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Abjar Bahkou

DEFENDING CHRISTIAN FAITH

THE FIFTH PART OF THE CHRISTIAN APOLOGY
OF GERASIMUS



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Managing Editor: Katarzyna Tempczyk

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I dedicate this work to my daughter Anna-Kait Bahkou and my son Kifa-Michael Bahkou
In November of 2006 Anna was born,
The Lord shone a new light and inspiration into my life
In November of 2010 Kifa was born,
The Lord added more challenge and inspiration into my life
I love you

Abjar

Acknowledgments

When I moved from California to Texas to continue my education at Brite Divinity School and later on at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, I had no idea about, or interest in, doing research on the Christian Arabic heritage because of my lack of knowledge in this field. That was when John Lamoreaux, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and my colleague Abdul-Massih Saadi, professor of Arabic Language and Culture at Baylor University in Waco, Texas introduced me to the field. I thank them for encouraging me to enter such an amazing field of study. Many thanks also go to Father Samir Khalil Samir, the director of my dissertation, for the long hours spent on Skype teaching me how to create a critical edition of Arabic manuscripts. Thanks to Ethel Azariah for her professional work of proofreading the English part of this thesis. Many thanks to Father Joseph Tarazi, Joseph Asmar and Saad Saadi for helping me in the Arabic editing process. And thanks to His Eminence More Gregorius Yūhanna Ibrāhīm, the Syrian Orthodox Bishop of Aleppo, for his efforts in contacting the Maronite Archdiocese in Aleppo to obtain a copy of Gerasimus's manuscript.

I cannot conclude without thanking my wife Phylan Peters-Bahkou for her sacrifice of allowing me to neglect my family duties and to hide myself in my office for many hours to finish this thesis.

Foreword

Anyone with a knowledge of Christian history knows that Christianity began and took root in the Middle East, in Palestine, Syria and Egypt. It is much less widely known just how long, and how persistently that Christian presence endured, and that contemporary churches in that region today have a direct connection back to the apostolic age. Although this region fell under Islamic rule during the seventh century, the religious transformation from Christianity to the new faith was extremely slow and intermittent. Not until the tenth century was there much prospect of Muslims achieving numerical dominance in much of the region, and the major collapse of Christian strength occurred only after 1300.

For several centuries, then, Christians in the Middle East operated in a world very different from that in Europe. While they retained their religious and cultural institutions, they did so in a multi-faith environment without political power. Beginning with John of Damascus in the eighth century, scholars repeatedly engaged in defending their faith with both their Muslim and Jewish neighbors. Apologetics became a major genre of Christian literature in the region. The need for such literature became all the more urgent in the eleventh century, as Muslim scholarship became potent and influential. Also, the beginning of the European crusades in 1095 radically transformed the relations between faiths, placing Middle Eastern Christians much more on the defensive.

This is the historical context of the *Apology for Christianity* by Gerasimus, which forms the subject of this important and timely work by Abjar Bahkou. It is especially instructive to see the doctrines that Gerasimus defended mostly ardently, the Incarnation and Trinity. Muslims and Jews found both found utterly baffling, and often mocked them. A defense and a rationale had to be found, and Gerasimus argued his case forcefully.

In some ways, Gerasimus seemed to belong to the familiar patristic world of Late Antiquity, but in reality he was living in a much different political and cultural environment marked by the new linguistic hegemony of Arabic. The world had clearly moved on from the era of saints and scholars like Gregory Nazianzus. In fact, when we read the numerous analogies and allegories employed by Gerasimus, we are struck by how precisely they are fitted for an increasingly Islamicized Middle East. It is scarcely surprising that European Crusaders felt it so difficult to identify Middle Eastern Christians as fellow believers. Yet of course, Middle Eastern Christians—far more than the Frankish newcomers—were authentic heirs of ancient Christianity, the culture we associate with old Antioch. That estrangement from the oldest forms of Christianity is one of the tragedies of the faith in medieval and later Europe.

Gerasimus's *Apology* also has a strong resonance with our own times when Christians around the world are very likely to have Muslim neighbors with whom they need to engage culturally and intellectually.

For many reasons, then, we must welcome this excellent scholarly edition by Abjar Bahkou, with its fluent and readable translations. It is a significant contribution to the study of the historic encounter between Christianity and Islam.

Philip Jenkins

Distinguished Professor of History

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General Introduction

Muslim-Christian relations have been subject to startling waves of events in history. We can learn a lot and get ample food for thought when we look back at the past and examine the way Muslims and Christians lived with and thought of each other. This book is a testimony to such interaction. It presents a critical edition of an Arabic text that has never been studied before: the fifth part of the *Christian Apology* by Gerasimus, properly known in Arabic as *Kitāb al-Kāfī fī al-Má nā al-Šāfī* (*The Complete Book of the Healing Meaning*).¹ In this last part of his *Apology*, Gerasimus presents six objections made against the Christian faith and responds to them.

Arabic Christian Theology

Gerasimus's *Apology* is part of the Arabic Christian² theological writings of the Arabic Medieval Period. There is a rich and widely varied body of Christian theological writings from Syria, to Iraq, to Palestine, to Lebanon and to Egypt. In the last third of the eighth century, Christians began to translate the Bible and their ecclesiastical and liturgical texts into Arabic. They also started to produce Arabic theological treatises which aimed to present their faith in a Muslim environment that challenged Christian faith and its main doctrines.³ Three important characteristics distinguish Arabic Christian theological writings, all of which can be found in Gerasimus's *Apology*. The first is *dialogical and apologetical*: Gerasimus's text is a dialogue between Christians and people of other religions, especially Islam, and shows how Christian Arabs contextualized Christianity and defended it. It illustrates how the Christian community lived in contact and confrontation with non-Christian communities. This leads us to the second characteristic, which is *cultural*: the *Apology* demonstrates how Arab Christians defended, acculturated and incarnated their own faith in their culture. Gerasimus attempts to communicate the Christian faith clearly, respectfully and coherently in idioms already heavily influenced by a religion hostile to it. His insights and responses to questions provide an important window into the Christian engagement with the Islamic environment in a critical period of the intellectual

1 In Arabic the expression *al-Kāfī fī al-ġawāb al-Šāfī* is used to refer to a "clean and thorough answer". Such an answer is also considered in Arab cultures to have healing properties. Gerasimus's title carries this sense of the phrase, but substituting the word *al-má nā*: "the meaning" for *al-ġawāb*: "the answer". (*Kitāb* is the Arabic word for book.)

2 It is important to give a brief definition of the term "Arab Christians" that I use throughout this book. According to S. K. Samir, Arab Christians are Christians of Arab culture, even if they are not of Arab origin, or even if they speak other languages. Christians and Muslims share Arab culture, religious differences notwithstanding. See Samir 2005, 495; Samir 2003, 27-48.

3 See Griffith 1988; Griffith 1997; Griffith 1985, 126-167; and Griffith 2008, 48-49.

development of both communities. As a theologian and defender of the faith, Gerasimus followed the footsteps of those apologists who had gone before him. He wants to equip his fellow Christians with the tools they need to face the challenges and still remain faithful Christians. The third characteristic is *theological*: the *Apology* presents a theological reflection based on biblical and patristic foundations; through it we discover a masterpiece of Arabic Christianity in the Middle Ages and the richness of Arabic theology, which is a legacy of the Eastern churches.

The Plan and Method of the Critical Edition

The first phase of my research consisted of editing the Arabic text. The analysis in this phase followed S. K. Samir's method explained in the preface of his critical edition of Yaḥyā Ibn 'Adī's treatise on the Trinity and unity (Samir (ed.) 1980, 79-81). He states that the purpose of any scientific critical edition is first, to reveal the correct meaning of the text, and second, to make known the right logic and thought of the author. This critical edition follows this outline.

Examination of the manuscripts of this work reveals that it would be almost impossible to determine which is the most authentic. All the available manuscripts are very similar and almost equal in quality. The extant manuscripts date back only as far as the 17th and 18th centuries thus, there is no autograph (*dustūr*) by Gerasimus to compare the available copies to. Furthermore, it is clear that additions and omissions were made by the scribes who transcribed the text, especially those found in Beirut. For these reasons I follow the "eclectic-critical method" developed by Samir. This method includes determining as much as possible from the various manuscripts what is original and what is not. W. Nasry, who used this method in his critical edition of the debate between al-Ma'mūn and Abū Qurrah, explains it thus:

This was not a simple method to adapt. It demanded a great deal of humility before the texts and familiarity with the author's writing and arguing styles, recurring expression[s], favorite example[s], philosophical and theological positions and thought patterns. In the eclectic-critical Samir method, the text of the Critical Edition remains in flux until all the manuscripts have been studied and compared and all pertinent material carefully incorporated into the edition. The stabilized final text is by no means a copy and paste of different parts from different manuscripts. It is a carefully studied and educated hypothesis. (Nasry 2008, 36)

In order to follow Samir's method in determining the proper logic and thought of the author, I divided each sections into titled paragraphs; vocalized the text and divided it into verses. Difficult words are explained in footnotes, and an index of the most important words in the text is provided.

Structure of the Book

This book is divided into two parts. The first part comprises four chapters in which I critically analyze Gerasimus's *Apology*, paying particular attention his fifth part. In Chapter 1 I present what little information there is about Gerasimus himself and describe the five manuscripts I used in producing this critical edition. A description of the graphic and editorial aspects of each manuscript and a detailed account of the content of each manuscript is presented, with special attention given to Gerasimus's argument structure. In Chapter 2 I examined the main structure of the *Apology* as a whole and offer a brief analysis of the major theological and doctrinal topics presented therein. My analysis is based on the published works of the Church Fathers and Arab Christian theologians. To illustrate his points, Gerasimus extensively borrows analogies from the Bible and from the Church Fathers. The ten analogies Gerasimus uses throughout the *Apology* are the focus of Chapter 3. I analyze the symbols and theological background of these analogies and their importance in the Muslim-Christian debates. Chapter 4 is dedicated to an analysis of the fifth part of the *Apology* where Gerasimus responds to six major objections made against the Christian faith. I examine the background of each objection and an analyze Gerasimus's response to it. The commentary on each objection highlights important details in the dialogue with Islam and points to the popularity of the topics discussed in each objection and the responses to it.

The second part of this book contains the fully vocalized Arabic text of the fifth part of Gerasimus's *Apology* with an English translation and an index of the most important words used in the text. As with any translation, the primary difficulty is to communicate to the reader, in clear language, the delicacy and complexities of the argument of the author. This translation, too, finds itself subject to all the pitfalls and limitations inherent in any endeavor to mediate between two very different languages. The problems here are further intensified by significant cultural differences and a text that was written more than seven centuries ago. The adventure was to provide a faithful rendering of the original Arabic text by following the general Arabic sentence structure, rigid vocabulary choices, and the complex development of the argument to allow the reader to gain a better appreciation of the rhetorical strategies of Gerasimus and his opponents, as well as the intellectual, theological, and social milieu in which they lived. The approach to translation used here is to adhere as closely as possible to the Arabic text, but to give priority to the meaning of the passage where a literal translation may obscure the point.

All quotations from the Qur'an given in English here are from the 2002 translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (see bibliography). All quotes from the Bible given here are taken from the New King James Version.

In conclusion, we can say that Gerasimus's *Apology* offers important insights into a critical period in Muslim-Christian relations, as well as in the development of Islamic theology, and necessitates closer attention by modern day scholars. It is

my hope that this study will provide Arabic and non-Arabic speakers with a clear example of Gerasimus's thought and method of engagement with his adversaries and enhance the possibility of further study.

1 Author and Manuscripts

According to Joseph Nasrallah, Yūsuf Šammās, Louis Cheikho, and Georg Graf, Gerasimus was head of the monastery of Saint Simeon the Wonderworker, or Simeon the Stylite, and wrote a book entitled, *Kitāb al-Kāfī fī al-Má nā al-Šāfī* (*The Complete Book of the Healing Meaning*).⁴ Graf dates Gerasimus to the 13th century,⁵ while Cheikho places him in the 12th or 13th century.⁶ Nasrallah believes that Gerasimus lived at the end of the 13th century.⁷ Based on the list of the scribes at Saint Saba's Monastery in Palestine, which includes the name Gerasimus, René Khawam concludes that this was the same Gerasimus who authored the work we are analysing here, that he studied there at Saint Saba's, and that he was thus a follower of the teachings of John of Damascus.⁸ The scribes who worked on the manuscripts mention that Gerasimus was the superior of the Monastery of Saint Simeon the Stylite, though it is not entirely clear which monastery that would have been.⁹ Khawam believes that this is not Monastery of Saint Simeon in Aleppo, but rather the Saint Simeon Church in Antioch which was established after the Arab invasion by the disciples of Saint Simeon from Aleppo.¹⁰

Khalil Samir divides the writing of Christian Arabic apologies into four phases,¹¹ of which Gerasimus's *Apology* belongs to the fourth phase (11th-13th centuries), characterized by a spiritual humanistic approach. The *Apology* presents the Christian faith in a clear logical manner using Greek Aristotelian philosophy. Gerasimus skillfully combines the biblical-homiletical tradition and the logical-philosophical approach.

1.1 Manuscripts

I was able to acquire copies of all the known manuscripts of *The Apology* except Jerusalem, *Holy Sepulcher Ar. 101* (17th-18th century). I examined a total of six manuscripts. Four of them contain the complete *Apology*; only Bierut, *Bibliothèque Orientale, Ar. 548*, ff. 243-271 and Beirut, *Bibliothèque Orientale, Ar. 552*, ff. 98-169, are

4 Nasrallah 1981, 118; Šammas 2002, 292; Šiḥū 1924, 81; Graft 1947, 82-84.

5 Graf 1947, 82-84.

6 Šiḥū 1924, 81.

7 Nasrallah 1981, 115.

8 Khawam 1996, 11.

9 For more information about the history of Saint Simeon Monastery see, Nasrallah 1970, 327-356; also Nasrallah 1972, 127-159 – especially 132-153.

10 Cf. Khawam 1996, 15.

11 Samir 1994, 109-114.

incomplete, containing only portions of Parts 4 and 5 of the text, respectively. The following is the list of the manuscripts used here:

Manuscripts	Date	Siglum
Beirut, <i>Bibliothèque Orientale</i> , Ar. 548, ff. 243-271	AD 1718	S1
Beirut, <i>Bibliothèque Orientale</i> , Ar. 552, ff. 98-169	AD 1718	S2
Vatican, <i>Biblioteca Apostolica</i> , Sbath 49, ff. 155-252	AD 1680	F
Oxford, Bodleian Library, <i>Marshall Or.</i> 69, ff. 2-113	AD 1656	B
The Maronite Archdiocese of Aleppo, <i>Man. N. 1190</i>	AD 1700	L
The Melkite Archdiocese of Homs, No Number	AD 1701	H

Gerasimus's writings are divided into two major parts or volumes. The first of these is *Kitāb al-Kāfī fī al-Mā nā al-Šāfī* (of which the fifth part is the subject of this thesis). The second includes theological essays on the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian sacraments: Eucharist, Baptism, and Chrismation (mayrūn).

1.2 Common Features of Manuscripts

The six manuscripts I examined are similar in their features, page numbering, and use of margins and vocalizations. In manuscripts F, B, L and H part 4 of the apology has insertions from other portions of the text mixed in. These include portions of Gerasimus's argument regarding baptism, the final paragraphs of the sixth objection from part 5 and arguments from the conclusion of the book. This creates a series of thematic leaps in the text which may cause some confusion in the mind of the reader. S2 is the only manuscript which presents the argument without such leaps. After careful reading, however, in which the various pieces of the argument are put into their respective places, the text becomes much easier to follow.

The margins are treated as essential to the text. First, they are used for the *réclame* with which the scribes begin the recto side of each folio.¹² Second, the margin is used to finish a word, as in the addition of “ب” in “الأب” or “ت” in “الشَّعِيَات”. Third, the scribes use the margins to fill in what they found missing in the body of the text. The scribe of L is the only scribe who uses the margins to write his own notes and observations. (See my comments on manuscript L below.) Fourth, the margins contain the folio number.

The scribes vocalize some words that need to be clarified to the reader, introducing especially the *šadda* and *kasra* when needed; nouns and verbs اتَّخَذَهُ لِنَفْسِهِ، الشَّانَ، السُّلْطَانَ are vocalized. The *hamza* is not utilized with consistency. For example, though they write “فايد” instead of “قائد” and “طائفة” instead of “طائفة” the *hamza* does occasionally appear as in السماء. The most common treatment of the *hamza* is substituting “ي” or “ى” for it as in اسرائيل instead of اسرائيل. The distinction between *madda* and *hamza* is not clear, as

¹² *Réclame* is the system of citing the last word of the verso as the first word in the following recto.

the scribes tend to put them together; they write “ارآء” instead of “أراء” Such confusion is found in other letters such as “ض” and “ظ.” They write “المظلة” instead of “المُضِلَّة” and uses “ى” and “ي” as “الي” instead of “الى”.

1.3 Beirut, *Bibliothèque Orientale*, Ar. 548, ff. 243-271 and Ar. 552, ff. 98-169

Manuscript 548 (S1) (28 folios) contains Part 4 of the *Apology*, comprised of the testimonies (*Šawāhid*) and prophecies of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Old Testament, the Qur’an, the books of the Sabians (pagans), and the Greek philosophers. The scribe did not write out the biblical prophecies of the Old Testament because, as he stated in the second manuscript, folio 122-123,

أما كتب العتيقة والحديثة فهي موجودة عندنا. وأما شواهد المسلمين والوثنيين ليست عندنا وها نحن نكتبها بعون الله

(Regarding the books of the Old and New [Testaments], we have them already, but the Muslim and Pagan testimonies we do not have. Therefore, we are going to record them with God’s help)

This manuscript is carefully written in large letters, in two columns with nine lines in each column. The titles and names are written in red. The name of the copyist is not included.

The second manuscript, 552, ff. 98-169, is written in smaller letters, in two columns with 15 lines each. The scribe used two colors of ink. Titles and important names are written in red ink; the rest of the manuscript is written in black.

At the beginning of the second manuscript, the scribe explains why he did not copy Part 4, which contains Sabian, Jewish and Muslim testimonies, in its entirety. On folio 99 he writes:

وقد ضربنا صفحاً عن كتابة ذلك جميعه لاجل طول شرحه ومعانيه

(We did not copy them [the testimonies of the Old Testament] because of the length of their commentaries and descriptions of meaning.)

The scribe is very careful in how he describes Muslims and Arabs to the point that he sometimes compromises the purpose of the book by modifying, or changing, offensive words about them. These are the changes he made:

- Folio 243-244, he replaced the Arabic phrase “*Kufr al-‘arab*” (the Arab abomination) with the Syriac word, “*Rūs’oh*” [ܪܘܫܘܚ]. Though the Syriac word means “evilness” and is equally pejorative, it would not be understood by a Muslim reader unfamiliar with the Syriac language and script.
- Folio 101:

وَأَنْتُمْ دُمَّةٌ مَهَانُونَ، تُوَدُّونَ الْخُرَاجَ لِأَعْدَائِكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ الْمُسْتَوْلِينَ عَلَيْكُمْ. إِنَّكُمْ تَحْتُ وَ أَوْلَاكُ فَوْقُ.

You are humiliated Dhimmi, you pay tribute taxes to your Muslim enemies who are Superior to you. You are below and they are above [in the social hierarchy].

He changes the phrase, *A'dā'ikum al-Muslimīn* (your Muslim enemies) to *A'dā'ikum* (your enemies). Also, he avoided copying the rest of the verse, *Ennakom Taht wa Aūla'ka Faūq* (you are below and they are above).

- In the same folio he changes the phrase *Amma isti'la' 'ummat Muhammad* (regarding the ascendance of the nation of Mohammad upon them) to *Amma isti'la' al-'umami* (regarding the ascendance of the nations upon them). Also, he changes *Sūratu sayf al-Islām* (the form of the sword of Islam) to *Sūratu sulḍat al-'umam* (the form of the Nations ruling over them) (cf. v. 34).
- In Part 5, the response to the first objection, he omitted an entire paragraph (vv. 27-33) which states:

27 فَأَمَّا الْجَوَابُ عَنْ تَعَاْفَلِ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ وَهَلَّاكِهِمْ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَهُوَ هَكَذَا: 28 إِنَّ اللهَ (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ!) لَمْ يَتَعَاْفَلْ عَنْهُمْ (كَمَا تَظُنُّونَ) 29 فَكَيْفَ ذَلِكَ وَهُوَ خَالِقُهُمْ سُبْحَانَهُ، الْخَبِيرُ وَالرَّؤُوفُ، أَبُو الْكُلِّ، وَإِلَهُ كُلِّ عَزَّ وَرَحْمَةً، الْقَاضِي الْعَدْلُ، الَّذِي لَا يَشَاءُ خَلَاصَ قَوْمٍ دُونَ قَوْمٍ، بَلِ الْكُلِّ بِالسَّوَابَةِ. 30 لَمْ يَنْخَلْ عَنْهُمْ، لَكِنَّهُ كَرَّرَ فِيهِمْ مَعَ تَفْسِيهِ الْقِدَيسَةَ عِنْدَمَا فَارَقَتْ جَسَدَهُ الْمُكْرَمَ عَلَى الصَّلِيبِ، وَانْحَدَرَ إِلَى أَقْصَى الْجَحِيمِ. 31 لِأَنَّهُ هُنَاكَ أَيْضًا أَظْهَرَ قُوَّةَ لَاهُوتِهِ، وَصَنَعَ خَلَاصًا لِأَنْفُسِ الْقِدَيسِينَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِهِ مِنَ الرَّاقِدِينَ مِنْذُ الدُّهُورِ الْمَاضِيَةِ، كَمَا فَعَلَ قَوْقِ الْأَرْضِ مَعَ الْأَحْيَاءِ الْبَاقِينَ. 32 فَمَنْ آمَنَ إِذَا يَكْرَاهِيَهُ هُنَاكَ خَلَصَ مِنْ دَيْشُونَةِ الْكُفْرِ، 33 وَصَارَ كَمَا قَالَ الرَّسُولُ: "كُلُّ مَنْ يَخْنِي لَهُ الرَّجْبَةَ (أَعْيُنِي السَّمَائِيِّينَ وَالْأَرْضِيِّينَ) وَالَّذِينَ نَحْتُ الثَّرَى."

27 In response to [the accusation that] God disregarded [the nations] and let them perish in error, we say: 28 God (the Precious and the Honorable!) did not disregard them, as you assume. 29 How would He do that while He is their Creator (praise be to Him!), the Generous, the Compassionate, the Father of all, the God of all might and mercy, the Just Judge, who desires the salvation not only of some nations to the exclusion of others, but of all nations equally? 30 He did not neglect them, but preached to them, through His Holy Soul, when it was separated from His venerable Body on the Cross, and descended into the farthest depths of Hell. 31 There too, He manifested the power of His Divinity and wrought salvation to the souls of the believing saints who had fallen asleep in previous times, as He did on earth for those who were still alive. 32 Thus, whoever believed in His preaching [there in Hell] was saved from the judgment of unbelief. 33 This fulfills what the apostle said: "Every knee shall bow, the heavenly and earthly, and those under the earth."

This statement is very offensive to Muslims and their understanding of Christ. According to the Qur'an, Jesus was not crucified.¹³

13 "They killed him not, nor crucified him, but it was made to appear to them." Sūrah 4:157.

1.4 Vatican, *Biblioteca Apostolica*, *Sbath. 49*, ff. 155-252

This manuscript contains two works; the first one (ff. 1-154) is entitled *Kitāb al-Burhan* (*The Book of Proof*) and was written by Athanasius, the patriarch of Alexandria. The second (ff. 155-252) is *Kitāb al-Kāfī fī al-Ma'nā al-Šāfī* (*The Complete Book of the Healing Meaning*). The owner of the manuscript, Ğirġs Aṭanāsīūs, is mentioned on the first page:

اشتراه من ماله لنفسه العبد الحقير جرجس اثناسيوس

(Bought it, from his own money, the humble servant, Ğirġs Aṭanāsīūs)

The name, the date of the manuscript and the name of the copyist are mentioned at the bottom of folio 106 in the first work:

الكاتب الشيخ أوري يوحنا خادم كنيسة مار الياس الحلي للموارنة في حلب. سنة 7019 لآدم، 1680 للتجسد،
1079 للهجرة

(The copyist, the elder priest Yūḥannā, minister of the Maronite St. Elias Church in Aleppo. In the year 7019 of Adam, 1680 of Incarnation, 1079 of Hijrah.)¹⁴

This is the only manuscript that changes the word *ma'nā*, in the title of the book, to its plural form, *ma'ānī*. Also, to the name of the monastery he adds the adjective *al-ḥalabī* (from Aleppo) to the name of St. Simeon.

The manuscript is written entirely in black ink, no coloring, and the calligraphy is very small. The pages are ruled leaving spaces for margins. There are two columns with 19 lines each. The folio numbers are written in the margins. The copyist also inserted partial punctuation (i.e. periods but not commas or semicolons).

1.5 Oxford, Bodleian Library, *Marshall Or. 69*, ff. 2-113

There is no mention of the copyist nor is a date given in this manuscript. The total number of folios is 113. The manuscript is carefully written, with the calligraphy very clear and small. The manuscript is written in black ink, no coloring. The pages are ruled leaving space for margins. There are two columns with 19 lines each. The punctuation is limited to periods, with which the scribe ended the sentences. Every folio is designed in two horizontal rectangles, and the titles are also written in designed rectangles.

¹⁴ There is a discrepancy between the dating given here and the standard alignment of the Gregorian and Islamic calendars, in which 1680 A.D. would correspond with 1090-1091 of Hijrah. The source of this discrepancy is unclear, as is the source of the belief, implied here, that Adam would have been created in approximately 5339 B.C.

1.6 The Melkite Archdiocese of Homs, (1701 AD)

I acquired a copy of this manuscript from Professor John Lamoreaux, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

According to Cheikho, this manuscript was first in the collection of Rev. Qustantin al-Bāšā, then in Dr. Samʿān's in Homs. It was written by Yūsuf ibn ʿAbdallāh, known as “Šidyāq” in the village of Kfar Hildah in al-Btrūn. He was living in Homs at that time.¹⁵ The total number of folios is 101; the calligraphy is very small, in two columns, 21 lines each.

