because being God, he became man, and in the form of man saves those who believe. “For if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” [Romans 10:9]. Now God is incapable of being put to death,

nor does he need resurrection, but he raises from the dead. Wherefore it became necessary that God “should have something which he could offer” [Hebrews 8:3] up for us, either in death or in life, that he saved us.

8. But again you say, “But how can the nature which had become accustomed to sin, and has received the transmission of sin, be without sin? It is impossible: Christ, on that view, will be like one among men.” This was what Marcion also thought: this was the conclusion which Manichaeism also brought forward, placing the flesh and the very birth, of man under the sway of the ruler of wickedness, and entitling him “Potentate”: “since he by whom one is overcome is he to whom one is brought into bondage” [2 Peter 2:19]. These are they whose opinions you are reviving, while by a different method you give over the intellectual nature of man, which is understood to be the soul, and define it to be incapable of escaping sin, and have in the plainest terms described the soul as “fleshly”, on whose authority I know not, for this cannot be found in the Holy Scriptures, nor in the general sense of men, since the Lord says, “Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul” [Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4]. And if the soul is as you say, “fleshly,” why does it not die and decay with the body? And again, why did Peter call the souls detained in Hades “spirits,” saying “He went to announce the good news” of the resurrection “to the spirits shut up in prison” [1 Peter 3:20]. But you apply to everything the phrase “contrary to nature,” in order to avoid giving a natural account of the economy, and so stating the truth about the Word, that the Word truly became man. For you have said that it is God’s voice that says, “The mind of man is sedulously devoted to evil from youth” [Genesis 8:21]; not understanding that by saying, “from youth,” he indicated what was “sown in afterwards” and perishable. Therefore did “the Lord swear a faithful oath unto David, that of the fruit of his body he would raise up the Christ after the flesh” [Acts 2:30]: not to be “seen as” a man in consequences of a change of Godhead - for then what need was there for the Lord to swear unto David? But as having taken “the form of a servant” [Philippians 2:7], when he submitted to be “born of a woman” [Galatians 4:4], and to “grow in stature” [Luke 2:52] as we do, as the apostle says, “Since then the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise partook of the same” [Hebrews 2:14]. “Likewise,” because not from seed, but from the Spirit; “of the same,” because not from any other source, but from the seed of David, and of Abraham, and of Adam, as it is written.

9. Why then, passing by the Holy Scriptures, and the manifestation of the truth, do you say, “If he was not of his own will seen as a man, but took human existence and became man, then he was combined with a man, and then also the Lord of glory, who was crucified, must be a man.” If then you listen to Peter when he says, “This Jesus, whom you crucified, has God made Christ and Lord” [Acts 2:30], to what do you refer the “making”? If to the Godhead of the Word, why do you still blame Arians, when you think as they do? If to that “form of the servant” [Philippians 2:7] which existed in the Word, why do you contradict yourselves? But this is not your belief, for you say again, “If the nature which had sinned did not sin when it came to exist in God, it must needs have been constrained, by necessity; but what is constrained by necessity is under duress.” Tell us then: if the condition of not sinning is produced by necessity, then to sin is according to nature; therefore you must grant that the Maker of nature is a producer of sin. But if such a statement is blasphemous, and sinning happens by virtue of necessity, it is clear that not to sin is according to nature. Therefore it is not by necessity, but by nature and power, that the “form of the servant” [Philippians 2:7] which was seen in the Godhead of the Word exhibits its sinlessness, having broken through the barrier of necessity, and “the law of sin” [Romans 7:23], and having led away captive the tyrannical author of captivity, as the prophet says, “You are gone up on high, You have led captivity captive” [Psalm 68:19 - 20; Ephesians 4:8]. For the Word, putting forward “the form of the servant” [Philippians 2:7] against the enemy, won the victory through that which had once been defeated. Therefore also Jesus went completely through every form of temptation, because he assumed all those things that had had experience of temptation, and by them won the victory in men’s behalf, saying “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” [John 16:33]. For it was not with the Godhead, which he knew not, that the devil engaged in warfare, for he would not have ventured on this; (therefore he said, “If you are the Son of God” [Matthew 4:3; Luke 4:4]) but with man, who he had long before been able to seduce, and from that time had directed against all men the operations of his wickedness. And since Adam’s soul was detained under sentence of death, and was continually crying out to its Lord, and those who had been well-pleasing to God, and had been justified by the natural law, were detained with Adam, and were mourning and crying out with him, God, taking pity on man whom He had made, was pleased through the revelation of a mystery to work out a new salvation for the race of men, and to effect the overthrow of the enemy, who “through envy” [Wisdom 2:21] had deceived them, and to exhibit an incalculable exaltation of man by his union and communion with the Most High in nature and truth.

