

The Jews in the Writings of Origen

THE JEWS

In chapter two we noticed that Origen was in good contact with some Jewish leaders. In the course of his biblical studies Origen found it advisable to become acquainted with the leaders of Jewish thought in Alexandria. He mentions those whom he consulted, and he also makes use of Jewish traditions in expounding the Scriptures. They helped him also in learning their literal commentaries on the Old Testament and Hebrew.

R. Cadiou says,

He had no intention of engaging in controversy with them, nor did he propose to adopt their methods of exegesis. His approach to them shows that an author does not always borrow from his contemporaries what is in harmony with his own type of mind. In spite of his own interest in the allegorical method he did not go to the rabbis for any lessons in its use. He sought from them something he himself lacked: a literal or literary commentary of the Bible.

"G. Bardy, in an article in the *Revue Biblique* for 1925 entitled 'Les traditions juives dans l'oeuvre d'Origène,' collected some seventy passages of Origen which he thought represented borrowings of Jewish traditions."

This relationship shows the normal relations between Jews and Christians in his time. On the other side, there is a fascinating passage in his *Commentary on the Psalms* which shows how utter and complete was the breakdown in communication between Jews and Christians by the third century. Commenting on the passage in Deuteronomy: "They have stirred me to jealousy with what is no god; they have provoked me with their idols. So I will stir them to jealousy with those who are no people; I will provoke them with a foolish nation," Origen sees its fulfillment in the contemporary scene.

That is why even now the Jews are not roused against the Gentiles, against those who worship idols and blaspheme God. No, they do not hate them, nor does their indignation blaze against them. But it is against the Christians that they are consumed with an insatiable hatred, Christians who have abandoned idols and are converted to God!

Origen records how in his day Jews told him that "As they had no altar, no temple, no priest, and therefore no offerings of sacrifices, they felt that their sins remained with them, and that they had no means of obtaining pardon."

If he who is commonly called a Jew murdered the Lord Jesus and is still today responsible for that murder, it is because he has not understood the Law and the prophets in a hidden manner.

DIALOGUE WITH THE JEWS

Origen remarks, commenting on Isaiah 53,

I remember that once in a discussion with some whom the Jews regard as

learned (i.e. Rabbis) I used these prophecies. At this the Jew said that these prophecies referred to the whole people as though of a single individual, since they were scattered in the dispersion and smitten, that as a result of the scattering of the Jews among the other nations many might become proselytes. In this way he explained the text: "Your form shall be inglorious among men" and "those to whom he was not proclaimed shall see him" and "being a man in calamity". I then adduced many arguments in the disputation which proved that there is no good reason for referring these prophecies about one individual to the whole people. And I asked which person could be referred to in the text: "This man bears our sins and suffers pain for us" and "but he was wounded for our transgressions and he was made sick for our iniquities;" and I asked which person fitted the words "by his strips we were healed." Obviously, those who say this were once in their sins, and were healed by the passion of the Savior, whether they were of the Jewish people or of the Gentiles: the prophet foresaw this, and put these words into their mouths by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. But we seemed to put Him in the greatest difficulty with the words "because of the iniquities of my people he was led to death". If according to them the people are the subject of the prophecy, why is this man said to have been led to death because of the iniquities of the people of God, if He is not different from the people of God? Who is this if not Jesus Christ, by whose strips we who believe in Him were healed, when he put off the principalities and powers among us, and made a show of them openly on the cross? .

O Jews, when you come to Jerusalem and find it destroyed, it had been changed into dust and ashes, don't weep as a child (1 Cor. 4:20), don't be in grief but ask for a city in the heaven instead of that which you search here on earth.

Lift up your sight, you will find " the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Gal. 4:26).

Don't be in grief for the temple (here) is left, and don't be in despair as you don't find a priest . For in heaven there is an altar and the priests of the future goods passing before the Lord according to the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:10). It is God's love and mercies that He removed the earthly inheritance from you that you may ask for the heavenly one.

