

John Chrysostom
Three homilies on the devil
(De diabolo tentatore)

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¹ This translation was commissioned by Roger Pearse, Ipswich, and is released by him into the public domain.

Translator's Note

There is no such thing as a perfect translation, for every translation is a representation of something else, and, as Plato teaches us,² a representation always pales in comparison with the original. This is no different in the following translations. I have endeavored to represent Chrysostom's writing on the basis of two principles: firstly, don't dramatically alter the structure and progression of his thought, if possible. By translating in the order that Chrysostom presents his thought, the reader grasps a little of the spirit of his writing. But the second principle is equally important and, sometimes, trumps the first: the English translation must read fairly smoothly. "Fairly smoothly" is ambiguous, as it should be: English is not static, and what reads smoothly to one reader may read roughly to another. This is necessarily so, since each reader brings a different linguistic background and set of expectations to a text. "Fairly smoothly," then, means that one should expect nothing which couldn't plausibly be expected in an original work written in English this past century.

The text underlying the translations is that of Bernard de Montfaucon as reprinted in the *Patrologia Graeca* 49 (columns 241 to 276) by Migne. Each column in my translation is indicated by the brackets [M.] with the appropriate column number inserted (i.e. [M. 241] refers to column 241).

These are the chief liberties I take with the text. I often replace a pronoun with the noun being referred to for the sake of clarity (i.e. I replace the pronoun "he" with "God," etc), and footnote the occurrence. Several times I have rendered the demonstrative pronouns "this" and "that" simply by "the" where the force of the demonstrative is weak and the substitution of the article "the" adds to the readability of the English. Likewise, where necessary I have added words in [brackets] which do not occur in the Greek but are understood and must be supplied in the English. As much as is possible I retain the order of clauses, but when this results of very odd sound English, I alter them to better English.

I have endeavored to be as accurate as possible in my translation, but where there are uncertainties or several possible interpretations of Chrysostom's Greek, I footnote the difficulties and possibilities for the reader's benefit. The same is true with words of particular interest or difficulty. A word can often be rendered several different English words, each of which capture only one aspect of the Greek word. I give the Greek so that interested readers can pursue the matter further if they should wish to do so.

For patristic literature, no one lexicon can suffice. The lexica I consulted, and to which reference is made in the footnotes, are (in this order of consultation):

- 1) Liddell, H.G, Scott, R, *Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996.
- 2) *Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Edited by G.W.H. Lampe. Oxford, 1968.

² *Phaedo* 100b and following; *Republic* 596 and following (Book 10).

- 3) Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W.F. Arndt, and F.W. Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3d ed. Chicago, 1999.
- 4) Sophocles, E.A. *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*. New York, 1900.
- 5) Chamberlaine, Gary Allan. *The Greek of the Septuagint: A Supplemental Lexicon*. Peabody, 2011.
- 6) Lust, J., Eynikel, E., Hauspie, K. *Greek English Lexicon of the Septuagint*. Revised Edition. Stuttgart, 2003.

Very often the biblical texts quoted by Chrysostom don't correspond well to the texts as we have them. Often words are interpolated or missing, or several verses are combined into one. The references in the footnotes point to the most likely source. In addition to the homilies by Chrysostom, it seemed valuable to translate the Latin introduction included with these three homilies in Migne, which follows.

A Translation of the Latin Introduction Included with These Homilies in Migne

We place these three homilies following one another by a consideration of the contents, for in each of them the concern is the feebleness of the devil and it is demonstrated that he doesn't govern the world and that whatever evil he does introduce into human life arises from human negligence and idleness. These three orations were placed in the Morel edition in various places separated at some distance so that the one which we place first is found in the fifth volume as the 63rd [oration]; that which we place second, *On the Devil the Tempter*, is situated in the first volume as the 25th [oration]; and the third, *On Negligence*, is placed last in the second volume. As to the fact that in the Morel edition they are found thus separated, this seems to have resulted by chance rather than by design. Indeed in the Savile edition those two which we place first, *That Daemons Don't Govern Human Affairs* and *On the Devil the Tempter*, are placed following one another in the sixth volume, but the third, *On Negligence*, is separated, with certain other [orations] placed between them, although both the most sound Catalogus Augustanus connects it with the preceding *On the Devil the Tempter*, and a consideration of the time and contents demands this. [245] As pertains to the first oration, *That Daemons Don't Govern Human Affairs*, it is certain that it was given after the Sunday on which he had given that second and most lengthy oration *On the Obscurity of Prophecies*. For at the beginning of this one, with which we are now concerned, he repeats all those things in order which he attests he spoke in the beginning of that oration, namely, about the holy and righteous men who recounted their own sins but not those of others with an expression of grief and abomination. For the examples are the same and he enumerates all of them in the same order. For the example that Tillemont complains was lacking, namely, that of Peter, "Go away from me because I am a sinful man," you already possess, restored from a very ancient codex in that last homily *On the Obscurity*

of *Prophecies*. As however it is certain that this homily about daemons was given during the week following the Sunday on which he gave the last oration, *On the Obscurity of Prophecies*, it is quite uncertain whether that one which we place second, *On the Devil the Tempter*, should follow or precede that one which we placed first. And similarly it is doubtful whether it was written at the same time or at a different time. For in that oration which he recounts he gave two days before in the beginning of this homily *On the Devil the Tempter*, he undertook the very same subject which follows in this homily. “We said,” he says, “recently [that is, two days before, as he had already said] that he doesn’t conquer by violence of tyranny or coercion or compulsion, since, if this were so, he would assuredly destroy all things. As evidence of this matter we brought forward the pigs, against whom the daemons weren’t able to do anything before it was permitted by God. The cattle and herds of Job – nor did the devil dare to destroy these until he received power from above. Therefore we have learned this one thing first, that he doesn’t conquer through force or compulsion. And secondly after this we added that although he conquers through deception, nevertheless he doesn’t for this reason turn out to be a conqueror over all, and again we brought forward the champion himself, Job, whom, although he moved a thousand machinations against him, he nevertheless didn’t by this reason conquer, but went away defeated. One question now remains,” etc. In that homily which was given two days before, which he recounts here, the focus was on the feebleness of the devil. But it was said that he had no power over human wills. He only conquers the heedless through deception and trickery. And this seems to be the chief focus of that homily which he recounts.

But in the one which we placed first, whose title is *Daemons Don’t Govern Human Affairs*, a mention occurs about the pigs who were led down a cliff through the effort of the daemons, and about the calamities, which were brought against Job by the devil, but with a considerably different meaning than is narrated above. For it is said to have been demonstrated that the devil has no power over human wills, so that he naturally drags them to evil by means of tribulations brought against them. But in that homily which we put first, Chrysostom demonstrates that daemons don’t govern human affairs; for if they did govern, they would destroy and devastate everything. For an example is the injuries that were brought against the pigs and Job’s family, all of which were carried out by the daemons with God allowing it, to be evidence of the daemons’ savagery and of the evils which they would inflict if power of this sort were in their control.³ But there’s not even a word about the devil’s power over human wills by which he would drag them to sins. For this reason I think that that homily which is mentioned at the beginning of this oration, *On the Devil the Tempter*, is different from that one which is entitled *That Daemons Don’t Govern the World*, and that it has been lost through the injury of time.

To this homily, which we place second, *On the Devil the Tempter*, we subjoin the third, *On Idleness, and That the Devil Can’t Harm a Vigilant Person*. We think that that was given on the day after that one which is entitled *On the Devil the Tempter*, for it begins like this. “The day before yesterday, the oration on the devil was begun by us in

³ The Latin of this sentence isn’t clear: exemplum enim porcorum et Jobi familiae illata damna, quae omnia, Deo permittente, a daemonibus peracta sunt, argumentum esse daemonum saevitiei, et malorum quae hominibus inferrent, si penes eos hujusmodi potestas esset.

the presence of your love,” Πρὸ τῆς χθὲς ἡμέρας.⁴ Moreover this is the subject of each one: for in both cases it is demonstrated that errors⁵ and vices issue not from the devil’s wickedness but chiefly from human idleness and laziness. For this reason these two homilies are rightly placed one after the other and in this order in that most ancient Catalogus Augustanus, which H. Savile edited, and in the ancient Codex Colbertinus 1030, because a consideration of both the contents and of the time demands this.

Accordingly, it is certain that the first homily, which is entitled *That Daemons Don’t Govern the World*, was given a few days after the homilies *On the Obscurity of Prophecies*. And it appears clear that the second oration, *On the Devil the Tempter*, precedes by a period of two days that oration which we placed in the third position. But it is utterly uncertain how much time passed between the first and the second and whether the first should precede the second, as we said. We are able to advance this one point as though it were maintained and undoubted, that these three homilies were given at Antioch. For the first was given a few days after the orations *On the Obscurity of Prophecies* when Chrysostom speaks about a bishop in such a way that he reveals that he himself is not bishop but someone else. And the introduction itself openly declares that the second one (and, two days after this was given, the third followed) was given when Bishop Flavianus was present in Antioch. However, we are not able to assign the year in which either these three homilies or some of them were given, not even as a conjecture. Tillemont, who thinks that the first oration, whose title is *That Daemons Don’t Govern the World*, [246] was given (only plausibly, and not without adverse suspicion) two days before the second, *On the Devil the Tempter*, thinks it is possible to elicit a sign of the year and time from this second oration, using this argument: on the very day on which he gave the oration *On the Devil the Tempter*, Chrysostom says that he began a certain catechesis⁶ to those about to be enlightened, where he says that he spoke about the devil, about renunciation and about the pact undertaken with Christ; but these best correspond with that catechesis which is the 21st [oration] in the homilies *To the People of Antioch*. That was undertaken either in the year 387 or, as Tillemont more plausibly thinks, in the year 389, from which it plausibly follows anyhow that these three homilies on the devil ought to be assigned to the year 388.

We have already examined carefully whether this catechesis should be assigned to the year 387 or 388. But now it must be investigated whether this particular one is the catechesis which is mentioned in the homily *On the Devil the Tempter*. Here are Chrysostom’s words: “But now it is time that we set out the table, namely, the leftovers of those things which were recently spoken. For still we are giving the sermon on the devil which we began three days ago and which we gave to those in the morning who are being initiated into the mysteries, when we were talking with them about renunciation and about the association, or pact, περὶ ἀποταγῆς καὶ συνταγῆς.⁷ We are doing this, however, not because it pleases us to speak about the devil,” etc. Therefore in the catechesis which he says that he began in the morning hours, he had undertaken the same subject, which follows in this homily, *On the Devil the Tempter*, namely, he had

⁴ The Greek is given in the introduction after the Latin translation, quoting the actual words of the introduction (“On the day before yesterday....”).

⁵ Or, “falls,” lapsus.

⁶ I.e. teaching intended to educate catechumens in the faith.

⁷ Given in Greek. It means “concerning renunciation and covenant.”

demonstrated that the devil had no power to drag the human will to evil by force; but in that catechesis which survives and was previously enumerated as the 21st [oration] among the homilies *To the people of Antioch*, there doesn't occur even a word about this matter, nor is it concerned with the devil except incidentally. For that which is treated near the end of the homily on omens and amulets has nothing in common with that hypothesis which is proposed in the homily *On the Devil the Tempter*, and [which] is mentioned as already previously having been established. Nevertheless I confess that in the catechesis *To Those Going to Be Enlightened or Baptized*, mention is made twice of the renunciation of Satan, and the words of renunciation themselves are cited twice, namely, "I renounce you, Satan." But I would like you to observe that during those twelve years in which Chrysostom gave public speeches at Antioch as a presbyter, namely, from the year 386 to 398, he began catecheses at least twice a year to those about to be enlightened or baptized, in which these words, customarily cited at a baptism, were, to so speak, so at hand, they were so able to be aptly fitted to the orations given to those about to be baptized, that it is difficult [to know whether] they were not often used by Chrysostom when he was preparing those catechumens who were about to be baptized. For this reason, since those things which he relates that he spoke don't agree with that catechesis which still exists, they will agree with another that has been utterly lost, in which he similarly related that solemn renunciation. We are able therefore to derive no sign of the year from this source. We may elicit this one point from the homily *On the Devil the Tempter*, namely, that since it was begun during Lent when Flavianus was present, it isn't possible to fit it to the year 387, because that year Flavianus was entirely absent for Lent since his journey to Constantinople was undertaken. And through all of Lent the calamity of the Antiocheans because of the overturned statues was dealt with in all the orations. Fronto Ducaeus made the translation⁸ of the first oration *That Daemons Don't Govern the World*, and of the second *On the Devil the Tempter*, which we edited with only the smallest changes. We prepared a new translation of the third oration *On Idleness* because the old translation made by an unknown person has the flavor of a paraphrase and wasn't accurate."

Homily One

To those who say that daemons govern human affairs, and who are displeased with God's punishments, and who are offended at the prosperity of base men and at the misfortunes of the righteous.

[M. 243]. I was expecting that you would receive your fill of my words by the length of my homily, but I see that the opposite has resulted: not that you have received your fill from its length, but a growing desire; not your satiety, but an increasing pleasure. [I see] the same thing occurring which people given to drink experience at profane drinking parties.⁹ For the more undiluted wine they pour in [M. 244], the more they kindle their

⁸ Into Latin, of course.

⁹ Ἐπὶ τῶν ἐξέωθεν συμποσίων.

thirst. And in your case, the more we teach, the more we kindle your desire, the greater we make your appetite and the more intense your love. For this reason, although I'm conscious of extreme poverty, I don't stop impersonating generous hosts by setting before you an endless table and [M. 245] setting up a wine bowl full of teaching. For I see that after drinking it all dry, you leave thirsting again. This became clear from every past experience¹⁰ but especially so from the last Lord's day. For that day especially showed that you partake insatiably of the divine oracles¹¹ when I was discoursing on how we mustn't talk badly of one another. I also provided you with a most sound subject for your criticism,¹² encouraging you to revile your own sins but not to meddle in those of others. I cited the saints who, while criticizing themselves, nevertheless spare others: Paul, saying, "I am the first of sinners, and God had mercy on me when I was blaspheming and a persecutor and insolent man,"¹³ and when he calls himself an abortion¹⁴ and doesn't think himself worthy of the title of the apostles;¹⁵ [and] Peter, saying, "Get away from me, for I am a sinner!";¹⁶ or Matthew, calling himself a tax-collector even during the time of his apostleship;¹⁷ or David, crying out and saying, "my transgressions have risen above my head, like a heavy load they oppressed me;"¹⁸ and Isaiah, bitterly lamenting and bewailing, "for I am impure, and I have impure lips;"¹⁹ or the three servants in the fiery furnace,²⁰ as they confessed and said that they had sinned and transgressed the law and didn't observe²¹ the ordinances of God;²² or Daniel, again lamenting the same thing; [or] when, after the catalogue of these saints, I called people who criticize²³ flies and introduced a just reason for the example, saying that in the same way that they sit in the wounds of others, so too critics bite²⁴ at the sins of others and so provide an illness for those with whom they interact. Those who do the opposite I called bees, who don't gather diseases, but produce²⁵ a honeycomb of the greatest piety²⁶ and thus fly through the meadow of the virtue of the saints.