10. Therefore the Word, being God, and the Maker of the first man, came that he might become man, in order to give life to man, and to overthrow the unrighteous enemy, and was “born of a woman” [Galatians 4:4], having

restored in himself the form of man as at first created, by an “exhibition” of flesh without carnal desires and human thoughts, as a representative of renewal. For the will belonged to the Godhead only, since the whole nature of the Word (was present) under the exhibition of the human form and visible flesh of the second Adam, not by a division of persons, but by the real existence of Godhead and manhood. For on this account did the devil draw near to Jesus, as to a man, but not finding in him a token of the old “seed sown” [Matthew 13:23] in man, nor any success of his immediate attempt, he was defeated, and gave way in confusion, and being enfeebled, said, “Who is this that comes from Edom” [Isaiah 63:1], that is, from the land of men, walking “with force and strength”? Therefore also the Lord said, “The prince of this world comes and finds nothing in me” [John 14:30]. And yet we are taught that the second Adam had both a soul, and a body, and the whole of the first Adam. For if the word “nothing” had referred to the real being of man, how came he to find the visible body of him who said “nothing”? But he did not find in him the things which he himself had produced in the first Adam; and thus was sin destroyed by Christ. Therefore also the Scripture testifies, “Who did no sin, neither was guilt found in his mouth” [Isaiah 53:9; 1 Peter 2:22].

11. Why then do you say, “It is impossible that man, who has once been made captive, should be set free from captivity,” so as to ascribe impotence to God and power to the devil, while you say, like the rest of the heretics, that sin cannot be destroyed in the nature of men, and that therefore the Godhead, which was not made captive, came in the “likeness” [Philippians 2:6 - 7; Romans 8:3] of soul and flesh, that it might remain itself out of captivity, and so righteousness might be seen as “clear”? When then was the righteousness of the Godhead not “clear”? And what benefit was hereby conferred on men, if it was not in identity of being and newness of nature that the Lord was seen, as the apostle says, “The way which he made new for us, fresh and living” [Hebrews 10:20] saying, “I am the way, and the life, and the truth” [John 14:6]? But you say that those who believe are saved by likeness and by imitation, and not by the renewal and the firstfruits. Why then did Christ, who is “the head of the body, then church,” become “firstborn among many brethren” [Colossians 1:18; Romans 8:29], and “firstfruits of them that slept” [1 Corinthians 15:20]? For a faith which has its object in full view cannot be called faith: but faith is that which believes the impossible to be possible, and the weak to be strong, and the passible to be impassible, and the corruptible to be incorrupt, and the mortal to be immortal. “This mystery is great,” as the apostle says, “but I speak in reference to Christ and the church” [Ephesians 5:32]. For the Godhead came not to justify itself, for it had not sinned: but he “who was rich, became poor for our sakes, that we, through his poverty, might be rich” [2 Corinthians 8:9]. And how did God become poor? When He assumed to Himself the nature which had become poor, and, while retaining His own righteousness, put this nature forward to suffer for men while it was superior to men, and was manifested from among men, and had become wholly God’s. For if He had not been born as firstborn among many brethren, how could he have been seen as “firstborn from the dead” [Colossians 1:18]? How then can you say, “The God who suffered and rose again through flesh”? Alas for the extravagance and the blasphemy! Such audacious language belongs to Arians. For they fearlessly put forward this blasphemy, having learned to call the Son of God “God” in an unreal sense: and yet Scripture teaches that the passion took place by means of God, in his flesh, and not that God suffered through flesh.