R. Cadiou says,

A Jewish rabbi who had been converted to Christianity asked himself why the king of Moab employed this figure of speech, 'as the ox is wont to eat the grass to the very roots.' The reason was, he said, that the ox in brewing uses its tongue like a scythe to cut what it finds. Thus the Israelites use their mouths and their lips as fighting weapons, destroying their enemies by borrowing the words of their challenge and using them for a means of offense.

THE JEWS AND THE GENTILES

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world not for rejecting the Jews, but through their unbelief He

opened the gates of faith to the Gentiles.

He did not come with the aim of bringing about the unbelief of the Jews, but by His foreknowledge He foretold that this would happen and He used the unbelief of the Jews to call the Gentiles .

God's providence has been wonderful: it has used the sin of the Jews to call the Gentiles into the kingdom of God by Jesus, strangers though they were to the covenants and alien to the promises (Eph. 2:12) .

It is clear that although the Jews saw Jesus they did not know who He was, and although they heard Him they did not understand from His sayings the divinity within Him, which was transferring God's care of the Jews to those Gentiles who believe in Him. Hence we may see how after the advent of Jesus the Jews have been entirely forsaken, and retain none of their traditionally sacred possessions, nor even a hint of the divine presence among them.

(Origen asks the meaning of the twin signs obtained by Gideon): 'I remember one of our predecessors saying in his commentaries that the fleece of wool was the people of Israel, while the rest of the ground was the rest of the nations, and the dew which fell on the fleece was the Word of God, because divine indulgence was shown to that people alone... But the second sign, the opposite of the first, is understood like this: observe the whole people of the Gentiles, gathered throughout all the world, possessing now within itself the divine dew-see it sprinkled with the dew of Moses, bedewed with the writings of the prophets; see it green with the watering of the Gospel and the apostolic (writings); while the fleece, the people of the Jews, is left to suffer in dryness, barren of the Word of God.

The Jews ought to have been the closest to the truth for they had the "types" of the truth but they rejected it. Those who truly understand the Law, offer spiritual sacrifice, not physical, sacrifices. The offering of incense in Leviticus 16:12 is what is offered by each church.

"No prophet is accepted in his own country" (Luke 4: 24).

Another, the country of Jeremiah did not receive him well (Jer. 11:21), and Isaiah and the rest of the prophets were refused by their country, i.e. the circumcised people... while we who are not attributed to the country, and were foreigners from the promise received by Moses and Prophets who reveal Christ. We received Him from all our hearts more than the Jews who refused Christ and did not witness to Him.

The true Israelite, then, is everyone who knows Christ; if a man does not know Christ he is no Israelite, for "Israel" means "the mind that sees God". The "glory" of the Jews, then, is to believe in Christ whom their prophets predicted-the glory, that is, of encountering the One they had awaited.

For how was the Bridegroom, the Logos, not going to leave the

adulterous generation and depart from it? But you might say that the Logos of God, leaving the synagogue of the Jews as adulterous, departed from it, and took a wife of fornication, namely, those from the Gentiles; since those who were "Zion, a faithful city" (Isa. 1:21), have become harlot Rahab, who received the spies of Joshua, and was saved with all her house (Josh. 6:25); after this no longer playing the harlot, but coming to the feet of Jesus, and wetting them with tears of repentance, and anointing them with the fragrance of the ointment of holy conversation, on account of whom, reproach Simon the leper, the former people, He spoke those things which are written (Josh. 6:25) .

When (God) rejected Israel.. grace was poured out on the Gentiles. The calling of the Gentiles took its start from the fall of Israel. [Hence Origen himself, a Gentile, can converse about the promises of God-can have faith in the God of Israel,] and by the grace of God can accept Jesus Christ, who was heralded aforesaid by the prophets.

Before the advent of Christ God was known only in Judea; since then the whole earth is the Lord's. Before that advent "fullness" was not to be found anywhere on earth, and most of the earth was.. emptiness; since then many would say from among the Gentile believers "from his fullness have we all received..." (John 1 16), and thus themselves, they have become His "fullness" - for those who are "empty" of the ordering of the gospel, cannot be the "fullness" of Christ.

