

The City of God (Book XI)

Chapter 1.— Of This Part of the Work, Wherein We Begin to Explain the Origin and End of the Two Cities.

The city of God we speak of is the same to which testimony is borne by that Scripture, which excels all the writings of all nations by its divine authority, and has brought under its influence all kinds of minds, and this not by a casual intellectual movement, but obviously by an express providential arrangement. For there it is written, Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. And in another psalm we read, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness, increasing the joy of the whole earth. And, a little after, in the same psalm, As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God. God has established it for ever. And in another, There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. From these and similar testimonies, all of which it were tedious to cite, we have learned that there is a city of God, and its Founder has inspired us with a love which makes us covet its citizenship. To this Founder of the holy city the citizens of the earthly city prefer their own gods, not knowing that He is the God of gods, not of false, i.e., of impious and proud gods, who, being deprived of His unchangeable and freely communicated light, and so reduced to a kind of poverty-stricken power, eagerly grasp at their own private privileges, and seek divine honors from their deluded subjects; but of the pious and holy gods, who are better pleased to submit themselves to one, than to subject many to themselves, and who would rather worship God than be worshipped as God. But to the enemies of this city we have replied in the ten preceding books, according to our ability and the help afforded by our Lord and King. Now, recognizing what is expected of me, and not unmindful of my promise, and relying, too, on the same succor, I will endeavor to treat of the origin, and progress, and deserved destinies of the two cities (the earthly and the heavenly, to wit), which, as we said, are in this present world commingled, and as it were entangled together. And, first, I will explain how the foundations of these two cities were originally laid, in the difference that arose among the angels.

Chapter 22.— Of Those Who Do Not Approve of Certain Things Which are a Part of This Good Creation of a Good Creator, and Who Think that There is Some Natural Evil.

This cause, however, of a good creation, namely, the goodness of God—this cause, I say, so just and fit, which, when piously and carefully weighed, terminates all the controversies of those who inquire into the origin of the world, has not been recognized by some heretics, because there are, forsooth, many things, such as fire, frost, wild beasts, and so forth, which do not suit but injure this thin blooded and frail mortality of our flesh, which is at present under just punishment. They do not consider how admirable these things are in their own

places, how excellent in their own natures, how beautifully adjusted to the rest of creation, and how much grace they contribute to the universe by their own contributions as to a commonwealth; and how serviceable they are even to ourselves, if we use them with a knowledge of their fit adaptations,— so that even poisons, which are destructive when used injudiciously, become wholesome and medicinal when used in conformity with their qualities and design; just as, on the other hand, those things which give us pleasure, such as food, drink, and the light of the sun, are found to be hurtful when immoderately or unseasonably used. And thus divine providence admonishes us not foolishly to vituperate things, but to investigate their utility with care; and, where our mental capacity or infirmity is at fault, to believe that there is a utility, though hidden, as we have experienced that there were other things which we all but failed to discover. For this concealment of the use of things is itself either an exercise of our humility or a levelling of our pride; for no nature at all is evil, and this is a name for nothing but the want of good. But from things earthly to things heavenly, from the visible to the invisible, there are some things better than others; and for this purpose are they unequal, in order that they might all exist. Now God is in such sort a great worker in great things, that He is not less in little things—for these little things are to be measured not by their own greatness (which does not exist), but by the wisdom of their Designer; as, in the visible appearance of a man, if one eyebrow be shaved off, how nearly nothing is taken from the body, but how much from the beauty!— for that is not constituted by bulk, but by the proportion and arrangement of the members. But we do not greatly wonder that persons, who suppose that some evil nature has been generated and propagated by a kind of opposing principle proper to it, refuse to admit that the cause of the creation was this, that the good God produced a good creation. For they believe that He was driven to this enterprise of creation by the urgent necessity of repulsing the evil that warred against Him, and that He mixed His good nature with the evil for the sake of restraining and conquering it; and that this nature of His, being thus shamefully polluted, and most cruelly oppressed and held captive, He labors to cleanse and deliver it, and with all His pains does not wholly succeed; but such part of it as could not be cleansed from that defilement is to serve as a prison and chain of the conquered and incarcerated enemy. The Manichæans would not drivel, or rather, rave in such a style as this, if they believed the nature of God to be, as it is, unchangeable and absolutely incorruptible, and subject to no injury; and if, moreover, they held in Christian sobriety, that the soul which has shown itself capable of being altered for the worse by its own will, and of being corrupted by sin, and so, of being deprived of the light of eternal truth—that this soul, I say, is not a part of God, nor of the same nature as God, but is created by Him, and is far different from its Creator.

Chapter 27.— Of Existence, and Knowledge of It, and the Love of Both.

And truly the very fact of existing is by some natural spell so pleasant, that even the wretched are, for no other reason, unwilling to perish; and, when they feel that they are wretched, wish not that they themselves be annihilated, but that their misery be so. Take

even those who, both in their own esteem, and in point of fact, are utterly wretched, and who are reckoned so, not only by wise men on account of their folly, but by those who count themselves blessed, and who think them wretched because they are poor and destitute—if any one should give these men an immortality, in which their misery should be deathless, and should offer the alternative, that if they shrank from existing eternally in the same misery they might be annihilated, and exist nowhere at all, nor in any condition, on the instant they would joyfully, nay exultantly, make election to exist always, even in such a condition, rather than not exist at all. The well-known feeling of such men witnesses to this. For when we see that they fear to die, and will rather live in such misfortune than end it by death, is it not obvious enough how nature shrinks from annihilation? And, accordingly, when they know that they must die, they seek, as a great boon, that this mercy be shown them, that they may a little longer live in the same misery, and delay to end it by death. And so they indubitably prove with what glad alacrity they would accept immortality, even though it secured to them endless destruction. What! Do not even all irrational animals, to whom such calculations are unknown, from the huge dragons down to the least worms, all testify that they wish to exist, and therefore shun death by every movement in their power? Nay, the very plants and shrubs, which have no such life as enables them to shun destruction by movements we can see, do not they all seek in their own fashion to conserve their existence, by rooting themselves more and more deeply in the earth, that so they may draw nourishment, and throw out healthy branches towards the sky? In fine, even the lifeless bodies, which want not only sensation but seminal life, yet either seek the upper air or sink deep, or are balanced in an intermediate position, so that they may protect their existence in that situation where they can exist in most accordance with their nature.

And how much human nature loves the knowledge of its existence, and how it shrinks from being deceived, will be sufficiently understood from this fact, that every man prefers to grieve in a sane mind, rather than to be glad in madness. And this grand and wonderful instinct belongs to men alone of all animals; for, though some of them have keener eyesight than ourselves for this world's light, they cannot attain to that spiritual light with which our mind is somehow irradiated, so that we can form right judgments of all things. For our power to judge is proportioned to our acceptance of this light. Nevertheless, the irrational animals, though they have not knowledge, have certainly something resembling knowledge; whereas the other material things are said to be sensible, not because they have senses, but because they are the objects of our senses. Yet among plants, their nourishment and generation have some resemblance to sensible life. However, both these and all material things have their causes hidden in their nature; but their outward forms, which lend beauty to this visible structure of the world, are perceived by our senses, so that they seem to wish to compensate for their own want of knowledge by providing us with knowledge. But we perceive them by our bodily senses in such a way that we do not judge of them by these senses. For we have another and far superior sense, belonging to the inner man, by which we perceive what things are just, and what unjust—just by means of an intelligible idea, unjust by the want of it. This sense is aided in its functions neither by the eyesight,

nor by the orifice of the ear, nor by the air-holes of the nostrils, nor by the palate's taste, nor by any bodily touch. By it I am assured both that I am, and that I know this; and these two I love, and in the same manner I am assured that I love them.