Then, then you demonstrated your insatiable love. For when our sermon had been stretched out at length, an infinite length as never before, many expected that your zeal would be extinguished by the amount of what was being said, yet the opposite occurred. Your heart was warmed more, your desire was kindled more. How was this clear? Your applause near the end were greater and your shouts were quite vigorous,²⁷ and the same

¹⁰ Lit: from all time.

¹¹ Τῶν θείων λογίων.

¹² Κατηγορία.

¹³ 1 Tim 1:15, 16.

¹⁴ Or: miscarriage (ἔκτρωμα); 1 Cor. 15:8, 9.

¹⁵ 1 Cor. 15:9.

¹⁶ Luke 5:8.

¹⁷ Matt. 10:3.

¹⁸ Psalm 38:4.

¹⁹ Isaiah 6:5.

²⁰ Lit: the furnace of fire.

²¹ Colb. "We have sinned, we have committed lawlessness...we did not observe..."

²² There is no clear source for this reference.

²³ Οἱ κατηγοροὶ.

²⁴ Or, "sting."

²⁵ Literally, "harden," πήγνυμι.

²⁶ Εὐλάβεια; it could also be rendered here by "discretion."

²⁷ Λαμπρόταται.

thing occurred that happens in the case of ovens. For just as in ovens²⁸ the light of the fire isn't exceedingly bright but, when the flame takes hold of all the wood lying before it, it rises up to a great height, this also occurred on that day. For at the beginning this congregation²⁹ wasn't exceedingly moved, but when my sermon had been stretched out at length and had taken hold of all who were set before it and the teaching had been sown at greater length,³⁰ then indeed, then your desire was kindled and your applause broke out more violently. For this reason, although I had prepared to say less than what was said, [M. 246] I exceeded its proper length,³¹ or rather I never exceeded its proper length, for I would naturally measure³² the quality of teaching not by the amount of what is said, but by the disposition³³ of those hearing it. For the person who receives sea-sick listeners, even if he furls³⁴ his teaching, seems to cause great annoyance; but the person [who receives] warm and alert and sober [listeners], even if he stretches [his sermon] out at length, nevertheless doesn't fill up their desire.

But since it happens that in so large an assembly there are some who are weak, incapable of following the length of the sermon, I want to encourage this to them, namely, that they receive as much as they can as they listen and, when they have received enough, to depart. No one is hindering them or forcing them to remain beyond their own capacity.³⁵ Let them not, however, force the sermon to be furled³⁶ before its appropriate time and hour. For you were filled, but your brother still hungers; and you are drunk on the amount of what's said, yet your brother still thirsts. Let him not crush your weakness, forcing you to receive more than your own capacity, and don't insolently oppose his desire by preventing him from receiving all that he can receive.

II

This also happens at profane dinners,³⁷ for some are filled more quickly, others more slowly, and the latter don't criticize the former, nor do the former condemn the latter. For at profane dinners,³⁸ to depart more quickly is a matter for praise, but here, to depart more quickly isn't a matter for praise, but it's worthy of pardon. At the profane dinners,³⁹ to cease more slowly is a matter for criticism and blame,⁴⁰ but here to depart more slowly is the greatest praise and acclamation. Why is this? Because there, the slowness results

²⁸ Literally, "there."

²⁹ ὁ σύλλογος οὗτος.

³⁰ Καὶ πλείων ἢ διδασκαλία κατεβλήθη. A somewhat difficult expression, but it is probably a farming metaphor (see LSJ 2,6.), i.e. the teaching was 'sown' in the manner of seed in a field, which, after it is sown at greater length (πλείων), produces a greater yield.

³¹ ἡ συμμετρία.

³² μετρεῖν ἂν πέφυκα; take ἂν with μετρεῖν as a potential optative.

³³ Colb. "by the zeal."

³⁴ I translate the verb συστέλλω in its full nautical sense "to furl [sails]" rather than simply "to shorten" given the presence of the verb ναυτιάω (to be sea-sick); the nautical imagery is clearly intended.

³⁵ Δύναμις.

³⁶ Again, the nautical imagery of shortening the sails of a ship.

³⁷ Ἐπὶ τῶν ἐξωθεν τραπεζῶν.

³⁸ Literally, "there."

³⁹ Literally, "there."

⁴⁰ Literally, "is an criticism and blame."

from gluttony, but here, constancy and perseverance arise out of a spiritual desire and divine appetite.

But enough with the introductory matters. From this point we will proceed to the matter itself which we took up from that [last] day. What was the topic then? That humanity possessed one language, just as there is also one nature,⁴¹ and no one had a foreign or difference language. From where, then, did such a great discord arise? From the carelessness⁴² of those who received the gift. We spoke on both these [points] on our last occasion⁴³ demonstrating the master's benevolence⁴⁴ through the unity of language and the arrogance of his servants through the diversity of language. For even though the [master] knew beforehand that we would lose the gift, he nevertheless gave it. But those who had been entrusted [with it] acted wickedly with the deposit.⁴⁵ This, the fact that God didn't banish [us] from the gift, but that we lost it, is one form of explanation.⁴⁶ A second [form of explanation] after this one is the fact that we later received gifts greater than what was lost. In place of temporary toils he honored us with eternal life; in place of thorns and briars he caused the fruit of the spirit to sprout in our souls.

Nothing was more vile than man⁴⁷ and nothing has been more honored. He was the final part of the rational creation.⁴⁸ But his feet became his head,⁴⁹ and through the first fruits⁵⁰ he was lifted up to the royal throne. [M. 247]. For just as a generous man sees someone who escaped a shipwreck and was only able to save his naked body from the waves receives him with outstretched hands and clothes him in a brilliant robe and leads him to a higher honor,⁵¹ in this same way God acted toward the human race.⁵² Man, whatever he had, cast all of it away: his confidence,⁵³ his communion⁵⁴ with God, his way of life in the paradise,⁵⁵ his life free from labor and, just as from a shipwreck, he went out from it naked. But God, after receiving him, immediately clothed him and leading him by the hand little by little, he led him up to heaven. For it was not due to the force of the winds but to the carelessness of the sailor that all of this billowing occurred.

But God didn't look to this but pitied the magnitude of our misfortune. For he kindly received the man who suffered shipwreck in a harbor just as if he had undergone

⁴¹ Φύσις. This word has several distinct uses in these homilies. 1) Nature in the sense of the natural world; 2) Nature in the sense of "human nature," that which is common to all humans and which is the cause of various desires, etc. 3) a natural extension from (2), "the human race."

⁴² ῥαθυμία. A common and important word in these homilies. It can be rendered as "carelessness, negligence, laziness," and their synonyms. It implies a serious lack of attention and care.

⁴³ Literally, "then" or "at that time."

⁴⁴ Φιλανθρωπία, "love for humanity." Throughout translated as "benevolence."

⁴⁵ Literally, "became wicked concerning the deposit."

⁴⁶ ἀπολογία. It might also be rendered by "defense." Chrysostom here (and later) uses the noun ἀπολογία and verb ἀπολογέομαι of God. He "defends" his actions or "explains/justifies" himself to humanity.

⁴⁷ ἄνθρωπος. Gender isn't emphasized here, but the idea of "humankind." This latter rendering, however, causes other difficulties, so "man" in the sense "humankind" is preferred. Likewise the following pronoun "he" should be understood without emphasis on gender.

⁴⁸ Colbert writes "of the rational nature."

⁴⁹ ἀλλ' οἱ πόδες ἐγένοντο κεφαλή. Uncertain meaning.

⁵⁰ ἀπαρχή.

⁵¹ Τιμή. This could also mean "compensation."

⁵² ἡ φύσις ἡ ἡμετέρα.

⁵³ Παρρησία.

⁵⁴ ὁμιλία.

⁵⁵ Παράδεισος. Through translated as "paradise."

this in the middle of the ocean. For to fall in paradise is to suffer ship-wreck in a harbor. How is this so? Because he hadn't yet fallen down and been tripped up by grief or anxiety or toils or hardships or by the countless waves of desire that assail the human race.⁵⁶ And just as the criminals who sail the sea bore a hole in a ship using a piece of iron and draw all the sea into the ship, so too the devil, seeing Adam's ship, that is, his soul, full of many good things, used his bare voice as a little piece of iron and after approaching it bore a hole and emptied it of all its wealth and sunk the ship itself. But God made the profit greater than the loss and led the human race⁵⁷ up to the royal throne. And so Paul cries out, saying, "He caused us to rise up together and sat us together on his right in heaven, in order that he might demonstrate in the coming ages the exceeding wealth of his grace in his kindness toward us."⁵⁸ "What are you saying? The matter has already happened and is complete and you say 'In order that he might demonstrate it in the coming ages.' For he demonstrated it, didn't he?"⁵⁹ He did already demonstrate it, but not to all men, but to me the believer. But the unbeliever hasn't yet seen the wonder.⁶⁰ But on that day the whole human race coming into his midst will wonder at the deed and it will then be especially manifest to us. For we also believe now, but the act of seeing and of hearing do not equally present the marvel. But just as when in the case of kings we hear of their purple robes and diadems and their golden raiment and the royal thrones,⁶¹ we marvel, but we experience this all the more when, we see him sitting before us on a lofty platform with the curtains retracted, so too with the only begotten: when we see the curtains of heaven drawn back and the king of the angels descending from that place attended by the heavenly companies, then we regard the wonder as greater because we see it.⁶² Consider for me what it is like to see the human race⁶³ carried upon the cherubim and all the angelic power surrounding it.

III

Examine also for me Paul's wisdom, how many words he seeks for in order to express God's benevolence. For he doesn't simply say "grace," or simply "wealth," but what? "The exceeding wealth of his grace in kindness." And yet this, too, was inadequate. For just as slippery bodies, though restrained by countless hands, escape our grip and easily slide away, so too we are unable to grasp God's benevolence, no matter with how many words we hold on to it, but its greatness, [coming] from a great abundance, conquers the inadequacy of our words. Paul, therefore, when he experienced this very issue and saw that the force of his words was inferior to its greatness, spoke one phrase and stopped. What was this? "Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift."⁶⁴ For neither reason nor

⁵⁶ ἡ φύσις ἡ ἡμετέρα.

⁵⁷ ἡ φύσις ἡ ἡμετέρα.

⁵⁸ Eph 2:6-7.

⁵⁹ Understand this as a question from the audience, as often in these homilies.

⁶⁰ Τὸ θαῦμα.

⁶¹ From "robes" to "thrones," the nouns are all singular in the Greek, but it reads more naturally in English if they are in the plural in agreement with the plural "kings."

⁶² Literally, "from our sight."

⁶³ ἡ φύσις ἡ ἡμετέρα.

⁶⁴ 2 Cor 9:15.

any mind will be able to express God's care.⁶⁵ For this reason he says that it is inexpressible in this passage,⁶⁶ but in another place [he says] that it surpasses our understanding, putting it this way: "The peace of God which is above all understanding will guard your hearts."⁶⁷

As I've been saying, these two forms of explanation⁶⁸ have so far been discovered: the first, that God didn't banish us, but we ourselves lost it; and second, that the good things that were given to us are more and greater than what was lost. I also want to mention a third [form of explanation]. What is it? Although what he gave after these [gifts] was not greater than what was lost, yet he only took away what had been given to us and we provided the cause (for this must be added). And this is sufficient in and of itself to demonstrate his care for us. For not only the act of giving but also of taking away what had been given comes from his greatest benevolence. And, if you please, let us examine the matter⁶⁹ in the case of paradise. For he gave the paradise; this was the result of his care. We appeared unworthy of the gift; this was the result of our folly.⁷⁰ He took the gift away from those who had become unworthy; this was the result of his goodness. "And what sort of goodness," someone says, "is it to take away the gift?" Stay, and you will hear everything.⁷¹ For consider who Cain would have become if he spent time in the paradise after the murder. For if he, after falling from this mode of life, condemned to hardship and toil, and seeing the threat of death hanging over [himself], if, looking upon the disaster before the eyes of his father, and still having in his hands the traces of God's anger, and, beset by so many terrible things, he ran himself into such a pitch of wickedness that he failed to perceive his nature,⁷² and forgot about his participation in birth pangs,⁷³ and slew one who had done no wrong, and laid hands on his brother's body and bloodied his right hand, and, though God encouraged him to rest, he didn't endure it, but committed an outrage against his maker, dishonored those who gave him birth – if this man had remained in the paradise, consider into how much wickedness he would have driven himself.⁷⁴ For if, though many restraints were placed upon [him], he leapt deadly leaps,⁷⁵ [M. 249] even if these walls had been removed, how would he not have thrown himself down a cliff?

Do you also want to learn from his mother how great a good being banished from the abode of paradise has become? Examine who Eve was before this event and who she became after it. Before it she considered the deceiving devil, that wicked daemon, to be more worthy of her trust than the ordinances of God, and from the bare sight of the tree she trampled on the law that was given by him. But when she was banished from the paradise, consider how much better and more self-controlled she became. For when she

⁶⁵ Κηδεμονία.

⁶⁶ ἐνταῦθα

⁶⁷ Phil 4:7.

⁶⁸ ἀπολογία.

⁶⁹ Or, "Let us explain the point," or "Let us exercise our reason."

⁷⁰ ἀγνωμοσύνη.

⁷¹ Literally, "in every way." This could also be rendered, "Stay, and by all means you will hear."

⁷² Φύσις. That might also be rendered by "race" here.

⁷³ Κοινωνία ὠδίνων.

⁷⁴ This sentence, though long and complicated, accurately reflects the equally long and complicated train of thought in the Greek; for this reason it isn't broken down into smaller sentences in the translation.

⁷⁵ Θανάσιμα ἐσκίρτησε σκίρτήματα. An odd expression. From what follows it seems to mean that he would have killed himself by throwing himself down a cliff.

gave birth⁷⁶ to a son, she said, “I gained a human through God.”⁷⁷ She immediately appealed to the master, she who previously scorned the master, and she doesn’t account the deed to nature nor ascribe the birth to the law of marriage but acknowledges the master of nature and confesses her gratitude to him for the birth of her child. And she who had previously deceived her husband later even educated her child and gave him a name that would be able to lead him to a remembrance of God’s gift. And again, when she gave birth to another son, she said, “God rose up for me a seed in place of Abel, whom Cain killed.”⁷⁸ She was mindful of the calamity, yet the dear woman⁷⁹ didn’t despair but again gave thanks to God and named the son after the gift, providing for him a perpetual subject⁸⁰ for instruction. And thus God gave greater blessings in the very act of taking away. The woman was banished from the paradise, but through the banishment was led by the hand to a knowledge of God, and thereby she found something greater than what she had lost.