The passion of Christ brings life to believers... and death... to unbelievers. For although salvation and justification come to the Gentiles through His cross, to the Jews come death and condemnation.

After many prophets who administered correction to Israel, Christ came to correct the whole world.

From the ruins of Jerusalem there came a cry of hope. "I am abandoned to my sufferings," she said to the nations of the world, "in order that you should find your place. Because of you I have become an enemy of God although He had chosen me to be His beloved because of my fathers. Hear my sigh and understand why I weep... Blessedness is primarily the avoidance of sin, but in the second place it is the confession to God of the sins we have committed. When the rest of the nations of the world will be saved, I in my turn, Lord, shall obtain salvation according to Your just judgments."

THE JEWS AND The CHURCH

Concerning Origen and the Jews, the debate between the Church and synagogue can be reduced to the question of Scripture. Whose Bible is it? The Church's? The synagogue's? This question is answered by Origen's claim that the Scripture is the church's and it is the supreme authority for the Church.

We Christians say that although (the Jews) "enjoyed the favor of God" and were loved by Him more than any others, yet this dispensation and grace changed over to us when Jesus transferred the power at work among the Jews

to the Gentile believers.

Commenting on this verse, "He shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Numbers 23:9) Origen adds that if Israel abandons his privileged position he is no longer Israel. "Therefore no one from Jacob or Israel who sins can be called Jacob or Israel, and equally no Gentile who has once entered the Church of the Lord will ever again be reckoned among the nations."

Lest it should be doubted that God has warned the Jews of what would befall them, there was the prophecy of Moses himself (Deuteronomy 32:21), "I will move them to jealousy with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation." The Church, composed of elements of various peoples but itself not a people, is clearly a strong candidate for the title of "those who are not a people;" as for the foolish nation, the key lies in I Corinthians 1:27, "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise."

JUDAISM IN ALEXANDRIA

Nicholas De Lange in his book "Origen and the Jews" says,

We know hardly anything of Judaism in Alexandria at this time, and any information Origen could offer would be most welcomed. He knew the city well, having been born and brought up there, and having lived there for the greater part of his life. In the works produced before he left Alexandria there are some interesting remarks about Jews and Judaism. What is to be made of these? We know that in the great revolt of 115-17 so many of the Jews of Egypt were killed. In Alexandria, where the revolt was crushed in its early stages, some of the Jews survived, but Jewish community life appears to have come to an end and the power of the Jews in Alexandria was destroyed.

JEWISH PROPHETS

(The Jewish prophets) were chosen by providence to be entrusted with the divine Spirit and with the words proceeding from Him, because of their quite exceptional qualities-courage, independence, fearlessness in face of death and danger.

God... taught men by the prophets to hope for the advent of Christ, who would save them.

JEWISH SCRIPTURE

When Jesus said to the Jews, "the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21 43), what other dispensation was He giving than to bring forth to light by divine power the whole Jewish Scripture, which contains the mysteries of the Kingdom of God?

JEWISH FEASTS

When Origen interprets the meaning of Jewish festivals, he does so on two levels. One level is the interpretation which is based on the literal meaning. The second level of understanding is based on

illumination of the Spirit. Origen contends that Moses saw heavenly things and passed on to Israel types and images of what he had seen. Furthermore, Origen suggests that if the teaching of Moses is not understood spiritually, then Moses cannot be called a prophet.

Thus, Origen, in his Homilies on the Numbers (hom. 23), treats of the symbolism of the Jewish feast, and interprets the feast of first-fruits (nova) as expressing the renewal of the interior man.

JEWISH SACRIFICES

We mentioned that Origen accepts the tradition that Jewish sacrifices foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ. Therefore, we must carefully draw a distinction between the sacrificial practices of the Jews and of other nations.