1.7 The Maronite Archdiocese of Aleppo, *Man. N. 1190*

The calligraphy of this document is beautiful and very clear; red ink is used in chapter titles and headings. There are a total of 163 folios and 273 pages with two columns of 15 lines each. For all its beauty though, this manuscript, L, is not very well organized, presenting Gerasimus's arguments in rather disjointed form in places. Some paragraphs from the sixth objection in Part 4 are not copied. The conclusion of the work, which is found at the end of Part 4 in manuscripts B, H, F and S2, is also not copied.

The manuscript is dated according to the Hijrah calendar, as indicated in folio 69:

تم الجزء الثالث بتأييد الله وعونه بيد الفقير الى الله تعالى يوحنا الكاتب سنة 1005 هجرية

(The third part is completed in the year 1005 of Hijrah)¹⁶

Folio 229 includes details of the scribe:

يوحنا الراهب بدير ابراهيم، الدمشقي اصلاً والأرثوذكسي مذهبا

(Monk Yūhanna, in the monastery of Ibrāhīm, by origin from Damascus, by denomination Orthodox.)

In the left margin of folio 63 the scribe notes that he was able to consult three other copies:

اعلم اننا راينا ثلاث نسخ على منوال هذه النسخة فلم نرى لهم شيء زايد عن هذه النسخة الا هكذا موجودين. لكن الذي رايناه موجود كتبناه بعد الفحص الكثير.

(Know that we have examined three copies that are in accordance with this one. We did not find any extra information that was not in this copy. After a careful examination, we wrote what we read.)

¹⁵ Cf. Šiḥū 1924, 81.

¹⁶ That would be approximately 1600 A.D.

2 An Overview of the *Apology*

The contents of the five parts of Gerasimus's are basically: 1) means by which true religion can be discerned, 2) signs of a true disciple of the true religion, 3) a comparison between Christianity and other religions, 4) various testimonies to the life and work of Jesus Christ, and 5) answers to objections regarding the above arguments.

As with most Arabic apologetical treatises, Gerasimus's main purpose is twofold. First, it is intended to provide Christians with a handbook of ready response to questions posed by Muslims about Christianity. Secondly, it is to encourage wavering Christians in the face of Muslim missionary efforts. Gerasimus defends the credibility of Christian claims concerning the trinity, the incarnation, Christian law, and certain Christian practices where Muslim arguments had begun to sow doubt within the Christian community.¹⁷ Gerasimus endeavors to prove to his readers that Christianity can be attested to as the true religion, not only through scriptural demonstrations but also through rational thinking.

2.1 The True Religion

To explain the concept of religion, Gerasimus argues that there are two categories of religions: true and false. The only true religion is revealed by God, and the many false religions are from the devil. The true religion is concealed among the many false ones, and the only way to discover it is through "research and analogy, right discernment, and the refinement of senses" (Part 1).¹⁸

In trying to find a common ground with his opponents, Gerasimus lists three elements that true religion must possess: God, law and compensation. On the basis of these shared premises he then challenges his readers to decide, "through analogical deduction, clearness of statement, and the authenticity of evidences," which faith to adapt, defend, and adhere to. After laying out these three essential elements of religion, Gerasimus explains how one should go about discerning their authenticity in a religion (Part 1).

¹⁷ Griffith 1979, 63-64.

¹⁸ The text of parts 1-4 of Gerasimus's *Apology* has yet to be definitively divided into verses and translated into English, thus at present it is not possible to provide more exact references for quotes from this text. These quotes are of the author's own translation.

2.1.1 Discerning the True Religion Through a Worshipped God

Gerasimus starts by presenting the means by which the existence of God can be discerned. He reasons that human nature cannot fully contain the knowledge of God, thus, in order to discern the true god one must begin by examining *the creation* (human beings and nature) the reason behind it because God's imprints are in his creation (heaven and earth) and also because man is a reflection of God's image and likeness. . . Gerasimus also uses analogical deduction. Like other Arab theologians, he endeavors to affirm that the existence of God can be inferred through logical deduction. In this he follows the same pattern of argument as Abū Qurrah in his treatise on the existence of God and true religion.¹⁹

Gerasimus compares “the mind of the Creator” to “the most noble and marvelous of the celestial beings, that is the sun, and to the most noble and marvelous creature on earth, that is man.” In the analogy of the Creator and man, Gerasimus's search is directed by the fundamental conviction that human attributes mirror divine attributes: “we see in man, as long as he is preserved in the Image, many virtues that are from his Creator, who created him in His likeness and Image” (Part 1). These noble and excellent human attributes have their counterparts in God, reflecting God's own attributes, thus being indicative of what God is like, though they can never show us God's complete essence.

He concludes his discussion of these two analogies (the sun and man — which will be examined in more detail here in chapter 3) with the assertions that, A. the human mind cannot perceive these truths, and yet B. through analogies it is still possible to deduce a Trinitarian God. He supports this argument by summarizing an analogy used by Abū Qurrah: “If we pass by a vineyard, and we see it drilled, fenced, and planted, we realize that a man did this. But we don't know if this was one man or three men, because it could be either” (Part 1).²⁰ With his analysis of the sun and of humanity, however, Gerasimus attempts to demonstrate a plurality within the divine, with God the Father acting as the first cause, and his word (the Son) and his Spirit manifesting his effects on creation.

Gerasimus returns to this point in Part 3 of the *Apology* where he compares Christianity with other religions. Based on the three foundations of all religions already mentioned, he affirms that the Christian Trinitarian God is the creator of heaven and earth, as Paul taught: “He gives to all life and breath, and all things” (Acts 17:25). Gerasimus then quotes Matthew 28:19 and John 1:1-4 as evidence of the Trinity. He then compares the Christian God with the gods of other religions, and states that none of these religions is able to teach what the Lord of all revealed in His Gospel.

¹⁹ Cf. Dick 1982.

²⁰ Ibid. 197-198.

2.1.2 Discerning the True Religion Through a Law That Includes Lawfulness and Unlawfulness

Gerasimus presents three kinds of law, earthly, Divine, and Satanic, which he adapts these from the well known apology of al-Kindī.²¹ The purpose of earthly law is to bring about justice and equity on earth. Humans are to return “like with its likeness.” This means, for example, to return love with love or hatred with hatred. Divine law is from Heaven. It goes beyond returning like with its likeness. The Divine Law commands us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. Through divine law, humanity can rise above human nature, and be elevated from earth to heaven; it transforms humans from earthly beings to gods. Through it we achieve divine perfection, which means returning good for evil, loving the persons who hate us, and treating with kindness those who mistreat us. Satanic law comes from the lower parts, under the earth. Its concerns are iniquity, injustice, and transgression. It pulls us down us from the middle level, to the level beneath the earth. We become devilish, returning love with hatred. Gerasimus concludes by inviting his reader to use this reality to discern the true religion by examining its law and responsibilities. Without doubt true religion applies the Divine law (Part 1).

In Part 3 Gerasimus returns to the subject of law, but this time to show that Christian law, that is love, is the spiritual law: “it is light and guidance, it raises us up from earth to heaven, from slavery to filiations, from defect to perfection.” Gerasimus based his comments on Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31, “Therefore whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them,” and John 13:34, “A new commandment I give to you, that you also love one another; as I have loved you.”

Gerasimus then presents four kinds of love: natural love, carnal love, worldly/human love, and spiritual love. Natural love is the love of parents for their children, but this is not a true genuine love since humans and animals both display it. Carnal love is the desire of the body, the love of a man for a woman. This is not true love either, and is not permanent, because when the beauty of a woman fades, carnal pleasure also ceases. The causes of worldly or human love are many and diverse: praise that the lover gives to his beloved, a gift received from a lover, etc. This love is not lasting and true either; if the cause ceases the love also ceases. Spiritual love is the true love that our Lord initiated and commanded us to practice. Our Lord taught us, “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends” (John 15:13). Gerasimus offers more scripture on love, rephrasing John 3:16 and quoting Luke 6:32-35 and Matthew 5:20, 39-41, 44-45, 48. He concludes that “this is the Divine Law and these are its commandments and its lawfulness and unlawfulness. These are the very same laws of Christians. No other religion is like it” (Part 3).

²¹ Cf. Bottini 1998; al-Ḥūrī 2004, 126-127.

Gerasimus continues in Part 3 by characterizing the laws of other religions. They command their followers to take advantage of each other, and they advocate vengeance and retaliation. These laws transform the natural man who is created in God's image into the image of a devouring beast. They return an insult for a simple word. They retaliate against an insult with beating and a beating with killing.

2.1.3 Discerning the True Religion Through Eternal Reward or Punishment

Gerasimus starts this section by defining the purpose of compensation in religion. It is our final reward; it can be either eternal bliss, or eternal punishment (Part 1). Then he moves on to define the two kinds of good: the true one and that which is assumed to be true. Our duty is to discern the true good. In order to assist in that, Gerasimus offers four characteristics of the true good. Of course, the characteristics of true evil are the opposite. First, true good must be beneficial in and of itself. Its benefits must not come by persuasion or monetary payment. Second, its benefits must be available to everyone. It would be contrary to its nature if it was good for some and not good for others. It is not like medicine [which is beneficial for ill people but of no use to healthy people]. Third, it must be valuable at all times, unlike satiating hunger with food. Fourth, it must be eternal, not temporal like happiness, blessings, and the glory of this world (Part 1). Gerasimus concludes his invitation to discern true good from evil: if any "good" lacks any of those four characteristics, it is not genuine but counterfeit.

In Part 3 Gerasimus confirms the verity of the Christian promise of reward and punishment, in that it demonstrates the four characteristics of genuine good. This good is union with God and the pleasure of His eternal bliss. Through grace, we become gods like Him, and have all that He has. This echoes Gregory of Nazianzus who wrote in his poem, *De Incarnatione*, "and since, then, God is made man, so man is perfected as God, and that is my glory."²² Gerasimus affirms his discussion of "good" with quotations from John 14:15-17, John 17:11, 20-24, and John 11:25-26.

After defining Christian good and the reward that awaits the believer, Gerasimus asks two questions: What is death? and What is life? He answers that man has two lives and two deaths. The bodily life is the unity of body and a soul. The spiritual life is the unity of the spirit with God, its creator. Bodily death is the separation of the spirit from the body; spiritual death is the isolation of the spirit from God, its creator. As the body takes life from the spirit, likewise the spirit gets its life from God.

Gerasimus continues to compare the spiritual life with the bodily life. He begins by describing how the Creator created human beings with an innate bodily attachment, that is, humans were created to love their bodies. God also created hunger in humans and provided sustenance that could satisfy human desire. Humans instinctively seek

²² Behr 2004, 275.

and desire such nourishment, and when they find it, they are pleased. Without it, they are distressed. God also created a spiritual life in humans that shares features with the bodily life. The spiritual life contains an innate desire which is to love life in the spirit and its union with the Divine. It is natural for the healthy spirit to yearn for God. As the Psalmist wrote, “As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God” (Psalm 42:1). However, if the spirit becomes corrupted, it will find pleasure in that which distresses and spoils it. Gerasimus gives the example of an eye. If the eye is healthy it desires light, but if it becomes diseased, it prefers what would ordinarily distress it, that is darkness. As God created sustenance for the body, He Himself became the sustenance for the spirit. He gave His life for us that we could be united with Him and enjoy His Divine eternity.²³

Gerasimus concludes this part of the argument by stating that eternity with God is the reward that our Lord promised in His Gospel. We will enjoy this reward if we believe and practice His commandments, but if not, we will suffer separation from God. In contrast with this he presents a brief description of the rewards of other religions. These rewards are given out according to the laws of the deity that is worshiped, and depend on what traps Satan has laid out regarding the pleasures of this world, including eating and drinking.

2.1.4 Additional Characteristics That Distinguish the Christian Faith

At the end of Part 3 Gerasimus adds three more characteristics that distinguish the Christian faith and that affirm that Christianity is the true religion:

A. The Christian religion does not contain any of the five defects that make any other religion and its messenger faulty. Gerasimus had previously listed these five flaws in the Part 2. They are: 1) the wisdom and analogies of this world; 2) the world’s passing glory; 3) its transitory richness; 4) its faulty pleasures; 5) fear of its power or its sword. He affirms that none of these five defects are present in the Christian religion nor in the twelve disciples who founded it.

B. The Christian religion is difficult to understand, yet it is proclaimed throughout the world. In Part 3, Gerasimus describes the disciples preaching in this way:

In regards to their preaching, it was hard to believe, or harder to accept than the [preaching] of other religions. The minds of earthly people detest it, and ascribe it to ignorance and foolishness.

²³ This idea of eternal life is known in the teaching of the Greek Church Fathers as “the doctrine of spiritual kinship.” The Greek Fathers were enthusiastic about the language describing the spirit’s “kinship,” or, “affinity” with the divine nature; the spirit is a “breath of God” or “spirit emanating from the invisible deity.” Cf. McGukin 2007, 105.

However, [the disciples] divided the regions of the world, and called its tribes (that are of different denominations, meanings, and morals) to worship a god whose attribute is this: He is One God in three, and three in One. No one is able to describe Him. He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Gerasimus presents this element to show that the Christian message spread throughout the world in spite of its being difficult to understand. The first disciples were not educated, and had no worldly power, or army. Yet the message they preached spread to the four corners of the earth while the messages and the temples of pagans, which were associated with powerful religions, faded. The power of Christianity comes from Jesus Christ, the one who sent the preachers out and promised to always be with them.

C. Christian preaching has a unified message. Gerasimus argues that Aristotle and Plato were not able to agree whether the soul was mortal or immortal, or agree on the nature of the Exalted Creator, while Christians in the four corners of the earth are in agreement with one another (Part 3). The example he gives of this unified Christian doctrine is from the first chapter of the Gospel of John, verses 1 and 14: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”²⁴

2.1.5 Signs Which Indicate That a Religion Is Faulty

Gerasimus divides the signs that indicate a religion is faulty into two categories: Some religions can be seen as false because they are based on the wisdom, standards and criteria of this world; others, for reasons that do not have to do with wisdom and analogical thought. Among signs of falsehood in the second category then he poses two sub-categories: those that are believed voluntarily and those that are accepted as a matter of coercion. There are in turn three false reasons for voluntary belief: glory, riches and pleasure. In addition to coercion by the sword, however, people can be forcibly brought to belief by the power of God through miracles. Altogether then there are six causes of belief. Five are earthly, or false, and one is heavenly, or true (Part 3).

These signs are adapted from Abū Rā’iṭah in his ninth letter, and from Ibn al-Faṭl.²⁵ With them Gerasimus is trying to convey to his readers that the Christian religion is difficult to understand, yet is proclaimed throughout the world, aided, not by physical force nor motivated by a desire for power or glory, but by the power of the Holy Spirit.

²⁴ This point will be examined in more detail in Chapter 4 in the response to the first objection.

²⁵ See al-Ḥūrī 2005a, 315, 318.

2.1.6 Gerasimus's Theological Template

In his argument about religion, Gerasimus rarely strays from the polemical template used by most Arab Christian theologians and seen in the mystical theology of the Greek Church Fathers. Their template can be summarized thus: True religion is the one revealed by God. True religion, in all its many facets, is the content of revelation that is revealed to a disciple and announced to God's people. There are many religions that claim to be the revealed truth. Therefore, the believer is required to discern which religion is revealed by God. The revealed religion is one, because God is One. It would contradict God's character if He revealed multitudes of contradicting religions. There are many false religions, but one true religion. The nature of true religion is always in agreement with the Divine nature, which means that no human endeavors can affect such a religion and it does not include any human efforts or effects.

To discern the divine nature and all that goes with it, two elements are needed: analogical deduction and a miraculous signs. To deduce true religion the mind needs to be healthy, together with a healthy soul/spiritual nature (an unhealthy one being that which is enslaved to the sin inherited from Adam). When the human soul/spiritual nature is sound and healthy, it naturally goes together with the divine nature, because it was created in God's image. Miraculous signs are also important in discerning true revealed religion. This religion's message and disciples must be accompanied by signs and wonders, such that leave no doubt that they are from God. Any religion can have negative as well as positive signs. The negative signs are human aspects that generate false religions. The positive are the miraculous, non-human signs that befit the Divine nature.²⁶

Gerasimus introduces two distinct levels of mystical discernment, which he adapts from Gregory of Nyssa. First, through the exercise of spiritual senses, divine illumination occurs. In this process humans recover the healthy mind that was lost to their sinful passions in the fall of Adam. The second level is that of the spirit being united with God. Human beings, after being purified from sin, discover the presence of God in the spirit. As Gregory writes in his homily on the beatitudes,

If a man's heart has been purified from every creature and unruly affections, he will see the Image of the Divine Nature in his own beauty. I think that, in this short saying, the word expresses some such counsel as this: there is in you, human beings, a desire to contemplate the true good; but when you hear that the Divine majesty is exalted above the heaven, that its glory is inexpressible, its beauty ineffable, and its nature inaccessible, do not despair of ever beholding what you desire. It is indeed within your reach; you have within yourself that standard by which you apprehend that Divine. For he who made you did at the same time endow your nature with this wonderful Nature, as if molding the form of a carving into wax. But the evil that has been poured all around that nature bearing the Divine Image has rendered useless to you this wonder-

26 Cf. al-Ḥūrī 2005a, 313-333.

ful thing that lies hidden under vile coverings. If, therefore, you wash off by a good life the filth that has been struck on your heart like plaster, the divine beauty will again shine forth in you. For the Godhead is purity, freedom from passion, and separation from all evil. If therefore these things be in you, God is indeed in you. Hence, if your thought is without any alloy of evil, free from passion, and alien from stain, you are blessed because you are clear of sight. You are able to perceive what is invisible to those who are not purified, because you have been cleansed; that darkness caused by material entanglements has been removed from the eyes of your soul, and you see the blessed vision radiant in the pure heaven of your heart. (Michael 1995, 99)

Gerasimus affirms that this process can begin only through faith in our Lord Jesus and His Gospel, and through our union with the One Who gave His life for us. We enjoy the everlasting bliss when our spirit is united with the One who gave His life for us (Part 3). He frequently refers to the analogy of the sick servant who fails to discern the right, healing medicine to cure his disease until the royal physician meets him and heals him. Gerasimus insists that the Lord Himself is the medicine, and that the way we receive this medicine is through faith and the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist (5:187, 345).

2.2 Signs of a True Disciple

Part 2 of Gerasimus's *Apology* is dedicated to examining the signs of a true disciple. The disciple who claims to proclaim the religion of God and asks people to follow and believe him must demonstrate three signs: first, his preaching must be to all nations; second, a power from God to perform miracles must accompany him; and third, he must be an expert in speaking the language of every nation and tribe. Gerasimus returns to these three signs in the Part 3 where he examines how they were fulfilled in the Christian disciples, thus confirming that the Christian disciple is the true one sent from God.

2.2.1 General Preaching

Gerasimus states that analogies used in preaching must refer to a God who is just and who wants all His servants to be saved. He notes that it is God's desire to pour His grace on all people; therefore, the messenger sent by Him must fulfill the goal of preaching to all tribes. Otherwise, the disciple would impede the purpose of God, his calling would be revoked, and he would deserve punishment (Part 2). Gerasimus then presents the parable of a king who calls for a royal banquet, which we will examine in more detail in Chapter 3.

In Part 3 Gerasimus examines how Christ is worshiped and honored in the four corners of the earth, fulfilling the prophecy of David: "Their line has gone out through

all the earth, and their words to the end of the world” (Psalm 19:4). Then in Part 5, objection 6, he responds to the challenge to this argument implied by the special status of the Jews in the Old Testament. We will examine that argument more carefully when specifically consider the content of Part 5 here in Chapter 4.

2.2.2 Performance of Miracles

The miraculous sign is an imperative one; otherwise, people would have an excuse not to believe, and they could not be punished for not believing (Part 2). In Part 3 Gerasimus returns to this sign to affirm that it was given to Jesus’s disciples. He also affirms that the five defects previously mentioned were not present in the disciples. These defects and their causes usually attract many people. However, in the disciples we see the opposite; some did not have wisdom and were illiterate, some were poor and from humble homes, and some were fishermen, practicing a humble profession. Beyond that, their preaching was hard to believe; almost no one accepted their teachings because they were so hard to practice. In regard to the rewards that their religion promised, it was hard for most people to imagine or understand it what they were talking about. Nevertheless, the disciples performed miracles, commanding the lame to stand up in the name of Christ, the blind to open their eyes, the deaf-mute to speak and the dead to rise up. If the power of the one who sent them had not been with them no one would have listened to them (Part 3). Gerasimus then adds that even baptized believers have access to the power to perform these miracles, as their master promised: “And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues” (Mark 16:17).

2.2.3 Speaking the Common Languages

Gerasimus here refers back to the first sign: Because God wants all nations to be saved, his disciples must be experts in speaking the common languages of the people in order to convey His message (Part 2). In Part 3 he affirms that the disciples were endowed with this sign on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon them and empowered them to speak multiple languages. He also argues that today the name of Jesus is proclaimed and worshiped in all the languages of the world (Part 3).

2.3 The Existence of God

In his argument on the existence of God, Gerasimus adopts the format used by the Greek Church Fathers and later on by the Muslim theologians of the *al-Mu‘tazila*

school.²⁷ He makes use of reason and demonstration, allegory and interpretation, in presenting the Christian understanding of a transcendent deity.

2.3.1 Reason and Demonstration

Gerasimus maintains that the knowledge of God is acquired both through the senses and by deductive reasoning; we know God by experience rather than by revelation. However, this evidence does not demonstrate the existence of God, but helps to guide the human spirit toward faith. The senses and deductive thinking show that it is reasonable to believe, but they are unable to produce faith itself, which is a gift from God. The human mind and spirit are ill and need “medicine” to recognize the existence of God. It is, therefore, impossible for the human mind to see God unless it is healed and purified from sin, by faith and baptism.²⁸

This argument is very similar to Origen’s reply to Celsus on the respective role of mind and the senses in our knowledge of God is representative of this view. Celsus had criticized Christians by saying: “How can we know God unless by perception of the senses? For how otherwise than through the senses are we able to gain any knowledge?” To this Origen replies:

Christian philosophers begin with the use of the senses upon sensible objects, in order to go on from them to a knowledge of the nature of things intellectual, yet their knowledge must not stop short with the objects of sense.... Since we hold that the great God is in essence simple, invisible and incorporeal, Himself pure intelligence, or something transcending intelligence and existence, we can never say that God is apprehended by any other means than through intelligence which is formed in His Image. (Henry (trans.) 1953, 36-39)

To Origen, God is the mind and the source from which all intellectual nature or mind takes its beginning. When the mind is purified and separated from material corruption it becomes a means of grasping something of the nature of the Divine. Therefore it is to misunderstand God if we try to apprehend him by means of our bodily senses.²⁹

²⁷ Mu‘tazilah is an Islamic school of theology based on reason and rational thought that flourished in the cities of Basra and Baghdad, both in present-day Iraq, during the 8th–10th centuries. The adherents of the Mu‘tazili school are best known for their having asserted that, because of the perfect unity and eternal nature of God, the Qur’an must therefore have been created, as it could not be co-eternal with God. Cf. Casper 1998, 167-186.

²⁸ Cf. Casper 2007, 57-58.

²⁹ Cf. Morris 1964, 52-53.

2.3.2 Allegory and Interpretation

Figurative interpretation flourished in the fifth century B.C. The Greeks devised it to reconcile the older religion of the Homeric world with the new ideas which clashed with it. Greek fathers adapted this method to explain certain passages from the Old Testament that are inconsistent with Christian morality. The goal of the Fathers was to bring the Old Testament in line with their new and more exalted idea of God.³⁰

The use of allegory became a matter of dispute in Islam also because it affected the doctrine of the nature of God. While the Qur'an strongly emphasizes the absolute uniqueness of God, it describes Him in anthropomorphic terms, ascribing to Him eyes, hands and a face, and portraying Him as speaking and sitting on a throne.³¹ A verse in the Qur'an that played a part in this dispute was Sūrah 3:7:

He it is who has sent down to thee the Book. In it are verses basic or fundamental [of established meaning *muḥkamāt*]. They are the foundation of the book, others are allegorical *mutašābihāt*. But those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part thereof that is allegorical seeking discord and searching for its hidden meaning but not one knows its hidden meanings except God. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say "we believe in the book; the whole of it is from our Lord" and none will grasp the message except men of understanding.

2.3.3 Transcendent Deity

Gerasimus states that God is unknowable, nameless, without part or qualities, and is not spatial. Two quotations from the Church Fathers support this statement. Justin the Martyr says:

But to the Father of all, who is unbegotten, there is no name given. For by whatever name He be called, He has as His elder the person who gave Him the name. But these words, Father and God and Creator and Master, are not names, but appellations derived from His good deeds and functions... the appellation God is not a name but an opinion implanted in the nature of men of a thing that can hardly be explained.³²

Clement of Alexandria also writes on this subject:

The discourse respecting God is most difficult to handle. For since the first principle of everything is difficult to find out, the absolutely first and oldest principle, which is the cause of all other things, being and having been, is difficult to exhibit. For how can that be expressed which is neither genus, nor difference, nor species, nor individual, nor number: anymore is neither

³⁰ Ibid. 56.

³¹ Cf. Morris 1964, 57-58.