12. How then can you, who begin by promising to acknowledge the coessentiality, degrade the indivisible Name to a condition of suffering? Degrading to that condition, and acknowledging as risen again, the undivided nature, the ineffable Godhead, the unchangeable and unutterable coessentiality? For if the Word, having made flesh, by a change, out of himself, went so far as to suffer without having taken on himself anything passible or capable of resurrection, then it must be himself that suffered and rose again from the dead: and the passion must have been, as Valentinus thought, common to the whole Trinity, since the Word in regard to the divine nature is inseparable from the Father. But if you choose to think thus of these things, what becomes of the promise of the prophets, or the genealogy of the Evangelists, or the testimony of the martyrs, or the mention of Mary the mother, or the growth in stature, or the exhibition of his eating food, or the indication of the universal sympathy, or the application of the Name, or such phrases as - “the Son of God became Son of Man,” or “the man Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom” [1 Timothy 2:5] for us,” or “the Son of Man must suffer many things and be killed, and the third day rise again from the dead” [Mark 8:31]? But if you do not believe that Christ was passible because he was man, yet impassible because he was God, but, when driven into a corner, argue, that if you confess Christ to be God and man, you will be saying, “Not one, but two,” you must necessarily either (like Marcion and the rest of the heretics) call the economy of the passion and the death and resurrection a mere appearance; or like Arius and his followers, call the Godhead of the Word passible.

13. For if, while reading the divine Scriptures, you have observed how, in the law and prophets, and the Gospels, and the apostles’ writings, everywhere they first call the Lord “man” and then mention his passion, in order that they

may not utter at any time a blasphemous word against the Godhead; therefore they have neither spoken of the “generation” of the Godhead of the Word, but acknowledge a Father, and proclaim the Son, and reckon Christ in his descent from Mary, as Son of David and of Joseph according to the flesh, by the assumption of “the form of the servant” [Philippians 2:7], in order that his humanity may be believed to be from men, and he may be acknowledged as God the Word from God the Father, bearing the sufferings that he bore on behalf of men in the passible form received from men, exhibiting his impassibility in the body which suffered, his immortality in that which died, his incorruption in that which was buried, his victory in that which had been tempted, his newness in that which had waxed old - because “our old man was crucified with him” [Romans 6:6]: for in this consists the grace: and nowhere does Godhead admit suffering apart from a suffering body, nor exhibit disturbance and distress apart from a distressed and disturbed soul: nor does it feel heaviness and pray, apart from a mind that is in heaviness and praying. But indeed, although what has been mentioned did not happen through any failure of nature, yet what took place was so done as to indicate real existence. Why then have you written that it is “God that suffered and rose again through flesh”? For if it is God that suffered and rose again through flesh, you must call the Father also, and the Paraclete, passible, since their Name is one, and the divine nature is one.