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Chapter 2.— That There is No Entity Contrary to the Divine, Because Nonentity Seems to Be that Which is Wholly Opposite to Him Who Supremely and Always is.

This may be enough to prevent any one from supposing, when we speak of the apostate angels, that they could have another nature, derived, as it were, from some different origin, and not from God. From the great impiety of this error we shall disentangle ourselves the more readily and easily, the more distinctly we understand that which God spoke by the angel when He sent Moses to the children of Israel: I am that I am. Exodus 3:14 For since God is the supreme existence, that is to say, supremely is, and is therefore unchangeable, the things that He made He empowered to be, but not to be supremely like Himself. To some He communicated a more ample, to others a more limited existence, and thus arranged the natures of beings in ranks. For as from sapere comes sapientia, so from esse comes essentia—a new word indeed, which the old Latin writers did not use, but which is naturalized in our day, that our language may not want an equivalent for the Greek οὐσία. For this is expressed word for word by essentia. Consequently, to that nature which supremely is, and which created all else that exists, no nature is contrary save that which does not exist. For nonentity is the contrary of that which is. And thus there is no being contrary to God, the Supreme Being, and Author of all beings whatsoever.

Chapter 3.— That the Enemies of God are So, Not by Nature, But by Will, Which, as It Injures Them, Injures a Good Nature; For If Vice Does Not Injure, It is Not Vice.

In Scripture they are called God's enemies who oppose His rule, not by nature, but by vice; having no power to hurt Him, but only themselves. For they are His enemies, not through their power to hurt, but by their will to oppose Him. For God is unchangeable, and wholly proof against injury. Therefore the vice which makes those who are called His enemies resist Him, is an evil not to God, but to themselves. And to them it is an evil, solely because it corrupts the good of their nature. It is not nature, therefore, but vice, which is contrary to God. For that which is evil is contrary to the good. And who will deny that God is the supreme good? Vice, therefore, is contrary to God, as evil to good. Further, the nature it vitiates is a good, and therefore to this good also it is contrary. But while it is contrary to God only as evil to good, it is contrary to the nature it vitiates, both as evil and as hurtful. For to God no evils are hurtful; but only to natures mutable and corruptible, though, by the testimony of the vices themselves, originally good. For were they not good, vices could not

hurt them. For how do they hurt them but by depriving them of integrity, beauty, welfare, virtue, and, in short, whatever natural good vice is wont to diminish or destroy? But if there be no good to take away, then no injury can be done, and consequently there can be no vice. For it is impossible that there should be a harmless vice. Whence we gather, that though vice cannot injure the unchangeable good, it can injure nothing but good; because it does not exist where it does not injure. This, then, may be thus formulated: Vice cannot be in the highest good, and cannot be but in some good. Things solely good, therefore, can in some circumstances exist; things solely evil, never; for even those natures which are vitiated by an evil will, so far indeed as they are vitiated, are evil, but in so far as they are natures they are good. And when a vitiated nature is punished, besides the good it has in being a nature, it has this also, that it is not unpunished. For this is just, and certainly everything just is a good. For no one is punished for natural, but for voluntary vices. For even the vice which by the force of habit and long continuance has become a second nature, had its origin in the will. For at present we are speaking of the vices of the nature, which has a mental capacity for that enlightenment which discriminates between what is just and what is unjust.

Chapter 7.— That We Ought Not to Expect to Find Any Efficient Cause of the Evil Will.

Let no one, therefore, look for an efficient cause of the evil will; for it is not efficient, but deficient, as the will itself is not an effecting of something, but a defect. For defection from that which supremely is, to that which has less of being—this is to begin to have an evil will. Now, to seek to discover the causes of these defections,— causes, as I have said, not efficient, but deficient—is as if some one sought to see darkness, or hear silence. Yet both of these are known by us, and the former by means only of the eye, the latter only by the ear; but not by their positive actuality, but by their want of it. Let no one, then seek to know from me what I know that I do not know; unless he perhaps wishes to learn to be ignorant of that of which all we know is, that it cannot be known. For those things which are known not by their actuality, but by their want of it, are known, if our expression may be allowed and understood, by not knowing them, that by knowing them they may be not known. For when the eyesight surveys objects that strike the sense, it nowhere sees darkness but where it begins not to see. And so no other sense but the ear can perceive silence, and yet it is only perceived by not hearing. Thus, too, our mind perceives intelligible forms by understanding them; but when they are deficient, it knows them by not knowing them; for who can understand defects?

Chapter 8.— Of the Misdirected Love Whereby the Will Fell Away from the Immutable to the Mutable Good.

This I do know, that the nature of God can never, nowhere, nowise be defective, and that natures made of nothing can. These latter, however, the more being they have, and the more good they do (for then they do something positive), the more they have efficient causes; but in so far as they are defective in being, and consequently do evil (for then what is their work but vanity?), they have deficient causes. And I know likewise, that the will could not become evil, were it unwilling to become so; and therefore its failings are justly punished, being not necessary, but voluntary. For its defections are not to evil things, but are themselves evil; that is to say, are not towards things that are naturally and in themselves evil, but the defection of the will is evil, because it is contrary to the order of nature, and an abandonment of that which has supreme being for that which has less. For avarice is not a fault inherent in gold, but in the man who inordinately loves gold, to the detriment of justice, which ought to be held in incomparably higher regard than gold. Neither is luxury the fault of lovely and charming objects, but of the heart that inordinately loves sensual pleasures, to the neglect of temperance, which attaches us to objects more lovely in their spirituality, and more delectable by their incorruptibility. Nor yet is boasting the fault of human praise, but of the soul that is inordinately fond of the applause of men, and that makes light of the voice of conscience. Pride, too, is not the fault of him who delegates power, nor of power itself, but of the soul that is inordinately enamored of its own power, and despises the more just dominion of a higher authority. Consequently he who inordinately loves the good which any nature possesses, even though he obtain it, himself becomes evil in the good, and wretched because deprived of a greater good.

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Chapter 2.— Of that Death Which Can Affect an Immortal Soul, and of that to Which the Body is Subject.

But I see I must speak a little more carefully of the nature of death. For although the human soul is truly affirmed to be immortal, yet it also has a certain death of its own. For it is therefore called immortal, because, in a sense, it does not cease to live and to feel; while the body is called mortal, because it can be forsaken of all life, and cannot by itself live at all. The death, then, of the soul takes place when God forsakes it, as the death of the body when the soul forsakes it. Therefore the death of both— that is, of the whole man— occurs when the soul, forsaken by God, forsakes the body. For, in this case, neither is God the life of the soul, nor the soul the life of the body. And this death of the whole man is followed by that which, on the authority of the divine oracles, we call the second death. This the Saviour referred to when He said, Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Matthew 10:28 And since this does not happen before the soul is so joined to its body that they cannot be separated at all, it may be matter of wonder how the body can be said

to be killed by that death in which it is not forsaken by the soul, but, being animated and rendered sensitive by it, is tormented. For in that penal and everlasting punishment, of which in its own place we are to speak more at large, the soul is justly said to die, because it does not live in connection with God; but how can we say that the body is dead, seeing that it lives by the soul? For it could not otherwise feel the bodily torments which are to follow the resurrection. Is it because life of every kind is good, and pain an evil, that we decline to say that that body lives, in which the soul is the cause, not of life, but of pain? The soul, then, lives by God when it lives well, for it cannot live well unless by God working in it what is good; and the body lives by the soul when the soul lives in the body, whether itself be living by God or no. For the wicked man's life in the body is a life not of the soul, but of the body, which even dead souls— that is, souls forsaken of God— can confer upon bodies, how little so-ever of their own proper life, by which they are immortal, they retain. But in the last damnation, though man does not cease to feel, yet because this feeling of his is neither sweet with pleasure nor wholesome with repose, but painfully penal, it is not without reason called death rather than life. And it is called the second death because it follows the first, which sunders the two cohering essences, whether these be God and the soul, or the soul and the body. Of the first and bodily death, then, we may say that to the good it is good, and evil to the evil. But, doubtless, the second, as it happens to none of the good, so it can be good for none.