³² Robert 1988, 20.

an event, nor that to which an event happens? No one can rightly express Him wholly, for on account of His greatness He is ranked as the All, and is the Father of the universe. Nor are any parts to be predicted of Him. For the one is indivisible; wherefore also it is infinite, nor considered with reference to its being without dimension, and not having limit. And therefore it is without form or name. And if we name it we do properly terming it either the One, or the Good, or Mind, or Absolute Being, or Father, or God, or Creator, or Lord. We speak not as supplying name; but for want, we use good names, in order that the mind may have these as points of support, so as not to err in any other respects. For predicates are expressed either from what belongs to things themselves, or from their mutual relation. But none of these are admissible in reference to God.³³

From this brief description we can see that the same method of explaining the existence of God was used by Muslims and Christians. They agreed that Divine attributes and names are only human descriptions of God, and these expressions must be interpreted in a way that is fitting with God's majesty. It is on this theological foundation that Gerasimus bases his interpretation on the existence of God. When explaining the mystery of the Trinity, he affirms that it cannot be explained rationally, but the biblical writers resorted to human language to make it accessible to human minds:

Nevertheless, in order not to suppose that He is similar to a mere human word which is ephemeral and has no existence in [and of] itself, (for, to "become" it needs bodily organs such as tongue, wind pipes, and so forth), He was called "Son." Furthermore, in order not to suppose filiation similar to what we have, and what our nature needs, namely, that the father precedes the son in time through a normal human birth process, He was called "the bright glory of the Father." And in order not to suppose that His attributes are different from the Father and dissimilar to the [Father], (as we see the difference among us humans), He was called, "the form of His person." And in order not to suppose Him as from a different substance, other than His own substance, He was called "His arm." He is also called, from a different perspective, "His power and His wisdom" (5:65-69).

A distinction needs to be drawn here between *theologia* – the mystery of God, and *oikonomia* – the economy of salvation. It is possible to speak about *theologia* only when that mystery has been recapitulated in *oikonomia* through Christ's incarnation and deification. The glory of God is revealed in the wonder of creation, but such theological knowledge is still only a pale reflection of what God is. The economy of salvation discloses *how* God is, without really penetrating the mystery of *what* God is.³⁴ Gerasimus is thus emphatic in stating that even if we are able to explain what divine paternity means, words like "begotten" and "unbegotten," "generated" and "ungenerated" do not express the ultimate substance (*ousia*) of God, but rather the characteristics of the divine hypostases – how God is toward us (5:61-73).

³³ John 1974, 49.

³⁴ Cf. Lacugna 1991, 54-60; Ware 1979, 11-27; Behr 2004, 272-318.

2.3.4 Differences Between Arab Christian and Greek Christian Emphases

The difference between the Greek Fathers and Gerasimus in arguing for the existence of God is that Gerasimus, like other Arab apologists, does not begin with the emphasis on the Triune economy of the One God; instead He begins with the divine unity. Christian Arab apologists developed their argument from the basis of God's absolute oneness, and then showed how the One God was ultimately revealed as a tripartite being through the incarnation. Such a method is necessitated by the assumptions of their Muslim audience. For the Arab Christian apologists, the real questions were why and how God became human while still maintaining continuity with previous monotheistic revelations and without introducing plurality into the divine being.

The question of how the Trinity could be understood through the use of analogy is a major theme in Christian Arabic literature.³⁵ According to Khalil Samir, there are two reasons for this. First, Arab Christian authors have been deeply influenced by patristic literature, and this topic is covered extensively in patristic literature. This literature contains a strongly Middle Eastern ethos of the sacredness of God: God lives in inaccessible light.³⁶ Second, this same understanding is shared by Muslim theologians. Therefore, Arab Christian apologists felt it was important to develop this theme, particularly when dealing with sensitive topics such as the Holy Trinity which is the most polemical Christian mystery for both Christian and Muslim readers.³⁷

2.3.5 God as Trinity

Gerasimus examines the concept of the Trinity using the formula of the Cappadocian Fathers: "one substance (*ousia*) in three persons (*hypostaseis*)" (*ḡawhar wāḥid wa talāṭat ḥawās muṣaḥḥaṣah*). God exists as Father, Son, and Spirit. This Trinitarian ontology is rooted in the self-revelation of God in the divine economy, in the person of Christ, and in the activity of the Spirit (5:74-85).

In a few other areas, Gerasimus also adapts Cappadocian Trinitarian theology:³⁸

1) Gerasimus understands the *divine paternity as a relational mode of God's being* (Father of the Son). He speaks of a differentiation without partition in God. This mode of relation in Trinity was adapted by the Cappadocians from Stoic and Aristotelian

³⁵ Cf. Haddad 1985, 104-114.

³⁶ Cf. 1 Timothy 6:16.

³⁷ See Samir 1994, 72.

³⁸ Cf. Lacugna 1991, 53-59; Ware 1979, 27-43. For an in-depth analysis of the Cappadocian Fathers teachings about the concept of the Holy Trinity see Behr 2004.

philosophy, and later became an ideal to explain the Trinitarian theology. As Catherine Lacugna (1991, 59) explains it:

Father and Son are distinct by relation to each other, but same in *ousia*. Relation as a category also worked particularly well from Greek Trinitarian theology because relation is farther from substance than any other category, since relation simply refers one thing to another and does not indicate what something is in itself. Thus, to say what God is with respect to relation does not specify what God's *ousia* is, and thereby does not compromise the principle that God's *ousia* is unknowable. Nevertheless, by saying what God is according to relation one has said really all that needs to be said, since relation (Father to Son) is the mode of God's being both in the economy and in itself.

2) *Hypostasis can be understood in two senses*: First, it can mean that which gives support to an object, the elements that form the object. Second, in its transitive sense it means the externally concrete character of a substance in relation to other objects.³⁹ When speaking about three hypostases, Gerasimus uses it as was common in the East, to indicate the unity of being.

3) In *comparing the consubstantiality of the divine persons to the consubstantiality of human persons*, the Cappadocian Fathers ask their hearers to imagine three men, Peter, James and John or Paul, Sylvanus, and Timothy. As human beings, they tell us the three are identical; their humanity is one and the same. But as unique human beings concretely existing, they are distinguished one from another as persons, as distinct hypostases, each with their own names and personal characteristics.⁴⁰ Gerasimus, in responding to the objection that claims that Christians are making God three and worshipping three gods, explains the concept of one God in three substances in a rather Cappadocian fashion:

We, the community of Christians, do not believe this at all, and we do not imagine, as they think we do, that the three Persons (that are the Persons of the Holy Trinity) are separate, as [human] individuals are from each other. For if we were all gathered under one mind, we would share one substance, and one form would prevail over all of us, but we are different in many things (I mean, time, place, determined will, and other characteristics that are parting and dividing us, are different from person to person. They can be found in one individual, but can never be shared with another one). It is to the point that these differences are not only present among us, but every person, from time to time, also experiences transformation, change, and fluctuation, from one state of mind to another. Regarding the Creator of all, although He consists of three persons, the difference is only in the "personified forms and attributes," [that is to say], each person [of the Trinity] has special attributes that distinguish and differentiate Him from the other persons; however, the agreement between [the persons of the Trinity] are many because He is

³⁹ Lacugna 1991, 66.

⁴⁰ Cf. Hopko 1985, 268.

one God with one substance, one nature, one honor, and one eternity. ([These characteristics] are not uniform among us humans. Every one of us has a different nature.) The totality of every one of the three is in the totality of the other two, yet He is fully God; and the three are one God, and every one of the three is Himself the other two, except in the personal attributes (mentioned above). Through [these attributes] only, not by any other, [the human] mind distinguishes the one from the other (5:75-82).

2.3.6 Man as the Image of God

The idea of the *divinization of man* that echoes throughout the writings of the Eastern Fathers is clearly used by Gerasimus as well; he follows the traditional Eastern template that divides the history of salvation into three progressive stages: 1) God created man in His likeness and image; 2) man fell; and 3) God restored man by the incarnation of His Son.

The Christological formula of the council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) that “Christ is one person in two natures,” is the theological basis on which Gerasimus builds his apology. He presents the theology of the incarnation as God’s identification with humankind. With the incarnation began a process that extends throughout the life of Jesus whereby He embraces all aspects of human experience except sin. Becoming human means the involvement of more than the human body, but the human mind and will as well. Salvation requires that humans somehow be united with the divine, since, as Gregory of Nazianzus wrote, “What has not been assumed cannot be restored; it is what is united with God that is saved.” Gerasimus is using the balancing formula of Chalcedon, “one nature in two persons,” to affirm both the distinctness and unity of the divine nature with the human one.⁴¹

Gerasimus elaborates extensively on the theological term, the “image of God.” A text of central importance to this term is Genesis 1:27, which speaks of humanity being made in God’s image and likeness. God created everything through His Word and through the Word He gave humanity a share in His Image, that is, His Son Jesus Christ. Thus, the relationship between God and creation, and in particular, between God and man, is through the Word.

This approach is found in the Patristic period which interprets “the image of God” in terms of human reason; a few aspects of human reasoning are evident in Gerasimus’s Apology and merit our attention. The image is understood to be the human rational faculty, which mirrors the wisdom of God.⁴² The image is also associated with the totality of man’s nature, considered as trinity of spirit, soul and body. At other times Greek Fathers connected the image more specifically with the highest aspect of man,

⁴¹ Cf. Lowe 1994, 226-229.

⁴² Cf. Bof 1994, 1830; and McGrath 2001, 440-448.

with his spirit or spiritual intellect, through which he attains knowledge of God and union with Him. Basically, the image of God denotes everything that distinguishes man from animals and that makes him in the full sense a person, a moral agent capable of right and wrong, a spiritual subject endowed with inward freedom.

Another aspect of the image that is particularly important in the *Apology* is the *gift of free choice*. As God is free, so likewise man is free, and being free, each human being realizes the divine image within himself in his own distinctive fashion.⁴³

Many Eastern Fathers draw a distinction between the “image of God” and “the likeness of God.” The image, for those who distinguish between the two terms, denotes man’s potentiality for life in God. The likeness is his realization of that potentiality. The image is that which he possesses from the beginning, and which enables him to set out in the first place upon the spiritual way. The likeness is that which he hopes to attain at the end of his journey.⁴⁴

The image and likeness signify orientation, relationship. Being created in the image of God means man is created for communion and union with God, and if man rejects this communion, he relinquishes the position of man in the image of God. The doctrine of the image means, therefore, that man has God as the innermost center of his being. The divine is the determining element in our humanity; by losing our sense of the divine, we also lose our sense of humanity.

In Part 3, when Gerasimus compares Christian law to the laws of other religions, he describes their laws as those which transform the natural image of man made in the likeness of God to the image of untamed beasts. The central point of his argument is that human nature has its God-given ability to relate to God, and although human reason has been corrupted by the Fall, it may be renewed by grace. Also in Part 3, when he speaks about the two kinds of life and death, he defines spiritual life as an instinctive spiritual desire that God formed in man, through which man desires the union of the spirit with Him in divine bliss. However, Gerasimus affirms that the movement toward God must be healthy, for if it is ill (filled with wrong motives), it will desire what corrupts and makes the spirit miserable. Then he concludes that as the body needs nutrition from food and drink to survive, God Himself became the nutrition that the human spirit needs to survive. He gave Himself that we may be united with Him and be delighted in His divine nature.

The doctrine of creation in the image of God is also seen as being directly related to the doctrine of redemption. Redemption involved bringing the image of God to its fulfillment in a perfect relationship with God culminating in immortality. In Part 3, when he speaks about the Christian eternal reward, Gerasimus articulates it in this way: “This is the union with the Sublime God and the delight in His divinity in the

⁴³ Cf. Migliore 2004, 141.

⁴⁴ Cf. Ware 1979, 51.

eternal bliss (that has no ending), that we become gods in His Likeness, and we attain, by grace, what He has by nature.”

It is worth noting that Gerasimus follows the pattern of the Eastern Church Fathers that emphasizes the positive side of redemption; God saved us out of His goodness and mercy. There is no mention of the wrath of God.⁴⁵ Redemption is seen as reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles, heaven and earth, and human nature and God its Creator (5:426). By redemption, man is returned to the position he held before the Fall, ruler over creation, thus defeating Satan and gaining victory over hell (5:430-432). Redemption destroys the barrier that stands between heaven and earth, and eliminates the flashing sword that guards the way to the Tree of Life (5:431).⁴⁶

2.4 Conclusion

Throughout the *Apology* Gerasimus presents humanity as universally affected by sin as a consequence of the Fall. The human mind has become darkened and weakened by sin, which makes it impossible for the sinner to think clearly in order to understand higher spiritual truths. An analogy that Gerasimus uses effectively is sin as disease. Sin weakens humanity, causing spiritual disorder. Being a sinner is as though a person were physically ill and unable to diagnose his own illness. Salvation is understood in sanative, or medical terms. We are healed by the grace of God so that our minds may recognize God and our wills may respond to the divine offer of grace. For it is through the grace of God alone that the illness is diagnosed and cured.

A second analogy that Gerasimus employs treats sin as a power which holds us captive and from whose grip we are unable to break free by ourselves. Human free will is captivated by the power of sin, and may only be liberated by grace. Christ is thus our liberator, the source of grace which breaks the power of sin.

⁴⁵ Cf. Coptology 2006.

⁴⁶ Cf. Genesis 3:24.

3 Analysis of the Analogies Used in the Apology

Gerasimus uses analogies extensively to illustrate his points. These parables are inspired by the Bible, the Church Fathers, and Arab Christian theologians. We can divide these analogies into two categories: first, those that use an earthly ruler or, in some cases a farmer to represent God, and a slave to represent humankind; Second, those that feature an ill man (representing humanity) who seeks to cure his grave disease. The man consults false physicians, who represent false religions and false disciples. He finally meets the divine and ultimate physician who gives him the right medications and heals him.

The persuasive power of these analogies originated in the conception of God as King, a metaphor common to Judaism and Christianity, and one that inspired some of the descriptions of God in the Qur'an. This method predates Christian Arabic literature; it goes back to Rabbinic Judaism. Midrash used analogies to explain difficult passages and concepts of the Hebrew Bible.⁴⁷

A total of ten analogies are presented in the *Apology* of which seven are presented in Part 5.

3.1 Parable of the King and His Ill Servant

At the end of Part 1 of the *Apology*, Gerasimus presents the analogy of the king and his ill servant to illustrate the process of discerning the true religion. In the analogy, a king's servants rebel against him and he banishes them from his kingdom. The king, however, had one loyal servant who was in charge of the royal palace. The king promised to make him a partner in his kingdom if he obeyed his commands. The king gave him access to all the storage areas of the palace except one, warning him of the consequences if he opened it. The king's rebellious servants knew about this deal, and envied the loyal servant. One of them came to the king's servant and convinced him to open the forbidden storage room, telling him that the king's crown was in it, and that anyone who put on the crown would immediately become king. As soon as the servant opened the storage room, the king realized what had happened and ordered his expulsion from the palace, exiling him to a remote village. However, the king, out of his mercy and compassion, sent a physician with him to take care of his health and diet.

His enemies did not want even the physician to be with the servant, so they convinced the disgraced servant to dismiss him from his service. After the doctor left him, the servant's health deteriorated; his enemies sent him massagers and doctors who gave him harmful medicines; even the doctor who attended the king was among

⁴⁷ Cf. Stern 1991.

those who wanted to trick him. Consequently, the servant was puzzled and could not distinguish between the helpful medicines and the harmful ones. Finally, he realized that the physician that the king had sent with him in the first place was the right one. The royal physician examined him and the servant was able to get rid of all the harmful medicines.

Having told the parable, Gerasimus outlines the symbols and their meanings. The king is God Almighty; the rebellious servants are Satan and his fallen angels; the chosen servant is humankind; the royal palace is the Garden of Eden; the forbidden storage area is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; the servant who ensnared him and convinced him to open the storage room is Satan; the expulsion of the chosen servant from the palace is the expulsion of Adam from the Garden; the physician that was sent with him is the mind, discernment and revelation that helps us distinguish between right and wrong. The second deception of the servant's enemies – to have the physician dismissed – is an analogy of the power of evil to blind foresight and to deprive humans of their sound minds; the enemies who sent him massagers and doctors who gave him harmful medicines are the false religions and heresies that the devil uses to attack us. The harmful medicines are the satanic laws that assault our souls and cause them to perish. The royal physician is Paul, the chief of the disciples; the book that has in it the right Medicine is the Holy Gospel; the prescription of the medicines is the Divine Law. Gerasimus concludes his analogy with an evangelical call; he tells his readers that whoever wants to discern true religion from the false ones must follow the steps of the king's servant and look for the right physician and the efficacious medicine using the three elements (God, law, and eternal reward or punishment).

In the main, this parable is adapted from Abū Qurrah's essay on *the existence of the Creator and the true religion*.⁴⁸ In his essay, Abū Qurrah aligns the seeker of true religion with the son of a king appointed by his father to go on a mission to a distant land. The son falls gravely ill, and his father sends a physician to him, as well as medication. The king's enemies send their own false messengers to poison the son. The son remains in the dilemma of not knowing which medication will help him until the true messenger of the king teaches him how to discern between lies and truth. Abū Qurrah then ends his parable by explaining the symbols of the parable which are parallel to Gerasimus's.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Lamoreaux 2005, 6-9.

⁴⁹ For more details on this parable see Dick 1982, 212-218.

3.2 Parable of a King Calling for a Royal Banquet

In Part 2 of the *Apology*, Gerasimus explains the method used in discerning the true disciple and the signs that must accompany him. The first sign is the universality of his preaching. Gerasimus uses the following analogy to illustrate his point: A king calls for a royal banquet, sending his messenger to invite all his subjects. The messenger advised them that whoever attended the banquet would be happy and be found righteous. Whoever would be late would suffer and be found guilty. This analogy is inspired by the parable of the wedding banquet in Matthew 22:1-14.

Gerasimus uses this parable to illustrate a number of points. He does so by asking his readers rhetorical questions or by describing symbolic actions taken by the king and his disciple. “Suppose that the messenger disobeyed the command of his lord and delivered [the royal summons] to a certain tribe to the exclusion of other tribes. The excluded tribes were consequently delayed, and the royal message did not reach them. Who, in this case, would be responsible for their delay, the king or the messenger?”

When Gerasimus discusses the second sign of a true messenger—the performance of miracles—he asks: “suppose the king sent his messenger to the head of a village asking him to surrender to him. As is customary for any messenger who is sent by his king, the messenger should carry a letter from the king. The messenger, however, did not carry such a letter. Therefore, the head of the village did not trust the messenger and refused to surrender to him. Is it then permissible for the king to punish the head of the village because he disobeyed him?”

Gerasimus raises another question when he presents the third sign of a true messenger—which is speaking in various common languages. Gerasimus asks: “suppose this king sends a foreign messenger to a tribe (the Syrians or the Byzantines [also known as “Rūm”]) for a royal affair; the messenger conveyed the royal message in a foreign language and consequently no one understood the king’s message. Is it then permissible for the king to judge the tribe because they did not obey his command?”

In Part 3, where he responds to the possible objection to the Christian faith that more than half of the world’s population have no knowledge of Christ, or do not worship Him, Gerasimus concludes his answer with two analogies. The first one is a new set of hypothetical actions taken by the people who heard the king’s message in the analogy of the king calling for a royal banquet, and the second one is a quick allusion to the parable of the sower in the New Testament. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

3.3 Parable of the Sower

At the end of his response to the previously mentioned objection that the majority of the world population does not know Christ, Gerasimus refers to the biblical parable

of the sower (Mark 4 and Matthew 13) rather than providing exhaustive commentary. Evidently, he is assuming that his audience is familiar with it, and he is just reminding them of it.

3.4 Parable of a Faithful Servant Who Offers a Gift to His Master

In Part 5, in response to the objection made against the Christian faith that God disregarded the destruction of churches, Gerasimus explains that God did not disregard His people but that He is disciplining them. God refuses our supplications and prayers when we anger Him by our deeds (5:42-43). To illustrate his point Gerasimus presents a short analogy:

It is like a sultan who has plentiful riches. His stores are full of money, splendid clothes, valuable jewels and other precious materials. 45 When one of his servants offers him a gift (even if it is the cheapest and lowest item), if he is satisfied with his servant, it will please [the king] and he will honor and exalt the gift (just to honor [the servant], not because he desires [the gift]). But if he is angry with [the servant], [the king] will throw the gift out and will not pay attention to it, for he does not need it (5:44-46).

3.5 Parable of the King who Saves His Captive Servant

In Part 5, 2nd Objection, Gerasimus illustrates his point with the following analogy in response to the question of why Christians honor the passion of Christ:

It is similar to a servant who fell into the harshness of captivity to the point of almost perishing. He was in iron chains and in the most oppressive prison. His master seized the opportunity to redeem him [at the cost of] himself, so [the master] endured the hardship that the servant would have had to endure. [The master] put on the servant's filthy garment and the chains of captivity on his feet, and, in this way, saved [the servant] from that harshness and from total destruction. The servant, after his liberation, and because of the favor of his master, continued to walk around with chains and with the filthy cloth of captivity, proclaiming to everyone the favor and goodness of his master toward him (5:90-94).

3.6 Parable of the Good Physician and His Favored Apprentice

To explain the freewill of man, and that human action is not predetermined by God, Gerasimus presents the following analogy. A good physician owns a shop that contains many types of medicines. He had an apprentice who was like a son to him. Out of his love for him he made the young man owner of the shop and all that was in it.

However, he warned him not to use a certain ointment, which he stored in a clay pot, because it was meant for people with a cold temperament and for the elderly. If any young man used the ointment, it would burn his good mood and scorch his humor. The friends of the apprentice envied him and convinced him that the ointment was not harmful. In fact, they convinced him that whoever used it would never die. The apprentice believed his friends and used the ointment. Immediately his body burned and the ointment flowed in his veins like poison. The master took the apprentice out of the shop. The apprentice's symptoms worsened and the young man was on the brink of death. The master was moved to mercy, and he made a healing medicine for his apprentice (5:159-175).

After presenting the analogy, Gerasimus asks his readers, "If the master had hidden the clay pot from his apprentice, the apprentice would have said, 'my master deceived me,' and, if the master healed him immediately, the student would not have appreciated the benefit of obedience and [experienced] the harm of disobedience" (5: 176-179). He then interprets the parable:

The physician is God Almighty. The store is paradise, its necessities, and its fruits. The cream that was forbidden from [the apprentice], that is not appropriate for the youngster but for elders, is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (that is not befitted for beginners in the knowledge of God). The apprentice is the first man. His envious [peers] are the devils. The sickness, pain and tribulations [which he experienced] are the problems of the sinful nature after disobedience and the fall. The exit of the deceived from the store is the exit of Adam from paradise. The healing medicine is the Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist (5: 180–187).

3.7 Parable of the Incognito King

Perhaps the most common analogy used by Arab Apologists to present the Christian faith is that of the *incognito king*. Gerasimus uses this analogy in his response to the 4th and 6th Objections. Critics of the Christian faith ask whether God did not have the power to save Adam and repel the deceitfulness of Satan. Furthermore, the opponents of Christianity consider the Christian belief in the Incarnation a weakness of the deity and, therefore, ask whether God could not have saved humankind in a less painful way (5:188-192). Gerasimus uses analogy to conclude his response to the 4th Objection.

A certain king is said to have four virtues: justice, power, mercy and wisdom. A high ranking servant rebelled and the king expelled him. The servant, seeking revenge, built an inn and planted a garden on its ground which he used to lure the passersby. When a victim entered the inn, the servant had him thrown into an abyss. The king, who was aware of the rebellious servant's character (harsh, unjust, wicked and deceiving) was faced with a dilemma. If he neglected the prisoners, his mercy would be compromised; if he exercised his power, he would not be acting justly; and if he overlooked and did not free the prisoners, his power would be weakened. Thus,

he dressed in servant's clothing and went to the inn. But he did not respond to the rebellious servant's temptation. The evil servant became suspicious and imprisoned him. When the king entered the prison he revealed his true identity. The royal soldiers hastened to help him and were astonished by such condescension. The evil servant was shocked when he recognized the king and became confused. With this confrontation, the evil servant's power diminished and felt he was perishing because he had transgressed, unjustly and wrongfully, against the one who could not be defeated by deception (5:214-240).

While the analogy is a common one, Gerasimus alters the conclusion slightly from that of *Kitāb al-Burhān*⁵⁰ and the *Disputation of Georg the Monk*.⁵¹ These authors concluded the analogy with a dialogue between the king and the evil servant. The evil servant defends himself by saying that people chose to go with him. The king rejects this explanation and forces the servant to admit that he tempted them. The king then binds the evil servant in chains forever, destroys the garden, and returns triumphantly to his kingdom.

This difference does not change the main structure of the analogy, which are easily recognizable for a Christian audience: humankind as a servant of God, the Fall, Satan tempting and deceiving humankind, God's plan for salvation, the Incarnation, Satan tempting Christ, the crucifixion, the resurrection, and Judgment Day.

Gerasimus presents the analogy first of all to illustrate, simply, the ingenuity of the plan of redemption, borrowed from medieval society. He wanted to explain the soteriological function of the Divine disguise. He presents a comparison between Christ liberating humankind from the dominion of death and a noble king going into the land of his enemy in disguise to persuade the captives whom the enemy has taken as slaves to return back to their rightful lord.⁵² The analogy can be traced back to the third-century Christian writer Origin, who was inspired by Paul's phrase that Christ "assumed the form of a servant" (Philippians 2:7).

The analogy is constructed in response to potential objections to the logic of Christian salvation history. The central point of the analogy is that it is not a question of God's weakness but only of a *restraint of power* on God's part with a view to bestowing His mercy upon humankind and of facilitating a true defeat of Satan: "The purpose of our Savior [coming into the world] was not to save us by might and coercion, but by justice and fairness" (5:193). Gerasimus's message is that God's use of power at the expense of His mercy would have been unjust, whereas using His mercy at the expense of His power is just, wise and, ultimately, effective (5:194-195).

A strategic factor of Christ's human "disguise" lies in the fact that Satan did not know whom he was tempting when he was standing face to face with Christ. The

50 Cachia and Montgomery 1960-1961, 133-135.

51 Nicoll 1820, 423-426.

52 Roggema 2004, 128.

analogy emphasizes the ingenuity of that strategy by explaining what would have happened if God had not used a disguise. If God were to come upon Satan in his full might, Satan would have objected that God extorted from him, forcefully, the one who, voluntarily, had become his own (5:199). As Satan clothed himself with a snake's body to hide his true nature and deceive the first man, likewise, God clothed Himself with a human body to hide His true nature from the deceiver. God took on the deceived nature of humanity and concealed in it His divinity. Thinking that God was human, Satan wrestled with Him, as he had done with Adam and Eve, who represent humanity, in the garden, and consequently, once Satan was defeated, our Savior had the right to retrieve humanity because the deceiver is the one who provoked the confrontation. Furthermore, in doing this, God completed His effective attributes: mercy, power, justice, and wisdom (5:196-207).