“But if it was beneficial,” someone says, “to be banished from the paradise, what was the reason God gave [them] the paradise in the first place?” This was beneficial, sir, because of our carelessness, since if they had taken heed for themselves and recognized their master and understood how to be self-controlled and moderate, they would have remained in their honor. But when they committed an outrage against the gift that was given [to them], it became beneficial to be banished. Why, then, did God give [them] the paradise in the first place? In order that he, on the one hand, might demonstrate his own benevolence and that he always prepared to lead us to greater honor, but we on the other hand deserved the chastisements and punishments since we banished ourselves through our carelessness in respect of the blessings⁸¹ that were given to us. Therefore, just as a loving father at first permits his own son to spend his time at his house and to enjoy everything that belongs to his father, but when he sees that he has become low in honor, he leads him from the table and places him beyond his own sight, and (as often happens)⁸² banishes him from his paternal home itself in order that by being banished and becoming better by being so disgraced and dishonored,⁸³ he might show himself worthy of his return and receive his paternal inheritance – so too did God act. He gave the paradise to the human; he cast him out when he appeared unworthy in order that by becoming better and more self-controlled through the time spent outside and through the dishonor he might appear worthy of his return. And, moreover, after he becomes better, he⁸⁴ restores him again and says, “Today you will be with me in paradise.”⁸⁵ Do you see that not only the act of giving the paradise but also the act of banishing from the paradise

⁷⁶ This and following verbs are present tense in the Greek, but this reads rather awkwardly in English.

⁷⁷ Gen 4:1.

⁷⁸ Gen 4:25.

⁷⁹ Γυναῖον, either an endearing term (as it is rendered here) or a contemptuous term, “that little woman” or the like.

⁸⁰ ὑπόθεσις.

⁸¹ Τὰ ἀγαθὰ.

⁸² πολλάκις. It is rendered here as a general, parenthetical statement (i.e. fathers often banish sons who have become base) rather than “he often banishes his son,” since the latter translation misrepresents the point.

⁸³ ὕβρεσι ταύταις καὶ ταῖς ἀτιμίαις.

⁸⁴ i.e. God.

⁸⁵ Luke 23:43.

was the result of his greatest care? For unless he had been banished [M. 250] from paradise, he wouldn't have appeared worthy of paradise again.

IV

Let us moreover always observe this point⁸⁶ and, if you please, let us examine it in the case of our present subject. He gave a language common to all; this was due to his benevolence. They did not use the gift for a good purpose⁸⁷ but inclined toward extreme folly. Again he took away what had been given. For if when they possessed one language they fell into so great a folly as to desire to build a tower up to heaven, if they hadn't immediately been punished, would they not also have desired to reach heaven's summit itself?⁸⁸ Why? Although it was impossible for them, nevertheless they were performing acts of wickedness by their intention. And God, seeing all of these things ahead of time, when they didn't use their concord of language for a good purpose, rightly divided⁸⁹ them by a division in their language. And consider for me his benevolence. "Behold," he says, "they all have one language, and they began to do this."⁹⁰ Why did he not immediately come to the act of disuniting their language but first gives an explanation,⁹¹ just as if he were about to be judged in a court of law? And yet no one will say to him, "What did you do?"⁹² But he has the authority to do everything he wants. Nevertheless, he sets forth his explanations⁹³ as if he were about to render an account, teaching us to be civil and benevolent.⁹⁴ For if the master defends himself to his servants and to those who have committed these wrongs,⁹⁵ we must all the more make our defenses to one another, even if we have had the greatest injustices done to us. See, then, how he defends himself. "Behold, they all have one lip and one voice," he says, "and they began to do this."⁹⁶ It is just as if he were saying, "Let no one bring these charges against me when he sees his language made discordant, let no one from the start think that this disunity of language was established in humanity from the beginning." "Behold, they have one lip and one voice." But they didn't use the gift for a good purpose. And in order that you may learn that he doesn't punish the present as much as he preemptively corrects the future, listen to what follows. "And now they will lack nothing,⁹⁷ whatever they put themselves to do."⁹⁸ What he means is something like this. If they don't pay the penalty now and aren't checked from the very root of their sins, they will in no way rise up from wickedness. For this is what is meant by, "They shall lack nothing, whatever they put themselves to do." It is just as if he were saying, "And they will add still greater offences." For such is

⁸⁶ Λόγος. A very difficult word to translate because it is used to signify many different referents. Here it might also be translated "argument."

⁸⁷ Εἰς δέον. Sometimes also rendered "rightly" in these homilies.

⁸⁸ Τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τῆς κορυφῆς.

⁸⁹ Aorist rendered as present for consistency in the English.

⁹⁰ Gen 11:6.

⁹¹ ἀπολογία.

⁹² Or, "Why did you do [this]?"

⁹³ ἀπολογίαί.

⁹⁴ Φιλάνθρωποι.

⁹⁵ Or, "to his servants who have also committed these wrongs."

⁹⁶ Gen 11:6.

⁹⁷ Literally, "everything will not be lacking from them."

⁹⁸ Gen 11:6.

wickedness. Whenever it isn't checked after taking root,⁹⁹ it rises to an unspeakable height just as when a fire takes hold of some material. Do you see that his taking away their unity of language is also due to his great benevolence? He cast them into disunity of language in order that they not fall into greater wickedness. Always observe this point for me and let it be irrevocably fixed and unmoved with you: God is good and benevolent not only when he shows his kindness but also when he punishes us. For indeed his chastisements and punishments are the greatest part of his kindness, the greatest form of his providence.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, whenever you see famines come to pass and plagues and droughts and torrential down pours and irregularities in the weather¹⁰¹ or anything else like these that chastise the human race,¹⁰² don't take it badly, but worship the one who causes [them]. Wonder at him for his care. [M. 251]. For he is the one who causes these things and chastises the body in order to teach the soul to learn self-control. "And God causes these things?" someone says. God causes these things. Even if the whole city were present, even if the whole inhabited world, I will not shrink from saying this. Would that I had a voice that was clearer than a trumpet and that I could stand in a lofty spot and cry out and testify to all that God causes these things. It is not from madness that I say these things, but I have the prophet standing with me who cries out and says, "There is no evil¹⁰³ in a city which the Lord did not cause."¹⁰⁴ "Evil" is an equivocal¹⁰⁵ word. And I want you¹⁰⁶ to know the precise meaning of each designation in order that you don't fall into blasphemy by confusing the nature of the matters on account of the ambiguity.

V

Evil, furthermore, true evil,¹⁰⁷ exists: sexual immorality,¹⁰⁸ adultery, greediness, and the countless other terrible things worthy of the gravest charges and punishments. Again [these things] are "evil," or rather aren't, but are so called: famine, plague, death, disease, and whatever else is like these, for these things are not evils.¹⁰⁹ For this reason I only said "so called." How is this so? Because, if they were evils,¹¹⁰ they wouldn't have become causes of good things for us by chastening our madness, thwarting our carelessness, and exciting us to zeal, making us more attentive. For, "When he slew them," [scripture] says, "then they sought him; they returned and sought God eagerly."¹¹¹ Therefore he is talking

⁹⁹ Literally, "after receiving a beginning."

¹⁰⁰ Πρόνοια.

¹⁰¹ ἀέρων ἀνωμαλίας.

¹⁰² ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις.

¹⁰³ Κακία. Starting here Chrysostom distinguishes between two types of "evil" which the word κακία signifies. His point is that true evil, ἡ ὄντως κακία, exists; any sin qualifies as true evil, and God never causes this type of evil. The other type of "evil" is what humans call evil but is not "true evil;" any circumstance resulting from nature that causes suffering is termed this type of "evil," since humans call such suffering evil. This latter "evil" is what God causes, never the former.

¹⁰⁴ Amos 6:7.

¹⁰⁵ ὁμώνυμον ὄνομα. i.e. it has multiple possible meanings or nuances.

¹⁰⁶ Pl. In these homilies Chrysostom normally uses the singular.

¹⁰⁷ ἡ ὄντως κακία.

¹⁰⁸ Πορνεία.

¹⁰⁹ Κακά.

¹¹⁰ Κακά.

¹¹¹ Psalm 77:34.

about this “evil” which chastens, which makes [us] illustrious, which makes us more earnest, which leads us to philosophy, not that [evil] which is reproached and worthy of accusation. For the former evil is not the work of God, but is an invention of our own choosing,¹¹² while the latter occurs for the destruction of the former [evil]. Therefore he calls this distress which we experience from our punishments “evil,” naming it such not in accordance with its own nature, but in accordance with human estimation. For since we are accustomed to call “evil” not just thefts and adulteries, but also disasters, he thus named the matter from human judgment. This is what the prophet asserts, that “there is no evil in a city which the Lord did not cause.” This, too, God insinuated through Isaiah, saying, “I am God, who make peace and create evils,”¹¹³ again naming the disasters “evils.”¹¹⁴ Christ also hints at this “evil” in the gospels when he says this to his disciples, “Each day’s evil is sufficient,”¹¹⁵ that is, distress, hardship. Therefore it is absolutely clear that here he calls punishments “evil” and that he himself brings these onto us, furnishing the greatest form of providence. For indeed the doctor isn’t only to be admired when he leads the sick person out into gardens and meadows or into the baths and reservoirs of water or when he sets forth a rich table, but also when he orders the patient to remain without food and whenever he wracks¹¹⁶ him with hunger and stretches him with thirst, nailing him to his bed and making his house a prison, depriving him of light itself and making his room dark in every way with curtains, and when he cuts and when he cauterizes and when he applies bitter drugs, he is similarly a doctor. How then is it not absurd to call that man a doctor who causes so many “evils,” but to blaspheme God and to cast him from his providence over everything if he ever causes one of these things [M. 252], as for example if he brings on famine or death,? And yet he is the only true doctor of both our souls and bodies. For this reason, when he perceives the human race leaping from our prosperity and suffering from the fever of our sins, he often delivers us from our diseases by scarcity and famine and death and other disasters and with the other drugs that he knows. “But only the poor perceive the famine,” someone says. But he doesn’t punish with famine alone but also in countless other ways. He often chastises the man who is in poverty with famine, the rich man and the man who enjoys abundance with dangers, diseases, and untimely deaths, for he is inventive and possess diverse drugs for our salvation.

Jurors act in this way, too. They don’t only honor or crown those who build cities or just give gifts, but they often also punish. For this reason they have sharpened the sword and prepared pits and a wheel [of torture] and stocks¹¹⁷ and executioners¹¹⁸ and other countless forms of punishments. And so, what the role of the executioner is in respect of jurors, so is the role of famine in respect of God, chastening us and leading us from evil as an executioner. This can also be seen in the case of farmers. Not only do they cover up the root of the vine or fence it around but they also trim it and cut off many of its branches. For this reason, they not only need the mattock but also the sickle for pruning. And yet we do not bring accusations against these men, but rather admire them

¹¹² Προαίρεσις.

¹¹³ Isaiah 45:7.

¹¹⁴ Κακά.

¹¹⁵ Matt 6:34.

¹¹⁶ Literally, “presses.”

¹¹⁷ Ξύλα.

¹¹⁸ Δήμιος. As this passage shows, public executioners would also apply non lethal forms of punishment.

greatly when we see them cutting off many useless parts so that, by the loss of the excess, they provide preservation for the parts that remain. How then is it not absurd that we so approve of a father and a doctor and a juror and a farmer and a that we don't blame or bring accusations against the father¹¹⁹ when he banishes his son from his home, or the doctor when he distresses his patient, or the juror when he punishes, but God, if he ever wants to remove us in our stupor from our drunkenness in evil, we blame and strike with countless accusations? Would it not be great madness not to give to our master the same opportunity for justifying himself¹²⁰ that we give our fellow-servants?

VI

I say these things now out of fear for those who are doing the accusing lest by “kicking against the goads”¹²¹ they bloody their feet, lest by throwing the stones into heaven they receive the wounds on their own head. I have another strong statement to make that is greater than this one. Someone taking up the question (I say this by way of indulgence) whether God profitably took from us (I mean this only, whether he took what had been given) couldn't bring an accusation against him. For indeed he has power over what is his own. In the case of humans, when they deposit their money with us and lend it, we acknowledge our gratitude for the time during which they lent it and we aren't irritated when they take back what is their own. But tell me, do we bring criticize God when he wants to take what is his? How is this not utter folly? But great and noble Job didn't act this way. Not only at the time when he received but also when it was taken away from him he confessed his greatest gratitude [M. 253], saying “The Lord gave, the Lord took away. May the name of the lord be praised always.”¹²² If we ought to worship for both these reasons and for its own sake and if the act of taking away isn't less useful than that of giving, tell me, what sort of excuse would we have if we were to exchange the one who is so gentle and benevolent and protecting and wiser than any doctor and more affectionate than any father and more just than any juror and more careful than any farmer, [the one who] who heals our souls, for the opposite, and to give up in despair the one whom we ought to worship? Could there be anything more mad and stupid than those who [even] amid such great orderliness say that we are deprived of God's providence? For if someone should contend obstinately that the sun was gloomy and cold, he produces by his judgment evidence of his extreme delirium, so too if someone should doubt in the matter of God's providence he is all the more liable to accusations of madness.

The sun isn't as bright as God's providence is manifest. But nevertheless some dare to say that daemons govern our affairs.¹²³ What am I to do?¹²⁴ You have a benevolent master. He prefers to be blasphemed by you through these statements rather than, after entrusting the daemons with your affairs, to persuade you through the affairs that¹²⁵ daemons are in control. For in that case you would have surely recognized their wickedness from experience itself, or rather it is now possible to prove this to you by a

¹¹⁹ Literally, “the former.”

¹²⁰ Δικαιολογία.

¹²¹ Acts 26:14.

¹²² Job 1:21.

¹²³ Τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς διοικοῦσι.

¹²⁴ Τί πάθω; for this rendering, see LSJ, πάσχω III.3.

¹²⁵ Literally, “how.”

certain small example, as it were. Certain daemon-possessed men met Jesus as they were coming out of some tombs and the daemons beseeched him to let them go into a herd of pigs, and he let them, and they went away and immediately threw all of them over a cliff. This is how daemons govern. And yet they had no quibble with the pigs, but with you¹²⁶ they have a war without treaty and a battle without truce and an undying hatred. If they didn't endure to put up with them,¹²⁷ not even for a moment, with whom they had nothing in common – if they received their enemies into their power, those who constantly sting them, namely, us, what would they not have done? What incurable damage would they not have devised? For this reason – that you might learn about their wickedness in the bodies of the irrational creatures – he permitted them to fall upon the herd of pigs. And it is clear to everyone that they would have done to the daemon-possessed men what they did to the pigs unless they¹²⁸ had the enjoyment of God's great providence even in their very madness. And so now when you see someone disturbed by a daemon, worship your master, learn of the daemon's wickedness. For it is possible to learn of both of these in the case of these daemon-possessed men, both God's benevolence and the daemons' evil. The daemon's evil, when they disturb and trouble the soul of the delirious man; the benevolence of God, when he holds back and hinders such a savage daemon who dwells [in the man] and desires to throw [him] over a cliff, not permitting it¹²⁹ to make full use of its power, but permitting it to show so much of its strength as is sufficient to chasten the man and to make its own wickedness manifest. Do you want to see again in another example how a daemon governs when God permits it to use its own power? [M. 254]. Consider Job's cattle herds, his sheep herds, how in one moment he¹³⁰ consumed them all, the pitiable death of his children, the wound brought against his body, and you will see the cruelty and inhumanity and mercilessness of the daemon's wickedness. And from these [examples] you will learn clearly that if God entrusted all of the universe to their authority, they would have destroyed everything and thrown them into confusion and would have devised against us what they did against the pigs and those cattle herd with the result that they wouldn't even for a moment have endured to spare our salvation.¹³¹ If daemons were in control, we would be in a no better state than the daemon possessed-man, or rather worse. For God didn't give them¹³² completely into the tyranny of the daemons since they would have suffered considerably worse things than these which they suffer now.