Chapter 3.— Whether Death, Which by the Sin of Our First Parents Has Passed Upon All Men, is the Punishment of Sin, Even to the Good.

But a question not to be shirked arises: Whether in very truth death, which separates soul and body, is good to the good? For if it be, how has it come to pass that such a thing should be the punishment of sin? For the first men would not have suffered death had they not sinned. How, then, can that be good to the good, which could not have happened except to the evil? Then, again, if it could only happen to the evil, to the good it ought not to be good, but non-existent. For why should there be any punishment where there is nothing to punish? Wherefore we must say that the first men were indeed so created, that if they had not sinned, they would not have experienced any kind of death; but that, having become sinners, they were so punished with death, that whatsoever sprang from their stock should also be punished with the same death. For nothing else could be born of them than that which they themselves had been. Their nature was deteriorated in proportion to the greatness of the condemnation of their sin, so that what existed as punishment in those who first sinned, became a natural consequence in their children. For man is not produced by man, as he was from the dust. For dust was the material out of which man was made: man is the parent by whom man is begotten. Wherefore earth and flesh are not the same thing, though flesh be made of earth. But as man the parent is, such is man the offspring. In the first man, therefore, there existed the whole human nature, which was to be

transmitted by the woman to posterity, when that conjugal union received the divine sentence of its own condemnation; and what man was made, not when created, but when he sinned and was punished, this he propagated, so far as the origin of sin and death are concerned. For neither by sin nor its punishment was he himself reduced to that infantine and helpless infirmity of body and mind which we see in children. For God ordained that infants should begin the world as the young of beasts begin it, since their parents had fallen to the level of the beasts in the fashion of their life and of their death; as it is written, Man when he was in honor understood not; he became like the beasts that have no understanding. Nay more, infants, we see, are even feebler in the use and movement of their limbs, and more infirm to choose and refuse, than the most tender offspring of other animals; as if the force that dwells in human nature were destined to surpass all other living things so much the more eminently, as its energy has been longer restrained, and the time of its exercise delayed, just as an arrow flies the higher the further back it has been drawn. To this infantine imbecility the first man did not fall by his lawless presumption and just sentence; but human nature was in his person vitiated and altered to such an extent, that he suffered in his members the warring of disobedient lust, and became subject to the necessity of dying. And what he himself had become by sin and punishment, such he generated those whom he begot; that is to say, subject to sin and death. And if infants are delivered from this bondage of sin by the Redeemer's grace, they can suffer only this death which separates soul and body; but being redeemed from the obligation of sin, they do not pass to that second endless and penal death.

Chapter 4.— Why Death, the Punishment of Sin, is Not Withheld from Those Who by the Grace of Regeneration are Absolved from Sin.

If, moreover, any one is solicitous about this point, how, if death be the very punishment of sin, they whose guilt is cancelled by grace do yet suffer death, this difficulty has already been handled and solved in our other work which we have written on the baptism of infants. There it was said that the parting of soul and body was left, though its connection with sin was removed, for this reason, that if the immortality of the body followed immediately upon the sacrament of regeneration, faith itself would be thereby enervated. For faith is then only faith when it waits in hope for what is not yet seen in substance. And by the vigor and conflict of faith, at least in times past, was the fear of death overcome. Specially was this conspicuous in the holy martyrs, who could have had no victory, no glory, to whom there could not even have been any conflict, if, after the layer of regeneration, saints could not suffer bodily death. Who would not, then, in company with the infants presented for baptism, run to the grace of Christ, that so he might not be dismissed from the body? And thus faith would not be tested with an unseen reward; and so would not even be faith, seeking and receiving an immediate recompense of its works. But now, by the greater and more admirable grace of the Saviour, the punishment of sin is turned to the

service of righteousness. For then it was proclaimed to man, If you sin, you shall die; now it is said to the martyr, Die, that you sin not. Then it was said, If you transgress the commandments, you shall die; now it is said, If you decline death, you transgress the commandment. That which was formerly set as an object of terror, that men might not sin, is now to be undergone if we would not sin. Thus, by the unutterable mercy of God, even the very punishment of wickedness has become the armor of virtue, and the penalty of the sinner becomes the reward of the righteous. For then death was incurred by sinning, now righteousness is fulfilled by dying. In the case of the holy martyrs it is so; for to them the persecutor proposes the alternative, apostasy or death. For the righteous prefer by believing to suffer what the first transgressors suffered by not believing. For unless they had sinned, they would not have died; but the martyrs sin if they do not die. The one died because they sinned, the others do not sin because they die. By the guilt of the first, punishment was incurred; by the punishment of the second, guilt is prevented. Not that death, which was before an evil, has become something good, but only that God has granted to faith this grace, that death, which is the admitted opposite to life, should become the instrument by which life is reached.

Chapter 5.— As the Wicked Make an Ill Use of the Law, Which is Good, So the Good Make a Good Use of Death, Which is an Ill.

The apostle, wishing to show how hurtful a thing sin is, when grace does not aid us, has not hesitated to say that the strength of sin is that very law by which sin is prohibited. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. 1 Corinthians 15:56 Most certainly true; for prohibition increases the desire of illicit action, if righteousness is not so loved that the desire of sin is conquered by that love. But unless divine grace aid us, we cannot love nor delight in true righteousness. But lest the law should be thought to be an evil, since it is called the strength of sin, the apostle, when treating a similar question in another place, says, The law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is holy made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. Romans 7:12-13 Exceeding, he says, because the transgression is more heinous when through the increasing lust of sin the law itself also is despised. Why have we thought it worth while to mention this? For this reason, because, as the law is not an evil when it increases the lust of those who sin, so neither is death a good thing when it increases the glory of those who suffer it, since either the former is abandoned wickedly, and makes transgressors, or the latter is embraced, for the truth's sake, and makes martyrs. And thus the law is indeed good, because it is prohibition of sin, and death is evil because it is the wages of sin; but as wicked men make an evil use not only of evil, but also of good things, so the righteous make a good use not only of good, but also of evil things.

Whence it comes to pass that the wicked make an ill use of the law, though the law is good; and that the good die well, though death is an evil.

Chapter 6.— Of the Evil of Death in General, Considered as the Separation of Soul and Body.

Wherefore, as regards bodily death, that is, the separation of the soul from the body, it is good unto none while it is being endured by those whom we say are in the article of death. For the very violence with which body and soul are wrenched asunder, which in the living had been conjoined and closely intertwined, brings with it a harsh experience, jarring horribly on nature so long as it continues, till there comes a total loss of sensation, which arose from the very interpenetration of spirit and flesh. And all this anguish is sometimes forestalled by one stroke of the body or sudden flitting of the soul, the swiftness of which prevents it from being felt. But whatever that may be in the dying which with violently painful sensation robs of all sensation, yet, when it is piously and faithfully borne, it increases the merit of patience, but does not make the name of punishment inapplicable. Death, proceeding by ordinary generation from the first man, is the punishment of all who are born of him, yet, if it be endured for righteousness' sake, it becomes the glory of those who are born again; and though death be the award of sin, it sometimes secures that nothing be awarded to sin.