The notion of the just deception and defeat of Satan can be traced back to the thought of Ephrem the Syrian, who stresses the importance of Satan not being constrained. In his *Hymns of Virginity*, Ephrem portrays the temptation of Christ by Satan (Matt. 4:1-11) as part of the strategy to outmaneuver Satan by confusing him about Christ's true identity.⁵³ Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa both describe Christ's veil of human nature as part of the strategy against Satan and stress that he was justly paid back according to his own intent.⁵⁴

3.7.1 A Second Version of the Incognito King

In the 6th Objection, Gerasimus reiterates the same analogy but uses different scenes, actors, and symbols in his response to the question of why God sent prophets and the Law to the children of Israel and neglected all other nations, and why salvation of all nations was delayed until the coming of Christ. According to Gerasimus, God did not neglect the nations, but salvation was delayed to complete the mystery of the Divine Economy (5:394-404). To conclude his answer, he presents a different version of the analogy of the *incognito king*. A certain king was said to have all the virtues that are appropriate for a good leader. Some of his soldiers rebelled and provoked the people to rebel also. The king had the power to reclaim his subjects by force, but out of his justice and meekness, he refused to do so. Some of the rebels returned to the king and the king honored them and appointed rulers over them to be his representatives until he himself would return to reign. He returned as a friend and brother, and not with power and might. When the people saw his humility they did not trust him and

⁵³ Mcvey 1989, 310-315.

⁵⁴ Egan 1989, 39:13 — Gregory Nazianzen: "after he [Satan] had deceived us with the hope of becoming gods, he was himself deceived by the screen of the flesh." Gregory of Nyssa: "Just as he [Satan] deceived humankind through the lure of pleasure so too is he deceived by the screen of humankind."

tortured and insulted him. Many of them denied who he was and rebuked him; only a small remnant believed him, so the king left that city. However, before going back to his dwelling, he gave all the royal gifts and the royal paraphernalia to the remnant that believed in him. He also put on them the royal armor that ensured they would not be defeated. Then he sent them back to the rebellious country to subdue it under his authority. They went and subdued the rebellious followers with the king's authority (5:468-509).

The main themes of the parable remain the same; however, Gerasimus adds some other details and symbolism. The people who first submitted to the king and later did not believe in him are the Old Testament Jewish people who believed in God. God sent Moses and the Law to prepare them for His coming. When the time of His Incarnation had come, He came as one of them; most did not believe Him and crucified Him; only a few of them believed in Him. After His resurrection, He gave to all who believed in Him, from all nations, the gifts of the Holy Spirit (5:510-525). The royal armor that the enemy cannot penetrate is the Divine Law (5:524). Because the Jews did not believe in Christ, Gerasimus argues, their city (Jerusalem) was first destroyed by Titus in 70 A.D. and then defeated by Christian Crusaders in Gerasimus's own time (5:525-528).

3.8 Parable of the Owner of a Village Who Offers Help to His Farmers

In the 5th Objection, Gerasimus examines the relation between the Mosaic Law in the Old Testament and the Law in the New Testament. He first presents the questions that his opponents ask: why did God ordain duties that He would later change or abolish? Why did he abolish them if they were beneficial? And if they were not beneficial, why did He order the children of Israel to keep them in the first place? (5:263-264). He answers these questions by saying that the purpose of two laws is to allow humanbeings to gradually arrive at the knowledge of God's full divinity (5:308-311). To illustrate his point he recounts an analogy. A certain village and its lands are uncultivated and its inhabitants are lazy to the point that they are satisfied with wild plants and the fruit that the plants bear. One of them decides to cultivate the portion of land assigned to him. When the owner found out about this he blessed the servant and offered him grain seed to plant. The villager farmed the land and offered the owner of the village its harvest. The servant and his followers become the owner's employees. After a few years, the owner appointed one of them to be the head of the group and gave them vine shoots to plant because vines are a longer lasting crop than grain. After a few years he came with branches of olive trees and asked that they be planted. He told the villagers that when the olive trees grew, the vines beneath them would wither. The olive trees would remain for them and their children forever. The farmers believed him and did what he asked them to do (5:357-374). Gerasimus then interprets the parable:

The village is the world. The owner of the village is the Creator and the Lord of all. Its lands are the hearts of people. The uncultivated plants are bad thoughts and their fruits are sin. The first man (from the people of the village) who sowed and cultivated the land is Abraham. The seed is the conversation of God with Abraham, His test of him, and His promise of reward for his faith. The [next] leader is Moses. The branches of vines are the Law. The coming of the owner with the olive branches is the coming of our Lord with the divine commandments (that are light and guidance) and their reward in the coming world with eternal bliss that has no ending. (5:375–384).

Though this analogy is inspired by the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:1-23 and Luke 8:4-15, Gerasimus adds the biblical symbolism of branches of vines and olive trees. According to Isaiah 5:1-6 and Matthew 20:1-16, 21:33-41, the vine represents the Law in the Old Testament. The Bible symbolizes the righteous man as an olive tree.⁵⁵

al-Gazālī also talks about the olive tree in his mystical interpretation of the Qur’anic verse of light: “God is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is as if there were a niche and within it a lamp, the lamp enclosed in glass, the glass as it were a brilliant star lit from a blessed tree, *an olive*, neither of the east nor of the west whose oil is well-nigh luminous.”⁵⁶ According to al-Gazālī, the olive tree is the rational and illuminative spirit:

The tree in the symbol is the olive, which gives oil producing the most radiant illumination. So the rational spirit multiplies, establishes and fixes all knowledge. Illumination can be infinitely multiplied, therefore a tree like the olive, whose oil can multiply light infinitely is entitled to be called blessed above other trees like fruit trees, whose fruit is consumed in use.⁵⁷

We can see the similarities between the two interpretations. Both associate light with the olive tree and both elevate the olive tree above all other kinds of fruits.

3.9 Analogy of the Physician Who Sent His Disciple Ahead of Him

In the 6th Objection, Gerasimus argues against the accusation that Moses had not fulfilled the three signs of the true disciple (5:394-396). Gerasimus answers his opponents by saying that Moses was aware of the limitations of the law he brought, and knew that its status could not last forever (5:407). To illustrate this point Gerasimus presents another analogy, though he does not interpret its symbols:

An appropriate analogy here is that of a skilled physician who wants to purge [a patient of] a large amount of bad humors through the use of a laxative. He first sends one of his students [to prescribe] a dietary law, ordering [the patient] to use it for a period of time until the discomfort eased and the release was accelerated. The law [given by the student] was appropriate for a

⁵⁵ Cf. Psalm 128:3, 52:8; Jeremiah 11:16; Hosea 6:14; Romans 11:17.

⁵⁶ Sūrah 24: 35.

⁵⁷ Gairdner 1924, 29-30.

period of time. Once it was complete, the master himself arrived with a stronger, more refined, final medicine. He gave it to [the patient], in order to release the bad mixture that was trapped inside of him. Once [the patient's body] was purged, [the master] revised the first [dietary] law and gave [the patient] a new law, instructing him to use it to maintain his health. (5: 410-415).

3.10 Analogies Used to Explain the Trinity and the Incarnation

In addition to the parables used in the *Apology*, Gerasimus uses a number of classical analogies taken from the writings of the Church Fathers to explain the mystery of the Trinity and the Incarnation:

1. The Sun: the disk, the light and the heat (*qurṣ, daw', suḥūnah*) (Part 1)

As the sun has its *cause*, its disk, and its *effects*, its light and heat which reaches creation, likewise we can say that God is the cause and his effects are two, His Word and His Spirit. We cannot say that the sun, with its light and heat, is three suns; likewise we cannot say that God the Father, with His Word and Spirit, is three gods.

The sun, with its heat and light, warms up and gives light to the creatures below it. The two features (heat and light) are never separated from the sun, and everybody benefits from them according to their own predisposition, yet the heat and the light never change nor are they diminished. Likewise the mind of the Creator; He provides growth and life to everyone, and enlightens, by the light of His knowledge, everybody according to the predisposition that is in them. In doing this God does not decrease, neither His living power that infuses human bodies, nor His radiant light that enlightens the minds of humans.

2. The Human Being: mind, word, and spirit (*'aḳil, kalimah, rūḥ*) (Part 1)

Word and spirit come from the mind. Likewise God is Word and a Spirit, He is their principle, and their source. The Word, which is the Son, is generational (father to son), and the Spirit is processional (forward moving). They are eternal and are never separate from Him. Thus, as we cannot say that mind, word, and spirit are three minds; likewise, we cannot say that God the Father, the Word and the Spirit are three gods.

In Part 5, while discussing the 3rd Objection – challenges to the Trinity and incarnation – Gerasimus reminds his readers of two analogies (5:59-60). He returns to them in greater detail later in his answer to the Objection when he explains how the incarnation and the passion of Christ do not harm the divine nature:

The example of the union [with a human body] and the suffering of the Word of God in His human body without harming the divine nature parallels the example of the sun and the man (which we already mentioned). If the light of the sun, which is compared to the Word, encountered a piece of glass, the light would penetrate and fill the glass; yet, at the same time, the light

would not be separated from the disk that it emerged from. If someone purposes to step on the glass, or to hammer it, to break it, the glass would be stepped on, smashed, and broken, but none of these acts of violence would offend the light. Likewise, the Eternal Word of God was united with a human body and with a speaking soul. God filled it with His divinity, divinizing it. When the time was fulfilled, He suffered in the body and died, separating the soul from it. Like [the light,] the substance of divinity in the body was not harmed at all.

It is also similar to a word, which when generated from the mind is by its nature (as we mentioned before) naked, not [clothed] with a body, but when it is written in a book, it becomes incarnate. Yet, it is not separated from the mind that it emerged from, nor transformed or changed. It is in its entirety in the mind, undivided, [but it emerges from it] announcing and proclaiming the secrets of the mind with a spirit that is not separated from it. If someone intended to step on the sheet of paper [that the word is written on] or spit on it, or tear it up, despite the fact that these actions are [directed] toward the word, they would be ascribed only to the sheet of paper and ink. The actions would not reach, or enter, the word and its nature at all (vv. 115-125).

3. The Passersby and the Vineyard

If we pass by a vineyard, and we see it drilled, fenced, and planted, we realize without doubt that a person had such an effect on it. Yet we do not know whether this was one person or more than one, because what we see could have happened in either of the two ways (Part 1).

In this analogy, Gerasimus presents rhetorical questions to explain the concept of the Trinity.

4. Three Lamps in One House / Three Men Chanting a Psalm

In Part 6 Gerasimus explains that Christians do not worship three gods, but one God in substance and three in persons, he provides two analogies:

It is like three lamps, or three lights, lit in one house, and every one of them fills the house with its light. It would not be possible for anyone to differentiate the light of the one from the others and say, "I saw three lights in the house." Rather [the person would say] "I saw light." Or, if a man hears three persons chanting one Psalm, it would not be possible to say, "I listened to three Psalms." He would have to say, "I heard one Psalm, chanted by three persons" (5:83-84).

3.11 Apologetic Importance of the Analogies

These sorts of analogies are important in Christian Arab literature because they reflect indirect apologetic tactics. First, attention is diverted from *how* the redemption of humankind happened to *whether* it happened. The more the analogy convinces its skeptical audience that the Incarnation and the Crucifixion do not contradict reason, the greater the possibility that the audience may regard these as historically

true.⁵⁸ Second, the Qur'an itself encourages it. Christian Arabs had a tendency to *veil metaphors* for the Incarnation; well-known apologists from various Christian communities used terms like *hiğāb* (veil) and *'ihtigāb* (veiling) when referring to Christ and the Incarnation.

The Qur'an clearly plays a role in the development of this pattern. Sūrah 42:51 states that God cannot speak to humans “except through revelation from behind a veil, or through an apostle, who is sent to reveal His command.” Some Christian apologists quoted this verse, others referred to it implicitly, but, in any case, it is clear that they were eager to use it to support their claim that Christ was the veil through which God revealed Himself. These analogies were also used to Christianize the Qur'anic claim that Christ “did not disdain to serve and worship God;”⁵⁹ Christian authors claimed that Christ, being divine, willingly assumed the form of a servant for the sake of the Divine plan.⁶⁰

3.12 Format of the Analogies

Gerasimus does not use a uniform format to present analogies. They can be *hypothetical* assertions – “what if the king were to...” – which present the argument as a propositions; or *comparisons* – “like a king who...” – that draw on royal customs and *allegorical* tales that are meant to emphasize the particular theological point Gerasimus is making.

The aim of the analogies is twofold: first, to illustrate major doctrinal points, and second, to convey a sense that one's community is the divinely favored one and that other communities are astray.

The analogies are integrated with the text in different ways. Sometimes they are introduced as a *maṭal* (parable); in other cases, the parable begins with *bi-manzilat* (at the rank of, or equal to,) or *fa-ṣāra maṭaluhu maṭala* (his example is the example of...); other parables are simply introduced with *yušbihu* (this is like) or *ašbaha* (this was like). At the end of the analogy, Gerasimus often connects it with his initial point with the phrase, *ka-ḡālika, fa-kaḡālika* (likewise) which allows him to repeat doctrinal points and in this way strengthen the comparison.

58 Roggema 2004, 130.

59 Sūrah 4:172.

60 Cf. Swanson 1998, 297-318; Swanson 1994, 115-145.

3.13 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that Gerasimus consulted the writers of Christian apologies who used biblical analogies. He presents a summary of analogies and illustrations used by many Church Fathers, yet he also develops them, adding some elements and omitting others. The analogies are presented not only to defend the Christian faith but also to educate the Christian community in its own faith.

Muslim criticism of the use of parables is that only God himself is in a position to make a comparison between the Divine and the perceptible world. The Qur'an states that, "God sets forth the parable"⁶¹ and also affirms that humans should not do so because "God knoweth and ye know not."⁶² Given the analogies Gerasimus uses in the *Apology*, it is evident that Gerasimus was well aware of Muslim objections to the use of analogies, and they prompted him to write that minds cannot contain speech about God; what Gerasimus presents is a limited human attempt to understand the idea of God (Part 1). Therefore, when he examines the mystery of the Incarnation and the Trinity he reminds us that the Church Fathers recommended that such matters should be honored with silence (5:61-62).

⁶¹ Sūrah 16:74.

⁶² Sūrah 16:74.

4 An Analysis of Part 5

In the *Apology* Gerasimus uses two levels of debate in the apologetical writings. The first level is the scholarly polemic that took place between Muslim and Christian intellectuals. It intends to lay out the issues in complex theological and philosophical categories. The second level is a popular polemic that extended to a wider range of participants, and was aimed at expressing teachings in a more simplistic form.⁶³ This is indicative of the extent to which discussion of religion had spread; it no longer took place just among scholars, but common folk were also being urged to convert to Islam and therefore pressed into defending their beliefs.

Gerasimus uses the structure of formal debates. First, he describes the questioner's proof; second, he lays out the evidence; and third, he advocates the general validity of the proof. It is in this third step that he lays out his most important arguments.⁶⁴

Unlike in Parts 1 to 3 of the *Apology*, Gerasimus avoids the use of analogy because he is aware that many Muslim theologians and jurists did not accept analogy or consensus as legitimate evidence. The respondent is therefore, required to base his argument on a foundation that both he and his opponent would find acceptable. Many, especially the *Mu'tazila*, found a solution in rationalism. Christians were quick to adopt this approach and respondents used a combination of reason and commonly accepted scriptural arguments to make their points.⁶⁵

Gerasimus presents an objection by laying out a series of questions in such a way that as many objections as possible can be addressed. In nearly every Objection, he assumes that his Christian reader will participate in the position of the respondent and almost never the questioner. This can serve as a tool for his Christian readers to gain the upper hand in any potential debate and demonstrate the validity of the Christian view.

As a form of apologetic writing, such a presentation leads the reader to see the strength of Christian teaching in the face of difficult plausible questions. It also assists Christian intellectuals in adopting the developing debate structure and using it to their own advantage when they are called upon to defend their faith.

63 Cf. Graft 1926, 827; Griffith 2008, 75-105.

64 Cf. Keating 2006, 29-30.

65 Ibid. 30.

4.1 1st Objection: Christianity Is Not the True Religion

4.1.1 Summary of the Objection

- Although you claim that God’s name and power is honored throughout the world, there are more non-believers than believers in Him (vv. 2-5).
- Since God overlooked all the nations except Israel for thousands of years, other nations relied on religions that are equally plausible (vv. 6-9).
- With the ruin of your temples and the fall of your priesthood, with the defeat of your armies and loss of your worldwide influence, you now pay taxes to Muslims. Since your miracle working powers are gone, there is nothing to save you from the oppression of your enemies. Therefore, Christianity is not the true religion (vv. 10-17).

4.1.2 Context of the Objection

This objection originated in the context of *growing numbers of Christians converting to Islam*. It is not the purpose of this study to examine such social and religious phenomenon. Therefore, I will provide only a brief description of the context in which this objection developed. According to Richard Bulliet (1979, 81-82), the Abbasid period (A.D.750-1258) saw an unprecedented number of Christians accepting Islam. Based on the estimate of the Umayyad governor ‘Ubayd Allāh Bin Ziyād, as of the year A.D. 675, only about three percent of the population in Iraq had converted to Islam. However, beginning with the reign of Caliph Harūn al-Rašīd (A.D. 786-809), the rate of conversions increased dramatically. By the mid-ninth century, the Muslim population of Iraq is thought to have reached nearly forty percent.⁶⁶ This is also true for the other countries in the region. Such a social and religious phenomenon alarmed Christians. Christian apologetics at this time not only defended Christian beliefs but also endeavored to stem the tide of conversions away from the well established Christian church. Christian clergy and scholars were prompted to make their case in favor of Christianity in such a way as to defend its intelligibility and legitimacy in the face of Muslim criticism, as well as to calm fears and encourage confidence within the Christian population.⁶⁷

In this context, the Qur’anic dialogue began with Jews and Christians about the *true religion*. According to the Qur’an, the true religion had never changed:

⁶⁶ Cf. Levtzion 1990, 289-311; Reinink 1993, 165-187.

⁶⁷ Keating 2006, 12.

“Do you claim that Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and their descendants were Jews or Christian?” say: “Do you know more than God, Who is more unjust than he who conceals a testimony given to him by God? For God is not ignorant of what you do.”⁶⁸

The Qur’an teaches that God’s verbal revelation is written on a heavenly template which represents his word.⁶⁹ This original template known as the “Mother of the book”⁷⁰ has been made known to humankind at various times, in the Torah through Moses,⁷¹ in the Psalms through David,⁷² and in the Gospels through Jesus.⁷³ The message of the Qur’an is said to confirm these earlier scriptures, but its authority is greater than theirs.⁷⁴ The Qur’an issues a divine declaration: “What we have revealed to you from the Book is the truth, confirming what was before it.”⁷⁵ However, according to the Qur’an, Jews and Christians fail to recognize the Qur’an’s continuity and authority.⁷⁶ Thus the Qur’an rejects their claims of possessing full religious truth by asserting its own continuity with Abrahamic monotheism and insisting that Jews and Christians conceal testimonies concerning this fact:

The Jews say: “the Christians promote nothing” and Christians say: “the Jews promote nothing,” while they both recite scripture. Those who do not know speak likewise. God will judge between them on the Day of resurrection about that which they differ.⁷⁷

The Qur’an also opposes the biblical assertion that Abraham belongs only to the Jewish and Christian communities by affirming that Abraham was a monotheist just like Muslims are; therefore, Jews and Christians have no special status in God’s view:

The Jews and Christians have said, “We are God’s children and His beloved ones.” Say: “Why then does He punish you for your sins? Rather, you are human beings whom He has created. He forgives whom He wills and punishes who He wills. God has dominion over the heavens and the earth and what is between them, and to Him is the return.”⁷⁸

The debate continued by equating religious truth is equated with political success. The Qur’an declares Islam’s destiny to military superiority and political

68 Sūrah 2:140.

69 Sūrah 85:22.

70 Sūrah 3:7: 13:39, 43:4.

71 Sūrah 3:39; 6:154.

72 Sūrah 4:163; 17:55; 21:105.

73 Sūrah 5:46.

74 Sūrah 5:48.

75 Sūrah 35:31; Also Q 2:4, 41, 91, 97; 3:3; 4:47; 6:92; 5:46-48, 10:94.

76 Sūrah 2:88, 91, 170. These verses contain dialogues with Jews on true religion.

77 Sūrah 2:113.

78 Sūrah 5:18.

success of because it follows the true religion: “It is He who has sent his apostle with guidance and the religion of truth, over all religion, however hateful the associators find it.”⁷⁹ From a Muslim perspective, God’s faithfulness to his prophets and his people means that He gives them the power to overcome their enemies.⁸⁰ al-Razi, in his commentary on Sūrah 9:33, considers the ascendancy of Islam over other religions to be an indisputable proof of Mohammad’s prophethood; God demonstrated that Mohammad was his prophet through political supremacy.⁸¹ al-Razi argues that there are three means by which this superiority can be achieved: first, by arguing and demonstration; second, by numerical growth and prosperity, and third, by victory and conquest. Ibn Taymiyya argues that the political ascendance of the Muslim community demonstrates that Mohammad is truly God’s prophet. God granted victory to the prophets who came before Mohammad and punished their enemies and did the same for Mohammad and his community to an even greater degree.⁸² The success that God gives to the Muslim community is seen to be both religious and political, for “he made it conqueror with proof and a clear argument, and He had made it conqueror by power and spear.”⁸³

In regard to Christianity, Ibn Taymiyya recognizes that Christianity achieved some political success, but because of and through that success, Christian doctrine was corrupted:

To Christians one can say that they were continually conquered, overcome, and scattered throughout the earth until Constantine was victorious and established the true religion of Christianity in sword, killing those Jews and pagans who opposed him. However, the religion he made victorious was changed and corrupted and not the religion of Christ.⁸⁴

Ibn Taymiyyah asserts that with the coming of Mohammad, God’s Kingdom on earth was established to a degree never achieved before:

When God sent Mohammad, the absolute oneness of God and His service alone with no rivals resulted in a conquest as no people had never known it, nor had any prophets ever accomplished such... Most of the people of the earth are with Mohammad... [He and his people] brought about the conquest by the religion of the Lord, from the eastern part of the world to the west, by word and deed.⁸⁵

79 Sūrah 6:19, repeated twice in Sūrah 9:33 and 48:28.

80 Sūrah 3:12; 24:55; 40:51; 37:171-173.

81 al-Razi 1938, 32-33.

82 Michael 1984, 177; cf. Roberts 2011, 210-235.

83 Michael 1984, 163.

84 Ibid. 362.

85 Ibid. 362-373.

Gerasimus presents the points of the objection in a structure similar to that used by al-Razi and Ibn Taymiyya. In response to the statement that “pagan temples are replaced by the temple of saints,” the objector argues that what is actually seen is the opposite, “the temples are ruined and humbled,” and Christians are under the protection of their Muslim enemies (vv. 11-16). Objection 1 concludes with: “your religion is not the religion of truth; otherwise, (as we mentioned before) the Ḥanif’s religion would have been true in the past, and the Muslim religion would now be the religion of truth” (v. 17).

4.1.3 Response to the Objection

Gerasimus’s response to the objection that Christianity is not the true religion can be divided into three sections. In the first he examines the spread of Christianity; in the second, the differences between the pagan message and the Christian one, and the third, reasons for Muslim ascendancy over Christianity.