MOSES' LAW

In a fragment of his Commentary on Romans preserved in the Philocalia, Origen shows great acuity in handling St. Paul's use of the word "law," ultimately distinguishing six different usages of the word. Origen suggests that the presence or absence of the article can be helpful in distinguishing St. Paul's two most important usages of "law," the use of it to mean the law of Moses and the use of it to mean natural law. Here, and in several other cases, Origen still provides a helpful commentary on Paul's notoriously obscure use of language.

The Mosaic law needed to be brought up to date, and at the same time it was wrong that it should be limited to one alone of all the peoples of mankind.

Origen states that God closes their eyes as unworthy to see, and the eyes of their prophets and of their rulers who profess to see the hidden things of the mysteries in the divine Scriptures; and when their eyes are closed, then shall the prophetic words be sealed to them and hidden, as has been the case with those who do not believe in Jesus as the Christ. And when the prophetic sayings have become as the words of a sealed book, not only to those who do not know letters but to those who profess to know, then the Lord said, that the people of the Jews draw nigh to God with their mouth only, and He says that they honor Him with their lips, because their heart by reason of their unbelief in Jesus is far from the Lord.

If anyone reads the whole of the Epistle to the Hebrews... he will find how the whole of this part of the Apostle's writing shows that those things written in the law are types and forms of things that are living and true.

Jewish Christians still lived according to the literal law, but for the Church this could only be a shadow of the spiritual law. Expounding the journey of the Israelites, Origen explains the tree thrown into the waters of Marah as an allegory of the Christian spiritualization of the law of Moses, and he adds, 'the Jews are still at Marah, still dwelling by bitter waters; for God has not yet shown them the tree by means of which the waters are sweetened.

"The Lord... threw a tree in the water and the water became sweet;; but when the "tree" (cross) of Jesus comes and the teaching of my Savior makes its dwelling with me, the Law of Moses is "sweetened"- its taste to one who thus reads and understands it is sweet indeed.

CIRCUMCISION

When the Jew sins his circumcision shall be reckoned for uncircumcision, but when one of the Gentiles acts uprightly his uncircumcision shall be reckoned for circumcision (Rom. 2:25-26), so those things which are thought to be pure shall be reckoned for impure in the case of him who does not use them unfittingly, nor when one ought, nor as far as he ought, nor for what reason he ought.

Origen identifies the 'uncircumcised' with those who disobey the commands of God:

God does not wholly abandon either the circumcised or the uncircumcised, because He loves every soul. For He has sent Jesus to 'circumcise' everyone, worthy and unworthy: Jesus -not the son of Nun, whose circumcision of the people was not the true and perfect one-but our Lord and Savior. For it is He who has truly cut away the pollution in our flesh and purged the stains of our sins from our heart and soul.

We who have been transferred from the Law and Prophets to the Gospel are circumcised again (Jos. 5:7) by the Rock which was Christ (1 Cor. 10:4), then the word of the Lord to Joshua is realized in us, i.e., "this day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you" Jos. 5:9.

Jesus came and gave us the second circumcision "by the washing of regeneration" (Tit. 3:5), purified our spirits and took away our reproach, grouting us instead the promise of the good conscious towards God.

Then the second circumcision takes away the reproach, and purifies us from our vices and sins... If by faith we passed over the stream of the Jordan by the virtue of the Gospel, and purified by the second circumcision, then we must not be afraid from the reproach of our previous sins. Do you hear: "I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you"?

JEWISH WARS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Commenting on the wars in which Joshua was involved, Origen says:

The Jews who read these events, I am speaking of the Jews according to the appearance, who is circumcised in his body, and ignores the true Jew who is circumcised in his heart; this Jew does not find except description of wars, killing of enemies, and victory of the Israelites who plundered the possession of the foreigners and pagans, under the guidance of Joshua. While the Jew according to the heart, that is the Christian who follows Jesus, the Son of God, and not Joshua the Son of Nun, understands these events as representing the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. He says, "Today also my master Jesus Christ fights the powers of the evil and derives them out from the towns which they occupied before. He drives them out of our souls. He kills the kings who reigned over them, so that sin will not reign over us. As our souls become free from the reign of sin they become a temple of the Lord and of the God's Kingdom, hearing the words, "The kingdom of God is within you"...