Chapter 16.— Concerning the Philosophers Who Think that the Separation of Soul and Body is Not Penal, Though Plato Represents the Supreme Deity as Promising to the Inferior Gods that They Shall Never Be Dismissed from Their Bodies.

But the philosophers against whom we are defending the city of God, that is, His Church seem to themselves to have good cause to deride us, because we say that the separation of the soul from the body is to be held as part of man's punishment. For they suppose that the blessedness of the soul then only is complete, when it is quite denuded of the body, and returns to God a pure and simple, and, as it were, naked soul. On this point, if I should find nothing in their own literature to refute this opinion, I should be forced laboriously to demonstrate that it is not the body, but the corruptibility of the body, which is a burden to the soul. Hence that sentence of Scripture we quoted in a foregoing book, For the corruptible body presses down the soul. Wisdom 9:15 The word corruptible is added to show that the soul is burdened, not by any body whatsoever, but by the body such as it has become in consequence of sin. And even though the word had not been added, we could understand nothing else. But when Plato most expressly declares that the gods who are made by the Supreme have immortal bodies, and when he introduces their Maker himself, promising them as a great boon that they should abide in their bodies eternally, and never by any death be loosed from them, why do these adversaries of ours, for the sake of

troubling the Christian faith, feign to be ignorant of what they quite well know, and even prefer to contradict themselves rather than lose an opportunity of contradicting us? Here are Plato's words, as Cicero has translated them, in which he introduces the Supreme addressing the gods He had made, and saying, You who are sprung from a divine stock, consider of what works I am the parent and author. These (your bodies) are indestructible so long as I will it; although all that is composed can be destroyed. But it is wicked to dissolve what reason has compacted. But, seeing that you have been born, you cannot indeed be immortal and indestructible; yet you shall by no means be destroyed, nor shall any fates consign you to death, and prove superior to my will, which is a stronger assurance of your perpetuity than those bodies to which you were joined when you were born. Plato, you see, says that the gods are both mortal by the connection of the body and soul, and yet are rendered immortal by the will and decree of their Maker. If, therefore, it is a punishment to the soul to be connected with any body whatever, why does God address them as if they were afraid of death, that is, of the separation, of soul and body? Why does He seek to reassure them by promising them immortality, not in virtue of their nature, which is composite and not simple, but by virtue of His invincible will, whereby He can effect that neither things born die, nor things compounded be dissolved, but preserved eternally?

Whether this opinion of Plato's about the stars is true or not, is another question. For we cannot at once grant to him that these luminous bodies or globes, which by day and night shine on the earth with the light of their bodily substance, have also intellectual and blessed souls which animate each its own body, as he confidently affirms of the universe itself, as if it were one huge animal, in which all other animals were contained. But this, as I said, is another question, which we have not undertaken to discuss at present. This much only I deemed right to bring forward, in opposition to those who so pride themselves on being, or on being called Platonists, that they blush to be Christians, and who cannot brook to be called by a name which the common people also bear, lest they vulgarize the philosophers' coterie, which is proud in proportion to its exclusiveness. These men, seeking a weak point in the Christian doctrine, select for attack the eternity of the body, as if it were a contradiction to contend for the blessedness of the soul, and to wish it to be always resident in the body, bound, as it were, in a lamentable chain; and this although Plato, their own founder and master, affirms that it was granted by the Supreme as a boon to the gods He had made, that they should not die, that is, should not be separated from the bodies with which He had connected them.

The City of God (Book XIV)

Chapter 4.— What It is to Live According to Man, and What to Live According to God.

When, therefore, man lives according to man, not according to God, he is like the devil. Because not even an angel might live according to an angel, but only according to God, if he was to abide in the truth, and speak God's truth and not his own lie. And of man, too, the same apostle says in another place, If the truth of God has more abounded through my lie; Romans 3:7 —my lie, he said, and God's truth. When, then, a man lives according to the truth, he lives not according to himself, but according to God; for He was God who said, I am the truth. John 14:6 When, therefore, man lives according to himself—that is, according to man, not according to God—assuredly he lives according to a lie; not that man himself is a lie, for God is his author and creator, who is certainly not the author and creator of a lie, but because man was made upright, that he might not live according to himself, but according to Him that made him—in other words, that he might do His will and not his own; and not to live as he was made to live, that is a lie. For he certainly desires to be blessed even by not living so that he may be blessed. And what is a lie if this desire be not? Wherefore it is not without meaning said that all sin is a lie. For no sin is committed save by that desire or will by which we desire that it be well with us, and shrink from it being ill with us. That, therefore, is a lie which we do in order that it may be well with us, but which makes us more miserable than we were. And why is this, but because the source of man's happiness lies only in God, whom he abandons when he sins, and not in himself, by living according to whom he sins?

In enunciating this proposition of ours, then, that because some live according to the flesh and others according to the spirit, there have arisen two diverse and conflicting cities, we might equally well have said, because some live according to man, others according to God. For Paul says very plainly to the Corinthians, For whereas there is among you envying and strife, are you not carnal, and walk according to man? 1 Corinthians 3:3 So that to walk according to man and to be carnal are the same; for by flesh, that is, by a part of man, man is meant. For before he said that those same persons were animal whom afterwards he calls carnal, saying, For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the animal man perceives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him. 1 Corinthians 2:11-14 It is to men of this kind, then, that is, to animal men, he shortly after says, And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. 1 Corinthians 3:1 And this is to be interpreted by the same usage, a part being taken for the whole. For both the soul and the flesh, the component parts of man, can

be used to signify the whole man; and so the animal man and the carnal man are not two different things, but one and the same thing, viz., man living according to man. In the same way it is nothing else than men that are meant either in the words, By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified; Romans 3:20 or in the words, Seventy-five souls went down into Egypt with Jacob. Genesis 46:27 In the one passage, no flesh signifies no man; and in the other, by seventy-five souls seventy-five men are meant. And the expression, not in words which man's wisdom teaches might equally be not in words which fleshly wisdom teaches; and the expression, ye walk according to man, might be according to the flesh. And this is still more apparent in the words which followed: For while one says, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are you not men? The same thing which he had before expressed by you are animal, you are carnal, he now expresses by you are men; that is, you live according to man, not according to God, for if you lived according to Him, you should be gods.

Chapter 16.— Of the Evil of Lust—A Word Which, Though Applicable to Many Vices, is Specially Appropriated to Sexual Uncleaness.

Although, therefore, lust may have many objects, yet when no object is specified, the word lust usually suggests to the mind the lustful excitement of the organs of generation. And this lust not only takes possession of the whole body and outward members, but also makes itself felt within, and moves the whole man with a passion in which mental emotion is mingled with bodily appetite, so that the pleasure which results is the greatest of all bodily pleasures. So possessing indeed is this pleasure, that at the moment of time in which it is consummated, all mental activity is suspended. What friend of wisdom and holy joys, who, being married, but knowing, as the apostle says, how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor, not in the disease of desire, as the Gentiles who know not God, 1 Thessalonians 4:4 would not prefer, if this were possible, to beget children without this lust, so that in this function of begetting offspring the members created for this purpose should not be stimulated by the heat of lust, but should be actuated by his volition, in the same way as his other members serve him for their respective ends? But even those who delight in this pleasure are not moved to it at their own will, whether they confine themselves to lawful or transgress to unlawful pleasures; but sometimes this lust importunes them in spite of themselves, and sometimes fails them when they desire to feel it, so that though lust rages in the mind, it stirs not in the body. Thus, strangely enough, this emotion not only fails to obey the legitimate desire to beget offspring, but also refuses to serve lascivious lust; and though it often opposes its whole combined energy to the soul that resists it, sometimes also it is divided against itself, and while it moves the soul, leaves the body unmoved.