The spread of Christianity

To complete the answer to the first section of the objection, it is necessary to refer to Part 3 of the *Apology* where Gerasimus examines, in detail, the spread of Christianity and responds to the criticism that Christianity is not the most widespread religion. As he begins his response to this objection, he states: “We already answered this before, and there is no need to say more than we already said” (v. 18). In the third part he examines how the three signs of the true disciple and true religion are evident in the Christian disciple. He also responds to the objection made against the spread of the Christian faith. Although an edited translation of Part 3 of the *Apology of Gerasimus* is not included in this book, it is helpful to quote the section in Part 3 where Gerasimus responds to the objection made against the spread of Christianity, with English translation:

وَأَمَّا الْأُولَى مِنْهَا وَهِيَ الْكِرَاةُ الْعَامَّةُ، فَمِنْ الْأُمُورِ نَفْسِهَا الظَّاهِرَةُ (الَّتِي لَا تَحْتَاجُ إِلَى بَرْهَانٍ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ هَذَا) وَهُوَ [أَنَّ] اسْمَ الْمَسِيحِ رَبًّا مَعْبُودًا وَمَسْجُودًا لَهُ إِلَى وَقْتِنَا هَذَا. مِنْ أَقَاصِي الْمَشَارِقِ إِلَى الْمَغَارِبِ، وَمِنْ طَرْفِ الْقِبْلَةِ إِلَى طَرْفِ الشَّمَالِ، لَمْ يَبْقَ مَوْضِعٌ فِي الْوَسْطِ إِلَّا وَدُكِرَ الْمَسِيحُ فِيهِ بِالْعِبَادَةِ وَالْكَرَامَةِ الْوَافِرَةِ. فَتَمَّتْ مِنْ هَهُنَا ثُبُوتُهُ دَاوُدَ، حَيْثُ تَقَدَّمَ فِي زُبُورِهِ قَائِلًا وَمُنَادِيًا عَنْهُمْ: "هَكَذَا فِي كُلِّ الْأَرْضِ خَرَجَ مَنْطِقَهُمْ، وَفِي أَقْطَارِ الْمَسْكُونَةِ اثْبَتَتْ كَلَامَهُمْ." لِأَنَّ بِنْيَايِيدَ مُرْسِلَهُمْ، وَيَكُونُهُ مَعَهُمْ (كَمَا وَعَدَهُمْ)، لَمْ يَفْتَنَّهُمْ وَلَا مَوْضِعٌ مِنْ أَرْبَعِ أَقْطَارِ الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا وَنَادُوا فِيهَا، مُكْمَلِينَ غَرَضَ مُعَلِّمِهِمْ وَوَصِيَّتِهِ لَهُمْ. فَإِنْ قَالَ مُعْطَلُ الْإِيمَانِ: "لَيْسَ الْأَمْرُ كَذَلِكَ! لِأَنَّا تَرَى فِي وَقْتِنَا هَذَا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ نِصْفِ الْعَالَمِ لَا يَعْرِفُ الْمَسِيحَ، أَوْ يَعْرِفُونَهُ وَلَا يَعْبُدُونَهُ." أَجَبْنَاهُ عَلَى صِفَةِ الْمُعَانَدَةِ أَوَّلًا، ثُمَّ عَلَى صِفَةِ الْمُسَاخَةِ. فَأَمَّا عَلَى سَبِيلِ الْمُعَانَدَةِ فَإِنَّا لَا نُسَلِّمُ إِلَيْهِ هَذِهِ الْقَضِيَّةَ لِكَيْتَا نَكْذِبُهَا، لِأَنَّ الْأَمْرَ بِالصِّدْقِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِالْمَسِيحِ فِي الدُّنْيَا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ غَيْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ. وَأَمَّا عَلَى سَبِيلِ الْمُسَاخَةِ فَإِنَّا نَعْمَلُ هَكَذَا: "إِنْ كَانَتْ الْكِرَاةُ صَارَتْ وَتَكَامَلَتْ فِي سَائِرِ أَقْطَارِ الْأَرْضِ (كَمَا دَكَّرْنَا)، فَتَصَلَّبَتْ قُلُوبُ قَوْمٍ مِنْ سَامِعِيهَا وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا، أَوْ إِتَمُّوا فِي ذَلِكَ

الوقت، ثُمَّ بَعَدَ هَذَا عَادُوا إِلَى كُفْرِهِمْ (كَالْكَلْبِ إِلَى قَيْئِهِ) لَمَّا عَلَبَتْهُمْ حَاضِرَاتُ هَذَا الْعَالَمِ، فَلَيْسَ مَلَامَةٌ تَحْقُ، مِنْ هَذَا الْوَجْهِ، عَلَى الرَّسُولِ وَلَا عَلَى مُرْسِلِهِ. " لِأَنَّ مِنَ الْمَعْلُومِ الْبَيِّنِ أَنَّ الدَّعْوَةَ لَيْسَتْ قَسْرِيَّةً، وَلَا كَانَ الْإِنْتِقَادُ إِلَى هَذِهِ الْأَمَانَةِ اقْتِدَارِيًّا وَاعْتِصَابِيًّا، لَكِنَّ اخْتِيَارِيًّا. وَلَوْلَا كَانَ كَذَلِكَ لَقَدْ كَانَ هَذَا الدِّينَ يَغْتَلُ مِنْ هَذَا السَّبَبِ، وَ[كَانَتْ] تَتَقَوَّى حُجَّةُ مُعْطَلِهِ عَلَيْهِ بِظُهُورِ عَيْبِهِ.

وَلِكَيْمَا تَوْسَعُ الْحَدِيثُ، وَتُطْبِلَ الشَّرْحُ فِي هَذَا الْجَوَابِ، بِإِقْتِنَاعِ صَاحِبِهِ، تَقُولُ: "إِنْ كَانَ رَسُولُ ذَلِكَ الْمَلِكِ (الَّذِي تَقَدَّمْنَا بِدَرْكِهِ فِي مَثَلِنَا فِي هَذَا الْمَعْنَى) عَمِلَ أَمْرَ مَوْلَاهُ، وَدَعَا كَافَّةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ تَحْتَ سُلْطَانِهِ، فَتَأَخَّرَ قَوْمٌ مِنَ الْمَدْعُوعِينَ لِأَسْبَابٍ مُخْتَلِفَةٍ، إِمَّا عَنْ اسْتِرْخَاءٍ وَكَسَلٍ، وَإِمَّا لِإِبْتَارِهِمْ مَا فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ (وَهُمْ مُعْتَادُوهُ) مِنَ الْأَطْعَمَةِ عَنْ تِلْكَ الْمَلِكِيَّةِ الْجَلِيلَةِ الْقَدْرِ، [وَإِمَّا] لِأَجْلِ غُلْظِ طِبَاعِهِمْ وَعَمِي بَصِيرَتِهِمْ، وَإِمَّا إِيْتَهُمْ (لِأَجْلِ نَهْمَةِ بَطُونِهِمْ وَصِعْرِ ثَفُوسِهِمْ) لَمْ يُصَيِّرُوا إِلَى حَيْثُ نُصَمِّدُ تِلْكَ الْمَوَائِدُ لِاجْتِمَاعِ الْمَدْعُوعِينَ عَلَيْهَا، فَاقْتَنَعُوا بِأَحْسَنَ مَا وَجَدُوهُ مِنَ الطَّعَامِ (كَالْأَطْفَالِ فِي عَفْوَهِمْ) وَامْتَلَأُوا مِنْهُ، فَعَاتَبْتَهُمْ تِلْكَ الْأَطْعَمَةُ الْمَلِكِيَّةُ، وَإِمَّا أَتَتْهُمْ لَمْ يُصَدِّقُوا الدَّاعِيَ لِأَجْلِ عِظَمِ قَدْرِ شَأْنِ الدَّعْوَةِ وَخِلَافَةِ شَرَفِ صَاحِبِهَا، وَمَا يُشَاكِلُ ذَلِكَ. فَإِنَّ حُجَّةَ الْمُتَأَخِّرِينَ (الْمُقَدَّمِ ذِكْرُهُمْ) [هَلْ هِيَ] عَلَى الْمَلِكِ أَمْ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ؟ أَيْضًا إِنْ كَانَ الزَّارِعُ لَمْ يَشْفِقْ عَلَى الْبِنَارِ، لَكِنَّهُ أَلْفَاهُ حَتَّى عَلَى الصُّحُورِ، وَعَلَى الطَّرِيقِ، وَفِي الشُّوْكِ، وَالْأَرْضِ الْبَاطِرَةِ، فَلَمْ يَنْبَسْ وَيُسْمِرْ مِنْهُ إِلَّا الْأَوَّلُ (وَهُوَ الْوَاقِعُ فِي الْأَرْضِ الطَّبِيبَةِ) فَأَيُّهُ مَلَامَةٌ تَحْقُ عَلَى الزَّارِعِ؟"

Regarding the First Objection one which is general preaching, it is one of the obvious matters that has no need for further proof, [to say] that up to our current time, the name of Christ our Lord is still worshiped and [he is still] bowed down to. From the farthest [corner] of the east to the farthest [corner] of the west, from the end of the Qiblah⁸⁶ to the farthest extent of the north, there is no place where Christ's name is not mentioned in worship and [given] abundant honor. This has fulfilled the prophecy of David, who said in his Psalm⁸⁷ about [the disciples] "For [in this way] their logic⁸⁸ has gone out through all the earth and their speech has spread to the ends of the world."⁸⁹ By the strength of the One who sent them, and by being with them as He promised, nowhere in the four corners of the earth has not been overtaken by their call. [In this way] they fulfilled the purpose and command of their Master.

But the objector of the faith claims, "The matter is not like this! For we see in our current time that more than half of the world does not know Christ, or they know Him but are not worshiping Him."

We respond to him at first with in a stubborn way, then with a forgiving manner Determined, we do not surrender this matter to him, but we disprove it, because it is untrue, [thus we say:] There are more believers in Christ in the world than non-believers. And in a forgiving manner we say, if preaching is done and carried out in

⁸⁶ *Qiblah*: The south, as defined in terms of the direction of the *ka'bah* — the direction Muslims face during their prayer.

⁸⁷ Here, for "psalm," Gerasimus uses the Quranic term *Zabbūr*, instead of the biblical term *Mazmūr*.

⁸⁸ He uses the Arabic word *Manṭiq* which means "logic."

⁸⁹ Psalm 19:4.

all the countries of the earth (as we mentioned) but the hearts of some listeners are hardened and they do not believe, or, they believed at one time, then went back to their infidelity (as the dog to its vomit) when the pleasure of this world overcame them, in this respect, no blame is due to the disciple, or to the one who sent him, for it is well known and proven that the preaching [to call people to Christian faith] is not coercive, and submission to this faith is not by power, or extortion, but by choice. If it were not so, this religion would have become, for such reason, unhealthy, and the objection of its obstructers would have been strengthened in revealing the defect [of the faith].

And, because we do not want to talk too much and prolong the interpretation in this answer [to try to convince the obstructer of the faith] we say: When the disciple of that king (already mentioned in our parable) executed his master's command, he invited all who were under the king's authority. However, some of those invited delayed for different reasons, either out of laziness or laxity, or because they preferred the food they had in their hands (which they were used to taking) more than the royal offering, which was majestic and honorable, or because of stubbornness of their nature and blindness of their sight, or, because of the craving of their bellies and the lowliness of their souls, and they did not attend the banquets that were prepared for the invited. They remained, instead, convinced that the food [in their hands] was best, and like mindless children, were satisfied with it, thus missing the royal food; or, they did not believe the one who invited them because they were impressed by the importance of the invitation and the majesty and honor of its owner; or similar [excuses]. Therefore, the excuses of the delayers (previously mentioned) are due to whom, the king or his disciple? [Similarly,] if the sower had no compassion on the seed, but threw it also on the rocks, on the road, in the thorns, and on uncultivated land, and no seed grew but the first one (that is, the one that fell on the good soil),⁹⁰ what blame is due to the sower? (Part 3).

He then discusses the reason miracles are not performed in his time as they were in the beginning of Christianity.

فَإِنْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ: "فَلِمَ لَا تَرَى مِثْلَ هَذِهِ الْأَعَاجِيبِ الْآنَ فِي الْمُعْتَمِدِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ؟" أَجَبْنَاهُ، إِنَّمَا صَارَ مِثْلُ هَذَا وَتَمَّ فِي وَقْتِهِ، عِنْدَمَا كَانَتِ الصُّورَةُ دَاعِيَةً إِلَيْهِ، وَلَوْلَا أَنَّ بِالْحَقِيقَةِ صَارَ مَا كَانَتِ الْبِشَارَةُ قَدْ انْتَشَرَتْ فِي سَائِرِ الْمَسْكُونَةِ. لِأَنَّ النَّارَ فِي بَدْءِ وَقْتِهَا، وَهِيَ بَعْدَ شَرَارَتِهَا، تَحْتَاجُ مَعُونَةَ تَلَحُّفِهَا مِنْ خَارِجٍ (وَهِيَ هُبُوبٌ رِيحٌ يَسِيرُ فِيهَا إِلَى أَنْ تَنْقَوَى) فَإِذَا مَا قَوِيَ هَيْبَتُهَا وَاضْطَرَامَتِهَا تَسْتَعِينُ عَنْ ذَلِكَ. كَذَلِكَ وَالنُّصَبَةُ الْجَدِيدَةُ إِنَّمَا تَحْتَاجُ إِلَى الْحَفْرِ عَلَيْهَا وَالسَّقْيِ إِلَى أَنْ تُعْرِقَ وَتَنْقَوَى.

If the speaker asks, "Why don't we see miracles performed by baptized believers like those [of early Christianity] in our time?" We answer him that this happened and was completed then because it was necessary then. If in reality this would not have happened, the Good News would not have spread throughout the world. When fire begins to ignite, and while it is still a spark, it

needs help from outside, that is, a wind blowing on it to strengthen it. When it blazes and the flames are strengthened, there is no need for [wind] anymore. Also a new plant needs digging and watering until it is rooted and strengthened (Part 3).

What we see here is a response loaded with biblical imageries, verses, and parables. Most probably the response was part of a sermon intended to edify Christians in their faith. It is also reminiscent of many liturgical chants in the Eastern Orthodox traditions. Gerasimus starts by quoting from Psalm 113:3-4: “From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets the name of the Lord is to be praised. The Lord is exalted over all the nations, his glory above the heavens,”⁹¹ and from Malachi 1 “My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offering will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations.”⁹² Gerasimus makes some changes in words, for example, instead of “south” he writes “*qiblah*” which is the direction for Muslim prayer. He then declares that this statement is fulfilling the prophecy of Psalm 19:4 and the promise of Jesus to be with his disciples in John 14-16. He then points out that the weakness is not in the Christian message, or faith; it is in the people who believed in the message, but when the pleasures of this world overcame them, they returned to their old lifestyle “like a dog to his vomit.” This analogy is taken from Proverbs 26:11 and 2 Peter 2:22. He then presents another biblical parable, that of the wedding banquet in Matthew 22:1-14, and continues to build his response by quoting and interpreting other biblical passages like 1 Corinthians 3:1-3, 2 Corinthians 3:14, and Ephesians 4:14-26. He concludes with the parable of the sower in Mark 4:14 and Matthew 13:1-9.

In his answer to the statement that “no miracle is being manifested in your midst,” Gerasimus believed that miracles were needed only for the time of Jesus and the apostles as witnesses to His person, to give proper credentials to Christ and to demonstrate that the gospel message was from God. With the end of the New Testament era, however, the need for miracles ceased. Gerasimus believed that the written word speaks for itself and is attended by the convincing power of the Spirit.⁹³

4.2 The Differences Between Pagan and Christian Messages

The second point that Gerasimus responds to is *the differences between pagan and Christian messages*. The term he uses for pagan is *hanif*. It occurs twelve times in the

⁹¹ This Psalm is chanted in the morning common prayer service of the Antiochian Syrian Church. See *Evening and Morning Prayer According to the Rite of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch*, 2002.

⁹² Malachi 1:11.

⁹³ Cf. Walvoord 1991, 173-174.

Qur'an, with seven of those associated with Abraham as the model of true faith.⁹⁴ This term has a double meaning within Syriac; it can mean both pagan and a monotheist believer. Christian Arabs adapted the Syriac term first to indicate “pagan,” “Gentile” or “Greek.”⁹⁵ We can clearly see that Gerasimus’s use of *hanpe* means “pagans” because he uses the same apologetic argument as the Church Fathers against pagans. His response is that Christians have one unified message while pagans have many and diverse opinions (vv. 21-23). Cyril of Alexandria, for example, in his defense against Julian the Apostate, defended the Christian message against his pagan counterpart’s critics in a similar way:

Readers, now you have heard and understood what drivell all this is! Opposing their opinions one to another, vociferating this or that, mixed up anyhow, without nuances, self-reflection, just at their pleasure; how can this avoid the impression that they are just guessing at the truth rather than knowing it? Indeed, some prefer just one universe, others a plurality; some of them believe that this universe is subject to creation, but others are opposed totally to this and opine on the contrary that the universe is imperishable and was not created; some say it is governed by a divine providence, others do without providence and allot the harmonious movements of the elements to automatic mechanisms and accidents; some say that the universe has a soul, others deny that it has a soul or a spirit. In short you could imagine that their theories on each detail are just tossed together, like mixed drinks!...So which one do we give our approval to, when we seek the truth, when we seek to start along on the irreproachable way from which every error is banished? Which of the thinkers quoted can we declare innocent of the wrong of telling a lie? Which do we reward as not having stumbled in some detail? Or rather how can we grant a right to teach others, to those who have traveled so far from the truth that they disagree not only with each other but even with themselves?⁹⁶

Gerasimus then argues that Christians are not like pagans. Despite the fact that Christians do not agree on the mystery of the Divine Economy, they all agree on the foundation of religion. They are the children of one baptism, follow the preaching of one gospel, share one hope, and are walking in one right royal way (vv. 24-26).

Gerasimus wants to portray Christianity positively by stressing Christian unity, which was one of the major and oldest themes in literary dialogues addressing Christian-Muslim relations. Christian writers emphasized that Christians follow one Gospel, one Baptism and one Law.⁹⁷ The message of Christian unity served two

⁹⁴ Abraham is mentioned as the model *hanif* in the Qur'an, in surahs 2: 135, 3: 67, 3:95; 4: 125, 6: 120, 123.

⁹⁵ Cf. Griffith 1995, 8-14; Griffith 1983, 118-121.

⁹⁶ Russel 2000, 192.

⁹⁷ An example of early dialogue on Christian unity is the dialogue between John of Sedra and the Muslim Emir. The first question that the Emir asked John is: “If Christian follows the same Gospel?” John’s answer: “it is one and the same Gospel to the Greek and the Romans and the Syrians and the Egyptians and the Ethiopians and the Indians and the Armaneans and the Persians and the rest of all people and languages.” For more on this see Penn 2003; Penn 2008; and Saadi 1998.

purposes. Theologically, it served as a proclamation of the universal Gospel and as a defense against the Muslim conquest and political pressure related to Christian division. Muslims accuse Christians of being divided and having no unified message, therefore they cannot govern themselves. Christian Arabs expressed their ability to govern themselves according to the criteria accepted by all Christians.⁹⁸

Gerasimus then concludes by stating that Christ died for all humanity and whoever believes in Him shall be saved. He quotes Philippians 2:10, “every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth and of those under the earth” (vv. 27-33).

The third point is *reasons for Muslims’ ascendance over Christians*. Eastern Christians saw the coming of Islam as God’s judgment on the Christians, the people who had erred. Various Eastern Christian writers expressed this view though interpreted it differently. The Monophysites and the Nestorians, who rejected the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451), and who were persecuted because of this, saw the coming of Islam as a judgment of God against their Melkite enemies who accepted the Council of Chalcedon. This is illustrated by Severus of Asmounein, the Coptic editor of the Egyptian *History of the Patriarchs* He wrote, “The Lord abandoned the army of the Romans as a punishment for their corrupt faith, and because of the anathemas uttered against them by the ancient fathers, on account of the Council of Chalcedon.”⁹⁹ The Melkites, on the other hand, saw the coming of Islam as a judgment of God against human transgressions.¹⁰⁰ Between the years 634 and 640 A.D. the Melkite, Maximus the Confessor, wrote a letter to Peter the Illustrious. In it he explained that Arabs succeeded in their conquest because of Christian sin:

For we have not conducted ourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ...We have all acted like wild beasts towards one another, ignorant of the grace of God’s love for humans, and the mystery of the suffering of the God who became flesh for our sake.¹⁰¹

Another source of the Melkite view of Islam is the writing of Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who, in his sermons, preached that Christians were experiencing the tribulation of Islam because of their own wickedness, and like Maximus, he thought that repentance would turn the Muslim advances.¹⁰² He used biblical analogy by recalling the Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar who destroyed Jerusalem, and whose action was interpreted by some of the Old Testament prophets such as Jeremiah, as evidence of God’s judgment on a decadent Israelite community. Gerasimus builds his defense upon such theological interpretations of Islam. As a Melkite, he adapted his

⁹⁸ Cf. Bertaina 2011, 89.

⁹⁹ Goddard 2000, 37.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Eichner 2011, 109-173.

¹⁰¹ Migne 1857-1886, 540.

¹⁰² Ibid. 540.

forebearers' interpretations; he reads the coming of Islam as a judgment from God because of Christian sin.

As to the reason for the ascendance of the nation of Mohammad (I mean the Muslims) over the children of the Holy Baptism, and their oppression of them, it is because [the Christians] strayed from keeping the Divine and life-giving commandments (that have in them what sustains the health of their souls) and inclined toward sin (that sickens their souls and destroys them). (v. 34)

He then moves to biblical imagery presenting the sword of Islam as a sort of discipline for Christians.

Moreover, there are many kinds of punishment. (I mean the punishments of the Lord are many and different, such as locusts, lice, snakes, rats, savage beasts, and others similar to this.) The sword of Islam, and its authority over the Children of Baptism, is but one form of these punishments, similar to the chastisement of [the Lord] in the past when the children of Israel deviated from the commandments of His laws. (vv.39-41)

He continues to build his treatise on biblical imageries from the prophets of the Old Testament stating that God has no desire for our worship when we anger Him; our supplications are vile if we deviate from His commandments and anger Him with our deeds (vv. 42-43).¹⁰³ Gerasimus concludes the response to the objection by stating that his purpose in this treatise is to prove the honor of the Christian religion and its truthfulness in and of itself. We don't judge any religion based on its follower's conduct but based on its teachings (v. 48). He then adds that a Christian's hope is not in this world but in the world to come (vv. 50-54).

4.3 Second Objection: Questions about the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ

4.3.1 Summary of the Objection

- How can Christians attribute a son to God, and then declare that God is three (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). In effect, it appears that Christians worship three gods (vv. 55-56)?
- In addition to that audacity, Christians actually describe Jesus with human characteristics, and say that he was crucified, that he died and that he was buried; yet they worship him as God (vv. 57-58).

103 This statement resonates with many prophetic warnings against the people of Israel in the Old Testament, such as in Amos 5:20-23 and Isaiah 1:1-20.

4.3.2 Context of the Objection

This objection is at the heart of Muslims' attacks against the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, Incarnation and Jesus's passion and death. The Qur'an clearly rejects this doctrine and condemns those who believe in such ideas:

The Jews call 'Uzair a son of God and the Christians say Christ is the son of God. That is a saying from their mouths. (In this) they but imitate what the unbelievers of old used to say. God's curse be on them, how they are deluded away from the truth!¹⁰⁴

That they said (in boast): "We killed Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, the apostle of God." But they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow for of a surety they killed him not.¹⁰⁵

O People of the book! Commit no excesses in your religion, nor say of God aught but the truth. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was no more than an apostle of God, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him, so believe in God and His apostles; Say not "Trinity," desist, it will be better for you, for God is One God, glory be to Him, far Exalted is He above having a Son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is God as a Disposer of affairs.¹⁰⁶

Underlying these words is a belief in the transcendence of God who is absolutely different from any creature and the fear of associating, or assimilating, any creatures with God. The Qur'an frequently asserts the transcendence of God, stating that "nothing is like Him."¹⁰⁷ The commentators of the Qur'an and Muslim theologians based their arguments on these verses and attacked the belief that Jesus is the Son of God and the Trinity.¹⁰⁸

4.3.3 Response to the Objection

In the response to this objection, Gerasimus considers three aspects of Christian dogma: first, the divine birth of Christ and the Holy Trinity; second, the passion of Christ and the reason Christians honor it; and third, the ground for God's condescendence.

104 Sūrah 9:30.

105 Sūrah 4:157.

106 Sūrah 4:171.

107 Sūrah 42:11.

108 For more detail about Muslim polemics against Christianity see, Thomas 2006, and Thomas 2002, 9-20, 37-48.

4.4 Divine Birth of Christ and the Holy Trinity

Gerasimus responds to two objections made against the Christian doctrines of the divine birth of Christ—God as one substance—and the Trinity. Muslims object to the first doctrine because for Muslims to say God is a substance (*ğawhar*) is to make God a visible body that occupies, and is affected by space and time. They object to the Trinity because they understand this doctrine to mean that “God is three gods” which associates God with other gods.¹⁰⁹ This is considered unforgivable blasphemy. To say that “the three persons of the Trinity are personal attributes of God (*hawāṣṣ muṣahḥaṣah*)” complicates the matter more because according to Muslims God has more than three attributes.¹¹⁰

As he did in response to the first Objection, Gerasimus reminds his readers that he has already examined this subject in Part 1 of the Apology. He then affirms that the statement “God is three persons” does not mean three gods, but that “God Almighty, His Word, and His Spirit are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” (vv. 59-60). This is similar to the Qur’anic description of Jesus as a spirit and a word from God: “The son of Mary, and apostle of God, and His Word, which he bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him.”¹¹¹ Gerasimus builds his case on foundations acceptable to Muslims, taking into account the way Muslims see Christ. While they refuse to speak of him as God’s son, they call Christ God’s word and spirit. If Christ is word and spirit that comes from God then surely he shares attributes of God in such a way that makes him divine as well as human.

Gerasimus then states that our minds cannot contain the idea of the divine birth of Christ and the doctrine of Trinity, thus it must “be honored by silence” (v. 61). Therefore, when we explain such an idea we resort to human language and analogies.

“How then could the mind imagine it? Or how do our tongues handle it? There is no ability to understand it, or to talk about its form, other than to say: “He was a Father, and a Son was begotten from Him,” either like a ray from the sun, or like a word from the mind, or another similar analogy (vv. 63-64).

Gerasimus borrows extensively from the theological discourses of the Cappadocian Fathers and John of Damascus¹¹² on the Son and His divine birth.¹¹³ He also makes use of the “without knowing how” principle of God’s actions that is a familiar part

¹⁰⁹ The term used by Muslims here is, *şirk*. It means to associate God with other gods.

¹¹⁰ Cf. al-Ḥūrī Būls 2007b, 9-58.

¹¹¹ Sūrah 4:171.

¹¹² Cf. Andrew 2002, 18-19; and Baher 2004.

¹¹³ John 2004, 334.

of Muslim theology, and was used by Arab Christian theologians such as ‘Ammār al-Baṣrī.¹¹⁴

Gerasimus then affirms that Christians do not worship three gods. When Christians speak about the Trinity they do not talk about three separate persons, but about God with one substance and three personal attributes (*ḥawāṣṣ muṣaḥḥaṣah*) (v. 79). He clarifies the idea of God as “one substance and three hypostases” (*ḡawhar wāḥid wa ṭalāṭat aqānīm*), stating that Christians do not intend to present three separate persons as in the separation of humans.

For if we were all gathered under one mind, we would share one substance, and one form would prevail over all of us, but we are different in many things (I mean, time, place, determined will, and other characteristics that are parting and dividing us are different from person to person. They can be found in one individual, but can never be shared with another one). It is to the point that these differences are not only present among us, but every person, from time to time, also experiences transformation, change, and fluctuation, from one state of mind to another. (vv. 76-78)

He then compares this to God and the persons of the Holy Trinity:

Regarding the Creator of all, although He consists of three persons, the difference is only in the “personified forms and attributes,” [that is to say], each person [of the Trinity] has special attributes that distinguish and differentiate Him from the other persons; however, the agreement between [the persons of the Trinity] are many because He is one God with one substance, one nature, one honor, and one eternity. ([These characteristics] are not uniform among us humans. Every one of us has a different nature.) The totality of every one of the three is in the totality of the other two, yet He is fully God; and the three are one God, and every one of the three is Himself the other two, except in the personal attributes (mentioned above). Through [these attributes] only, not by any other, [the human] mind distinguishes the one from the other (vv. 79-82).