Let us then understand well, that if Joshua had killed the kings of

Jericho, AI, Libnah, Lachish, and Habron, this all happened so that these cities would be subject to the oracles of the Lord instead of their subjection to the law of sin, to evil kings.

Unless those carnal wars (of the Old Testament) were a symbol of spiritual wars, I do not think that the Jewish historical books would ever have been passed down by the apostles to be read by Christ's followers in their churches... Thus, the apostle, being aware that physical wars have become personal battles of the soul against spiritual adversaries, gives orders to the soldiers of Christ like a military commander when he says, "Put on the armor of God so as to be able to hold your ground against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11).

JEWISH ALLEGORIES

Origen's free and independent methods of study had the unexpected result of putting him in touch with Jewish publications comparable with the words of the outstanding philologists of Alexandria.

The Jewish allegories had little influence on Origen. His work on Philo, however, shows some traces of them, but we should remember that his interest lay in Philo's system of thought rather than in his exegesis. With his Christian viewpoint he found Jewish allegories cold and lifeless. They lacked what the emerging Christian exegesis possessed, something that would have imparted to them the warmth of life. They needed a view of the Bible as a whole, a general system of interpretation, an ideal that would rouse the ancient texts from slumber, an inspiration that would give them a new sense of authority in the consciousness of a long-cherished hope at last realized.

He became a sincere admirer of the rabbinical custom of comparing different biblical passages with one another and, wherever possible, of establishing connections between them. This was merely one of a number of the exegetical methods in use among the Jews. Origen drilled himself in the application of it, and it later became the principal instrument of Christian exegesis.

JEWISH PASCH AND CHRISTIAN PASCHA

Origen's fullest treatment of the Pascha, next to his treatise On the Pascha, is found in His Commentary on John 10:13-19, Homilies on Exodus 5:2; 7:4; Homilies on Numbers 23:6; Homilies on Jeremiah 19:13, and Against Celsus 8:22.

In his Commentary on John he finds the spiritual meaning of the Old Testament descriptions of the Exodus and prescriptions of the Pascha. Eating the whole of the roasted lamb, for example, means understanding the Scriptures and all of creation under the influence of the Spirit, while the unleavened bread symbolizes the Christian's repentance and salutary trials. These exercises prepare one to receive the manna, which he explains elsewhere as the Word of God incarnate and immolated as our paschal victim. The three foods given successively in the course of the Exodus - the lamb, the unleavened bread, and the manna - represent three phases of the spiritual life, but it is not said that they follow one another in that order. He frequently says that the spiritual nourishment is to be taken in the form that suits one's degree of advancement in the spiritual life.

THE MEANING OF THE PASSOVER

Now this should be enough comment on the mere name to teach us the meaning that comes from the word phas (fas) and to warn us against rashly attempting to interpret things written in Hebrew without first knowing the

Hebrew meaning. We come now to an examination of the text itself, knowing that the Passover (Pascha) means passage.

KIND OF PASCHAS

Origen refers to three kind of Paschas:

I. The historical Pascha of the Old Testament.

II. The Pascha as celebrated by the Church.

III. The heavenly Pascha: "Raising our minds to the third Pascha, which will be celebrated among myriads of angels in the most perfect festivity (cf. Heb. 12:22) and with the happiest exodus, is not necessary at the same time, especially since we have spoken more fully and lengthily than the text required."

For the Christian Pasch is a yearly and daily feast; it is celebrated both at Easter time as a memorial of Christ's death and resurrection, and at all times by feasting with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth and the bitter herbs of sorrow and repentance.

For Origen, the Pasch means Christ, our Passover Lamb, the Eucharist, and study of the Divine Word, but for Philo, it represents the journey of the soul from the body and its passions.