Chapter 17.— Of the Nakedness of Our First Parents, Which They Saw After Their Base and Shameful Sin.

Justly is shame very specially connected with this lust; justly, too, these members themselves, being moved and restrained not at our will, but by a certain independent autocracy, so to speak, are called shameful. Their condition was different before sin. For as it is written, They were naked and were not ashamed, Genesis 2:25 — not that their nakedness was unknown to them, but because nakedness was not yet shameful, because not yet did lust move those members without the will's consent; not yet did the flesh by its disobedience testify against the disobedience of man. For they were not created blind, as the unenlightened vulgar fancy; for Adam saw the animals to whom he gave names, and of Eve we read, The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes. Genesis 3:6 Their eyes, therefore were open, but were not open to this, that is to say, were not observant so as to recognize what was conferred upon them by the garment of grace, for they had no consciousness of their members warring against their will. But when they were stripped of this grace, that their disobedience might be punished by fit retribution, there began in the movement of their bodily members a shameless novelty which made nakedness indecent: it at once made them observant and made them ashamed. And therefore, after they violated God's command by open transgression, it is written: And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. Genesis 3:7 The eyes of them both were opened, not to see, for already they saw, but to discern between the good they had lost and the evil into which they had fallen. And therefore also the tree itself which they were forbidden to touch was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil from this circumstance, that if they ate of it it would impart to them this knowledge. For the discomfort of sickness reveals the pleasure of health. They knew, therefore, that they were naked,— naked of that grace which prevented them from being ashamed of bodily nakedness while the law of sin offered no resistance to their mind. And thus they obtained a knowledge which they would have lived in blissful ignorance of, had they, in trustful obedience to God, declined to commit that offense which involved them in the experience of the hurtful effects of unfaithfulness and disobedience. And therefore, being ashamed of the disobedience of their own flesh, which witnessed to their disobedience while it punished it, they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons, that is, cinctures for their privy parts; for some interpreters have rendered the word by *succinctoria*. *Campestria* is, indeed, a Latin word, but it is used of the drawers or aprons used for a similar purpose by the young men who stripped for exercise in the campus; hence those who were so girt were commonly called *campestrati*. Shame modestly covered that which lust disobediently moved in opposition to the will, which was thus punished for its own disobedience. Consequently all nations, being propagated from that one stock, have so strong an instinct to cover the shameful parts, that some barbarians do not uncover them even in the bath, but wash with their drawers on. In the dark solitudes of India also, though some philosophers go naked,

and are therefore called gymnosophists, yet they make an exception in the case of these members and cover them.

Chapter 18.— Of the Shame Which Attends All Sexual Intercourse.

Lust requires for its consummation darkness and secrecy; and this not only when un lawful intercourse is desired, but even such fornication as the earthly city has legalized. Where there is no fear of punishment, these permitted pleasures still shrink from the public eye. Even where provision is made for this lust, secrecy also is provided; and while lust found it easy to remove the prohibitions of law, shamelessness found it impossible to lay aside the veil of retirement. For even shameless men call this shameful; and though they love the pleasure, dare not display it. What! Does not even conjugal intercourse, sanctioned as it is by law for the propagation of children, legitimate and honorable though it be, does it not seek retirement from every eye? Before the bridegroom fondles his bride, does he not exclude the attendants, and even the paranymphs, and such friends as the closest ties have admitted to the bridal chamber? The greatest master of Roman eloquence says, that all right actions wish to be set in the light, i.e., desire to be known. This right action, however, has such a desire to be known, that yet it blushes to be seen. Who does not know what passes between husband and wife that children may be born? Is it not for this purpose that wives are married with such ceremony? And yet, when this well-understood act is gone about for the procreation of children, not even the children themselves, who may already have been born to them, are suffered to be witnesses. This right action seeks the light, in so far as it seeks to be known, but yet dreads being seen. And why so, if not because that which is by nature fitting and decent is so done as to be accompanied with a shame-begetting penalty of sin?

Chapter 22.— Of the Conjugal Union as It Was Originally Instituted and Blessed by God.

But we, for our part, have no manner of doubt that to increase and multiply and replenish the earth in virtue of the blessing of God, is a gift of marriage as God instituted it from the beginning before man sinned, when He created them male and female,— in other words, two sexes manifestly distinct. And it was this work of God on which His blessing was pronounced. For no sooner had Scripture said, Male and female created He them, Genesis 1:27-28 than it immediately continues, And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Increase, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, etc. And though all these things may not unsuitably be interpreted in a spiritual sense, yet male and female cannot be understood of two things in one man, as if there were in him one thing which rules, another which is ruled; but it is quite clear that they were created male and female, with

bodies of different sexes, for the very purpose of begetting offspring, and so increasing, multiplying, and replenishing the earth; and it is great folly to oppose so plain a fact. It was not of the spirit which commands and the body which obeys, nor of the rational soul which rules and the irrational desire which is ruled, nor of the contemplative virtue which is supreme and the active which is subject, nor of the understanding of the mind and the sense of the body, but plainly of the matrimonial union by which the sexes are mutually bound together, that our Lord, when asked whether it were lawful for any cause to put away one's wife (for on account of the hardness of the hearts of the Israelites Moses permitted a bill of divorcement to be given), answered and said, Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What, therefore, God has joined together, let not man put asunder. Matthew 19:4-5 It is certain, then, that from the first men were created, as we see and know them to be now, of two sexes, male and female, and that they are called one, either on account of the matrimonial union, or on account of the origin of the woman, who was created from the side of the man. And it is by this original example, which God Himself instituted, that the apostle admonishes all husbands to love their own wives in particular. Ephesians 5:25

Chapter 23.— Whether Generation Should Have Taken Place Even in Paradise Had Man Not Sinned, or Whether There Should Have Been Any Contention There Between Chastity and Lust.