In this section Gerasimus uses the same format John of Damascus uses in his book *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*.¹¹⁵ Following the steps of the Arab theologian, Gerasimus defends the belief that fatherhood and sonship in the Godhead are not comparable with their human equivalents and are of such a form that they do not violate God’s unity and transcendence. He uses the two arguments Abū Qurrah used in reply to those who deny the incarnation:¹¹⁶ First, if God were unable to beget a son, then he would be weak, and if he has begotten a son, he himself is no earlier in time than his Son. Unlike human beings, God’s willingness to have a son is identical to his act of begetting. Second, God must have authority but not merely over something

114 ‘Ammār concedes in his response to the Muslim objection against the idea of the Incarnation that some things cannot be known for certain: “We do not know how the divine united with the human. This is analogous to creation. We do not know how God creates.” Cf. Beamont 2003, 59; Beamont 2005, 79; and Griffith 1983.

115 Andrew 2002, 18-19.

116 Dick 1982, 224-228.

as inferior as a created being, so God must be over an equal who is of the same nature as himself, hence a son.

Gerasimus also uses most of the synonyms used by Arab Christian theologians to explain one substance (*ḡawhar wāhid*) with expressions like “one kind” (*naw’ wāhid*) and “one form” (*ṣūrah wāhidah*) that express the one substance of God.¹¹⁷ When he writes about the persons of the Trinity (*aqānīm*) he calls them, “the personified forms and attributes” (*al-aqānīm al-muṣaḥḥaṣat al-ūḡūh*). This usage is similar to what Arab Christian theologians called “personal attributes” (*hawāṣṣ dātyyah*). It explains that the three persons of the Trinity are personified attributes, or manifestations, of one substance.¹¹⁸ Arab theologians began with the notion of the divine attribute (*ṣifa*), which was well known in the Muslim tradition, and also represents the Muslim manner of reconciling the inevitable multiplicity of human language about God with the uniqueness of the divine essence.¹¹⁹ The theologians then add their own specifications to indicate that the persons are of a different order from the attributes. Ibn al-Ṭayyib speaks of attributes “specific to the divine essence” (*taḥuṣṣ al-dāt*) while other writers connect the relationship of God to creatures.¹²⁰ Paul of Antioch speaks of “substantial” (*ḡawhariyya*) attributes equivalent to names which the One God gives Himself.¹²¹

Gerasimus uses the Syriac word *qnūm* to describe the persons of the Trinity, not the Arabic word *uqnūm*. Many Arab Christian theologians considered the Syriac meaning a more accurate one to express the oneness of God.¹²² al-Baṣrī explains it in this way: “*al-qnūm* is a Syriac word that means the particular, complete substance that is self-sufficient, and does not need any other body.”¹²³ Gerasimus ends his discussion of the Trinity with the classical illustrations used by Abū Rā’iṭah and Theodore Abū Qurrah: three lamps lighted in one home and three persons singing one Psalm (vv. 83-85).

4.5 Passion of Christ and the Reason Christians Honor It

Gerasimus’s answer to this objection is a combination of biblical and patristic liturgical teachings. Similar to many eastern liturgical hymns that are chanted in the services on Good Friday,¹²⁴ he first declares,

117 al-Ḥūrī Būls 2007b, 11-45.

118 Ibid. 97-104.

119 Cf. Caspar 2007, 77-78.

120 Troupeau 1971, 71-89.

121 al-Ḥūrī Būls 2007a, 19-21.

122 Ibid. 61-62.

123 Al-Ḥāik Miṣāl 1977, 162.

124 “The Order of Adoration and Exaltation of the Holy Cross and the Redeeming Burial Conducted on Good Friday.” Barsom 1984, 201-251.

In regard to the passion of our Lord and Savior, we not only do not despise it, but we affirm it about Him and confess that through it our salvation was wrought. We, therefore, proclaim it, honor it, and declare it, not only by words, but also by deeds. We display it in the Holy Church, on the roads, and in most places (I mean His crucifixion and passion) that we may remember it and be proud of it. Our purpose in this is to announce the favor of our Lord upon us, His level of grace regarding our salvation (vv.86-89).

He then compares the passion of Christ to a servant who fell into the harshness of captivity. His master redeemed him by enduring the hardship that the servant had to endure. He put on the servant's filthy garment and the chains of captivity, and suffered on his behalf. The servant, after his liberation, clothed himself with the filthy garments and the chains of captivity and walked around proclaiming the favor and goodness of his master (vv. 90-94). Gerasimus then states that the passion of Christ is foolishness for the world but for us it is the power of God (vv. 96-103; referencing 1 Corinthians 1:18-21, 25, 1 Corinthians 2:1-6, and Galatians 4:16). He then turns to the question: *Why do the Bible and the church's books use humble terms to describe Christ?* His answer: God was depicted in the Bible as a created human because Christ is fully God and fully human. He is fully divine, equal to His Father and fully human, equal to His mother and humankind. Therefore, sometimes the Bible talks about Jesus as human, and other times as God (vv. 104-107).

Two important points merit our attention in this interpretation. First, the passion of Christ shows how much God cares for humanity; human beings ought to proclaim such love and favor. "Our purpose in this is to announce the favor of our Lord upon us, His level of Grace regarding our salvation," (v. 89) writes Gerasimus. Second, Christ has two natures, divine and human. The two natures of Christ have separate points of origin, but an ultimate unity. The divine is eternal, the human is bound by time, but after the union of eternal and temporal there is a unity of being. His suffering and death did not affect Jesus's divinity; only his human body suffered.

4.6 Reasons why God Condescended

Gerasimus begins his discussion of God's condescension by showing that His act of creation demonstrates his grace and generosity, and his appearance as a human being was his supreme act of communication and the culmination of his generosity toward creation. The appearance of God in flesh is the best form of revelation, since it was not enough for God to send a prophet to declare his message. It was God's ultimate plan to reveal himself to humanity in Jesus, so that no one could have any doubt about the character of God.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ Beamont 2005, 70-71; Thomas 2002, 54. For more detailed analysis of how Arab Christian Theologians presented the concept of the Incarnation see the two volumes of al-Ḥūrī Būls 2004.

For this and similar reasons, it was necessary that the Lord of all (according to the law of the economy of our salvation, and out of His favor and goodness) would condescend from His exalted glory to the point of being equal to us. [He did this] to communicate with the human body by a human body, and to teach us divine conduct through a human body taken from our physical nature (vv. 111-112).

This argument, as Beaumont (2005, 71) points out, is a direct challenge to Muslim notions of revelation which are bound by the transcendence of God, and thereby preclude revelation being given by human speech, safeguarding the character of God from contamination or limitation in his relationship with humanity.

Gerasimus adds two more reasons for the incarnation when he answers the fourth objection: to deceive Satan (vv. 196-207) and to teach humans how to wrestle with Satan (vv. 208-213), both of which we have already discussed in Chapter 3. Gerasimus avoids talking about incarnation as a means of ransoming souls, or winning them from the devil. The act of incarnation was not in the first instance a matter of physicality, but rather it revealed God united with humankind through the saving economy. Gerasimus is aware of the context in which he is writing and the need to explain why God should appear in a bodily form and how. The emphasis is on the possibility of incarnation and the distinction between God and the created order. God's direct communication through a human is the inevitable culmination of his relationship with humankind; such relationship is more direct and superior than any other kind of communication.

To explain this point Gerasimus uses three illustrations: 1) It would be impossible for a pedestrian to reach a man sitting on a horse if the latter would not dismount his horse and walk with the pedestrian (v. 109). 2) Nobody can teach another to swim while he is in a boat. The instructor needs to take off his clothes and dive into the water in order to teach somebody to swim (v. 110). 3) A deaf-mute cannot understand a speaker if the latter hides his speech and does not become equal to the deaf-mute by using his hands and fingers to communicate (v. 114).

Gerasimus concludes by saying: “the union of the Word of God with the human body and His suffering does not harm the Divine Nature” (v.115), referring back to two illustrations used in Part 1, the illustrations of the sun and a man (vv. 116-131).

4.7 Third Objection: God Allowed Adam to Fall, and Did Not Repel Satan

4.7.1 Summary of the Objection

The third objection takes the form of questions, asking

- Why would God create humanity knowing that it would fall?
- Why God would allow Adam to sin instead of stopping the work of Satan?

- Since Adam did sin, why God did not save him before his sin increased? (vv. 132-134).

4.7.2 Context of the Objection

This objection originated in the Muslim doctrine of *free will and predestination*. In the Qur'an (as in the Bible) the dogma of God's predetermination of fate is ambiguous. It says that God is the Omnipotent Creator. He creates all things¹²⁶ in heaven and earth and all that is between them.¹²⁷ He is the Creator of humankind.¹²⁸ God writes faith or unbelief on the hearts. He foreordains the human destiny from before birth.¹²⁹ He sets the length of life and the day of death.¹³⁰ Everything is written before being created.¹³¹ Good and evil fortunes come from God.¹³² Yet, the Qur'an affirms strongly that human beings are free and responsible for their actions. The verses most often quoted by theologians are: "Let whoever wishes believe, let whoever wishes be an unbeliever,"¹³³ and "Whatever good happens to thee is from God; whatever evil happens to thee is from thy soul."¹³⁴

While the Qur'an's teaching does not confirm nor deny human responsibility, Muslim theology and tradition affirm the doctrine of predestination. In about 702 A.D. Orthodox Islam anathematized, as the worst heresy, the idea of free will or man's independence from God. The Qadarites¹³⁵ and Mu'tazila, who upheld the doctrine of free will, were branded by traditionalists (*muḥaddithūn*) as dualists for setting man up as a co-creator with God by asserting that man initiated his own action and determined his own destiny.¹³⁶ Several Hadith statements affirm predetermination. God is identified with *dahr* which means Destiny. A *ḥadith qudsi*¹³⁷ affirms that God has declared "I am *dahr*." All is written by the heavenly pen *qala* in the eternal book before it takes place. All the actions of human beings are written by the angels when the embryo is still in the mother's womb: their sex, and the material and spiritual

126 Sūrah 6:101; 24:2: 39:62.

127 Sūrah 5:19-20.

128 Sūrah 37:96.

129 Sūrah 3:6.

130 Sūrah 3:154-158.

131 Sūrah 57:22.

132 Sūrah 9:51.

133 Sūrah 18:29; 73:19; 76:29.

134 Sūrah 49:79.

135 *Qadarites*, School of thought in early Islamic period. It was influenced by the Greco-Christian theologians. They insisted that man had power over his own deeds even though the fate of man has been preordained. Their doctrine and teaching was held to be heresy. Cf. Farah 2003, 207-208.

136 Morris 1964, 23-26.

137 *ḥadith qudsi* is a hadith which is attributed directly to God himself and not just to the prophets.

provision for their whole life, the length and ending of their life, the good and evil actions they will carry out, and their eternal destiny to paradise or hell.¹³⁸ Al-Bukhari quotes a tradition in which Adam demonstrates to Moses that his fall was preordained:

The Prophet said, “Adam and Moses argued with each other. Moses said to Adam. ‘O Adam! You are our father who disappointed us and turned us out of Paradise.’ Then Adam said to him, ‘O Moses! Allah favored you with His talk (talked to you directly) and He wrote (the Torah) for you with His Own Hand. Do you blame me for action which Allah had written in my fate forty years before my creation?’ So Adam confuted Moses,” the Prophet added, repeating the statement three times.¹³⁹

4.7.3 Response to the Objection

Gerasimus summarizes what Abū Qurrah wrote on free will.¹⁴⁰ He gives three reasons for God giving humans the gift of free will.

First, when God created Adam in His likeness and image, his purpose was to appoint Adam ruler over creation. We have already examined the term “image and likeness of God” in Chapter 2. One of the characteristics of man’s image is free will, through which Adam was enabled to choose to obey God or misuse the gift God bestowed on him and decide not to obey. Therefore, if God, who foreknew that Adam would fall, had not created him because of this reason, the choices given to Adam would have overcome the purpose and goodness of God (vv. 135-142). It is as if we say, “If God foreknew that iron would be used for killing, why then did He create it? The same could be said about wine for drunkenness, or about the member of procreation for adultery, or about the tongue for lying and cursing” (vv. 143-144).

Second, the reason God allowed Adam to fall is that if He forced Adam to obey Him, He would have robbed Adam of the gift of free will with which God had honored him. The gifts of God are never taken back (vv. 145-147). Gerasimus uses the expression *al-qwwah al-istiṭā’yyah* “the enabling power,” which is used by the Mu’tazila to indicate the physical ability that allowed human beings to act. The words used from the Mu’tazila are *qudra ḥāditha* which means created capacity that gives human beings an enduring ability, and *istiṭā’a*, to produce action and to choose freely between good and evil.¹⁴¹

Third, God allowed man to fall so that man might appreciate the grace and mercy of God. When God saves man through His Divine Economy, man will appreciate the

¹³⁸ Caspar 2007, 155-156.

¹³⁹ al-Buḥārī, *Sahih Volume 8, Book 77, N. 611*, University of Southern California, Muslim Students Association, Compendium of Muslim Texts.

¹⁴⁰ Lamoreaux 2005, 195-298; cf. Griffith 1987.

¹⁴¹ Caspar 2007, 159, 161.

goodness of God and will recognize the harm of disobedience and the reward of obedience (vv. 148-152).

Gerasimus concludes his response with the parable of the good physician and his beloved student which has been discussed in Chapter 3.

4.8 Fourth Objection: God Condescended and Shed His Blood On the Cross

4.8.1 Summary of the Objection

- Since God, the Creator, is Almighty, He could speak one word to provide salvation for Adam and his descendents. In light of this, the abasement of suffering and death on a cross is incomprehensible (vv. 188-189).
- Furthermore, it is said that Christ bought humankind with His blood. It is unbelievable that God would purchase humankind with the blood of Christ, as it is understood that Satan is the seller, and that he would have been paid with the blood (vv. 190-192).

4.8.2 Context of the Objection

The first objection—*why God did not complete the salvation of Adam in one word*—has its foundation in the Muslim scriptures that reject the atonement and redemption and teach that God is almighty and omnipotent. Therefore, it would not be necessary for him to condescend and die on a cross. “To Him is due the primal origin of heaven and earth. When He decrees a matter, He says to it ‘Be’ and it is.”¹⁴² “Allah creates what He wills, and when He has decreed a plan, He but says to it ‘Be’ and it is.”¹⁴³

The second objection – *He bought us by his blood* – can be traced back to the teachings of Origen (185-254 A.D.) who believed that Jesus’s human soul was given to Satan as a ransom to redeem humanity. But Satan could not hold Jesus’s soul.¹⁴⁴ Commenting on 1 Corinthians 6:20, “you were bought at a price,” Origen says: “we must be bought from a person who enslaved us....Satan was the one who subdued us; we were standing in the same line with him because our sins drew us to him.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Sūrah 2:116.

¹⁴³ Sūrah 3:47.

¹⁴⁴ Coptology 2007.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

4.8.3 Response to the Objection

Gerasimus's response can be divided into four points:

First, God's will was to save us through justice and fairness, not by power (vv. 193-195). Second, God's will was to meet like with like; this means that He would save us in the same way that Satan used to deceive Adam. As Satan clothed himself with the body of a snake to hide his nature and deceive the first man, likewise, God clothed Himself with a human body to hide His Truth from the deceiver. Deceived in this way, Satan then desired to wrestle with Him, and consequently, when Satan was defeated, God won the right to have us back (vv. 196-207, discussed in more detail already in Chapter 3.) Third, God wanted, through His union with human nature, to teach humanity how to wrestle with Satan (vv. 208-209). Fourth, through this saving economy, God fulfilled the work of his four effective attributes: mercy, might, justice, and wisdom (vv. 213-214). Gerasimus concludes his response with the parable of the Incognito King. This parable has been examined in Chapter 3 (vv. 214-261).

4.9 Fifth Objection: Jesus Changed the Ordinances of the Old Testament Law

4.9.1 Summary of the Objection

- It is unclear why God would change or abolish ordinances that he had established for the benefit of his people. Jesus was among those who were circumcised and ate the Passover meal. Yet, when He commanded His followers to be like Him, He did not expect them to keep these laws (vv. 263-265).
- If practicing the ordinance of the Law was necessary, even after Jesus completed the gift of Baptism and the Lordly Sacrifice, why then does he [Jesus] not command us to practice the ordinance of the Law? And if there are no benefits in practicing the Law, why didn't Jesus abolish it in its totality? Furthermore, why did [Jesus] discontinue many other Jewish practices such as the Sabbath, and not eating certain unclean food (vv. 266-267)?

4.9.2 Context of the Objection

The background of this objection can be traced to the Jewish teachings against Christians. Since the beginning of Christianity, Jews have criticized Christians for believing in the Old Testament and not practicing the ordinances of the Law. A good example of this kind of polemic between Jews and Christians is in the Apology of

Justin the Martyr and his dialogue with the Jewish philosopher Trypho.¹⁴⁶ We also find, among Christian Arab apologists, teachers like Abū Qurrah who defended the Christian faith by presenting treatises that explain the relation between the Law of Moses in the Old Testament and the Law of Christ in the New Testament.¹⁴⁷ It is evident from this objection that these kinds of attacks were still flourishing in Gerasimus's time, and that he made use of the apologists before him.

It is also possible to deduce from this argument the following reasoning of Muslims: if Christ cancelled, or to use the Muslim expression *abrogated*, the practices and the commands of the Torah, similarly the Qur'an abrogated the Gospel.¹⁴⁸ This is a common theme in inter-religious dialogue between Christians and Muslims. A famous example is found in the discussion between Timothy I and the Caliph al-Mahdi. The Caliph argues, "If Christ abolished the Law and its requirement, He is, therefore, its enemy and its adversary. We call enemies those who destroy and contradict one another."¹⁴⁹ Timothy answers:

The light of the stars is abolished by the light of the sun, and the light of the latter is not for that enemy of the former; the functions of childhood are also abolished by those of manhood, and man is not for that enemy of himself; an earthly kingdom is also abolished by the heavenly kingdom, and the kingdom of God is not for that the enemy of men. In this very way Jesus abolished and destroyed the Law by the Gospel, while he is not for that the enemy and the adversary of the Law.¹⁵⁰

4.9.3 Response to the Objection

Christian-Arab theologians rejected the idea of Christ abrogating the Law and firmly believed that Christ fulfilled the Law. Gerasimus based his response on this theological conviction.

First, Gerasimus explains that *Christ did not abolish the Law*, but, as He said in His Holy Gospel, He *revealed its symbols and shadows*. He completed the Law, confirmed it, and brought it to perfection (vv. 268-270). In defense of this point Gerasimus examines symbols and practices of the Law in the Old Testament that were fulfilled in the New Testament (vv. 274-288). He then presents four illustrations to explain his point: 1) The Law of Moses is like a tree that bears fruit seasonally, and the Law of Christ is like a tree that bears fruit all the time (vv. 289-290). 2) The Law of Moses is like a farmer who prepares his land and then cuts down the weeds on the surface leaving

¹⁴⁶ David 2002, 22.

¹⁴⁷ Lamoreaux 2005, 27-39; Nasry 2008a, 175-183.

¹⁴⁸ This is Nasry's conclusion in 2008a, 127-129. See also Nasry 2008b, 180-181.

¹⁴⁹ Mingana 1928, 28.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 28-29.

the roots. The Law of Christ is like the farmer that uproots the weeds (vv. 292-297). 3) The Law of Moses is like the moon and the Law of Christ is like the sun. When the sun rises, it does not eliminate the moon but hides it. Likewise, the Law of Christ did not eliminate the Law of Moses but covered it (vv. 304-306). 4) The Law of Moses is like mother's milk; it is beneficial and appropriate for the newborn. The Law of Christ is like food for the strong and mature who no longer need milk (v. 307).

Second, Gerasimus shows that the reason *God ordained two laws* is to gradually arrive at the knowledge of His full divinity (vv. 308-311). He uses four illustrations: 1) The four seasons of the year; we cannot jump from winter to summer without spring (v. 312). 2) Parents tolerate certain behavior in their children when they are young but will not tolerate the same conduct when the children grow up (v. 317). 3) Soldiers are trained for war with wooden swords but when they enter true battle, they use real iron swords (vv. 270- 271). 4) The physician who gradually treats the symptoms of illness (vv. 318-319).

Following these illustrations, Gerasimus explains that when God realized humanity was falling spiritually, he knew this "illness" needed to be treated. Over time, God gave humanity different kinds of laws, but none could completely heal humanity's illness. God Himself had to carry the healing medicine and complete the healing.

The first medicine He gave and administered to [humanity] was the Natural Law, that is, discernment and vision (which can distinguish between good and evil and between what is appropriate and not appropriate for us). Then He gave it the Written Law. In it was explained the different kinds of medicine that the creator made for the human race. When none of these medicines was able to complete the recovery, and the illness had progressed to the point of being terminal, it was a necessary in due time for [human nature] to take the strongest medicine, which was appropriate for its grave illness. The making [of this medicine] required extreme measures because the disease was also quite extreme.

And when nobody except Himself could administer [this medicine], necessity demanded that He would be united with an earthly body that was taken from the nature of our bodies. [He did this] to be like us and to rightfully be able to teach us through [the human body] what He wanted to convey. Moreover, by [His] becoming equal to us we can rightfully be able to emulate what we see in Him. (vv. 335-340).

Third, Gerasimus then explains the *purpose and the symbol of circumcision*. God first commanded Abraham to be circumcised to separate him from other nations (v. 347). Then with Moses, God added the written Law (vv. 354-355.) Finally, when the time was complete, God Himself brought us the Divine Law that lifts us up to complete perfection (v. 356). Gerasimus then explains why circumcision was done on this particular member of the body.

349 We respond to him that the intention of God (glory be to Him) in forming this mark on this particular member has two reasons. 350 The first is that the image is marred when it loses any member; 351 therefore, this member was chosen to avoid disfiguring the human image. 352 It would not have been proper for the goodness of God to act like this, that is, to disfigure or deform

the image of His own believers. 353 The other [reason] is in order not to have other marks similar to it because this mark (I mean maiming and cutting) is always practiced by thieves and those who would cause shame (vv. 349-353).

There are two points to be noted. First, the dignity of the human being: humans are created in the image and likeness of God. Second, the goodness of creation: God did not want to deform the human image and spoil the human body of believers. He concludes his point with the analogy of the owner of the village who offers help to his farmers, an analogy examined in Chapter 3.

Fourth, Gerasimus then responds to the question of *why Jesus Christ practiced the Law of Moses*. According to Gerasimus, the Lord Jesus was circumcised because the gift of baptism had not yet been given. He celebrated the Passover because the Lamb of God had not yet been sacrificed. He completed the duties of the Law to affirm that He is the One Who ordained it, and then He, Himself, presented the Law of Truth because He is the “Cornerstone” that contains both Testaments (vv. 387-393).¹⁵¹ Gerasimus, in his conclusion, defends the centrality of Jesus Christ throughout the Old and New Testaments. Everything that was practiced in the Old Testament was leading to Christ.

4.10 Sixth Objection: Signs of True Disciple Not Demonstrated in Moses; God’s Specific Calling to the Children of Israel Unfair

4.10.1 Summary of the Objection

- Moses did not demonstrate the three signs of the true disciple which are preaching, performing of miracles, and speaking in the languages that are spoken all over the world. If these are the signs, then Moses should be called a false disciple (vv. 394-397).
- You say that God is fair and good to all, yet He sent a prophet and the Law to the children of Israel and excluded all other nations (vv. 398-404).

4.10.2 Context of the Objection

The first half of this objection is related the fifth objection, which concerns the relation between the Old and New Testaments. Why do Christians honor Moses and consider him a disciple if the signs of the true disciple are not all fulfilled in Moses? It is attested by the Bible that God’s calling is universal, why then did God favor the Nation of Israel over the rest of nations?

¹⁵¹ Ephesians 2:11-22; Psalm 118 (117):23; Matthew 12:10; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17.

4.10.3 Response to the Objection

First, Moses himself recognized that he was not the ultimate and true disciple. He said, “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear”¹⁵² (vv. 405-407). Gerasimus briefly states that *the coming of Christ is what gave importance to Moses*. Only through the coming of Christ did the four corners of the earth recognize Moses (vv. 463-467).

Second, God did not send prophets only to the children of Israel, but their patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) knew Him and sought Him before anybody else sought him (vv. 415-417). If God entrusted the children of Israel with His Law, His prophets, and His miracles, He bestowed upon the Greeks similar gifts of wisdom and knowledge, and also gave to the other nations what they needed (vv. 418-420).

Third, Gerasimus responds to the objection that *the salvation of all nations was delayed*. According to Gerasimus, God was certain of the calling and the salvation of all nations. He promised Abraham that he would become the father of countless nations. However, the calling and the salvation of the other nations was delayed for “many and diverse purposes” (vv. 421-423). Gerasimus lists the reasons that the salvation of all nations was delayed (423-453). We can summarize this list in one phrase: to complete the mystery of the Divine Economy (Cf. v. 424). In Eastern theology this meant, “God’s plan to save humanity.” The definition is inspired by Ephesians 1:10. The plan of salvation was to be implemented gradually; thus the Old Testament and its written Law and practices are considered a fundamental part of the Divine Economy. In this section, Gerasimus draws many connections between the symbols and practices of the Old Testament and their fulfillment in the New Testament. God intended to educate humans through the practices of the Law to bring them back to the point where God intended them to be, that is in fellowship with Him which was reached in the person of Jesus Christ.¹⁵³ In Christ, reconciliation and agreement was completed between human nature and God, its Creator. Human nature was honored by its union with the Divine and ascended through Him above every lordship and authority (vv. 426-427). Gerasimus concludes his response with a second version of the well known analogy, the Incognito King (vv.469-531), which has been examined in Chapter 3.