But I would have inquired of this point from those who say these things: what sort of disorder do they see in the present state of affairs so as to ascribe all of our affairs to the management of daemons? And yet we see the sun proceeding each day in good order for so many years, a diverse chorus of stars carefully observing their own order, unhindered courses of the moon, the precise succession of night and day, all things, both the things above and the things below in, as it were, a harmonious dance, but rather with even more precision, each keeping its proper place and not departing from the order which God established when he made them in the beginning.

¹²⁶ Recall that these second person pronouns are all singular.

¹²⁷ I.e. the pigs.

¹²⁸ Literally, "the demoniacs."

¹²⁹ The daemon.

¹³⁰ Presumably the devil.

¹³¹ Or, "safety."

¹³² i.e. the daemon-possessed men.

VII

“What is the benefit of these things,” someone says, “when the sky and sun and moon and the chorus of stars and all of the other things possess great orderliness, yet our affairs are full of confusion and disorder?” What type of confusion, sir, and disorder? “One man is rich,” he says, “and violent, he steals and is greedy, he gulps down the properties of the poor each day, but he suffers no harm. Another man lives virtuously,¹³³ adorned with self-control and righteousness and all the other good qualities, but is punished with poverty and illnesses and the most terrible [punishments].” These, then, are what cause you trouble? “These things,” he says. If therefore you see many of “those who steal” being punished, or some of “those living virtuously” or even countless numbers of them, enjoying good things, why do you not put an end to this judgment or approve¹³⁴ of the master? “Because this very thing is what troubles me more. For why, when there are two wicked people, is one punished, but the other flees and gets off? And [why] when there are two good people, one is honored, but the other is continually punished?” This very thing is the greatest work of God’s providence. For if he punished all the wicked people here and honored all the good people here, the day of judgment would be superfluous. Again, if he punished no bad person or honored no good person, the base¹³⁵ would have become more base and more evil and so be more careless than the good,¹³⁶ and those who want to blaspheme more would have brought accusations God and would have said that our affairs are utterly deprived of providence. [M. 255]. And if when some wicked men are punished now, and some good are honored, they still say that human affairs are ungoverned by providence, or even if this didn’t happen, what would they have not said? What sort of statements would they have let fall? For this reason he¹³⁷ punishes some wicked people and other he doesn’t, and he honors some good people but others he doesn’t. In order to persuade you that there is a resurrection he doesn’t punish everyone. He punishes some in order to make the more careless more earnest. Again, he honors some good people in order to draw others to a zeal for virtue by their honors, but in order for you to learn that there is another time that gives to all their recompense, he doesn’t honor all. For if everyone here received what they merit,¹³⁸ they wouldn’t have believed the teaching of the resurrection. But if no one received what they merit, the majority would have become more careless. For this reason, he punishes some and doesn’t punish others, benefiting both those who are punished and those who are not punished. For he eradicates the evil of the former group and makes the others more self-controlled by the punishments of these people. And this is clear from what Christ himself said. For when they reported to him that a tower buried some men when it was being demolished, he said

¹³³ ἐν ἐπιεικείᾳ. This could also be rendered “reasonably.”

¹³⁴ For this meaning of ἀποδέχομαι, see the entry in LSJ 4.a.

¹³⁵ οἱ φαῦλοι.

¹³⁶ οἱ χρηστοῖ.

¹³⁷ i.e. God.

¹³⁸ Τὰ κατ’ ἄξιαν.

to them, “Why do you think¹³⁹ that those men alone were sinners? No, I tell you. But if you don’t repent, you too will suffer the same things.”¹⁴⁰

Did you see how those men also perished because of sin and how the rest didn’t escape because of their righteousness, but in order that they might become better through the punishment of the former? “Therefore,” someone says, “those who are punished have been wronged, for they could have become better themselves by the punishments of others while not having been punished themselves.” But if he knew that they were going to become better through repentance, God would not have punished [them]. For if he, knowing beforehand that many will not profit from his patience, nevertheless endures [them] with great forbearance, fulfilling his role¹⁴¹ and providing them [the opportunity] to become sober again from their own folly, how would he have taken away the benefit of repentance from those who were going to become better through the punishment of others? And so these people have not been wronged since their sin has been eradicated through punishment, and their punishment will be lighter in the afterlife,¹⁴² since they have already suffered badly here. Again, those who have not been punished have not been wronged for it was possible for them, if they had wanted to, to make use of God’s patience for a change to the best¹⁴³ and, by marveling at his long-suffering, to feel shame before his exceeding forbearance and at the same time to make the change to virtue and to gain the profit of their salvation by the punishments of others. But if they remain in their wickedness, God isn’t responsible who is patient for this reason, that he may win them over, but they are unworthy of pardon who didn’t rightly make use of God’s patience. I can tell [you]¹⁴⁴ not only this reason why not all the wicked are punished here, but also another not inferior to this one. What sort of [reason] is this? That, if he applied punishments to all in accordance with their sins themselves, our race¹⁴⁵ would have already been snatched away and wouldn’t have managed to come into any succession.¹⁴⁶ And in order that you may learn that this is true, listen to the prophet when he says, “If you closely observe transgressions, Lord, who will endure [it]?”¹⁴⁷ And if it seems best also to test this saying, let us bring into the open those very sins which we all incontrovertibly commit, [M. 256] passing over a thorough examination of the life of each person (for it is impossible for us to know each person’s actions), and from this it will be clear and manifest to us that, if he punished in respect of each of our sins, we would have perished long ago. He who called his brother a fool¹⁴⁸ is liable to the fiery hell,¹⁴⁹ [scripture] says. Is there, then, anyone who hasn’t committed this sin? What then? Should we have been immediately snatched away?¹⁵⁰ Yes, all of us would have been snatched away and made away with long ago, indeed very long ago. Again, the man who

¹³⁹ Or, “What do you think, that those men alone were sinners?”

¹⁴⁰ Luke 13:4.

¹⁴¹ Τὸ αὐτοῦ πληρῶν.

¹⁴² ἐκεῖ; literally, “there.”

¹⁴³ Literally, “for the best change.”

¹⁴⁴ Literally, “it’s possible to tell....”

¹⁴⁵ Τὸ γένος ἡμῶν.

¹⁴⁶ i.e. no generation would have proceeded from the preceding generation because the preceding would have been already destroyed.

¹⁴⁷ Psalm 130:3 (Septuagint Psalm 129:3).

¹⁴⁸ Matt 5:22.

¹⁴⁹ εἰς τὴν γέεναν τοῦ πυρὸς.

¹⁵⁰ i.e. in death.

makes an oath, even if he keeps his oath, performs the acts of the evil one.¹⁵¹ Who is there who has not made an oath? Or rather, who is there who never perjured his oath? “The man who looked at a woman,” he says, “with unbridled eyes, is an utter adulterer.”¹⁵² And one could find many who are answerable for this sin. Therefore, since our admitted [sins] are of this sort, so unbearable, and since each one of these, taken by itself, brings upon us inevitable punishment – if indeed we should reckon up our sins committed in secret, then we would especially see that God’s providence doesn’t bring upon us the punishment for each sin singly. And so, when you see someone stealing, being greedy, and not being punished, ponder your own conscience, reckon up your life, review your sins, and you will learn well that it is not especially to *your* advantage to be punished for each of your sins. For this reason the majority of people speak without mercy¹⁵³ when they don’t consider their own [sins] before the [sins] of others but, passing over our own, we all examine those of others. But let us no longer do this but the opposite. Even if you see a righteous man being punished, remember Job. For even if someone is righteous, he won’t be more righteous than him or even close.¹⁵⁴ And even if he suffers countless terrible things, in no way did he ever suffer as much as Job¹⁵⁵ did.

VIII

Furthermore, since you have received this into your mind, stop bringing accusations against your master, since you learned that God doesn’t let such a man suffer badly by abandoning him, but from his desire to crown him and make him more illustrious. And if you see a sinner being punished, remember the paralyzed man who for 38 years lay on his bed.¹⁵⁶ As to the fact that that man was given over to that disease at that time because of his sin, listen to Christ when he says, “Behold, you have become well. Sin no more, lest something worse happen to you.”¹⁵⁷ For we pay the penalties for our sins by being punished or we receive the basis for crowns if while living virtuously¹⁵⁸ we suffer badly. And so, even if we live righteously or sinfully, punishment is to our benefit, sometimes making¹⁵⁹ [us] more illustrious, sometimes making¹⁶⁰ us more self-controlled, and lightening our future punishment. As to the fact that one who is punished here and bears it with thanksgiving enjoys a milder punishment in the afterlife,¹⁶¹ listen to Paul when he says, “For this reason many among you are sick and weak and a substantial number are asleep.¹⁶² For if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined,¹⁶³ in order that we may not be condemned together with

¹⁵¹ Matt 5:37.

¹⁵² Matt 5:28.

¹⁵³ Or, “unsparingly.”

¹⁵⁴ More literally, “close by a little.”

¹⁵⁵ ἐκεῖνος.

¹⁵⁶ John 5:5.

¹⁵⁷ John 5:14.

¹⁵⁸ ἐν κατορθώμασι.

¹⁵⁹ ποιῶσα

¹⁶⁰ ἐργαζομένη

¹⁶¹ Literally, “there.”

¹⁶² A common euphemism for death.

¹⁶³ Or, “when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord.”

the world.”¹⁶⁴ Therefore, since we know all these things, let us teach¹⁶⁵ such things about God’s providence and bridle those who gainsay [us]. And if some matter¹⁶⁶ exceeds our understanding, let us not for this reason think that our affairs [M. 257] are ungoverned by providence but, since we understand his providence in part, let us concede [this] in incomprehensible matters to his inscrutable wisdom. For if it isn’t possible for a common man to understand a human art, how much more impossible is it for a human mind to understand the infinitude of God’s providence!¹⁶⁷ “For his judgments are unfathomable, his ways inscrutable.”¹⁶⁸ But nevertheless, since we have received a sure and clear faith from the small matters and about the whole,¹⁶⁹ let us give thanks to him for all that happens. For indeed there is also another undeniable argument for those who wish to speculate about God’s providence. Let us ask the gainsayers, “Does God exist?” And if they say, “he does not exist,” let us not give an answer, too. For in the same way that it isn’t worth answering those who are mad, so too in the case of those who say that God doesn’t exist. For if a boat, carrying a few sailors and passengers, couldn’t keep going safely even for a stade without the hand that guides it,¹⁷⁰ how much more so would so great a cosmos, containing in itself so many bodies composed of diverse elements, not have lasted for so much time, unless there were some providence superintending it, perpetually holding this universe together and maintaining it? But if those respect the common opinion held by all and their experience of the facts¹⁷¹ [M. 258] confess that God exists, let us say this to them, that if God exists, as indeed he exists, it follows that he is also righteous; for if he is not righteous, neither is he God. If he is righteous, he gives to each person what he deserves. But we don’t see everyone here receiving what they deserve. Therefore we must hope that another compensation is stored up so that God’s righteousness may be manifest when each person has received what he deserves. For this argument introduces for us not only the philosophy¹⁷² about providence but also about resurrection. And so since we know these things, let us meditate upon the matters concerning providence and resurrection and let us teach others and take every pain¹⁷³ to silence those who rave against the master, and let us worship him in all things. For in this way we will attract more of his care and will enjoy his great help,¹⁷⁴ and thus we’ll be able to be delivered from true evil and to obtain the future blessings¹⁷⁵ by the grace and benevolence of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to the Father, together with the holy spirit, now and forever and into eternity.¹⁷⁶ Amen.

¹⁶⁴ 1 Cor. 11:30-32.

¹⁶⁵ Τὰ τοιαῦτα φιλοσοφῶμεν περὶ τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ προνοίας.

¹⁶⁶ Literally, “something of the things happening.”

¹⁶⁷ This could also be punctuated as a question.

¹⁶⁸ Rom 11:33.

¹⁶⁹ Περί τοῦ παντός.

¹⁷⁰ Around 606 feet.

¹⁷¹ Literally, “from the facts.”

¹⁷² Φιλοσοφία.

¹⁷³ Σπουδὴν ποιησώμεθα ἅπασαν.

¹⁷⁴ ῥοπή. For its meaning as “help,” see the entry in Lampe 5 and 6.

¹⁷⁵ Τὰ ἀγαθά.

¹⁷⁶ Literally, “into the ages of ages.”

Homily Two

To those who object “why hasn’t the devil been removed?”; and that his wickedness doesn’t harm us at all if we are careful; and about repentance.

Once when Isaac wanted to eat his breakfast from the hands of his son, he sent his son from his house to go hunt. But this¹⁷⁷ Isaac, who wanted to take his breakfast from our hands, didn’t send us out from the house, but ran to our table himself. What could be more affectionate than this? What more humble? He who deemed it worthy to show his love so warm also endured to descend so far. For this reason we, too, after lowering the tone of our voice and the force of our feet from our morning homily,¹⁷⁸ after seeing the sight of this father,¹⁷⁹ we immediately forgot our weakness, we put off our sloth, we were excited by the pleasure, we saw the splendid grayness of his hair, and our soul was filled with light. For this reason we eagerly set out the table in order that when he finished eating he might bless us. There is no thievery or deception here as there was there¹⁸⁰ on that occasion. One person was ordered to bring it¹⁸¹ in, but another brought it in. But I was ordered to bring it in and I brought it in. Bless us indeed, father, with a spiritual blessing, which we all always pray to receive, and which is profitable not only for you but also for me and all these people. Beseech our common master to lead your life [M. 258] into the long old age of Isaac. For this is of greater value to us and more indispensable than the dew of heaven and the fertility of the earth.