But he who says that there should have been neither copulation nor generation but for sin, virtually says that man's sin was necessary to complete the number of the saints. For if these two by not sinning should have continued to live alone, because, as is supposed, they could not have begotten children had they not sinned, then certainly sin was necessary in order that there might be not only two but many righteous men. And if this cannot be maintained without absurdity, we must rather believe that the number of the saints fit to complete this most blessed city would have been as great though no one had sinned, as it is now that the grace of God gathers its citizens out of the multitude of sinners, so long as the children of this world generate and are generated. Luke 20:34

And therefore that marriage, worthy of the happiness of Paradise, should have had desirable fruit without the shame of lust, had there been no sin. But how that could be, there is now no example to teach us. Nevertheless, it ought not to seem incredible that one member might serve the will without lust then, since so many serve it now. Do we now move our feet and hands when we will to do the things we would by means of these members? Do we meet with no resistance in them, but perceive that they are ready servants of the will, both in our own case and in that of others, and especially of artisans

employed in mechanical operations, by which the weakness and clumsiness of nature become, through industrious exercise, wonderfully dexterous? And shall we not believe that, like as all those members obediently serve the will, so also should the members have discharged the function of generation, though lust, the award of disobedience, had been awaiting? Did not Cicero, in discussing the difference of governments in his *De Republica*, adopt a simile from human nature, and say that we command our bodily members as children, they are so obedient; but that the vicious parts of the soul must be treated as slaves, and be coerced with a more stringent authority? And no doubt, in the order of nature, the soul is more excellent than the body; and yet the soul commands the body more easily than itself. Nevertheless this lust, of which we at present speak, is the more shameful on this account, because the soul is therein neither master of itself, so as not to lust at all, nor of the body, so as to keep the members under the control of the will; for if they were thus ruled, there should be no shame. But now the soul is ashamed that the body, which by nature is inferior and subject to it, should resist its authority. For in the resistance experienced by the soul in the other emotions there is less shame, because the resistance is from itself, and thus, when it is conquered by itself, itself is the conqueror, although the conquest is inordinate and vicious, because accomplished by those parts of the soul which ought to be subject to reason, yet, being accomplished by its own parts and energies, the conquest is, as I say, its own. For when the soul conquers itself to a due subordination, so that its unreasonable motions are controlled by reason, while it again is subject to God, this is a conquest virtuous and praiseworthy. Yet there is less shame when the soul is resisted by its own vicious parts than when its will and order are resisted by the body, which is distinct from and inferior to it, and dependent on it for life itself.

But so long as the will retains under its authority the other members, without which the members excited by lust to resist the will cannot accomplish what they seek, chastity is preserved, and the delight of sin foregone. And certainly, had not culpable disobedience been visited with penal disobedience, the marriage of Paradise should have been ignorant of this struggle and rebellion, this quarrel between will and lust, that the will may be satisfied and lust restrained, but those members, like all the rest, should have obeyed the will. The field of generation should have been sown by the organ created for this purpose, as the earth is sown by the hand. And whereas now, as we essay to investigate this subject more exactly, modesty hinders us, and compels us to ask pardon of chaste ears, there would have been no cause to do so, but we could have discoursed freely, and without fear of seeming obscene, upon all those points which occur to one who meditates on the subject. There would not have been even words which could be called obscene, but all that might be said of these members would have been as pure as what is said of the other parts of the body. Whoever, then, comes to the perusal of these pages with unchaste mind, let him blame his disposition, not his nature; let him brand the actings of his own impurity, not the words which necessity forces us to use, and for which every pure and pious reader or hearer will very readily pardon me, while I expose the folly of that scepticism which argues solely on the ground of its own experience, and has no faith in anything beyond. He who is not

scandalized at the apostle's censure of the horrible wickedness of the women who changed the natural use into that which is against nature, Romans 1:26 will read all this without being shocked, especially as we are not, like Paul, citing and censuring a damnable uncleanness, but are explaining, so far as we can, human generation, while with Paul we avoid all obscenity of language.

Chapter 24.— That If Men Had Remained Innocent and Obedient in Paradise, the Generative Organs Should Have Been in Subjection to the Will as the Other Members are.

The man, then, would have sown the seed, and the woman received it, as need required, the generative organs being moved by the will, not excited by lust. For we move at will not only those members which are furnished with joints of solid bone, as the hands, feet, and fingers, but we move also at will those which are composed of slack and soft nerves: we can put them in motion, or stretch them out, or bend and twist them, or contract and stiffen them, as we do with the muscles of the mouth and face. The lungs, which are the very tenderest of the viscera except the brain, and are therefore carefully sheltered in the cavity of the chest, yet for all purposes of inhaling and exhaling the breath, and of uttering and modulating the voice, are obedient to the will when we breathe, exhale, speak, shout, or sing, just as the bellows obey the smith or the organist. I will not press the fact that some animals have a natural power to move a single spot of the skin with which their whole body is covered, if they have felt on it anything they wish to drive off—a power so great, that by this shivering tremor of the skin they can not only shake off flies that have settled on them, but even spears that have fixed in their flesh. Man, it is true, has not this power; but is this any reason for supposing that God could not give it to such creatures as He wished to possess it? And therefore man himself also might very well have enjoyed absolute power over his members had he not forfeited it by his disobedience; for it was not difficult for God to form him so that what is now moved in his body only by lust should have been moved only at will.

We know, too, that some men are differently constituted from others, and have some rare and remarkable faculty of doing with their body what other men can by no effort do, and, indeed, scarcely believe when they hear of others doing. There are persons who can move their ears, either one at a time, or both together. There are some who, without moving the head, can bring the hair down upon the forehead, and move the whole scalp backwards and forwards at pleasure. Some, by lightly pressing their stomach, bring up an incredible quantity and variety of things they have swallowed, and produce whatever they please, quite whole, as if out of a bag. Some so accurately mimic the voices of birds and beasts and other men, that, unless they are seen, the difference cannot be told. Some have such command of their bowels, that they can break wind continuously at pleasure, so as to

produce the effect of singing. I myself have known a man who was accustomed to sweat whenever he wished. It is well known that some weep when they please, and shed a flood of tears. But far more incredible is that which some of our brethren saw quite recently. There was a presbyter called Restitutus, in the parish of the Calamensian Church, who, as often as he pleased (and he was asked to do this by those who desired to witness so remarkable a phenomenon), on some one imitating the wailings of mourners, became so insensible, and lay in a state so like death, that not only had he no feeling when they pinched and pricked him, but even when fire was applied to him, and he was burned by it, he had no sense of pain except afterwards from the wound. And that his body remained motionless, not by reason of his self-command, but because he was insensible, was proved by the fact that he breathed no more than a dead man; and yet he said that, when any one spoke with more than ordinary distinctness, he heard the voice, but as if it were a long way off. Seeing, then, that even in this mortal and miserable life the body serves some men by many remarkable movements and moods beyond the ordinary course of nature, what reason is there for doubting that, before man was involved by his sin in this weak and corruptible condition, his members might have served his will for the propagation of offspring without lust? Man has been given over to himself because he abandoned God, while he sought to be self-satisfying; and disobeying God, he could not obey even himself. Hence it is that he is involved in the obvious misery of being unable to live as he wishes. For if he lived as he wished, he would think himself blessed; but he could not be so if he lived wickedly.

Chapter 28.— Of the Nature of the Two Cities, the Earthly and the Heavenly.

Accordingly, two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord. For the one seeks glory from men; but the greatest glory of the other is God, the witness of conscience. The one lifts up its head in its own glory; the other says to its God, You are my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. In the one, the princes and the nations it subdues are ruled by the love of ruling; in the other, the princes and the subjects serve one another in love, the latter obeying, while the former take thought for all. The one delights in its own strength, represented in the persons of its rulers; the other says to its God, I will love You, O Lord, my strength. And therefore the wise men of the one city, living according to man, have sought for profit to their own bodies or souls, or both, and those who have known God glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise,— that is, glorying in their own wisdom, and being possessed by pride—they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. For they were either leaders or followers of the people in adoring images, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.

Romans 1:21-25 But in the other city there is no human wisdom, but only godliness, which offers due worship to the true God, and looks for its reward in the society of the saints, of holy angels as well as holy men, that God may be all in all. 1 Corinthians 15:28

The City of God (Book XV)

Chapter 1.— Of the Two Lines of the Human Race Which from First to Last Divide It.