THE PASSOVER (EXEGESIS OF EXODUS 12)

1. First month of the year.

But when Christ came not to abolish the law or the prophets but to fulfill them (Matt. 5:17), he showed us what the true Passover is, the true "passage" out of Egypt. And for the one in the passage, the beginning of the months is when the month of passing over out of Egypt comes around, which is also the beginning of another birth for him - for a new way of life begins for the one who leaves behind the darkness and comes to the light (John 3:20-21) - to speak in a manner proper to the sacrament through water given those who have hoped in Christ, which is called the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5). For what does rebirth signify if not the beginning of another birth?

2. This month is for you the beginning of months.

It is clear that it is not for the whole people that the month was then the beginning of months, but only for Moses and Aaron to whom it was spoken...

For the fact that the perfect man has the beginning of another birth and becomes other than what he was, this is what the Apostle is teaching us when he says: The old man in us was crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6), and again: If we have died with Him we shall also live with Him (2 Tim. 2:11; cf. Gal. 2:19), and then speaking boldly of himself: It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me (Gal. 2:20).

3. Receiving Christ in our senses.

When one has taken the true Lamb, that is, Christ, one does not immediately sacrifice and eat Him but after an interval of five days from His taking. For when someone hears about Christ and believes in Him he has taken Christ, but he does not sacrifice or eat Him before five days have gone by (cf. Exod. 12:3,6). For since there are five senses in the human being, unless Christ comes to each of them, He cannot be sacrificed and after being roasted, be eaten. For it is when he made clay with His spittle and anointed our eyes (John 9:6-7) and made us see clearly (Mark 8:25), when He opened the ears (cf. Mark 7:33-35) of our heart so that having ears we can hear (cf. Matt. 11:15; 13:19), when we smell His good odor (cf. Eph. 5:2; 2 Cor. 1:15), recognizing that His name is a perfume poured out (Cant. 1:3; cf. Phil. 2:7), and if, having tasted, we see how good the Lord is (cf. 1 Peter 2:3; Ps. 34[33]:8), and if we touch Him with the touch of which John speaks: That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes and touched with our hands concerning the word of life (1 John 1:1), then it is that we will be able to sacrifice the Lamb and eat it and thus come out of Egypt.

4. On the fourteenth day of the month, between the two evenings.

For the lamb was sacrificed on the fourteenth day of the month, between the two evenings, when, beginning with the fifteenth day, the sphere of the moon reaches its fullest plenitude in the opinion of the experts. And for our part, unless the perfect, true Light (cf. John 1:9) rises over us and we see how it perfectly illumines our guiding intellect, we will not be able to sacrifice and eat the true Lamb.

In his Homilies on Genesis, Origen says, "Since the paschal Law prescribes that the lamb should be eaten in the evening, the Savior suffered in the evening of the world, so that you might always eat the flesh of the Word, you who live always in the evening until the morning shall come."

5. A lamb without blemish, a male, and a year old.

A lamb without blemish, a male, a year old. For Christ is a perfect being, since there is nothing lacking or deficient in Him. Male indicated his firmness and courage. And it is said to be a year old because the year signifies a completed number since the sun returns to its own place after an interval of twelve months.

6. The whole assembly of the sons of Israel shall kill it towards evening.

It is towards evening (cf. Exod. 12:6b) that we are ordered to kill the lamb, since it is at the last hour (1 John 2:18) that the true Lamb, the Savior, has come into the world (cf. John 1:9).

7. The application of blood to the houses.

The application of blood to the houses which we sacrifice, and which we anoint with blood, our houses, which is to say, our bodies, which anointing is the faith we have in Him, by which faith we have confidence in

the destruction of the power of the destroyer (cf. Exod. 12:23).