But indeed it is now time to set out the table. What, then, is it? The leftovers of what was said yesterday out of love for you. For we were still, still setting in motion our homily on the devil two days ago which we spoke to the initiates during the morning when we were talking with them about [their] renunciation¹⁸² and covenant.¹⁸³ We do this not because the speech about the devil is sweet to us but because the teaching on this matter¹⁸⁴ provides security for you. For he is both a personal and a public enemy.¹⁸⁵ To know well the affairs of one’s enemies provides great security. We said yesterday that he doesn’t conquer through force or through tyranny or by coercion or by being violent since, if this were so, he would have destroyed everyone. And as a proof of this we brought forward the pigs whom the daemons were unable to insolently attack before permission was granted from the master.¹⁸⁶ Nor did the devil dare to destroy these, the cattle and sheep herds of Job, until he received the authority from above. Moreover, we

¹⁷⁷ Presumably pointing out Bishop Flavianus; see my translation above of the Latin introduction to these homilies for a brief discussion of Flavianus.

¹⁷⁸ Διάλεξις.

¹⁷⁹ Τὴν πατρικὴν ὄψιν.

¹⁸⁰ Gen 27.

¹⁸¹ i.e. the meal.

¹⁸² ἀποταγή.

¹⁸³ Συνταγή.

¹⁸⁴ Or, “about him.”

¹⁸⁵ ἔχθρος γὰρ ἐστὶ καὶ πολέμιος.

¹⁸⁶ Πρὸ τῆς ἐπιτροπῆς τοῦ δεσπότου.

learned this first, that it isn't through force that he conquers us or through coercion; and after this we added a second point, that, when he conquers by deceit, he doesn't by this means prevail against everyone. And again, we brought forward the champion¹⁸⁷ himself, Job, against whom he moved countless machinations, but even so he didn't prevail but withdrew after being defeated. One issue¹⁸⁸ still remains. What type of issue? [M. 259] That "although he doesn't conquer by force," someone says, "yet [he conquers] by deceit. And for this reason it was better that he be done away with. For although Job prevailed, Adam was deceived and was tripped up. But if he were taken away once and for all, Adam wouldn't have ever been tripped up. But as it is since he remains he is defeated by one but prevails against many. Ten people conquer him, yet he conquers and prevails against countless people. But if he¹⁸⁹ had removed him, the countless people wouldn't have perished." What shall we say to this? That those who conquer are indeed worth considerably more than those who were defeated, even if this last group is greater in number and the former group fewer. For [scripture] says, "One who does God's will is greater than countless law-breakers." And secondly, that if our opponent were removed, the person who conquers comes off worse through him. For if you permit the adversary to remain, the more careless people come off the worse not because of the more diligent people, but because of their own carelessness; but if you remove the opponent, the careless people form plots against¹⁹⁰ the more diligent people¹⁹¹ and they¹⁹² don't demonstrate their own power and don't obtain their crowns.

II

Perhaps you haven't yet understood what was said. Therefore I must speak about it again more clearly. Let there be one opponent; let there be two athletes going to wrestle with him, and of these two athletes, let one be corrupted by greed, careless, utterly weak, unnerved; let the other be eager, in good bodily shape, spending time in the wrestling grounds, in my many exercises, exhibiting all of his training for the contest. If, then, you should remove the opponent, which one of these do you injure?¹⁹³ Is it the careless and negligent man, or the eager man who had toiled in such matters? It's absolutely clear that it's the eager man, for he is wronged if the opponent is removed;¹⁹⁴ while the careless man still isn't injured because of the eager man if the opponent remains, for he fell because of his own carelessness. Let me mention another solution to this question in order that you may learn that it isn't the devil who injures but in every case each person's own carelessness trips up those who aren't careful. Let the devil who is extremely evil not by nature¹⁹⁵ but by his resolve¹⁹⁶ and will¹⁹⁷ be left alone. As to the fact that the devil

¹⁸⁷ Or, "athlete."

¹⁸⁸ Ζήτημα.

¹⁸⁹ i.e. God.

¹⁹⁰ ἐπεβουλευθήσαν, literally, "have plots formed against them because of the careless." This and the following verbs are aorist and should be understood as gnomic aorists, hence rendering them in the present tense.

¹⁹¹ Perhaps out of envy.

¹⁹² i.e. the more diligent people.

¹⁹³ Literally, "did you injure," an aorist.

¹⁹⁴ i.e. because all of his hard work comes to nothing.

¹⁹⁵ Φύσει.

isn't wicked by nature, learn this from his very names. He is called the "slanderer" from the verb "to slander."¹⁹⁸ For he slandered man to God, saying "Job doesn't worship you freely.¹⁹⁹ But put forth your hand and touch what he possesses: [see] if he will not blaspheme you to your face."²⁰⁰ Again, he slandered God to man. "Fire fell from heaven and it consumed his flocks."²⁰¹ He hastened to persuade him that this war was fanned from heaven above and he brought the servant into collision with the master and the master with the servant, or rather he didn't bring [them] into collision but tried to and wasn't able to, so that when you see another servant brought into collision with his master, Adam with God, and [you see him] believing his slander,²⁰² you may learn that he received strength, not from his own [M. 260] power, but from the man's carelessness and negligence. For this reason, then, he is called the "slanderer." To slander and not slander are not in nature's order²⁰³ but are events²⁰⁴ that happen and stop happening, that occur and stop occurring.²⁰⁵ Such things don't possess the order of nature²⁰⁶ or of being.²⁰⁷ I know that for many this discourse on being and these²⁰⁸ properties²⁰⁹ is difficult to understand. But there are some who are able to understand more subtly and for this reason we spoke about these matters. Do you²¹⁰ want me to proceed to another name? You'll also see that that [name] doesn't belong to nature or being. He is called "wicked,"²¹¹ but wickedness doesn't belong to nature, but to one's resolve. For indeed, this sometimes occurs but sometimes doesn't. And don't tell me that wickedness²¹² is permanently a part of him,²¹³ for in fact it wasn't a part of him from the beginning but afterwards²¹⁴ came into being and so he is also called an apostate. And although many wicked people exist he alone is called exceedingly wicked. Why, then, is he called this? Because, although he wasn't wronged by us in any way, not being able to accuse us of

¹⁹⁶ Προαίρεσις.

¹⁹⁷ Γνωμη.

¹⁹⁸ Διάβολος and διαβάλλειν, respectively. The were here rendered by "slanderer" is the same word translated as "devil" elsewhere. It is render here by "slanderer" to demonstrate how Chrysostom derives the word from the Greek verb διαβάλλειν.

¹⁹⁹ I.e. without receiving a benefit in return that motivates his worship.

²⁰⁰ Job 1:9, 11.

²⁰¹ Job 1:16.

²⁰² Διαβολή; not the similarity in form to διάβολος, "the slanderer."

²⁰³ Τὸ διαβάλλειν δὲ καὶ μὴ διαβάλλειν οὐ φύσις ἐστίν. The nominative φύσις is a little odd. One might have expected the genitive, "it doesn't belong to nature to slander...."

²⁰⁴ Singular in the Greek, but must be made plural for English idiom.

²⁰⁵ Πρᾶγμα γιγνόμενον καὶ ἀπογιγνόμενον, συμβαῖνον καὶ ἀποσυμβαῖνον. A difficult expression to render accurately into English while preserving the parallel word-plays in the Greek. The point seems to be that since slandering is an *act* or *event*, and all acts and events have beginnings and ends, and that which has a beginning and an end necessarily doesn't always exist (for then it would have no end), it can't inextricably be a part of something's *nature*.

²⁰⁶ Οὐ φύσεως ἐπέχει τάξιν

²⁰⁷ οὐσίας.

²⁰⁸ Literally, "the."

²⁰⁹ Τῶν συμβεβηκότων. A difficult term to translate. It can mean simply "the events" [LSJ, συμβαῖνω, III.3] or "properties" [LSJ, IV.2].

²¹⁰ Pl.

²¹¹ πονηρός.

²¹² Literally, "it."

²¹³ Literally, "always remains on him."

²¹⁴ Literally, "after these things."

anything small or large, he saw the human was held in honor and immediately envied his blessings.²¹⁵ What could be worse than this wickedness: that hatred and war exist which have no reasonable cause? Again, let the devil be left alone and let us bring creation forward so that you may learn that the devil isn't responsible for our ills if we are willing to be careful, [and] so that you may learn that the person who is weak in resolve and negligent and careless falls and throws himself into pits of evil even when the devil doesn't exist.

The devil is wicked. I too know this and it has been confessed in the presence of all, but pay careful attention to what I'm about to say now. For it isn't any chance matter but [matters] on account of which arguments often arise in many places, [matters] on account of which a great battle and war exist, not only of believers with unbelievers but also of believers with believers. For this is the matter that is full of pain.

III

The devil, then, is confessedly wicked as I said. What shall we say about this beautiful creation? Is the creation wicked too? And who is so abominable, who is so stupid and mad so as to bring an charge against the creation? What then shall we say about it? It is not wicked but both beautiful and a display of God's wisdom and power and benevolence. Hear at all events how the prophet marvels at it. "How exalted were your deeds, o Lord! You made all things in wisdom."²¹⁶ He didn't go through them one by one but he assigned [the matter] to the incomprehensibility of God's wisdom. As to the fact that he profitably made it so beautiful and great, listen to the person who says that "their creator is seen by analogy from the greatness and beauty of his creations."²¹⁷ Listen also to Paul when he says, "His invisible qualities are clearly perceived from the creation of the world in his works."²¹⁸ For each of these people signified obscurely through what he said that creation²¹⁹ leads us [M. 261] to a knowledge of God, for this²²⁰ causes [us] to recognize the master. What then? If we see that this beautiful and wonderful [creation] itself has become a cause of impiety for many, are we to blame it? Absolutely not, but those who didn't make right use of the medicine. How then is this responsible for impiety which leads to a knowledge of God? "The philosophers," he says, "were darkened in their arguments and they worshiped and served the creation above the creator."²²¹ The devil isn't here at all, a daemon isn't here at all, but creation is presented as the only teacher of the knowledge of God.²²² How has it become responsible for impiety? Not by its own nature, but by the negligence of those who aren't careful. What then? Tell me, are we to remove the creation?

And what am I to say about the creation? Let us proceed to our own limbs and indeed we'll discover these to be responsible for destruction if we are not careful, not by their own nature but by our own carelessness. Consider: the eye was given in order that

²¹⁵ Τὰ ἀγαθά.

²¹⁶ Psalm 103:24.

²¹⁷ Wisdom 13:5.

²¹⁸ Romans 1:20.

²¹⁹ Literally, "this."

²²⁰ i.e. creation.

²²¹ Romans 1:21, 25.

²²² Or, "but creation alone is presented as the teacher of..."

by seeing the creation you might glorify the master. But if you do not use the eye well, it assists in adultery.²²³ The tongue was given so that you might praise, that you might sing hymns to the master. But if you aren't very careful, it becomes a cause of blasphemy for you. Hands were given that you might stretch them up in your prayers. But if you aren't sober-minded, you stretch them out for greed. Feet were given that you might run to good works. But if you are negligent, they will bring you to wicked deeds.²²⁴ Do you see that everything harms the weak man? Do you see that even medicines intended to heal throw the weak man into death, not because of their own nature but because of his weakness? God made the heavens that you might worship the master after marveling at his work. But others, neglecting the master, worshipped the heavens. This results from their carelessness and folly. But what am I to say of creation? What could be more wholesome than the cross? But this cross has become an offence to the weak. "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those who are being saved it is the power of God."²²⁵ And again, "We proclaim Christ crucified, an offense to Jews, foolishness to the gentiles."²²⁶ What could be more instructive than Paul and the apostles? Yet these apostles became a scent of death to the many. Indeed [scripture] says "To some it is a scent of death [leading] to death, but to others of life [leading] to life."²²⁷ Do you see that the weak man is harmed even by Paul, but that the strong man isn't injured by the devil?

IV

Do you want me to consider the matter in the case of Jesus? What is equal to that salvation? What is more profitable than his advent?²²⁸ But this saving, this profitable advent has become for many an increase in punishment. "For it was for judgment," he says, "that I came into this world, in order that those who can't see might see, and those who see might become blind."²²⁹ What do you say? Has the light become a cause for blindness? The light hasn't become a cause for blindness, but the eyes' weakness wasn't able to receive the soul's light. Did you see that a weak man is harmed from every side but the strong man is benefited from every side? For in every case one's resolve is responsible, in every case one's will is supreme.²³⁰ For the devil, if you wish to learn, is even useful for us if we make right use of him, and he renders us great services and we don't gain just any chance benefits. And we demonstrated [M. 262] this many times from Job. But it's also possible to learn from Paul. For when he writes about the sexually immoral person²³¹ he says, "Give such a man over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved."²³² Behold, the devil has become a cause even of

²²³ A bolder translation: "it becomes a patron of adultery." Πρόξενοϋς.

²²⁴ Literally, "you will have wicked deeds through them."

²²⁵ 1 Cor 1:18.

²²⁶ 1 Cor 1:24.

²²⁷ 2 Cor 2:16.

²²⁸ Παρουσία. This could also be rendered by "presence."

²²⁹ John 9:36.

²³⁰ Κύρια.

²³¹ ὁ πεπορνευκός.

²³² 1 Cor 5:5.

salvation but not by his own will,²³³ but by the skill²³⁴ of the apostle. For just as when doctors take hold of vipers and cut off their venomous parts and fashion antidotes, so too Paul: after taking hold of all that was beneficial from the punishment introduced by the devil, he passed over what was left. In order that you may learn that the devil isn't responsible for salvation, but that he was eager to destroy and devour the man and that the apostle through his wisdom thwarted his gluttony,²³⁵ listen to what he says about the sexually immoral man in the second epistle to the Corinthians. "Affirm your love for him, lest such a man be devoured by excessive grief and we be outwitted by Satan."²³⁶ Let us seize the man out from the beast's throat, he means.²³⁷ For Paul often used the devil as an executioner. Executioners punish those who have broken the law, not as much as they want, but as much as the jurors command. For this is the executioner's custom, to inflict punishment while heeding the jurors' command. Did you see into how much honor the apostle ascended? The one who wore a body used the bodiless one as an executioner and, what our common master says to the devil about Job when he orders him thus, "Touch his body, but his soul do not touch,"²³⁸ giving him boundaries and limits for the torments, lest the beast, being reckless, should spring upon him too shamelessly – the apostle also does this. For, after giving over to him the sexually immoral man, he says, "for the destruction of the flesh," that is, "do not touch his soul." Did you see the servant's authority? Do not, then, fear the devil, even if he is bodiless. For he fell, and nothing is weaker than the one who has fallen, even if he does not wear a body. In the same way, then, nothing is stronger than the person who has confidence, even if he carries about a mortal body.

V

All of these things have now been spoken by me not that I may deliver the devil from accusations but that I may free you from carelessness. For indeed he really wants to place the responsibility of our sins upon himself, so that by being nourished by these hopes and going through every form of evil, we may increase our great punishment against ourselves, obtaining no pardon since we transfer the responsibility onto him. In this way, no even Eve obtained [pardon]. But let us not do this but recognize our wounds. For in this way we'll also be able to apply the medicines. For the man who is ignorant of the disease will be able to make no treatment for the sickness. We committed many sins. I too know this. All of us are subject to penalties.²³⁹ But we were not deprived of forgiveness and we didn't fall away from repentance. For still we stand in the arena and are in the contests for repentance. Are you an old man, and have you arrived at your final exodus? Do not think that even so you have fallen from repentance and do not despair [M. 263] of your salvation, but consider the bandit who was freed on the cross. What is briefer than that hour in which he was crowned? And yet even this was sufficient for his salvation. Are you young? Do not be confident in your youth or think that you have a

²³³ Γνώμη.