14. But from this expression one can perceive your drift to be that of men who do not fear God, nor obey the divine Scriptures. For Moses writes about God, “our God is a consuming fire” [Deuteronomy 4:21], but about his coming among us in flesh, he speaks of the Lord as about to “raise up a prophet from among your brethren” [Deuteronomy 18:18], and of “life hanging on the tree” [Deuteronomy 28:28], as it were the body of the Lord, given to be unto life for us, and Isaiah loudly proclaims concerning God, “God the great, the eternal, He who constructed the extremities of the earth, will not hunger nor be weary” [Isaiah 10:28] and so on: but about the passion, “a man under a stroke” and “knowing how to bear infirmity” [Isaiah 53:3]. And what is the meaning of “knowing how to bear infirmity”? It means that by that which suffered, that which was capable of suffering was exhibited. For on this account also he says, “Write with the pen of a man in the new volume” [Isaiah 8:1], and not flesh without form. And the apostle also says “the man Christ Jesus who gave himself” [1 Timothy 2:5]. Therefore also to the phrase, “of the seed of David” [Romans 1:3], he adds a mention of the resurrection, using the phrase “according to the flesh”: but of the Godhead he says, “For the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword” [Hebrews 1:2]. And the Lord also refers the passion to the Son of Man, indicating that it is according to the flesh: but of his Godhead he says, “I and the Father are one” [John 10:30], and, “No one knows who the Son is but the Father only” [Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22]. And nowhere have the Scriptures conveyed to us any invention of “blood of God” apart from flesh, or of God having suffered, and risen again “through flesh.” These are the audacious sayings of Arians, since they do not acknowledge the Son of God to be very God. But the holy Scriptures speak plainly of “blood” and “suffering” as in the flesh of God, and belonging to the flesh of God made man, and of a resurrection of God’s body, a resurrection from the dead. But you say the very contrary, as if you were wiser than the apostles, and more spiritual than the prophets, and had better right to speak than the Evangelists, or even higher authority than the Lord, while by language falsely called reverential you deny the truth, and speak against the Godhead, whereas the economy was plainly exhibited on the cross, and his flesh was proved to exist by the effusion of blood: when a voice was uttered, and soul was indicated, not manifesting any severance of Godhead, but indicating the putting to death of the body; for the Godhead did not desert the body in the sepulchre, nor was the soul separated from it in Hades. For this is the meaning of what was said by the mouth of the prophets, “You shall not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You give Your Holy One to see corruption” [Psalm 16:10]. Therefore also the Lord said, “No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself” [John 10:18], that is, “I being present, declare this.”

15. Therefore by the soul of God the grasp of death was loosened, and the resurrection from Hades was effected, and was announced as good tidings to the souls: and in the body of Christ corruption was annulled, and incorruption was displayed from the sepulchre. So that neither was man separated from God, nor did God announce that He would abandon man, nor was the dying, and the departure of the spirit, a withdrawal of God from the body, but a separation of soul from body: for therein was our death described. But if God was separated from the body, and its death was exhibited under that condition, how was it that the body, when separated from the incorruptible God, could exhibit incorruption? And how did the Word also make his entrance into Hades? Did he himself rise again in place of the soul that is ours, so as to construct a mere likeness of our resurrection? Nay, how is it possible to imagine this of God? Your statement, then, is out of harmony with the holy Scriptures, and your opinion is incongruous with the economy that was fulfilled. And the words, “Sit on my right hand” [Psalm 110:1], do not express the dignity of a man, but of God; but since the dignity of God has become the dignity of man, therefore in order that the dignity of man might be believed to be the dignity of God, it is said, “Sit on my right hand” [Psalm 110:1], and “Glorify me, O Father, with the eternal glory” [John 17:4]. He does not say this as if he was separated from that glory, but as having

come to exist in a body that was not glorious, that he might exhibit “the form of the servant” [Philippians 2:7] as not separate from the divine glory, but as showing it forth. Therefore it is said, “And I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again” [John 12:28], signifying that the glory which existed prior to the body was one with that which dwelt in the body, as the apostle says, “Having become so far superior to the angels, as he has inherited a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, sit on my right hand” [Hebrews 1:4 - 5; Psalm 110:1]. Assuredly the Word, who is the Maker of the angels, did not become inferior to them as if he had been inferior, but by exhibiting that “form of the servant” [Philippians 2:7], which had risen up in him, as superior to the angels, or indeed to the whole creation: since being “the image of the invisible God, he became firstborn of all the creation” [Colossians 1:15], as it is also written in the Gospels, “until she brought forth her firstborn Son” [Matthew 1:23]. Therefore also “in him were all things created” [Colossians 1:17], and in him the passion took place, and he is the deliverer from suffering and death, and through him all things came into being, “and he is the head of the body, the church, who is firstborn from the dead, that he himself, it is written, might become pre-eminent of all things” [Colossians 1:16 - 18].