8. Eat the flesh roasted with fire

To eat the lamb roasted with fire means to feed upon God's word once the preacher has interpreted it with the assistance of the fire par excellence, the Holy Spirit. To eat the lamb raw means attempting to feed on the word when it has been presented with the inadequate literal interpretation of the Jews. To eat the lamb boiled in water means attempting to feed on the word when it has been misinterpreted by heretics, who contaminate the word with their own non-biblical doctrines, much as boiled meat is mixed with water, a substance foreign to it.

Therefore the Holy Spirit is rightly called fire, which it is necessary for us to receive in order to have converse with the flesh of Christ, I mean the divine Scriptures, so that, when we have roasted them with this divine fire, we may eat them roasted with fire. For the words are changed by such fire, and we will see that they are sweet and nourishing.

9. Not raw or boiled with water.

We are commanded not to cook the flesh of the Savior, that is, the word Scripture, with such a water, and not to mix with the words of Scripture another material which could water it down in the cooking, but to partake of it by cooking it with fire alone, that is, with the divine Spirit, and not eat it raw or cooked with water.

10. The head with the feet and the entrails.

...some partake of its head, others of its hands, others of its breast, others also of its entrails, still others of its thighs, and some even of its feet, where this is not much flesh, each partaking of it according to his own capacity. Thus it is that we partake of a part of the true Lamb according to our capacity to partake of the Word of God. There are some who partake of the head and, if you wish, of each part of the head, for example, of the ears so that, having ears, they can hear his words (cf. Matt. 11:15; 13:9, 43). Those who taste of the eyes will see clearly (cf. Ps 34 [33]:9; Heb. 6:4-5) lest you dash your foot against a stone (cf. Ps 91[90]:12; Jer. 13:16; Matt. 4:6; Luke 4:11). Those who taste the hands are the workers (cf. John 9:4) who no longer have drooping hands (Heb. 12:12) which are closed against giving (cf. Sir. 4:31), the ones who accept correction before the Lord become angry with them (cf. Ps. 2:11). Others, resting on its breast (cf. John 13:25), will even recognize from this food who the betrayers of Christ are (cf. John 13:21-26). The studious who eat of the entrails will see even to the depths of God - for the entrails have a certain harmony of twists and turns and they also make for the body everything needed for life; and such function of one initiated in the mysteries - or rather they see the hidden ratio of the Incarnation situated as it were in the middle, at least if we take the head to be the divinity...

Varied indeed is the food of those who eat the Passover, but they are all one (cf. Acts 2:44); even he who eats the head is one with whoever eats the feet, since the head cannot say to the feet: "I have no need of you."

For the members eaten are many but the body of Christ is one (1 Cor. 12:20-21). Let us preserve, then, as well as possible the harmony of the members in order not to incur the reproach of dividing the members of Christ (1 Cor. 6:15).

11. Leave nothing until morning

Just as the mysteries of the Passover which are celebrated in the Old Testament are superseded by the truth of the New Testament, so too will the mysteries of the New Testament, which we must now celebrate in the same way, not be necessary in the resurrection, a time which is signified by the morning in which nothing will be left, and what does remain of it will be burned with fire.

12. You shall break no bone of it.

The words becoming His bones, the flesh becoming the meaning from the text, following which meaning, as it were, we see in a mirror dimly (1 Cor. 13:12) the things which are to come, and the blood being faith in the Gospel of the new covenant (cf. 1 Cor. 11:25; Luke 22:20).

13. Your loins girded.

We are ordered, when we eat the Passover, to be pure of bodily sexual union, for this is what the girding of the loins means. Thus Scripture teaches us to bind up the bodily source of seed and to repress inclinations to sexual relations when we partake of the flesh of Christ.

14. Sandals on your feet.

It is that the flesh itself also goes out with us as we depart from Egypt. For we must put to death what is earthly in us: immortality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, and so forth (cf. Col. 3:5; Gal. 5:19-20) and thus depart from Egypt.

15. Your staff in your hand

They should henceforth also have staffs in their hands (cf. Exod. 12:11) as ones who are to share henceforth in the task of training, because the staff is a symbol of training. For he who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him, as we have read in Proverbs (Prov. 13:24).

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