Gerasimus bases his response on the Eastern patristic theology of God’s universal call to salvation and the salvation of non-Christians. Some Fathers of the church elaborated a theology of the salvation of the non-Christian. Overcoming their original polemical attitude toward Greek philosophers, they moved towards respect for the faith of the pagan who is presumed to attain his salvation through it. According to Justin “the seeds of the word” are spread among all nations as a consequence of the Incarnation of Christ so that they can share, though imperfectly, the universal revelation of God.

¹⁵² Deuteronomy 18:15, Acts 3:22.

¹⁵³ Cf. Coptology 2008.

Echoing this sentiment, Irenaeus writes about the “Cosmic Christ,” meaning that God the Father revealed Himself to all nations, and even before the Incarnation, the Hidden Christ was present in the hearts of people until He was fully revealed when the word became flesh. The idea of “divine pedagogy” is present in Clement of Alexandria who sees the pagan philosophy as a path that leads to revelation.¹⁵⁴

4.11 Conclusion

Gerasimus ends Part 5 with a liturgical benediction that is common in the supplications of the Eastern Churches: “We...offer glory, thanksgiving, honor, and power to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now, always, forever and ever. Amen.”

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Fitzgerald and Casper 1992, 8-11; Sharp 2011, 52-72.

The Text in Arabic

الجزء الخامس المخاطبة عن الدين المسيحي والرّد على حجج المغاندين له

1 الجزء الخامس، المحتوي على المخاطبة عن هذا الدين الصّحيح، (الذي لا علة فيه) بإيراد حجج مغانديه عليه ونقضها، وهي 155 سيّس حجج، صورتهم هذه الصّورة.¹⁵⁶
الحجّة الأولى

[اعتراض على انتشار الدين المسيحي في سائر المسكونة وحالة الكنائس]

1. صورة الحجّة

2 قوّمه هكذا: "إتقا لا نكتفي في تثبيت دينكم، ممّا أوردتموه لنا قريباً، من قولكم أنّ بشارته اشترت في سائر المسكونة، 3 وأنّ اسم المسيح مجّد عند سائر القبائل، وفي جميع الأمكنة. وعوض مساجد الأصنام ومعاييدهم قد صارت هياكل القديسين. 4 واتعلّب ذلك الاضطهاد القديم والدّل (الذي كان يشتمل على المؤمنين بالمسيح) إلى عزّ وكرامة. 5 ونحن ترى الأمر بالصدّ! لأنّ غير المؤمنين¹⁵⁸ بالمسيح في وقتنا هذا أكثر من المؤمنين به.

[1. 1. هل تعافل الله عن باقي الأمم؟]

6 على أنّه إن كان الأمر كما تقولون¹⁵⁹ وبهذا تستدلون على أنّ التصاري صائبون) فمن هذا يستبين لنا أنّ الحنفاء قد كانوا على الحقّ مثلكم، لا بل وأكثر منكم، 7 لأنّ العالم بأسره بقي في الضلالة والطغيان قبل المسيح بأكثر من خمسة آلاف سنة. 8 ولا كان في الدنيا من يعرف الله ويعبده حقّ العبادة، إلاّ بنو إسرائيل وحدهم، وقد كانوا أحقر وأصغر أمّة في العالم. 9 ثمّ، وما هو أعجب من هذا، كيف تخلى الله عن عباده مدّة هذا مقدارها وهي أمم لا تحصى؟

[1. 2. هياكل المسيحيين مهانة ومداسة]

10 [أمّا عن] كرامة هياكلكم وكرامتكم¹⁶⁰ واستغلاء سلاطينكم، فهذا نحن نرى جميع ذلك ضدّ ما تقولون، 11 لأنّ هياكلكم في عدّة مواضع خربة مهانة، وآلة تكهينكم، مع صلبانكم وباقى ما تُشرفونه من مفتضى عبادتكم،

155 ب. ح. ف. ل. وذلك

156 س. ناقصة هذه العبارة. ح. بضيف، "وبالله المستعان على القوم الماورين."

157 ح. ف. عزاء. ب. عزاء

158 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. الغير مؤمنين

159 س. "بهذا تستدلون على صحة دينكم أنها المسيحيين"

160 ف. غرامتكم

جميع ذلك مَداسٌ ومُهَانٌ، 12 وسَلَاطِينُكُمْ فِي أَكْثَرِ الْأَوْقَاتِ، مَعَ جِيُوشِهَا، مَطْرُوحَةٌ، 13 وَأَكْثَرُ مَا كَانَ فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ مِنَ التَّفُؤُذِ وَالْبِلَادِ قَدِ انْتَقَلَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَى غَيْرِكُمْ، وَأَنْتُمْ مَطْرُودُونَ¹⁶¹ مِنْهَا فِي أَكْثَرِ الْمَوَاضِعِ، 14 وَأَنْتُمْ ذِمَّةٌ مُهَانُونَ، تَوَدُّونَ الْحِرَاجَ لِأَعْدَائِكُمْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ الْمُسْتَوْلِينَ عَلَيْكُمْ. 15 إِنَّكُمْ تَحْتِ وَأَوْلِيكَ فَوْقَ. 16 وَلَا آيَةَ تَنْظُهُرُ الْآنَ عِنْدَكُمْ، وَلَا قُوَّةَ تَخْلَصُكُمْ مِنَ الظُّلْمِ الَّذِي قَدْ غَشَاكُمْ. 17 فَلَيْسَ دِينُكُمْ إِذَا مِنْ هَذَا الْوَجْهِ دِينَ الْحَقِّ، وَإِلَّا كَانَ الْأَوَّلَى بِهِ دِينَ الْخُنْفَاءِ مِنْ قَدِيمٍ (كَمَا ذَكَرْنَا) وَدِينَ الْإِسْلَامِ الْآنَ بِأَنْ يَكُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ.

2. الْجَوَابُ عَلَى هَذِهِ الْحُجَّةِ

18 أَمَا عَنْ مَذْهَبِ النَّصَارَى فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ هُوَ الْأَقْلَ الْآنَ فِي الدُّنْيَا مِنْ قِبَائِلِ بَاقِي الْأُمَّمِ، 19 وَلَأَيَّ سَبَبٍ لَمْ تَنْظُهُرُ عِنْدَنَا الْأَعْرَاجِيْبُ، كَمَا كَانَتْ قَبْلَ، فَقَدْ تَقَدَّمْنَا فِي الْجَوَابِ عَنْ ذَلِكَ قَبْلَ، وَلَا حَاجَةَ لَنَا إِلَى أَكْثَرِ مِمَّا ذَكَرْنَا، مُتَقَدِّمًا فِي نَعْضِ هَذَا.

[2. 1. الْخُنْفَاءُ لَا يَتَّفِقُونَ بَيْنَ بَعْضِهِمْ لَكِنَّ النَّصَارَى مُتَّفِقُونَ فِي أُصُولِ الدِّينِ]

20 وَأَمَّا الْجَوَابُ عَنْ ثَبَاتِ الضَّلَالَةِ فِي الْعَالَمِ أَجْمَعِهِ تِلْكَ الْمُدَّةَ الطَّوِيلَةَ، تَحَلُّيًا مِنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، وَأَنَّ الْأَوَّلَى بِالْخُنْفَاءِ، مِنْ هَذَا الْوَجْهِ، أَنَّ يَكُونَ الْحَقُّ عِنْدَهُمْ، فَهَكَذَا: 21 لَيْسَتْ صِفَةُ الْخُنْفَاءِ فِي ذَلِكَ الْوَقْتِ¹⁶² كَانَتْ تُشْبِهُ صِفَةَ النَّصَارَى الْآنَ، لِأَنَّهُ إِنْ كَانَ الْإِتِّفَاقُ صَارَ¹⁶³ عِنْدَهُمْ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ وَاحِدًا، لَكِنَّ ضَلَالَتَهُمْ لَيْسَتْ عَلَى مَنْهَجِ وَاحِدٍ [وَلَا] عَلَى صِفَةٍ¹⁶⁴ وَاحِدَةٍ، 22 بَلْ الْإِخْتِلَافُ¹⁶⁵ فِيهَا كَثِيرًا كَانَ وَمُخْتَلِفًا¹⁶⁶، لَيْسَ فِي أَمْرِ مَعْبُودَاتِهِمْ قَطُّ، بَلْ وَفِي تَوَامِيهِمْ وَوُعُودِ مَجَازَاتِهِمْ، 23 حَتَّى أَنَّهُ وَلَا التَّلْمِيذُ كَانَ يَتَّفِقُ مَعَ تَلْمِيذٍ مِثْلِهِ، أَوْ مَعَ مُعَلِّمِهِ فِي وَاحِدٍ مِنْهَا، وَلَا الْمُعَلِّمُ مَعَ تَلْمِيذِهِ أَوْ مَعَ مُعَلِّمٍ مِثْلِهِ.

24 وَأَمَّا مَذْهَبُ أَوْلَادِ الْمُعْمُودِيَّةِ، فَإِنَّ كَانَ فِيهِ فِي وَقْتِنَا هَذَا إِخْتِلَافٌ يَسِيرٌ فِي بَابِ التَّدْبِيرِ،¹⁶⁷ لَكِنَّ فِي بَاقِي الْأَشْيَاءِ (أَعْنَى الْإِلَهَةِ الْمَعْبُودَةِ، وَالتَّامُوسِ، وَالمَجَازَاةِ، الَّتِي هِيَ أُصُولُ الدِّينِ) [فَهُمْ] يَتَّفِقُونَ جَمِيعُهُمْ تَحْتِ رَأْيٍ وَاحِدٍ، 25 لِأَنَّهُمْ أَوْلَادُ مُعْمُودِيَّةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَتَابِعُونَ لِكِرَازَتِهِ بِجِبِلِّ وَاحِدٍ، وَتَحْتِ رَجَاءٍ وَاحِدٍ. 26 هُمْ سَالِكُونَ أَجْمَعُونَ¹⁶⁸ فِي الطَّرِيقِ الْمَلَكِيَّةِ، الْوَاحِدَةِ الْمَهْدِيَّةِ، وَمَا سِوَاهُمْ¹⁶⁹ فِي الشَّاوِيرِ الْكَثِيرَةِ الْمُظْلِمَةِ.

161 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. مطرودين

162 س. زمان

163 س. كان

164 ف. عاصفة

165 ح. اختلاف

166 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. مختلف

167 س. تدبير التحسد والاحقاد

168 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. اجمعين

169 ح. ساواهم

[2. 2]. 2. 2. اللَّهُ لَمْ يَتَعَاْفَلْ عَنِ الْأُمَمِ بَلْ مَاتَ مِنْ أَجْلِهِمْ وَخَلَّصَهُمْ¹⁷⁰]

27 فَأَمَّا الْجَوَابُ عَنْ تَعَاْفَلِ اللَّهِ عَنْهُمْ وَهَلَاكِهِمْ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَهُوَ هَكَذَا: 171 28: إِنَّ اللَّهَ (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ!) لَمْ يَتَعَاْفَلْ عَنْهُمْ¹⁷² (كَمَا تَطَّلُونَ). 29 فَكَيْفَ ذَلِكَ وَهُوَ خَالِيَهُمْ سُبْحَانَهُ، الْحَيُّ وَالرَّؤُوفُ، أَبُو الْكُلِّ، وَإِلَهُ كُلِّ عِزٍّ وَرَحْمَةٍ، الْقَاضِي الْعَدْلُ، الَّذِي لَا يَشَاءُ خَلَاصَ قَوْمٍ دُونَ قَوْمٍ، بَلِ الْكُلُّ بِالسَّوِيَّةِ. 30 لَمْ يَتَخَلَّ عَنْهُمْ، لَكِنَّهُ كَرَّرَ فِيهِمْ، مَعَ تَغْيِيهِ الْعِدِّيَّةَ، عِنْدَمَا فَارَقَتْ جَسَدَهُ الْمَكْرَمَ عَلَى الصَّلِيبِ، وَاتَّخَذَ إِلَى أَقْصَى الْجَحِيمِ. 31 لِأَنَّهُ هُنَاكَ أَيْضًا أَظْهَرَ قُوَّةَ لَاهُوتِهِ، وَصَنَعَ خَلَاصًا لِأَنْفُسِ الْقِدِّيْسِينَ،¹⁷³ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِهِ مِنَ الرَّاقِدِينَ مِنْذُ الدُّهُورِ الْمَاضِيَةِ، كَمَا فَعَلَ قَوِّقَ الْأَرْضِ مَعَ الْأَحْيَاءِ الْبَاقِيْنَ. 174 32 فَمَنْ آمَنَ إِذَا بِكَرَارَتِهِ هُنَاكَ خَلَّصَ مِنْ دَيْشُونَةِ الْكُفْرِ، 33 وَصَارَ كَمَا قَالَ الرَّسُولُ: "كُلُّ نَجِيٍّ لَهُ الرَّجِيَّةُ، أَعْنِي السَّمَائِيِّينَ وَالْأَرْضِيِّينَ، وَالَّذِينَ تَحْتَ الشَّرَى."¹⁷⁵

[2. 3. 3. سَبَبُ اسْتِعْلَاءِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ عَلَى النَّصَارَى هُوَ تَأْدِيبُهُمْ]

34 وَأَمَّا سَبَبُ اسْتِعْلَاءِ أُمَّةِ مُحَمَّدٍ (أَعْنِي الْمُسْلِمِينَ)¹⁷⁶ عَلَى أَوْلَادِ الْمَعْمُودِيَّةِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ، وَصَبْمِهِمْ إِيَّاهُمْ، فَهُوَ لِأَجْلِ أَنَّهُمْ خَادُوا عَنْ حِفْظِ الْوَصَايَا الْإِلَهِيَّةِ الْمُحْيِيَّةِ (الَّتِي بِهَا قِيَامُ صِحَّةِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ) وَجَنَحُوا إِلَى الْحَطِيئَةِ الْمُمْرِضَةِ الْمُهْلِكَةِ لِلْأَنْفُسِ. 35 فَعِنْدَمَا مَرَضُوا مَرَضَ الرُّوحِ، وَأَشْرَفُوا عَلَى الْعَطَبِ، لَمْ يَتَعَاْفَلِ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمْ، لَقَلَّ يَهْلِكُوا، لَكِنَّهُ سَارَعَ إِلَى مَدَاوِعِهِم بِالْأَدْوِيَةِ الَّتِي رَكَّبَهَا لَهُمْ بِفَاتِحِ حِكْمَتِهِ، وَكَانَ مَقْصُودُهُ فِيهَا إِعَادَتَهُمْ إِلَى صِحَّتِهِمْ. 36 وَنُو لَمْ يَفْعَلْ مِثْلَ هَذَا لَمَّا كَانَ وَالِدًا حَنُونًا، لِأَنَّ أُمَّيَّ وَلَدَ لَا يُؤَدِّبُهُ أَبُوهُ¹⁷⁷؟ وَإِنْ اعْتَلَّ لَا يُعَالِجُهُ¹⁷⁸؟ 37 كَمَا قَالَ سُلَيْمَانَ: "يُؤَدِّبُ مَنْ يُحِبُّهُ، وَيَجْلِدُ ابْنًا يَقْتِيلُهُ."¹⁷⁹ 38 وَيَقُولُ بُولُسُ الرَّسُولُ أَيْضًا: "إِنْ كُنْتُمْ خَلَوْا مِنَ الْأَدَبِ، الَّذِي قَدْ تَشَارَكَهُ الْكُلُّ، فَأَنْتُمْ إِذَا تَعُولُوا وَاسْتُنْتُمْ بَيْنَ."¹⁸¹

[2. 4. 4. سَيْفُ الْإِسْلَامِ هُوَ شَكْلٌ مِنْ أَشْكَالِ التَّأْدِيبِ]

39 وَمَعَ هَذَا فَأَصْنَفَ¹⁸² [هِيَ] الْأَدَابِ (أَعْنِي آدَابَ الرَّبِّ كَثِيرَةً وَمُخْتَلِفَةً، مِثْلَ الْجُرَادِ وَالْقَمَلِ وَالْحَيَّاتِ وَالْفِئْرَانِ)¹⁸³ وَالْوُحُوشِ الْكَاسِرَةِ، وَمَا يُشَاكِلُ ذَلِكَ. 40 وَمَا صُورَةُ سَيْفِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَسُلْطَتُهُمْ عَلَى أَوْلَادِ الْمَعْمُودِيَّةِ¹⁸⁴ إِلَّا

170 س. كل الفقرة ناقصة

171 ح. ب. ناقص

172 ح. ب. ناقص

173 ح. ب. ناقص

174 راجع 1 تسالونيكي 4: 13-17

175 راجع، فيليب 2: 10

176 س. استعلاء الأمم

177 ح. ف. ب. ل. س. أبيه

178 س. يطيبه

179 س. يرتضيه

180 الأمثال 3: 12

181 عبرانيين 12: 8

182 ح. ب. أصناف

183 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. الفأر

184 س. سلطة الأمم واستعلاهم على النصارى

كَوَادِحَةٍ يَمَّا دَكَرْنَاهُ. 41 لِأَنَّ بِيْثَلِ هَذَا كَانَ اللهُ فِي الْقَدِيمِ يُؤَدِّبُ شَعْبَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِذَا مَا رَأَهُمْ حَادُوا¹⁸⁵ عَنْ فَرَايِضِ نَامُوسِهِ.

[2. 5. اللهُ يَسْتَعْنِي عَنْ تَسَابِيحِنَا عِنْدَمَا نَغْضِبُهُ]

42 وَأَمَّا تَعَاظُهُ عَنَّا فِي خِرَابِ هَبَاكِلِهِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ، وَإِهَانَةِ آيَاتِهَا¹⁸⁶ الشَّرِيفَةِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ، فَهُوَ نَافِعٌ لِعُضْبِهِ عَلَيْنَا، 43 لِأَنَّهُ مُسْتَعْنٍ عَنْ تَسَابِيحِنَا وَتَكْهِينِنَا، وَكُلٌّ مَا يَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنَّا مِنَ الْكِرَامَةِ وَالتَّجْبِيلِ، وَجَمِيعُ ذَلِكَ عِنْدَهُ زُدَالَةٌ إِذَا مَا حَدْنَا عَنْ وَصَايَاهُ وَأَعْضْبَانَهُ بِأَفْعَالِنَا.

[2. 6. مَثَلُ الْغُلَامِ الْأَمِينِ الَّذِي قَدَّمَ هَدِيَّةً لِسَيِّدِهِ]

44 وَالْمَثَلُ¹⁸⁷ فِي ذَلِكَ مِثَالُ سُلْطَانٍ جَزِيلٍ غِنَاهُ،¹⁸⁸ وَخَازِنُهُ مُلْمَوءَةٌ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالثِّيَابِ الْفَاحِشَةِ وَالْأَخْجَارِ النَّجْمِيَّةِ،¹⁸⁹ وَبَاقِي الْأَمْتَعَةِ الشَّرِيفَةِ، 45 فَصَتَّى مَا قَدَّمَ إِلَيْهِ أَحَدُ غُلَمَائِهِ مَثَلًا هَدِيَّةً (وَلَوْ أَنَّهَا مِنْ أَلْبَسِ الْأَشْيَاءِ وَأَدْنَاهَا) فَإِنَّهُ يُسَرُّ بِهَا وَيُجَلِّهَا وَيُشْرَفُهَا إِذَا مَا كَانَ عَلَيْهِ رَاضِيًا، إِكْرَامًا لَهُ، لَا يَسْبَبُ رَغْبَتِهِ فِيهَا، 46 فَإِذَا مَا غَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَطْرُقُهَا، وَلَا يَخْفَلُ بِهَا، لِأَنَّهُ مُسْتَعْنٍ¹⁹⁰ عَنْهَا.

[2. 7. اللهُ يُمَجِّدُ مَنْ يُمَجِّدُهُ وَيَطْرُقُ مَنْ يَطْرُقُهُ]

47 وَهُوَ (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ!) يَقُولُ: "إِنِّي أُمَجِّدُ مَنْ يُمَجِّدُنِي، وَمَنْ يُهَيِّنُنِي فَإِنِّي أُهَيِّنُهُ، وَأَطْرُقُ مَنْ يَطْرُقُنِي."¹⁹¹ 48 وَأَمَّا نَحْنُ فَلَيْسَ مَقْصُودُنَا فِي مَقَالَتِنَا هَذِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ نَبَيِّنَ شَرَفَ دِينِ النَّصَارَى (أَوْلَادِ الْمُعْمُودِيَّةِ) وَصِحَّتَهُ فِي ذَاتِ نَفْسِهِ، لَا مِنْ تَصَرُّفِنَا نَحْنُ فِيهِ، 49 لِأَنَّ أَيَّ عَيْبٍ وَأَيَّةَ عِلَّةٍ تَدْخُلُ عَلَى صَنْعَةٍ مِنَ الصَّنَائِعِ [فَهِيَ] مِنْ خَطَايَا أَوْ سُوءِ تَصَرُّفٍ مُسْتَعْمِلِيهَا.

[2. 8. رَجَاؤُنَا لَيْسَ عَلَى هَذِهِ الْأَرْضِ]

50 وَيُضَافُ إِلَى ذَلِكَ أَيْضًا أَنَّ رَجَاءَنَا (نَحْنُ أَوْلَادِ الْمُعْمُودِيَّةِ) إِنَّمَا لَيْسَ هُوَ فِي شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْمَرْغُوبِ فِيهِ فِي هَذَا الْعَالَمِ، لِأَنَّهُ بَطَالٌ، وَكُلُّ مَا فِيهِ زَائِلٌ،¹⁹² 51 كَمَا قَالَ سُلَيْمَانُ: "الْجَمِيعُ بَاطِلٌ وَبَطَالٌ".¹⁹³ 52 وَكَمَا قَالَ بُولْسُ

185 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. حالدین

186 ح. ف. ب. ل. س. ألنها

187 س. مثال

188 ح. ف. ب. ل. س. غناية

189 س. الناحات الملكية والجواهر

190 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. مستغن

191 راجع، صموئيل الأول 2: 30

192 س. كالضلل والأحلام

193 الجامعة 1: 14

أَيْضًا: "إِنْ كَانَ رَجَاؤُنَا فِي الْمَسِيحِ إِثْمًا هُوَ هَهُنَا فِي هَذَا الْعَالَمِ، فَسَنَكُونُ أَشَدَّ تَحْسُرًا¹⁹⁴ مِنَ النَّاسِ كُلِّهِمْ."¹⁹⁵ 53
 وَإِثْمًا رَجَاؤُنَا (كَمَا وَعَدَنَا سَيِّدُنَا) فِي الْعَالَمِ الْمُسْتَأْتَفِ، حَيْثُ الْمَجْدُ الْأَبَدِيُّ وَالتَّعِيمُ الَّذِي لَا يَفْسُدُ¹⁹⁶ وَلَا يَبْزُولُ،
 54¹⁹⁷ لِأَنَّ مَا هَهُنَا¹⁹⁸ كَمَا قَالَ بُولُسُ: "زَمِّي،"¹⁹⁹ وَمَا هُنَاكَ²⁰⁰ "أَبَدِيٌّ."²⁰¹

194 ب. ف. ح. ل. خسارة

195 1 كورنثس 15: 19

196 س. والمملكة التي لا تزول

197 راجع، مرقس 13: 14

198 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. ها هنا

199 س. وقتياً زمنياً

200 س. فأبدياً سرمدياً

201 راجع، 1 كورنثس 15: 53

الْحُجَّةُ الثَّانِيَةُ

[اعْتِرَاضٌ عَلَى الثَّلَاثِ الْمُقَدَّسِ وَالْوَهْيَةِ الْمَسِيحِ]

[1. صُورَةُ الْحُجَّةِ]

55 صُورَتُهَا هَذِهِ الصُّورَةُ. كَيْفَ تَجَسُّسُونَ يَا مَعْشَرَ النَّصَارَى أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ ابْنًا! ثُمَّ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ تَقُولُونَ: "إِنَّهُ ثَلَاثَةٌ وَحُوهُ، آبٌ وَابْنٌ وَرُوحٌ قُدْسٌ." 56 فَيَلْزِمُكُمْ مِنْ هَذَا الْإِعْتِقَادِ أَنْ تَعْبُدُوا ثَلَاثَةَ آلِهَةٍ. 57 وَلَا يَكْفِيكُمْ ذَلِكَ مِنَ التَّخَاسِرِ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى (الْوَاحِدِ) لَكِنَّكُمْ تُوجِبُونَ وَتُصَدِّقُونَ عَلَى الْمَسِيحِ (مَعْبُودَكُمْ وَإِهْكُمْ²⁰²) بِأَنَّهُ صُلِبَ بِالْحَقِيقَةِ وَمَاتَ وَدُفِنَ. 58 وَبَعْدَ أَنْ تَصِفُوهُ بِجَمِيعِ مَا يُوصَفُ بِهِ الْإِنْسَانُ الْمَخْلُوقُ (كَوَاحِدٍ²⁰³ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ) تَعُودُونَ فَتُصَيِّرُونَهُ إِلَهًا وَتَعْبُدُونَهُ.