16. In what sense then, according to you, did the Word, who is the Maker of all rational natures, having united flesh to himself, become rational man, and how, being unchangeable and unalterable, did he become man, if it was not by constituting the “form of the servant” [Philippians 2:7] so as to be endued with reason, so that the Word might be unchangeable, remaining what he was, and also the man, being God, might be seen on earth as rational? For the Lord is “heavenly man,” not by having exhibited his flesh as from heaven, but by having bestowed a heavenly condition on that flesh, which was derived from earth. Therefore also, “as is the heavenly One, such are they that are heavenly” [1 Corinthians 15:48], by their partaking of his holiness. Therefore also, the attributes of the body were appropriated by him. But you say again, “How was it that they “crucified the Lord of glory” [1 Corinthians 2:8], and yet in your view did not crucify the Word?” God forbid! On the contrary, they set at nought the Word, when they nailed to the cross the body of the Word. For it was God who was set at nought, but it was the soul and flesh of God that went through suffering and death, and resurrection. Therefore the Lord said to the Jews, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” [John 2:19]: as the prophet says, “Because his soul was delivered unto death” [Isaiah 53:12], and not the Word himself; and John says, he “laid down his soul for us” [1 John 3:16]. How then were the Jews able to destroy the temple of God, and to break up the indissoluble union of the flesh with the Word, if, as you hold, this was the way in which the process of dying took place? For the body would not have become dead, if it had not been separated from something. For if no dissolution took place, neither did death: and if no death took place, neither did resurrection. Grant, then, the dissolution, and the separation from the body which took place, as it is written in the Gospels that “he breathed his last” [Luke 23:46], and that “he bowed his head, and gave up his spirit” [John 19:30]: that we may see what sort of spirit you suppose to have departed from the body, and how the dying took place. For you have said, “The Word, having united to himself a flesh which had no subsistence, exhibited the truly rational and perfect man.” If then it was the Word that departed from the body, and this was the mode in which the dying took place, the Jews did prevail against God by dissolving the indissoluble union. Consequently, it was not the death that is ours that there took place, if the dying of the body took place after God was parted from it. And how could the body, thus parted from the incorruptible God, continue uncorrupt? On this view, the wounding will indeed belong to the body, but the passion of the Word. For on this account you even speak of God as having suffered, using language in consistence with yourselves, or rather in harmony with the Arians, for this is what they assert. And moreover, according to you, it will be the Word who was raised up by resurrection. For it must needs be that some one received power to begin the resurrection from the dead, in order that the resurrection and dissolution of death, and the release of the spirits there detained, might be perfect.

17. But if it was the Word who suffered this, then what became of his unchangeableness and unalterableness? And why was the Word, when seen without a veil in Hades, accounted as man in death? And why did the Lord say to the Jews, “I will raise it up,” and not, “I will rise again from Hades” for if the Word, on becoming dead, was in need of someone to raise him from death, the victory will not belong to him, but to the person who raised him up. And again, why did he utter through the prophets predictions about his soul? Why did the Lord, when he came, say, in fulfillment of the promise, “I lay down my soul for my sheep” [John 10:15] - that soul which the holy Scriptures clearly represent as being a spirit? And the Lord moreover spoke of the body as being killed [Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4] by men who yet were not able to kill the soul, because it was a spirit. It was the spirit in which Jesus was troubled: it was the “spirit” that departed from the body on the cross. And by this means the body became dead, and its dissolution took place, while God the Word remained unchangeably both with the body and with the soul, and with himself who was “in the bosom of the Father” [John 1:17], so as to exhibit unchangeableness. And in that form which is ours, and which belonged to him, he there depicted the death which is ours, in order that in it he might also