Of the bliss of Paradise, of Paradise itself, and of the life of our first parents there, and of their sin and punishment, many have thought much, spoken much, written much. We ourselves, too, have spoken of these things in the foregoing books, and have written either what we read in the Holy Scriptures, or what we could reasonably deduce from them. And were we to enter into a more detailed investigation of these matters, an endless number of endless questions would arise, which would involve us in a larger work than the present occasion admits. We cannot be expected to find room for replying to every question that may be started by unoccupied and captious men, who are ever more ready to ask questions than capable of understanding the answer. Yet I trust we have already done justice to these great and difficult questions regarding the beginning of the world, or of the soul, or of the human race itself. This race we have distributed into two parts, the one consisting of those who live according to man, the other of those who live according to God. And these we also mystically call the two cities, or the two communities of men, of which the one is predestined to reign eternally with God, and the other to suffer eternal punishment with the devil. This, however, is their end, and of it we are to speak afterwards. At present, as we have said enough about their origin, whether among the angels, whose numbers we know not, or in the two first human beings, it seems suitable to attempt an account of their career, from the time when our two first parents began to propagate the race until all human generation shall cease. For this whole time or world-age, in which the dying give place and those who are born succeed, is the career of these two cities concerning which we treat.

Of these two first parents of the human race, then, Cain was the first-born, and he belonged to the city of men; after him was born Abel, who belonged to the city of God. For as in the individual the truth of the apostle's statement is discerned, that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual, 1 Corinthians 15:46 whence it comes to pass that each man, being derived from a condemned stock, is first of all born of Adam evil and carnal, and becomes good and spiritual only afterwards, when he is grafted into Christ by regeneration: so was it in the human race as a whole. When these two cities began to run their course by a series of deaths and births, the citizen of this world was the first-born, and after him the stranger in this world, the citizen of the city of

God, predestinated by grace, elected by grace, by grace a stranger below, and by grace a citizen above. By grace—for so far as regards himself he is sprung from the same mass, all of which is condemned in its origin; but God, like a potter (for this comparison is introduced by the apostle judiciously, and not without thought), of the same lump made one vessel to honor, another to dishonor. Romans 9:21 But first the vessel to dishonor was made, and after it another to honor. For in each individual, as I have already said, there is first of all that which is reprobate, that from which we must begin, but in which we need not necessarily remain; afterwards is that which is well-approved, to which we may by advancing attain, and in which, when we have reached it we may abide. Not, indeed, that every wicked man shall be good, but that no one will be good who was not first of all wicked; but the sooner any one becomes a good man, the more speedily does he receive this title, and abolish the old name in the new. Accordingly, it is recorded of Cain that he built a city, Genesis 4:17 but Abel, being a sojourner, built none. For the city of the saints is above, although here below it begets citizens, in whom it sojourns till the time of its reign arrives, when it shall gather together all in the day of the resurrection; and then shall the promised kingdom be given to them, in which they shall reign with their Prince, the King of the ages, time without end.

Chapter 2.— Of the Children of the Flesh and the Children of the Promise.

There was indeed on earth, so long as it was needed, a symbol and foreshadowing image of this city, which served the purpose of reminding men that such a city was to be rather than of making it present; and this image was itself called the holy city, as a symbol of the future city, though not itself the reality. Of this city which served as an image, and of that free city it typified, Paul writes to the Galatians in these terms: Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh, but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answers to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, you barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, you that travailest not, for the desolate has many more children than she which has an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless, what says the Scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. And we, brethren, are not children of the bond woman, but of the free, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. Galatians 4:21-31 This interpretation of the passage, handed down to us with apostolic authority, shows how we ought to understand the Scriptures of the two covenants— the old

and the new. One portion of the earthly city became an image of the heavenly city, not having a significance of its own, but signifying another city, and therefore serving, or being in bondage. For it was founded not for its own sake, but to prefigure another city; and this shadow of a city was also itself foreshadowed by another preceding figure. For Sarah's handmaid Agar, and her son, were an image of this image. And as the shadows were to pass away when the full light came, Sarah, the free woman, who prefigured the free city (which again was also prefigured in another way by that shadow of a city Jerusalem), therefore said, Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac, or, as the apostle says, with the son of the free woman. In the earthly city, then, we find two things— its own obvious presence, and its symbolic presentation of the heavenly city. Now citizens are begotten to the earthly city by nature vitiated by sin, but to the heavenly city by grace freeing nature from sin; whence the former are called vessels of wrath, the latter vessels of mercy. Romans 9:22-23 And this was typified in the two sons of Abraham—Ishmael, the son of Agar the handmaid, being born according to the flesh, while Isaac was born of the freewoman Sarah, according to the promise. Both, indeed, were of Abraham's seed; but the one was begotten by natural law, the other was given by gracious promise. In the one birth, human action is revealed; in the other, a divine kindness comes to light.

Chapter 4.— Of the Conflict and Peace of the Earthly City.

But the earthly city, which shall not be everlasting (for it will no longer be a city when it has been committed to the extreme penalty), has its good in this world, and rejoices in it with such joy as such things can afford. But as this is not a good which can discharge its devotees of all distresses, this city is often divided against itself by litigations, wars, quarrels, and such victories as are either life-destroying or short-lived. For each part of it that arms against another part of it seeks to triumph over the nations through itself in bondage to vice. If, when it has conquered, it is inflated with pride, its victory is life-destroying; but if it turns its thoughts upon the common casualties of our mortal condition, and is rather anxious concerning the disasters that may befall it than elated with the successes already achieved, this victory, though of a higher kind, is still only short-lived; for it cannot abidingly rule over those whom it has victoriously subjugated. But the things which this city desires cannot justly be said to be evil, for it is itself, in its own kind, better than all other human good. For it desires earthly peace for the sake of enjoying earthly goods, and it makes war in order to attain to this peace; since, if it has conquered, and there remains no one to resist it, it enjoys a peace which it had not while there were opposing parties who contested for the enjoyment of those things which were too small to satisfy both. This peace is purchased by toilsome wars; it is obtained by what they style a glorious victory. Now, when victory remains with the party which had the juster cause, who hesitates to congratulate the victor, and style it a desirable peace? These things, then, are

good things, and without doubt the gifts of God. But if they neglect the better things of the heavenly city, which are secured by eternal victory and peace never-ending, and so inordinately covet these present good things that they believe them to be the only desirable things, or love them better than those things which are believed to be better—if this be so, then it is necessary that misery follow and ever increase.

Chapter 5.— Of the Fratricidal Act of the Founder of the Earthly City, and the Corresponding Crime of the Founder of Rome.