²³⁴ Τέχνη.

²³⁵ ἡ λαίμη.

²³⁶ 2 Cor 2:8, 7, 11, respectively.

²³⁷ This is not a quotation, but an explanation of the preceding quotation.

²³⁸ Job 2:6.

²³⁹ Literally, "are in penalties."

long time appointed for your life. “For the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night.”²⁴⁰ For this reason he made our end unclear that we might make our eagerness and care clear. Don’t you see those who are snatched away before their time²⁴¹ each day? For this reason someone exhorts, “Do not delay turning to the Lord, nor put it off day after day,”²⁴² lest while you delay you destroy [yourself].²⁴³ Let the old man have this exhortation; let the young man have this admonition. But are you safe and wealthy and abounding in property²⁴⁴ and is nothing terrible happening to you? Listen to what Paul says. “When they speak of peace and security, then sudden destruction overtakes them.”²⁴⁵ One’s circumstances are full of great change. We are not in control of our end, but let us become in control of our virtue. Our master, Christ, is benevolent.

Do you also want me to speak of the paths of repentance? There are many both diverse and differing and all lead to heaven. The first path of repentance is the condemnation of sins. “Speak first your sins that you may be made righteous.”²⁴⁶ For this reason the prophet also said, “Let me declare my lawlessness against me to the Lord, and you sent away the impiety of my heart.”²⁴⁷ You also, then, condemn your sins. This is a sufficient defense to the master. For the man who has condemned his sins is more reluctant to falling into them again. Stir your internal accuser, your conscience, lest you have an accuser on the Lord’s tribunal stand. This is one path of repentance, the best; but there is another, not inferior to this: to not remember the wrongs of your enemies, to control your anger, to forgive the sins of our fellow servants.²⁴⁸ For in this way we shall be forgiven our sins against the master. Behold also the second means of purification from our sins. “For if you forgive your debtors,” he says, “your heavenly father will also forgive you.”²⁴⁹ Do you also want to learn the third path of repentance? An ardent and genuine²⁵⁰ prayer,²⁵¹ and to do this from the very depth of your heart. Did you see how that widow won over the shameless judge?²⁵² But you have a gentle and kind and benevolent master. [M. 264] She kept making her request against her enemies, but you don’t make your requests against enemies but for your own salvation. And if you also want to learn the fourth [path], I will speak about giving [to the poor],²⁵³ for this has great and untold power. For Daniel says to Nebuchadnezzar who had entered into every kind of evil and who had gone the rounds of every [type of] impiety, “King, let my counsel be pleasing to you. Redeem your sins by charitable giving, and your transgressions in acts of

²⁴⁰ 1 Thess 5:2.

²⁴¹ Literally, “untimely.”

²⁴² Sir 5:7.

²⁴³ There is no stated object for the verb ἐκτριβῆς, which must be supplied from context. “Yourself” makes seems reasonable; or, if we render the verb as “lest you wear out,” this might imply something like “God’s patience.”

²⁴⁴ Or, “pluming yourself on your property.”

²⁴⁵ 1 Thess 5:3.

²⁴⁶ Isaiah 43:26.

²⁴⁷ Psalm 31:5. It might mean, “you sent impiety *from* my heart.”

²⁴⁸ Τὸ ἀφιέναι τὰ συνδουλικά ἀμαρτήματα. The adjective συνδουλικά is worth noting for its rarity. It doesn’t appear in the LSJ, Lampe, or Sophocles, and seems to only occur only once, in this passage.

²⁴⁹ Matt 6:14.

²⁵⁰ ἀκριβής. For this translation, see the entry in LSJ II.2.b.

²⁵¹ Or, “petition.”

²⁵² Luke 18:3-5.

²⁵³ ἐλεημοσύνη.

pity toward the poor.²⁵⁴ What could equal this benevolence?²⁵⁵ After countless sins, after so many transgressions, a promise is made to one who has fallen if he will act humanely toward his fellow servants. To act moderately and to be humble don't consume the nature of sins less than all the aforementioned [paths]. And the tax-collector is a witness who can't speak of virtuous actions but, in place of all [of these], he brings forward humility, shedding the heavy weight of his sins.²⁵⁶

Behold, we made known five paths of repentance, first, the condemnation of one's sins; secondly, forgiving the sins of your neighbors; thirdly, the repentance that comes from prayer;²⁵⁷ fourthly, repentance from charitable giving; fifth, repentance from humility. Do not then be idle but travel all these paths daily. For the paths are easy and you can't allege poverty as an excuse. For even if you lived in greater poverty than everyone else, you can still give up your anger and be humble and pray earnestly and condemn your sins, and poverty in no way becomes an obstacle. What am I to say here where poverty doesn't hinder us from following the command either on this path, in which it is possible to contribute money (I mean charitable giving), or there? The widow who contributed two pennies made it known.²⁵⁸ Since then we have learned the cure for our wounds, let us apply these medicines constantly in order that by returning to health, a true health, we may both have the enjoyment of the holy table with confidence and with great glory meet the king of glory, Christ, and obtain the eternal blessings by the grace and compassion and benevolence of our lord Jesus Christ, through whom and with whom be glory, strength, and honor to the father together with the all-holy and good and life-giving spirit, now and forever and into eternity.²⁵⁹ Amen.

[M. 263]

Homily Three

That evil comes from carelessness and virtue from eagerness, and that nothing, neither wicked men nor the devil himself, can injure the sober-minded man; and the demonstration from many places and from the examples of Adam and Job.

The day before yesterday we set into motion our sermons about the devil out of love for you,²⁶⁰ but while such discourses were being held here, other people, sitting in the theaters, were watching the devil's pomp.²⁶¹ They took part in lewd songs [M. 264], you participated in spiritual tidings.²⁶² They ate diabolical filth while you fed on spiritual

²⁵⁴ Dan 4:27.

²⁵⁵ Τί γένοιτο ταύτης ἴσον τῆς φιλανθρωπίας; An ἄν appears to have dropped out of the text, which if restored would make it a potential optative. As the text stands the simple optative γένοιτο doesn't make sense.

²⁵⁶ Luke 18:13.

²⁵⁷ Or, "petition."

²⁵⁸ Mark 12:42.

²⁵⁹ Literally, "into the ages of ages."

²⁶⁰ Literally, "for your love."

²⁶¹ Πομπή. Perhaps a festival was being held.

²⁶² ἀκροάματα, literally, "things heard."

myrrh. Who led them astray?²⁶³ Who separated them from the holy herd? [M. 265] Did the devil deceive them? How then did he not deceive you? For you and they are equally human²⁶⁴ (I mean in your nature²⁶⁵). You and they have the same soul, you have the same desires that come from nature. How is it, then, that you and they [don't participate] in the same [things]? Because your resolutions²⁶⁶ are not the same as theirs. For this reason they are in deceit but you are without deceit. Again, I do not say this to extricate²⁶⁷ the devil from accusations but because I am eager to free you from your sins. The devil is wicked, I too confess this, but wicked toward himself, not toward us if we are sober-minded. For such is the nature²⁶⁸ of evil. It is destructive only for those who have acquired it, but the opposite is true with virtue. It not only is able to benefit those who have acquired it but also their neighbors. And in order that you may learn that the evil man is evil toward himself, but that the good man is good for others, I give you the testimony from Proverbs: "Child," he says, "if you are evil, you alone will drink your evils to the dregs; but if you are wise, [you are wise] for yourself and for your neighbor."²⁶⁹

They were deceived in the theaters but you were not deceived. This is the greatest proof of the facts, a clear proof and indisputable argument that in every case²⁷⁰ one's resolve is supreme.²⁷¹ Make use of this type of proof yourself. If you see someone²⁷² living in wickedness and exhibiting every evil and then blaming God's providence, saying that he²⁷³ gave the charge of our race²⁷⁴ to the necessity of fortune and fate²⁷⁵ and to the tyranny of daemons, in everyway taking the blame off himself but transferring it to the maker and the one who provides for this whole universe, stop up his mouth, not with a word but with an action, by showing him another fellow servant who lives in virtue and goodness.²⁷⁶ There's no need for many words, no need for intricate argument or syllogisms; the proof arises through deeds. Say to him, "You are a servant and so is he; you are human and so is he. You live on the same earth, you are nourished on the same food under the same heaven. Why are you [living] in wickedness, but he in virtue?" For this reason God permitted the wicked to mingle with the good and didn't give one land to the wicked and move the good to another region, but he mingled the former with the latter, accomplishing something very useful. For the good appear more esteemed who,

²⁶³ ἀποβουκολέω might be translated with the nuance, "who led them astray [as cattle]."

²⁶⁴ Literally, "the same humans."

²⁶⁵ Φύσις.

²⁶⁶ προαιρέσεις. The words προαιρέσεις and γνώμη are often coupled together in this homily. Their meanings are very similar. I translate them as "resolve and will," though they could also be rendered "choice and disposition" (and a number of other ways); the point is that while both groups have the same opportunities for goodness, they do not have the same resolutions or convictions, and so one group does good while the other indulges in vice, hence putting the blame onto each individual person.

²⁶⁷ Literally, "extricating."

²⁶⁸ Φύσις.

²⁶⁹ Prov. 9:12.

²⁷⁰ Πανταχοῦ; so translated elsewhere in this homily.

²⁷¹ Κύριαν. This word can be difficult translate succinctly, but the meaning is that one's resolve is the final authority or in final control.

²⁷² ἄνθρωπον,

²⁷³ i.e. God.

²⁷⁴ Τὴν ἡμετέραν φύσιν, i.e. the human race. In this context (several times in these homilies) φύσις is best rendered by "race."

²⁷⁵ These could be capitalized if they are understood to be personified.

²⁷⁶ ἐπιεικεία could also be rendered by "reasonableness."

though they are in the midst of those who hinder them from living rightly and draw them to evil, nevertheless hold on to virtue. “For there must,” [Paul] says, “be divisions among you, so that the esteemed may become manifest among you.”²⁷⁷

For this reason too, then, he permitted the wicked to be in your midst, so that the good may be more conspicuous. Do you see how great the gain is? But the gain doesn't result from the wicked but from the courage of the good. For this reason we also wonder at Noah, not because he was righteous but because he preserved his virtue in that perverted and wicked generation when he didn't have an example of virtue, when all were calling him to wickedness. But he walked every path contrary to them as a traveler traveling over the path against the great multitude that is carried along by its force. For this reason [scripture] didn't simply say “Noah is just, perfect,” but added, “in his generation,” in the perverted generation, in the despaired of generation, when there was no gain in virtue.²⁷⁸ This, then, was the gain for the good from the wicked. In this way, moreover, trees become stronger when they are battered by contrary winds, too. There is also [M. 266] a gain for the wicked that comes from intermingling with the good. In their presence they feel shame, they feel awe, they blush, and even if they don't shrink from evil, nevertheless they dare what they dare in private. This is not a small [gain], not to hold one's lawlessness boldly; for the lives²⁷⁹ of other people become an accuser of their evil. At all events, listen to what they say about the righteous man. “When he is seen he is burdensome to us.”²⁸⁰ Being stung by his presence is not an inconsiderable beginning to correction. For if the sight of the righteous man didn't sting them they wouldn't have uttered this statement. To be stung and bitten²⁸¹ in one's conscience because of his presence is no small hindrance to fearlessly indulging in wickedness. Did you see how great the gain is both for the good from the wicked and for the wicked from the good? For this reason God did not separate them but permitted them to be mingled.

II

We have the same argument concerning the devil. He²⁸² permitted him to be here for this reason, that he might make you stronger, that he might make the champion more illustrious, that the brave deeds²⁸³ might be greater. Therefore, when someone says, “Why did God permit the devil [to be here],?” say these words to him: “Because he not

²⁷⁷ 1 Cor. 11:19.

²⁷⁸ This expression, ἐμπόρευμα ἀρετῆς, is somewhat difficult. ἐμπόρευμα is a rare word; according to LSJ, it can mean either “merchandise” or “traffic,” while Lampe gives the additional meaning “gain,” citing only one instance. I prefer to render it as “gain in virtue” based on the example in Lampe where it is also used with an abstract noun, “νήψεως...ἔ.”, “gain in/of sobriety.” But in our context it could also be rendered by “traffic in virtue,” implying that virtue wasn't a common ‘commodity.’

²⁷⁹ Singular, but made plural for English idiom.

²⁸⁰ Wisdom 2:14.

²⁸¹ Στύφεισθαι, more literally, “to be made tight, astringent.” I render as “to be bitten” from the metaphorical usage, “to be harsh, austere, gloomy” [LSJ, στύφω, II.2), “to sting” and “to correct” [Lampe, 2a and 1b, respectively), and “to discipline, correct” [Sophocles 2]. The point is that the conscience of the wicked man is strongly affected by the presence of the righteous man, and “to be stung and bitten in his conscience” effectively renders the idea.

²⁸² I.e. God.

²⁸³ ἀγωνίσματα. Or, “prizes.”

only does no harm²⁸⁴ to those of sober mind and who are careful but even benefits them, not by his own resolve²⁸⁵ (for it is evil), but by their courage who made use of his wickedness for a good purpose. For he also attacked Job, not for this reason, that he might make him more illustrious, but in order to trip him up. For this reason, his will and resolve, he is wicked. But nevertheless he didn't harm the righteous man, but rather he²⁸⁶ gained something from the battle which we demonstrated. The daemon exhibited his wickedness and the righteous man his courage. "But he trips up many," someone says. [But this is] because of his own²⁸⁷ weakness, not because of his²⁸⁸ own strength, and this has already been demonstrated through many [examples]. Moreover, correct your own will²⁸⁹ and you'll never receive harm from anyone, but you'll be benefited in the greatest ways not only from the good but also from the wicked. For this reason (as I said before) God permitted the humans [to mix] with one another, and especially the good with the wicked, so that they²⁹⁰ might lead them²⁹¹ to their own virtue. And listen to what Christ says to his disciples. "The kingdom of heaven is like a woman who, after receiving leaven, concealed it in three sats²⁹² of flour." And so the righteous have the power of leaven in order that they may cause the wicked to move to their own likeness.²⁹³ "But the righteous are few, and the leaven is indeed small." Yet its smallness doesn't harm the dough, but that smallness affects all the flour²⁹⁴ through the power which is in it. So too the power of the righteous doesn't have its strength in numerical quantity²⁹⁵ but in the grace of the spirit. Did you see how small the leaven was? The whole world was in disbelief. Did you see how great the dough was? Yet those twelve men turned the whole world toward themselves. The leaven and the dough are of the same nature, but not the same quality.²⁹⁶ For this reason he put the wicked in the midst of the righteous so that, just as they are of the same nature as the righteous, they might also become of the same resolve.²⁹⁷

Remember these things, use them to silence the careless, the dissolute, the more reluctant, those who shrink from the toils of virtue, those who accuse our common master. "You sinned," he says, [M. 267] "be still,"²⁹⁸ so that you don't add a second worse sin. Sinning isn't as bad as accusing the master after the sin. Recognize the person responsible for the sin and you will find that the one who has sinned is no one else but

²⁸⁴ Παρέβλαπεν, necessarily taken as gnomic aorist together with the following verb "he benefits."