arrange the resurrection which should take place on our behalf: by exhibiting his soul on returning from Hades, and his body from the sepulchre, that in death he might overthrow death by the exhibition of a soul, and in the grave might abolish corruption by the burial of a body; exhibiting immortality and incorruption from Hades and from the grave; having traversed our path in that form which is ours, and unloosed that hold which pressed heavily upon us. And herein lay the wonder: for in this the grace was bestowed. But you, who acknowledge flesh only, are unable to prove either the condemnation of sin, or the overthrow of death, or the completion of resurrection, or the unchangeableness of the Word; because you have gone outside the holy Scriptures, uttering the sophisms of Arians, although the mention of a "soul" occurs plainly in holy Scriptures, and the economy was fulfilled with an exhibition of all that could fulfill and complete it.

18. But some heretics, while they acknowledge him who was seen, disbelieve in his Godhead: and others, acknowledging him as God, deny his nativity in flesh, and others, acknowledging his flesh as well as Godhead, deny the presence of his soul, and have become like to the frenzied children of the Arians, who fasten together knotty and crooked propositions in order that by dint of these they may raise doubts, and get hold of simple people, while they themselves are in doubt about the faith. In like manner also they have learned to say, "Who is he that was born of Mary? Is he God or man?" and then if any one says, "man," he may be led to disbelieve in his Godhead, and agree with those heretics who have disbelieved in it: or, if he says, "God," he will deny his nativity in flesh, and be led away with those heretics who deny it. And then again they ask, "Who is he that suffered? Is he God or man?" so that if one answers, "God," he may utter a blasphemous word, like the impious Arians; and if he says "man," he may on the contrary be speaking according to Jewish sentiments. Therefore the holy Scriptures affirm the Word to be ineffably God from the Father, and to have himself become man from the virgin in the last times: that neither "God" may be disbelieved, nor the birth in flesh be denied. But where there is the name of "flesh," there is the orderly form of our whole constitution, but "without sin" [Hebrews 4:15]. And they connect the passion with the name of man, and do not go further, as it is written in the holy Scriptures: but conceiving the Godhead of the Word, they acknowledge its unchangeableness and ineffableness. Therefore the "Word" is spoken of as divine, but the "man" is subject of a genealogy; in order that the selfsame might naturally and truly appear in both aspects: as "God," in reference to the eternity of Godhead and to the authorship of creation; as "man," in reference to his birth "from a woman" [Galatians 4:4], and his "increase in stature" [Luke 2:52]: "God," in connection with His life-giving operations, and as mighty in wonderful works: "man," in connection with his feelings corresponding to our own, and his participation in our infirmities; "God the Word," in the exhibition of his immortality and incorruption and unchangeableness: "man," as his being nailed to the cross, and in the flowing of blood, and the burial of his body, and the descent into Hades, and the resurrection from the dead. Thus was Christ raised from the dead, and being God, he raises up the dead.

19. Foolish then are those who attribute the passion to his Godhead, or who disbelieve his incarnation, or who call the one "two," or who attempt to make a precise description of "his flesh," and venture to say, "how much," or "how," beyond the Scriptures. For by such notions have the minds of heretics lost their footing. Marcion lapsed through excess of blasphemy; Manichaeus was perverted by an opinion about sin; Valentinus was led astray by a pretense of knowledge; Paul of Samosata, and he who was called Photinus, and their followers, fell away by disbelief in the Godhead; Arius blasphemed through madness; and you, who employ the same sophisms, say what is not written in Scripture, and pervert the unstable. But it is enough to believe in what has been written, and what has taken place, as Paul says, "Like to us in all things, without sin" [Hebrews 4:15], and Peter, "Since Christ then suffered for us in flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind" [1 Peter 4:1], and not push speculations further, and so reject the truth.