Thus the founder of the earthly city was a fratricide. Overcome with envy, he slew his own brother, a citizen of the eternal city, and a sojourner on earth. So that we cannot be surprised that this first specimen, or, as the Greeks say, archetype of crime, should, long afterwards, find a corresponding crime at the foundation of that city which was destined to reign over so many nations, and be the head of this earthly city of which we speak. For of that city also, as one of their poets has mentioned, the first walls were stained with a brother's blood, or, as Roman history records, Remus was slain by his brother Romulus. And thus there is no difference between the foundation of this city and of the earthly city, unless it be that Romulus and Remus were both citizens of the earthly city. Both desired to have the glory of founding the Roman republic, but both could not have as much glory as if one only claimed it; for he who wished to have the glory of ruling would certainly rule less if his power were shared by a living consort. In order, therefore, that the whole glory might be enjoyed by one, his consort was removed; and by this crime the empire was made larger indeed, but inferior, while otherwise it would have been less, but better. Now these brothers, Cain and Abel, were not both animated by the same earthly desires, nor did the murderer envy the other because he feared that, by both ruling, his own dominion would be curtailed,— for Abel was not solicitous to rule in that city which his brother built—he was moved by that diabolical, envious hatred with which the evil regard the good, for no other reason than because they are good while themselves are evil. For the possession of goodness is by no means diminished by being shared with a partner either permanent or temporarily assumed; on the contrary, the possession of goodness is increased in proportion to the concord and charity of each of those who share it. In short, he who is unwilling to share this possession cannot have it; and he who is most willing to admit others to a share of it will have the greatest abundance to himself. The quarrel, then, between Romulus and Remus shows how the earthly city is divided against itself; that which fell out between Cain and Abel illustrated the hatred that subsists between the two cities, that of God and that of men. The wicked war with the wicked; the good also war with the wicked. But with the good, good men, or at least perfectly good men, cannot war; though, while only going on towards perfection, they war to this extent, that every good man resists others in those points in which he resists himself. And in each individual the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. Galatians 5:17 This spiritual lusting, therefore, can be at

war with the carnal lust of another man; or carnal lust may be at war with the spiritual desires of another, in some such way as good and wicked men are at war; or, still more certainly, the carnal lusts of two men, good but not yet perfect, contend together, just as the wicked contend with the wicked, until the health of those who are under the treatment of grace attains final victory.

Chapter 6.— Of the Weaknesses Which Even the Citizens of the City of God Suffer During This Earthly Pilgrimage in Punishment of Sin, and of Which They are Healed by God's Care.

This sickliness— that is to say, that disobedience of which we spoke in the fourteenth book— is the punishment of the first disobedience. It is therefore not nature, but vice; and therefore it is said to the good who are growing in grace, and living in this pilgrimage by faith, Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2 In like manner it is said elsewhere, Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man. 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 And in another place, If a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, lest you also be tempted. Galatians 6:1 And elsewhere, Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Ephesians 4:26 And in the Gospel, If your brother shall trespass against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. Matthew 18:15 So too of sins which may create scandal the apostle says, Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. 1 Timothy 5:20 For this purpose, and that we may keep that peace without which no man can see the Lord, Hebrews 12:14 many precepts are given which carefully inculcate mutual forgiveness; among which we may number that terrible word in which the servant is ordered to pay his formerly remitted debt of ten thousand talents, because he did not remit to his fellow-servant his debt of two hundred pence. To which parable the Lord Jesus added the words, So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother. Matthew 18:35 It is thus the citizens of the city of God are healed while still they sojourn in this earth and sigh for the peace of their heavenly country. The Holy Spirit, too, works within, that the medicine externally applied may have some good result. Otherwise, even though God Himself make use of the creatures that are subject to Him, and in some human form address our human senses, whether we receive those impressions in sleep or in some external appearance, still, if He does not by His own inward grace sway and act upon the mind, no preaching of the truth is of any avail. But this God does, distinguishing between the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy, by His own very secret but very just providence. When He Himself aids the soul in His own hidden and wonderful ways, and the sin which dwells in our members, and is, as the apostle teaches, rather the punishment of sin, does not reign in our mortal body to obey the lusts of it, and when we no longer yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness, Romans 6:12-13

then the soul is converted from its own evil and selfish desires, and, God possessing it, it possesses itself in peace even in this life, and afterwards, with perfected health and endowed with immortality, will reign without sin in peace everlasting.

Chapter 8.— What Cain's Reason Was for Building a City So Early in the History of the Human Race.

At present it is the history which I aim at defending, that Scripture may not be reckoned incredible when it relates that one man built a city at a time in which there seem to have been but four men upon earth, or rather indeed but three, after one brother slew the other—to wit, the first man the father of all, and Cain himself, and his son Enoch, by whose name the city was itself called. But they who are moved by this consideration forget to take into account that the writer of the sacred history does not necessarily mention all the men who might be alive at that time, but those only whom the scope of his work required him to name. The design of that writer (who in this matter was the instrument of the Holy Ghost) was to descend to Abraham through the successions of ascertained generations propagated from one man, and then to pass from Abraham's seed to the people of God, in whom, separated as they were from other nations, was prefigured and predicted all that relates to the city whose reign is eternal, and to its king and founder Christ, which things were foreseen in the Spirit as destined to come; yet neither is this object so effected as that nothing is said of the other society of men which we call the earthly city, but mention is made of it so far as seemed needful to enhance the glory of the heavenly city by contrast to its opposite. Accordingly, when the divine Scripture, in mentioning the number of years which those men lived, concludes its account of each man of whom it speaks, with the words, And he begot sons and daughters, and all his days were so and so, and he died, are we to understand that, because it does not name those sons and daughters, therefore, during that long term of years over which one lifetime extended in those early days, there might not have been born very many men, by whose united numbers not one but several cities might have been built? But it suited the purpose of God, by whose inspiration these histories were composed, to arrange and distinguish from the first these two societies in their several generations—that on the one side the generations of men, that is to say, of those who live according to man, and on the other side the generations of the sons of God, that is to say, of men living according to God, might be traced down together and yet apart from one another as far as the deluge, at which point their dissociation and association are exhibited: their dissociation, inasmuch as the generations of both lines are recorded in separate tables, the one line descending from the fratricide Cain, the other from Seth, who had been born to Adam instead of him whom his brother slew; their association, inasmuch as the good so deteriorated that the whole race became of such a character that it was swept away by the deluge, with the exception of one just man, whose name was Noah, and

his wife and three sons and three daughters-in-law, which eight persons were alone deemed worthy to escape from that desolating visitation which destroyed all men.

Therefore, although it is written, And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Enoch, and he built a city and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch, Genesis 4:17 it does not follow that we are to believe this to have been his first-born; for we cannot suppose that this is proved by the expression he knew his wife, as if then for the first time he had had intercourse with her. For in the case of Adam, the father of all, this expression is used not only when Cain, who seems to have been his first-born, was conceived, but also afterwards the same Scripture says, Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived, and bare a son, and called his name Seth. Genesis 4:25 Whence it is obvious that Scripture employs this expression neither always when a birth is recorded nor then only when the birth of a first-born is mentioned. Neither is it necessary to suppose that Enoch was Cain's first-born because he named his city after him. For it is quite possible that though he had other sons, yet for some reason the father loved him more than the rest. Judah was not the first-born, though he gives his name to Judæa and the Jews. But even though Enoch was the first-born of the city's founder, that is no reason for supposing that the father named the city after him as soon as he was born; for at that time he, being but a solitary man, could not have founded a civic community, which is nothing else than a multitude of men bound together by some associating tie. But when his family increased to such numbers that he had quite a population, then it became possible to him both to build a city, and give it, when founded, the name of his son. For so long was the life of those antediluvians, that he who lived the shortest time of those whose years are mentioned in Scripture attained to the age of 753 years. And though no one attained the age of a thousand years, several exceeded the age of nine hundred. Who then can doubt that during the lifetime of one man the human race might be so multiplied that there would be a population to build and occupy not one but several cities? And this might very readily be conjectured from the fact that from one man, Abraham, in not much more than four hundred years, the numbers of the Hebrew race so increased, that in the exodus of that people from Egypt there are recorded to have been six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms, Exodus 12:37 and this over and above the Idumæans, who, though not numbered with Israel's descendants, were yet sprung from his brother, also a grandson of Abraham; and over and above the other nations which were of the same stock of Abraham, though not through Sarah,— that is, his descendants by Hagar and Keturah, the Ishmaelites, Midianites, etc.