²⁸⁵ Προαίρεσις.

²⁸⁶ Job.

²⁸⁷ i.e. the person who is tripped up.

²⁸⁸ i.e. the devil.

²⁸⁹ Γνώμη.

²⁹⁰ i.e. "the good."

²⁹¹ i.e. "the wicked."

²⁹² A saton is roughly equivalent to 13 liters [BDAG, σάτον].

²⁹³ Ποιότης, more literally, "quality," a difficult word to translate without awkwardness. "Likeness"

²⁹⁴ ἡ συμκρότης ἐκείνη ἅπαν τὸ ἄλευρον πρὸς ἑαυτὴν μεθίστησι. A somewhat difficult expression. The translation is here paraphrased. Literally this means, "That smallness changes all the flour to itself [i.e. to the smallness]. The meaning seems to be that the small quantity of leaven *affects* all the flour, and is thus translated.

²⁹⁵ Literally, "in the quantity of number."

²⁹⁶ Ποιότης.

²⁹⁷ Προαίρεσις.

²⁹⁸ Gen. 4:7.

you. In every case there is need for a good resolve. I showed this to you not through bare arguments but from fellow-servants living in the world itself. Make use of this proof yourself. In this way our common master will judge us. Learn²⁹⁹ this method of proof, and no one will be able to out-reason you. Is someone engaging in illicit sex? Show him another man who shows self-control. Is someone greedy and stealing? Show him the man giving gifts to the poor.³⁰⁰ Is he living in jealousy and envy? Show him the man who is free³⁰¹ from passion. Is he overcome by anger? Bring forward the man who lives in philosophical moderation.³⁰² For it's not necessary to have recourse only to the ancient tales but also to take our examples from contemporary [affairs]. For indeed today by God's grace virtuous actions³⁰³ aren't fewer than past actions. Is someone an unbeliever³⁰⁴ and considers the scriptures to be false? He doesn't believe that Job was such a man? Show him another person who emulates his life. In this way, the Lord will also judge us. He makes fellow-servants to stand with fellow-servants, and he does not bear his vote from his own judgment, in order that someone not begin to say again, "You are a hard man,"³⁰⁵ just like the servant who was entrusted with a talent³⁰⁶ and in place of the talent brought an accusation. For it's necessary to groan because he didn't double the talent but also committed a worse sin by adding an accusation against his master to his own idleness. What does he say? "I knew³⁰⁷ that you were a hard man." O unhappy and miserable and senseless and reluctant man! You who ought to accuse your own idleness and subtract a little from your former sin doubled your sin instead of the talent by transferring the accusation onto your master!

III.

For this reason God establishes two groups³⁰⁸ of servants so that one group, being judged through the other, can't accuse their master in the future. For this reason he says, "The son of man is coming in the glory of his father."³⁰⁹ See that no distinction³¹⁰ is made in [their] glory. He didn't say, "in a glory like the glory of the father," but, "in the glory of the father, and he will gather all the nations." The tribunal is dreadful, dreadful for those who are sinning and liable to give an account, but for those who are conscious of their own virtuous deeds it is desirable and kind. "And he will stand the sheep on his right, and the baby goats³¹¹ on his left."³¹² The two groups are humans. Why, then, is one group

²⁹⁹ Plural. In these homilies Chrysostom usually uses the singular "you."

³⁰⁰ ἔλεημοσύνη.

³⁰¹ Literally, "pure."

³⁰² ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ. For my translation, see the entry in Lampe, φιλοσοφία, Bb.

³⁰³ Καταρθώματα. For this meaning, see the entry in LSJ, 2.

³⁰⁴ ἄπιστος. For the technical sense "an unbeliever," see the entry in Lampe, ἄπιστος, 3.

³⁰⁵ Matt. 25:24.

³⁰⁶ A large sum of money, though the value differed over time and space.

³⁰⁷ Εἶδον could also mean "I saw...."

³⁰⁸ Literally, "he causes to stand servants and servants,...." Throughout the following discussion the two groups of servants are referred to as "the former," and "the latter." This becomes rather tedious to follow in English, more so than in the Greek, and so I render the terms variously by "this group," "the other group," "the first group," etc., to make clear who is being signified.

³⁰⁹ Matt. 16:27.

³¹⁰ More literally, "the indistinguishability of [their] glory."

³¹¹ This refers, of course, to young goats.

“sheep” but the other “baby goats”?³¹³ In order that you might learn not of the variation in their nature but of the variation in their resolve. But why are those who don’t give gifts to the poor “baby goats”? Because the animal is unproductive and isn’t able to contribute to its owners the benefit from its milk or from its offspring or from its hair, being wholly devoid of such contribution because of its unseasonable age.³¹⁴ For this reason he called those who don’t bear any fruit of charitable giving “baby goats,” but those on his right “sheep.” For the contribution from these is great, from the nature of their wool, from their offspring, from their milk. What, then, does he say to them? “You saw that I was hungry, and you fed me; naked, and you clothed me; a stranger, and you received me.”³¹⁵ Again, [he says] the opposite to other group. And yet both groups are equally human,³¹⁶ they received [M. 268] the same promises, the same dwelling places³¹⁷ were laid before both groups for those who lived good lives, the same person came to both groups, with the same nakedness [he came] to both groups, with the same hunger, and equally a stranger [to both groups]. All things were equal for both groups.

Why, then, is their end not the same? Because their resolve didn’t permit it, for this alone made the difference. For this reason one group [will go] into gehenna, the other into the kingdom. If the devil was responsible for their sins, the one group wouldn’t be going to be punished since someone else³¹⁸ is sinning and forcing [them to sin]. Did you see here both those who are sinning and those who have lived good lives? Did you see how they were silenced when they saw their fellow-servants? Come, let’s bring the discussion to another example. “There were,” he says, “ten virgins.”³¹⁹ Again, here are resolves that were righteous³²⁰ and those which are going astray³²¹ in order that you may see side-by-side³²² the sins of one group and the virtuous actions of the other. For the comparison makes these clearer. Both groups were virgins, both groups were five in number.³²³ Both had torches. All of them were awaiting the bridegroom. How then is it the case that if the one group went inside, the other didn’t? Because one group was cruel,³²⁴ the other civilized and kind. Do you see again that one’s resolve is responsible

³¹² Matt. 25:33.

³¹³ This sentence might be put in quotations to indicate an objection or question from the audience.

³¹⁴ Literally, “the untimeliness of its age.”

³¹⁵ Matt. 25:35.

³¹⁶ Literally, “the same humans.”

³¹⁷ ἔπαυλα. An extremely rare word and (particularly) form. The word ἔπαυλος is poetic; the LSJ only cites the Odyssey, Apollonius Rhodius, Sophocles, and Aeschylus. This particular form, *neuter* plural from an otherwise masculine noun, is only found in Sophocles. It is striking that the word should occur here and particularly in the neuter form. Curiously, the Latin translation of this text in Migne translates the word by “praemia,” “presents/rewards,” a meaning not to be found for this Greek word. If ἔπαυλα is correct, it *could* be a reference to John 14:2, “In my father’s house there are many rooms,” or simply a reference to heaven as a dwelling place.

³¹⁸ i.e. the devil.

³¹⁹ Matt. 25.

³²⁰ Αἱ προαιρέσεις αἱ κατορθώσασαι.

³²¹ The form here used, διαμαρτοῦσαι, is very rare. The verb underlying this form must be διαμαρτ-έω (cf. the common form διαμαρτ-άνω and the nouns διαμάρτ-η-μα, διαμάρτ-η-σις), yet it is cited in no lexica as its own verb. However, this verb is probably what underlies the future form διαμαρτ-ή-σω of διαμαρτάνω on the model of other ε-contract verbs (cf. οἰκ-έ-ω, (fut.) οἰκ-ή-σω).

³²² ἐκ παραλλήλου.

³²³ Literally, “These and those were virgins, these and those were five.”

³²⁴ ἀπάνθρωποι.

for one's end, not the devil? Did you see the judgments side-by-side, and that the vote was cast by equals?³²⁵ Fellow-servants will judge their fellow-servants. Do you want me to show you a comparison from dissimilar people?³²⁶ For it also arises from dissimilar people, resulting in a clearer judgment. "Men of Ninevah," he says, "will arise and judge this generation."³²⁷ No longer are those who are being judged equals, for one group consists of barbarians³²⁸ and the other of Jews. One group had the enjoyment of the prophetic teaching while the other never had any share in divine instruction. This isn't the only difference, but also the fact that in one case³²⁹ a servant³³⁰ came, but in the other³³¹ the master. The former³³² preached ruin in person, but the latter told the good news of the kingdom of heaven. Who, then, were more likely to believe, the barbarians who were foolish and had never had any share in divine teaching, or those who from their earliest age were reared on the prophetic books? It's clear to everyone that it was the Jews – yet the opposite occurred. For they disbelieved the master when he was preaching the kingdom of heaven, but the former group believed their fellow-servant when he threatened ruin, so that their reasonableness and the Jews'³³³ folly should become more manifest. Was a daemon [responsible]? Was the devil? Was fortune? Was fate?³³⁴ Wasn't each responsible for his own evil and virtue? For unless they were going to be liable to give an account he wouldn't have said that "they will judge this generation." Nor would he have said that "the queen of the south will judge"³³⁵ the Jews. For indeed, at that time not only will peoples just peoples, but one man will often judge a whole people, whenever those for whom it was possible to be deceived clearly remain undeceived and those who in every way ought to prevail happen to be defeated. For this reason we mentioned Adam and Job. For it is necessary to return to that subject again and so explain what is left in my sermon.³³⁶ For he assailed Adam through bare words, but Job through events. He stripped him of all his wealth and deprived him of his children. But from the former he took away nothing small or large from his property. But let us rather examine the words themselves and the manner of the attack. [M. 269] "The snake approached," [scripture] says, "and said to the woman, 'Why did God say, 'You are not to eat from any tree in the paradise'?"³³⁷ Here it was a snake but in the case of Job it was his wife. Up to this point the difference between the advisors was great. The one was a servant,³³⁸ the other a partner in life. The one was a helper,³³⁹ the other was subordinate. Did you see

³²⁵ ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων, i.e. people in the same situation of life, part of the same group, etc.

³²⁶ ἐκ ἀνομοίων.

³²⁷ Matt. 12:41.

³²⁸ Βάρβαροι.

³²⁹ ἐκεῖ, "there," referring to Jonah going to Ninevah.

³³⁰ Jonah.

³³¹ ἐνταῦθα.

³³² Jonah.

³³³ Literally, "of these" or (following the sequence of the antecedents) "the latter's."

³³⁴ "fortune" and "fate" could be capitalized if they are understood to be personified. The preceding questions expect a negative answer.

³³⁵ Matt. 12:42.

³³⁶ Τὰ λείψανα ἀποδοῦναι τῷ λόγῳ.

³³⁷ Gen. 3:1.

³³⁸ The devil.

³³⁹ Eve.

how unpardonable³⁴⁰ this is? The one who was subordinate and a servant deceived the woman, but Job's³⁴¹ partner and helper wasn't able to trip him up. Let us see what he³⁴² says. "Why did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree?'" And yet God didn't say this but the opposite. See, then, the devil's villainy: he said what wasn't spoken in order to learn what was spoken. What, then, [did] the woman [say]? When she should have silenced him, when she shouldn't have shared the word with him, she blurted out the master's will³⁴³ because of her folly and so furnished him³⁴⁴ with a strong hold.³⁴⁵

IV.

See how great an ill it is to give oneself over into the hands of hostile and insidious men! For this reason Christ said, "Do not give what is holy to dogs, nor cast your pearls before pigs, lest turning around they should tear you to pieces."³⁴⁶ This happened in the case of Eve. She gave what is holy to a dog, to a pig. He trampled on her words, and turning around toward her tore the woman to pieces. And see how he commits his villainy. "You will not surely die," he says.³⁴⁷ Pay attention to this for me – the woman was able to detect his deception. For he immediately announced his hatred and war with God, he immediately spoke in contradiction [to God]. Very well.³⁴⁸ Earlier you³⁴⁹ spoke to one who wanted to learn his will; after this why did you follow one who spoke the opposite? God said, "You will surely die."³⁵⁰ But he³⁵¹ contradicted these [words] and said, "You will not surely die." What is clearer than this war? From where else ought you to have learned that he was hostile and an enemy than from his contradicting God? She ought to have immediately fled the bait, she ought to have rebounded from the trap. "You will not surely die," he says. "For God knew that on the day you ate, your eyes would be opened, and you would be gods."³⁵² By a hope for a greater promise they threw away what they had in their hands. He promised that he would make them gods, but he threw them down into death's tyranny. Why, woman, did you trust the devil? What goodness did you observe? Was the law-giver's trustworthiness not sufficient [to prove] that the one was God and the artificer and maker, the other the devil and hostile?³⁵³ I don't yet say the "devil." You thought that he was a bare snake. Tell me: ought you to have thought a snake worthy of such equality that you even made known to him the master's will? You see that it was possible to detect the deceit, but she was unwilling. And indeed God gave sufficient proofs of his own kindness and through his deeds he showed his care. For he

³⁴⁰ Literally, "the unpardonableness, how great [it is]?"

³⁴¹ "Job" isn't in the Greek text but was added for clarity.

³⁴² Given the quote that follows this is presumably the devil; however, this could also refer to 'scripture' generally. "let us see what [scripture] says...."

³⁴³ Γνώμη.

³⁴⁴ i.e. the devil.

³⁴⁵ i.e. a way to attack her. [RP]

³⁴⁶ Matt. 7:6.

³⁴⁷ Gen. 3:4.

³⁴⁸ Literally, "let this be."

³⁴⁹ Chrysostom is directly addresses Eve.

³⁵⁰ Gen. 2:7.

³⁵¹ The snake.

³⁵² Gen. 3:5.

³⁵³ Or: an enemy.

formed a human who didn't exist, and he infused him with soul, and created him in his image, and made him ruler over all things on the earth, and he gave him a helper, and planted a paradise, and after permitting him the use of all the other trees, there was only one he forbade him to touch, and he did this very thing for his benefit.³⁵⁴ But by his action the devil showed nothing good, neither small nor great, but, after inducing the woman with bare words and cheating her with vain hopes he thus deceived her. And yet she thought the devil to be more trustworthy than God, although through his deeds [M. 270] he had demonstrated his goodwill. The woman trusted the one who brought bare words only and nothing else. Do you see how the deceit occurred from folly only and carelessness, not from force? And in order that you may learn this more clearly, hear how the scripture accuses the woman. For it didn't say, "after being deceived," but, "after seeing the tree, that it was beautiful, she ate."³⁵⁵ And so the charge was against her unrestrained sight, not only against the deceit from the devil. For she was defeated by her own desire, not by the daemon's wickedness. For this reason she didn't enjoy the benefit of pardon, but in saying "The snake deceived me," she thus paid the highest penalty, for in was in her power to not fall. And in order that you may learn this more clearly, come, let's bring the discussion to Job, away from those who were defeated to the one who prevailed, away from those who were conquered to the one who conquered, for this will give us greater eagerness to raise our hands against the devil. In the former case the deceiver is a snake and he prevailed. In this case it is a woman³⁵⁶ and she did not succeed, although she was considerably more persuasive. The design was brought against Job after the destruction of his property, after the loss of his children and after the stripping of all he had. In the other case there was nothing of this sort. Adam didn't lose children, he didn't lose property. He wasn't sitting on a refuse-pile but lived in a luxurious paradise³⁵⁷ and enjoyed every sort of tree and spring and rivers and every other [form of] abundance. There was no toil or pain or despondency or anxieties or disgraces or reproaches or the countless ills with fell upon Job. And yet, though there was nothing of this sort, he fell and was tripped up. Isn't it very clear that this was because of his carelessness? And so, just as that man³⁵⁸ stood nobly when all of these things were pressing and weighing upon him and did not fall, isn't it very clear that this man,³⁵⁹ too, because of the sobriety of his soul, [didn't fall]?

V

³⁵⁴ Χρησιμῶς.

³⁵⁵ Gen. 3:6.

³⁵⁶ Or: his wife.

³⁵⁷ Literally, "a paradise of luxury."

³⁵⁸ i.e. Job.

³⁵⁹ Οὗτος. It isn't clear who this other successful man is. The immediate discussion has been comparing Job with Adam, a man who prevailed against the devil with a man who was defeated by the devil. It doesn't, therefore, make sense to be comparing both Job and Adam positively. It must be assumed that the Latin translator also perceived the difficulty, for rather than rendering οὗτος, the masculine pronoun, by the corresponding Latin pronoun *is*, he uses *id*, the neuter pronoun, which can't refer to a person. A translation of the last clause in the Latin reads, "isn't it clear that this (*id*) arose from the vigilance of his mind?" where "this" refers to the fact that Job didn't fall. However, if this were the meaning, one would expect τοῦτο, the neuter pronoun, and *not* οὗτος, in the Greek. Perhaps the text is corrupt.

From both sides, beloved, reap the greatest gain, flee from emulating Adam,³⁶⁰ since you know how many evils are born from carelessness. But emulate Job’s discretion,³⁶¹ since you have learned how many good things sprout from eagerness. Always consider this crown-bearer and you will have sufficient consolation for every pain and crisis. For that blessed and noble man, standing as if in the common theater of the world, tells everyone through the sufferings which befell him to bear nobly everything that befalls them and not to give in to any of the sufferings that assail them. For there is no, there is no human suffering which can’t receive consolation from that source, for the sufferings which are scattered in all the world fell up his one body all together at once. What pardon, then, will there be for the man who is unable to bear with thanksgiving a part of the sufferings which were brought against that man, who clearly bears not only a part, but all of the ills of all of humanity? And so that you don’t accuse my statement of exaggeration, come, [and] bringing forward each of the things that befell him, let’s bring in this promise. And, if you wish, let’s first bring forward what seems to be the most unendurable thing of all: I mean poverty, and its corresponding pain. For all humans everywhere bewail this. What,³⁶² then, has become more impoverished than Job who was more impoverished than those who are thrown in the baths and more than those who sleep in the ash of ovens, and, simply, more than all of humanity? For while these men at any rate have a ragged cloak [M. 271], he sat naked, and the only cloak that he has from nature, the covering of his flesh, even this the devil corrupted on every side with a grievous decay. Again, these poor people are at any rate under the roof of the entrances to the baths and are hidden by a cover,³⁶³ but that man continually spent his nights outdoors always in the open air and didn’t have the comfort from a bare roof. And what is more, these people are conscious of their many sins, [but that man didn’t know even one]³⁶⁴ For this, being observed in each of the matters that befell him, is what caused his pain to be greater and made his distress³⁶⁵ worse – not knowing the cause of what was happening. Therefore these people, as I said, would be able to impute many things against themselves, and to know that one is justly being punished is not an insignificant comfort in misfortune. But he was deprived even of this comfort, and although he exhibited a life filled with virtue, he endured the punishments due to men who have dared terrible things.³⁶⁶ And while these poor people among us were exercised in this misfortune from the very beginning, that man endured a poverty in which he was unpracticed,³⁶⁷ having received the change from wealth all at once. Just as knowing the cause of what is happening is a very great comfort, it is no less a comfort that one who has practiced poverty from the beginning

³⁶⁰ Literally, “the emulation of Adam.”

³⁶¹ Εὐλάβεια; it could also mean ‘piety;’ perhaps both senses are to be understood.

³⁶² Two manuscripts read “Who, then, has become....”

³⁶³ Or: are covered by a tent.

³⁶⁴ The bracketed clause is supplied by an editor, Regulus, to complete the contrast, but isn’t found in the actual text.

³⁶⁵ ἀπορία; this could also be translated by “perplexity;” perhaps both senses are intended.

³⁶⁶ Τὰ τῶν ἔσχατα τετολμηκότων. The word order allows for two interpretations. 1) (as I render it in the translation) understanding the object of “he endured” to be the article τὰ, and have ἔσχατα be the object of the substantivized participle τῶν...τετολμηκότων (“he endured the things [τὰ] due to those who have dared terrible things [τῶν ἔσχατα τετολμηκότων]), or 2) Taking τὰ...ἔσχατα as the object of “he endured,” so that τῶν...τετολμηκότων then modifies the article-noun construction (he endured the terrible things [τὰ...ἔσχατα] due to audacious men [τῶν...τετολμηκότων]).

³⁶⁷ Literally, “unpracticed poverty.”

should continue thus living in poverty. [But] that righteous man was deprived of both of these [comforts] and even so he didn't fall. Did you see that he came to that state of utter poverty after which it's not possible to find another? For what could be more poverty stricken than one who is naked and doesn't have even a roof? Indeed he wasn't even entitled to have the enjoyment of the earth, for he wasn't sitting on the earth but on the refuse-pile. And so when you see yourself in poverty, consider the suffering of the righteous man and you'll immediately arise and beat off any despondent attitude.³⁶⁸ People think that this one misfortune is the starting-point³⁶⁹ for all the sufferings together, and second to this, or rather before it, is the affliction against one's body. Who indeed was ever so ill? Who endured so great a disease? Who received so great an affliction, or saw another who received it? There is no one. Little by little his body was consumed and a fountain of worms burst forth from his limbs on all sides and this flow was constant and the stench was intense from all quarters and his body, being destroyed little by little and wasting away in such decay, made his food distasteful, and his hunger was astounding and strange, and he couldn't have the enjoyment of the food that was given [to him]. "I see," he says, "my food as a stench."³⁷⁰ Whenever you fall into an illness, sir, remember his³⁷¹ body and his holy flesh. For it was holy and pure and possessed such wounds. If someone is on an expedition³⁷² and then, without any good reason, has his sides flayed off³⁷³ after being hung³⁷⁴ on a pole, let him not consider the matter a disgrace or yield to the pain, keeping this holy man in mind. "But," someone says, "he has sufficient consolation and comfort in knowing that it was God who was bringing these things against him." But this especially troubled and bewildered him. He thought that God, who is righteous and who in every way had been worshiped by him, was at war with him. And he could find no good reason for what was happening. See how much [M. 272] piety³⁷⁵ he demonstrated when he afterwards learned the cause. For when God said to him, "Do you think that I have dealt with you for any other reason than that you should appear righteous?",³⁷⁶ he says in total astonishment, "I will place my hand on my mouth. I spoke once, but I won't add to a second time."³⁷⁷ And again, "Formerly I heard you with my ear,³⁷⁸ but now my eye has seen you, and so I disparaged myself, and wasted away. I consider myself earth and ash."³⁷⁹

³⁶⁸ For λόγισμος as "attitude," see the entry in Lampe, 4.

³⁶⁹ ὑπόθεσις.

³⁷⁰ Job 6:7. The word βρόμος "stench" is interesting. It probably means "stench," but isn't listed in LSJ with this meaning, but in various Septuagint lexica (*The Greek of the Septuagint: A Supplemental Lexicon*, (2011), Gary Chamberlaine; *Greek English Lexicon of the Septuagint, Revised Edition* (2003), J. Lust, E. Eynikel, K. Hauspie). The text as quoted here leaves off the rest of the verse as given in the Septuagint, "ὡσπερ ὀσμὴν λέοντος," "as the scent of a lion," which might help to explain the word βρόμος here.

³⁷¹ Or, "that."

³⁷² Κἂν ἐν στρατείᾳ δέ τις τελεῖ. Τελέω should probably be understood in the sense τελέθω, "to be" [see the entry in LSJ, 1.8, "later = τελέθω"].

³⁷³ A form of torture, "carding," in which a tool like a miniature rake is dragged across the skin to rend the flesh.

³⁷⁴ This could refer to being impaled.

³⁷⁵ Εὐλάβεια. Could be rendered "discretion."

³⁷⁶ Job 40:8.

³⁷⁷ Job 40:5.

³⁷⁸ Literally, "up to the hearing of my ear."

³⁷⁹ Job 42:5-6.

VI

If you think that this is sufficient for consolation, you will yourself be able to have this comfort. For if you don't suffer some terrible thing³⁸⁰ because of God,³⁸¹ but from the abuse of humans, but give thanks and don't blaspheme the one who, though able to stop it, permits it for your character,³⁸² you will obtain the same rewards as those who, after suffering because of God, are crowned, because you bore nobly the misfortunes brought against you by humans and gave thanks to the one who, though able to stop it, didn't wish to. Behold, moreover, poverty and illness, and you saw both of these brought against the righteous man to an extreme degree.³⁸³ Do you want me to also show you the war from nature that so excessively³⁸⁴ assailed that noble man at that time? He lost ten children, ten all at once, then in the very blossom of their age, ten who had exhibited great virtue, and not by the common law of nature, but by a forceful and pitiable death. Who could speak of such a disaster? There is no one. And so, whenever you lose a son and daughter together, run back to that righteous man, and you will assuredly find a great comfort for yourself. Were these the only sufferings which befell him? There was the abandonment and betrayal of his friends, the scoffing and abuses, the mockery and laughter. Being ridiculed by all was unbearable. For the nature of our misfortunes isn't so accustomed to sting our soul as are the people who reproach us in addition to our misfortunes. Not only did he not have someone to comfort him but many people from all quarters pressed upon him with their reproaches.³⁸⁵ And you see him lamenting this and saying, "You trampled upon me."³⁸⁶ And he calls them pitiless and says, "My neighbors disowned me and my servants spoke against me, and I called upon the sons of my concubines, but they turned away."³⁸⁷ "Others," he says, "spat upon me, and I became the common talk of everyone"³⁸⁸ and, he says, "my robe itself despised me."³⁸⁹ These things are unendurable even to hear, let alone to endure through the actual events.

Utter poverty, and an illness both unbearable and new and incredible. The loss of so many and such children and in such a manner. Reproaches and scoffing and abuses from humans. Some mocked him while others reproached and others despised, not only his enemies, but also his friends; not only his friends, but also his servants. Nor did they just mock and reproach him, but also detested him, and all of this not just for two or three or ten days, but for many months. And, what befell him alone, he didn't even have the comfort that comes from night, but the addition of sufferings after day was greater: the appearance of night-terrors. As to the fact that he endured worse things in his sleep, listen to what he says. "Why do you terrify me in my sleep and make me panic-stricken in my

³⁸⁰ Literally, "something of the sufferings."

³⁸¹ Διὰ τὸν θεόν.

³⁸² Or, "to test you."

³⁸³ Literally, "with the extreme excess."

³⁸⁴ Literally, "With such excess."

³⁸⁵ Literally, "reproaching."

³⁸⁶ Job 19:5.

³⁸⁷ Job 19:14.

³⁸⁸ Job 30:9.

³⁸⁹ Job 9:31.

dreams?”³⁹⁰ What sort of person made of iron, what sort of person made of adamant would have endured so many sufferings? For if each one of these, taken by itself, is unendurable, consider what a tumult they raised coming together. [M. 273/274]. And yet that man endured them all and in all that befell him didn’t sin or have treachery upon his lips.

VII

And so let his sufferings be as medicine to our ills and his terrible billow a harbor for our sufferings, and let us consider the holy man in each of the things that befalls us, and, by seeing one body drinking up³⁹¹ the sufferings of the world, we will be nobly disposed to each thing in turn. And, as if to an affectionate mother, stretching out her hands in every way and receiving and reviving her terrified children, let us always flee for refuge to this book. And if the most pitiable of all sufferings assails us, we will thus depart³⁹² after receiving the comfort that is sufficient for all [circumstances].

But if you should say that “He was *Job* and for this reason he endured, but I am not like him,” you are telling me a greater charge against yourself and, again, a greater praise for the righteous man. For it is more reasonable that you endure than he. Why? [M. 275/6] Because [he lived] before grace and before the law when there was no exact account for one’s conduct,³⁹³ when the grace of the spirit wasn’t so great,³⁹⁴ when sin was hard to overcome, when the curse prevailed, when death was frightful. But now the wresting-bouts are easier, since all of these have been removed after the advent of Christ. And so, after so much time and progress³⁹⁵ and so many gifts given to us by God, we have no defense for not being able to attain to the same measure as him. Therefore, considering all of these things, that his sufferings were greater and that, at a time when the struggle was more difficult, he stripped and wrestled, let us nobly bear all that assails us with great thanksgiving, that we may be able to obtain the same crowns as him by the grace and benevolence of our lord Jesus Christ with whom be glory to the father together with the holy spirit, now and forever and into eternity.³⁹⁶ Amen.

³⁹⁰ Job 7:14.

³⁹¹ I.e. experiencing to the full; an established idiom in Classical Greek. See LSJ, ἀντλέω, II.2.

³⁹² οὕτω ἀπελευσόμεθα. This may refer to death.

³⁹³ Οὐ πολλὴ τῆς πολιτείας ἦν ἀκρίβεια. A difficult phrase. More literally, “no great precision of conduct.” It seem to mean that there was no clearly defined guide for how one should live.

³⁹⁴ Or, “when there was no so great a grace from the spirit.”

³⁹⁵ ἐπίδοσις. It might also here mean “benefaction.”

³⁹⁶ Literally, “into the ages of ages.”