[2. الْجَوَابُ عَنِ هَذِهِ الْحُجَّةِ]

59 قَدْ كُنَّا فِي هَذِهِ الْمَسْأَلَةِ افْتِنَعْنَا قَبْلَ، مَا قَدْ أَوْصَحْنَا، وَمَا قَدَرْتَ عُمُودُنَا أَنْ تَصِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ مَعْرِفَةِ اللَّهِ، مِنْ مِثَالِ الشَّمْسِ وَالْعَقْلِ الْإِنْسَانِيِّ، وَذَلِكَ أَنَّهُ ثَلَاثَةٌ (أَعْنَى عِلْمًا وَمَعْلُولِيْنِ). 60 فَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَكَلِمَتُهُ وَرُوحُهُ آبٌ وَابْنٌ وَرُوحٌ قُدْسٌ.²⁰⁴

[2. 1. مِيلَادُ الْمَسِيحِ يَجِبُ أَنْ يُكْرَمَ بِالصَّمْتِ]

61 وَأَمَّا وِلَادَةُ سَيِّدِنَا يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحِ (الابْنِ الْأَرْزَلِيِّ) الْوِلَادَةُ الْأَرْزَلِيَّةُ مِنْ أَبِيهِ قَبْلَ الدُّهُورِ، فَالْآخَرَى بِهَا، كَمَا ذَكَرَ بَعْضُ مُقَدِّمِي²⁰⁵ بِيَعْتِنَا، أَنْ تُكْرَمَ بِالصَّمْتِ. 62 لِأَنَّ حَيْثُ لَا نَاطِقٌ كَانَ هُنَاكَ، وَلَا دَهْرٌ كَانَ وَاسِطَةً.²⁰⁶ 63 فَكَيْفَ تَحْتَلِّهَا الْعَقْلُ؟ أَوْ كَيْفَ يَخْدُمُ اللِّسَانُ مِمَّا فِيهَا؟ وَلَا جِبَلَةٌ إِذَا فِي إِذْرَاكِهَا وَالْحَدِيثُ فِي خَالَ صِفَتِهَا أَكْثَرُ مِنْ أَنْ تَقُولَ: 64 "كَانَ آبٌ وَابْنٌ مِنْهُ وَوَلِدٌ، إِمَّا كَالشُّعَاعِ مِنَ الشَّمْسِ،²⁰⁷ أَوْ كَالْكَلِمَةِ مِنَ الْعَقْلِ، أَوْ مَا يُشْبِهُ وَيُشَاكِلُ ذَلِكَ."

202 س. بعدما تألّمكم

203 ب. ح. ف. ل. كأحد

204 الجزء الأول، الوسائل التي تؤدي إلى معرفة الله،

205 س. أمنا

206 س. يضيف: "بين الوالد والمولود"

207 س. يضيف: "كالضوء من النار"

[2. 2. الإختلاف بين التعابير البشرية وحقيقتها الثالث المقدس]

- 65 ولقلاً يُظنُّ به أَنَّهُ بُمَائِلٌ كَلِمَتَنَا نَحْنُ الْهُيُولَائِيَّيْنَ (وَدَلِّكَ أَتَمَّا مُنْحَلَّةٌ لَأَقْوَامٍ بِمَا فِي دَنَائِمَا، إِذْ هِيَ مُخْتَاةٌ إِلَى آلَاتٍ جِسْمَائِيَّةٍ فِي بُرُوزِهَا، مِثْلَ اللِّسَانِ وَقَصَبَةِ الرَّثْمَةِ، وَمَا يَتَّبَعُ) لِذَلِكَ سُمِّيَ: "إِبْنًا."²⁰⁸
- 66 ثُمَّ لِقَلَّ يُظنُّ بِهَذِهِ الْبُنُوَّةِ أَتَمَّا نُشْبِهُ مَا عِنْدَنَا، وَيَلْزُمُهَا مَا لَزِمَ طَبِيعَتَنَا، وَهُوَ أَنَّ يَتَقَدَّمَ الْآبُ فِي زَمَانٍ عَنِ الْإِبْنِ، مَعَ بَاقِي تَوَابِعِ الْوِلَادَةِ الْجِسْمَائِيَّةِ الصُّورِيَّةِ، سُمِّيَ: "الْمَعْدَةُ"²⁰⁹ مُجْدِ الْآبِ.²¹⁰
- 67 وَلِقَلَّ يُظنُّ به أَنَّهُ يُخَالِفُ الْآبَ فِي صِفَاتِهِ²¹¹ وَلَا يُشْبِهُهُ (كَمَا تَرَى الْإِخْتِلَافَ عِنْدَنَا نَحْنُ الْهُيُولَائِيَّيْنَ) سُمِّيَ: "صُورَةٌ قَنُومِهِ."²¹²
- 68 وَلِقَلَّ يُظنُّ به أَيضًا أَنَّهُ مِنْ جَوْهَرٍ غَرِيبٍ غَيْرِ جَوْهَرِهِ سُمِّيَ: "ذِرَاعَةٌ."²¹³ 69 وَيُسَمَّى أَيضًا مِنْ وَجْهِ آخَرَ: "قَوْتُهُ وَحِكْمَتُهُ."²¹⁴
- 70 ثُمَّ يُضَافُ إِلَى ذَلِكَ هَذَا أَيضًا وَهُوَ أَتَمَّا لَمَّا اعْتَبَرْنَا فَضَائِلَ الْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ قَبْلِ، الصَّائِرَةِ إِلَيْهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ خَالِقِهِ (لَمَّا خَلَقَهُ عَلَى صُورَتِهِ وَمِثَالِهِ) 71 فَوَجَدْنَا فِي مُجَلِّبَتِهَا الْأَشْرَفِ وَالْأَكْرَمِ مِمَّا فِيهَا أَنَّهُ صَانِعٌ لِمَا هُوَ دُونَهُ، وَوَالِدٌ لِمَنْ هُوَ لِمِثْلِهِ فِي طَبِيعَتِهِ، أَوْ صَلْنَا قِيَاسُ الْعُقُلِ أَنْ تَنْصَوَّرَ فِي الْبَارِي كَذَلِكَ، 72 وَإِلَّا فَقَدْ كَانَتْ الْقَضِيَّةُ تُوجِبُ لَنَا أَنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ هَذَا الْوَجْهِ إِنَّمَا يُبْمَائِلُ اللَّهُ، لَيْسَ بِالْأَشْرَفِ مِمَّا فِيهِ، لَكِنَّ بِالْأَدْوَانِ، وَهَذِهِ مِنْ أَعْظَمِ الْأَخْطَاءِ. 73 وَلَكِنَّ بَيْنَ مِيلَادِ اللَّهِ (الَّذِي يُقَوُّ [كُلُّ] وَهَمٌّ وَكُلُّ زَمَانٍ وَطَبِيعَةٍ، وَيَتَعَالَى عَلَى كُلِّ مَادَةٍ وَصُورَةٍ²¹⁵) وَمِيلَادِ الْإِنْسَانِ (الزَّمَانِي الْفَنَائِي الْهُيُولَائِيَّيْنِ) هُوَ مِثْلُ مَا بَيْنَ صُورَةِ الْحَيَاتِلِ (الْمَوْجُودَةِ فِي الْمِرْآةِ) وَبَيْنَ الصُّورَةِ الَّتِي تُعَابَلُهَا بِالْحَقِيقَةِ، بَلْ وَأَكْثَرَ مِنْ هَذَا بِمَا لَا قِيَاسَ يُعْغِ عَلَيْهِ.

[2. 3. النَّصَارَى لَا يَعْبُدُونَ ثَلَاثَةَ آلِهَةٍ]

- 74 [أَمَّا] الْجَوَابُ لِقَوْلِهِمْ عَنَّا إِنَّمَا تَعْبُدُ ثَلَاثَةَ آلِهَةٍ [فَهُوَ] هَكَذَا: 75 إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مَعْشَرُ النَّصَارَى لَا تَعْتَقِدُ هَذَا أَبَدًا، وَلَا تَصَوَّرُنَا فِي الثَّلَاثَةِ وَجُوهٍ، (وَهِيَ أَقَانِيمُ الثَّلَاوِثِ الْمُقَدَّسِ) كَمَا يَظُنُّونَ هُمْ بِنَا أَتَمَّا مُفْتَرَقَةٌ، كَافِرَاتٍ أَشْخَاصِنَا نَحْنُ بَعْضُنَا عَنْ بَعْضٍ. 76 لِأَنَّمَا إِنْ كُنَّا مُجْتَمِعِينَ كُنَّا نَحْتُ تَوْعٍ وَاحِدٍ، وَمُتَّفِقِينَ أَجْمَعًا فِي جَوْهَرٍ وَاحِدٍ، وَصُورَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ تَعْمُنُ، 77 لَكِنَّمَا مُخْتَلِفُونَ²¹⁶ فِي أَكْثَرِ الْأَشْيَاءِ (أَعْنِي فِي الزَّمَانِ وَالْمَكَانِ وَالْمَشِيبَةِ الْعُزْمِيَّةِ، وَعَيْرَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَاضِ الْمُفَارِقَةِ وَعَيْرَ الْمُفَارِقَةِ²¹⁷، الْمُجْتَمِعَةِ فِي كُلِّ مَنَّا وَلَا يُمَكِّنُ وَلَا يُجُوزُ اجْتِمَاعُهَا الْبَتَّةُ فِي غَيْرِهِ). 78 حَتَّى أَنَّ الْإِخْتِلَافَ لَيْسَ مَوْجُودًا عَلَى هَذِهِ الصَّفَةِ بَيْنَ بَعْضِنَا الْبَعْضَ فَقَطُّ، لَكِنَّ الشَّخْصَ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ مُنْحَوَّلٌ²¹⁸ وَمُتَغَيِّرٌ وَمُتَقَلِّبٌ مِنْ خَالٍ إِلَى خَالٍ فِي كُلِّ وَقْتٍ.

208 عبرانيين 1: 5، مزمور 2: 7

209 س. شعاع

210 عبرانيين 1: 3

211 س. في الجوهر

212 راجع: كولوسي 1: 15؛ عبرانيين 1: 3؛ 2 كورنثس 4: 4

213 راجع: مزمور 89: 1؛ لوقا 1: 51

214 راجع: كولوسي 2: 3؛ 1 كورنثس 1: 24

215 ح. هذه العبارة ناقصة

216 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. مختلفين

217 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. غير المفارقة

218 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. مستحيل

79 وأما باري الكلِّ فإن كانت الأرقام فيه ثلاثة، فالإختلاف إنما هو في الخواص المَشَخَّصَةِ الوُجُوهَ فَقَطْ، وهو أن لكلِّ منهم منه خاصَّةٌ تُخَصُّهُ بها، تُمَيِّزُ الوُجُوهَ مِنْ غَيْرِهِ، لَكِنَّ الاتِّفَاقَ فِيهَا كَثِيرٌ، 80 لِأَنَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ، دُو جُوهَرٍ وَاحِدٍ، وَطَبِيعَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَكِرَامَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَأَزَلِيَّةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَمَا يُشَاكِلُ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا يَتَعَبَقُ فِيهِ الإِخْتِلَافُ عِنْدَنَا نَحْنُ الهَيُولَانِيَّةَنَ وَبَيْنَنَا، 81 لِأَنَّ كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِنَ الثَّلَاثَةِ كَلَيْتُهُ فِي كَلَيْتِي الأَخْرَيْنِ، وَهُوَ مَعَ هَذَا إِلَهٌ كَامِلٌ، وَالثَّلَاثَةُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ، 82 وَكُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِنَ الثَّلَاثَةِ هُوَ بَعِيْنُهُ الإِثْنَانِ الأَخْرَانِ، مَا خِلاَ الخَوَاصِ (المُقَدَّمُ ذِكْرُهَا) الَّتِي بِهَا وَحَدَّهَا لَا غَيْرَ بِمَيِّزِ العُفْلِ الوَاحِدِ مِنَ الأَخْرَيْنِ، 83 كَثَلَاثَةِ مَصَابِيحٍ، أَوْ كَسُجِّحٍ مَسْرُوحَةٍ فِي بَيْتٍ وَاحِدٍ، وَكُلُّ مِنْهَا قَدْ مَلِئَ البَيْتُ مِنْ ضَوْءِهِ، فَلَا يَجُوزُ لِأَحَدٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ يَغْرُقَ ضَوْءَ الوَاحِدِ مِنَ الأَخْرِ فَيَقُولَ: "إِنِّي عَابِنْتُ فِي البَيْتِ ثَلَاثَةَ نُورٍ،" بَلْ نُورًا وَاحِدًا، 84²¹⁹ أَوْ إِنْسَانًا إِذَا سَمِعَ ثَلَاثَةَ يَرْتَلُونَ مَزْمُورًا وَاحِدًا فَلَا يَجُوزُ لَهُ أَنْ يَقُولَ: "إِنِّي سَمِعْتُ ثَلَاثَةَ مَزَامِيرٍ، بَلْ مَزْمُورًا وَاحِدًا مُرْتَلًا مِنْ ثَلَاثَةِ أَتْرَاقٍ." 85²²⁰ هَكَذَا نَحْنُ إِذَا مَا قَلْنَا إِنَّمَا عَابِدُونَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَقَانِيمَ (آبَا²²¹ وَابْنَا²²² وَرُوحَ قُدْسٍ) وَكُلُّ مِنَ الثَّلَاثَةِ إِلَهٌ كَامِلٌ، لَا يَلْزِمُنَا أَنْ تَقُولَ: "نَحْنُ عَابِدُونَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَهْلَةٍ، بَلْ إِلَهًا²²³ وَاحِدًا." 224

[2. 4. سَبَبُ تَكْرِيمِ المَسِيحِيِّنَ الأَمِ المَسِيحِ]

86 وَأَمَّا الجَوَابُ عَنِ الأَمِ سَيِّدِنَا وَمُخْلِصِنَا، فَلَيْسَ إِنَّمَا لَا نَأْنِفُ مِنْهَا فَقَطْ، لَكِنَّمَا نَحْفَظُهَا عَلَيْهِ وَتَعْرِفُ بِأَنَّ بِهَا صَارَ خَلَاصُنَا، 87 فَتُعْلِمُنَا²²⁵ وَتُسَرِّفُنَا وَتُشْهِرُنَا، لَيْسَ بِالقَوْلِ فَقَطْ، لَكِنُ بِالقَوْلِ أَيْضًا، 88 حَتَّى إِنَّمَا نُصَوِّرُهَا فِي البِيعَةِ²²⁶ المُقَدَّسَةِ، وَعَلَى الطَّرِيقِ،²²⁷ وَفِي أَكْثَرِ المَوَاضِعِ (أَعْنِي صُلْبُهُ وَالأَمَةُ) لئَلَّا تَنْسَى افْتِخَارَنَا بِهَا، 89 وَقَصْدُنَا فِي مِثْلِ هَذَا أَنْ نُنَادِيَ بِفَضْلِ سَيِّدِنَا عَلَيْنَا، وَتَنَازُلُهُ مَعَنَا فِي بَابِ خَلَاصِنَا، إِلَى حَدِّ هَذَا مُقْدَارُهُ. 90 شَبِيهًا بِعَبْدِ²²⁸ قَدْ وَقَعَ فِي ضَعْفَةِ الأَسْرِ وَشِدَّةِ التَّهْلِكَةِ،²²⁹ مَعَ التَّكَبُّلِ فِي الحَدِيدِ بِأَضْيَاقِ سِجْنٍ، 91 فَتَحَنَّنَ²³⁰ صَاحِبُهُ إِلَى أَنْ قَدَّاهُ²³¹ بِذَاتِهِ، وَهُوَ أَنَّهُ احْتَمَلَ لِأَجْلِهِ كُلَّ مَا كَانَ سَمَلَهُ مِنْ تِلْكَ الشَّدَّةِ، 92 فَلَبَسَ²³² رِيَّةَ القُدْرِ،²³³ وَوَضَعَ قِيُودَ الحَدِيدِ فِي رِجْلَيْهِ، وَخَلَّصَهُ عَلَى هَذِهِ الصِّفَةِ مِنْ تِلْكَ الشَّدَّةِ،²³⁴ وَمِنْ ضَبِيقِ التَّهْلِكَةِ، 93 فَظَلَّ ذَلِكَ العَبْدُ، لِأَجْلِ إِفْرَاطِ إِحْسَانِ مَوْلَاةٍ عَلَيْهِ، طَائِفًا بِتِلْكَ الأَعْلالِ، مَعَ لِبَاسِ الأَسْرِ²³⁵ ذَلِكَ القُدْرِ، 94 مُشْهِرًا جَمِيعَ ذَلِكَ لِكُلِّ أَحَدٍ، مُنَادِيًا بِمَا أَوْلَاهُ مَوْلَاةً مِنَ الإِحْسَانِ، وَمِنْ إِتْعَامِهِ عَلَيْهِ.

219 س. يضيف: "الثلاثة مصابيح"

220 ح. ب. س. ل. نفر

221 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. أب

222 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. ابن

223 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. إله

224 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. واحد

225 ب. ح. ل. ف. نعلها

226 س. يبعثنا

227 س. يضيف، والشوارع

228 س. ومنلنا في ذلك مثل عبد

229 س. التكبيل

230 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. فتحيل

231 ح. يفديه

232 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. ولبس

233 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. القدرة

234 ح. ناقص

235 ب. ح. ل. ف. المهلكة، س. الأسر

[2]. 5. آلام المسيح هي حماقة عند العالم أما للتصاري فهي قوة للخلاص]

95 هذه [هي] الآلام المقدسة. فِيمَقْتَضَى الْعَقْلُ الْبَشَرِيَّ، وَحِكْمَةُ هَذَا الْعَالَمِ وَقِيَاسَاتِهِ، إِنَّهَا بِالْحَقِيقَةِ مِنَ الْعَجَبِ الْمُنْكَرِ الَّذِي يُعْجَبُ كُلُّ عَجَبٍ، 96 كَمَا قَالَ بُولْسُ الرِّسُولِ: "إِنَّ الْكَلَامَ فِي بَابِ الصَّلِيبِ: أَمَا لِنَهَالِكِينَ فَهُوَ حَمَاقَةٌ، وَعِنْدَ الْمُخَلَّصِينَ فَهُوَ قُوَّةُ اللَّهِ، 97 لِأَنَّهُ قَدْ كُتِبَ: "الْأَيْدَى حِكْمَةُ الْحُكَمَاءِ، وَالْأَيْدِيَانِ فَهَمُ الْفُهَمَاءِ." 98 أَيْنَ الْحَكِيمِ؟ أَيْنَ الْكُتَّابِ؟ أَيْنَ مُسْتَفْجِحِ هَذَا الدَّهْرِ بِنَعْمَتِي؟ أَوْ لَيْسَ قَدْ جَعَلَ²³⁶ اللَّهُ حِكْمَةَ هَذَا الْعَالَمِ حَفَلًا. 99 مِنْ أَجْلِ أَنَّ الْعَالَمَ لَمْ يَعْرِفْ اللَّهَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ فَسَرَّ لَدَى اللَّهِ²³⁷ أَنْ يُخَلِّصَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِكَرَامَةِ الْأُمَمِينَ.²³⁸ 100 وَقَالَ أَيْضًا بَعْدَ قَلِيلٍ: "إِنَّ تَحَامُقَ²⁴⁰ اللَّهِ هُوَ أَوْفَرُ حِكْمَةٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ، وَضَعْفُ اللَّهِ هُوَ أَشَدُّ قُوَّةً مِنَ النَّاسِ." 101 وَقَالَ أَيْضًا: "أَمَّا جُنُوحُكُمْ²⁴² لَمْ أَحِجِّكُمْ²⁴³ بِحِكْمَةِ مَنْطِقٍ، أَوْ بِالْحِكْمَةِ أُخْبِرْتُكُمْ بِشَهَادَاتِ اللَّهِ، 102 لِأَنِّي لَمْ أُؤَثِّرْ أَنْ أَعْرِفَ فِيكُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا يَسُوعَ الْمَسِيحَ مَصْلُوبًا." 103²⁴⁴ وَقَالَ أَيْضًا: "فَإِذَا لَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَفْتَحِرَ إِلَّا بِصَلِيبِ رَبِّي."²⁴⁵

[2]. 6. الجواب عما يوجد في الكتب المقدسة من تصغير للمسيح]

104 وَأَمَّا الْجَوَابُ عَمَّا يُوجَدُ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ الْمُقَدَّسِ وَبَاقِي كُتُبِ الْكَنِيسَةِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ مِنَ الْأَلْفَاظِ، الَّتِي فِيهَا تَصْغِيرُ الْمَسِيحِ، وَالْحِطَاطَةُ مِنْ مُسَاوَاتِهِ لِأَبِيهِ، فَهُوَ أَنَّ جَمِيعَ هَذِهِ الْأَلْفَاظِ إِنَّمَا تَلْزِمُهُ وَتَقَالُ عَلَيْهِ. 105 فَمِنْ جِهَةِ أَنَّهُ إِلَهٌ كَامِلٌ، مُسَاوٍ لِأَبِيهِ فِي الطَّبِيعَةِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ، لَكِنَّهُ هُوَ بِعَيْنِهِ إِنْسَانٌ كَامِلٌ أَيْضًا، مُسَاوٍ لِأُمِّهِ وَلَنَا فِي الطَّبِيعَةِ الْبَشَرِيَّةِ. 106 فَيَقَالُ عَلَيْهِ كُلُّ مَا يَقَالُ مِنَ التَّعْظِيمِ عَلَى الطَّبِيعَةِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ وَمِنَ التَّصْغِيرِ عَلَى الطَّبِيعَةِ الْبَشَرِيَّةِ. 107 وَذَلِكَ شَبِيهًا بِابْنِ يُولَدُ لِنَعُضِ الْمَلُوكِ مِنْ عَبْدَةٍ، فَإِنْ قَالَ ذَلِكَ: "أَنَا عَبْدٌ، ابْنُ عَبْدَةٍ"، فَقَدْ صَدَقَ. وَإِنْ قَالَ: "أَنَا مَلِكٌ، ابْنُ مَلِكٍ"، فَصَدَقَ أَيْضًا.

[2]. 7. سبب تنازل الله وتجسده]

108 وَالسَّبَبُ فِي تَنَازُلِهِ إِلَى حَدِّ الْمُسَاوَاةِ بِنَا فَهُوَ حَتَّى مُكَنَّاتْنَا حَتَّى أَيْضًا الْمُسَاوَاةَ بِهِ، وَأَنْ تَقْتَفِي²⁴⁶ أَثْرَهُ وَتَتَّبِعَهُ، 109 لِأَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَنِعِ أَنْ يُعَادِلَ²⁴⁷ الرَّاجِلُ²⁴⁸ الْفَارِسَ، فَيَلْحَقَهُ وَيَقْتَفِي أَثْرَهُ وَيَتَّبِعَهُ، إِنْ لَمْ يَتَرَجَّلِ الْفَارِسُ وَيَتْرَلْ

236 س. ح. حق

237 ح. ناقص. ف. ابن الله.

238 س. بمسجول البشارة

239 1 كورنثس 1: 18 - 21

240 س. تجاهل

241 1 كورنثس 1: 25

242 ب. ف. ح. ل. أحجكم

243 ب. ف. ل. أحجكم

244 1 كورنثس 2: 1 - 6

245 غلاطية 6: 14

246 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. نفقو

247 ب. ف. ح. ل. يعادي، س. يجازي

248 ب. ف. ح. ل. الرجل

عَنْ فَرَسِهِ وَيُسَاوِي الرَّاجِلَ فِي عَدْوِهِ. 110 وَلَا يَجُوزُ لِأَحَدٍ أَنْ يُعَلِّمَ السَّبَّاحَةَ لِغَيْرِهِ وَهُوَ دَاخِلٌ مَرَكَبٍ إِنْ لَمْ يَتَعَرَّ وَيُعْطَسُ فِي الْمَاءِ مَعَهُ. 111 فَمَنْ أَجَلُ هَذَا، وَمَا أَشْبَهَهُ، دَعَبَ الصُّورَةَ لِسَيِّدِ الْكُلِّ، بِمُقْتَضَى نَامُوسِ السِّيَاسَةِ، وَعَنْ غَايَةِ فَضْلِ وَجُودِ مِنْهُ فِي بَابِ خَلَاصِنَا، أَنْ يَتَنَازَلَ مِنْ غُلُوِّ بَحْدِهِ إِلَى حَدِّ الْمُسَاوَاةِ بِنَا. 112 لِإِحْطَابِ الْجِسْمِ بِجِسْمٍ مِثْلِهِ، وَيُعَلِّمَنَا السَّيْرَةَ الْإِلَهِيَّةَ بِجِسْمٍ هَيُولَانِيٍّ مِنْ طَبِيعَةِ أَحْسَادِنَا. 113 وَلَوْ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ لَمَا كَانَ أَفَادَنَا شَيْءٌ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ وَتَعَالِيهِ. 114 كَمَا أَنَّهُ وَلَا الْأَخْرَسُ الْأَصَمُّ يَسْتَقِيمُ لَهُ الْبَيْتَةُ أَنْ يَفْهَمَ لَفْظَةً وَاحِدَةً مِنَ الْفَاطِطِ النَّاطِقِ وَحِطَابِهِ مَعَهُ وَيَسْتَفِيدَ مِنْهُ، إِنْ لَمْ يُخْفِ النَّاطِقُ مَنْطِقَهُ بِلِسَانِهِ، وَيُسَاوِ الْأَخْرَسَ فِي خَرَسِهِ، فَيُحَاطَبُهُ بِيَدَيْهِ وَأَصَابِعِهِ عَلَى تَمُودِجِهِ.

[2]. 8. تَجَسُّدُ اللَّهِ وَتَأَلُّمُهُ لَا يَنَالُ الطَّبِيعَةَ الْإِلَهِيَّةَ أَيُّ ضَرَرٍ: مِثَالُ الشَّمْسِ الْإِنْسَانِ

115 وَالْمِثَالُ²⁴⁹ عَنْ اتِّحَادِ كَلِمَةِ اللَّهِ فِي هَذَا الْجَسَدِ الْهَيُولَانِي، وَتَأَلُّمِهِ بِهِ، مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَنَالَ طَبِيعَتَهُ الْإِلَهِيَّةَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ ضَرَرٍ، هُوَ مِثَالُ الشَّمْسِ وَالْإِنْسَانِ أَيْضًا (الَّذَيْنِ كُنَّا قَدْ تَقَدَّمْنَا بِذِكْرِهِمَا). 116 وَذَلِكَ فَكَمَا أَنَّ ضَوْءَ الشَّمْسِ (وَهُوَ الْمُسْتَبْتُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ) إِذَا مَا قَابَلَتْهُ قِطْعَةٌ مِنَ الْبُلُورِ، وَهُوَ مَعَ هَذَا لَا يُفَارِقُ قَرَصَهُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَنْعُدُ فِيهَا، فَمَنْعَلِي مِنْهُ (الَّذِي مِنْهُ خُرُوجُهُ). 117 فَإِنْ عَمَدَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِلَى تِلْكَ الْبُلُورَةِ فَدَاسَهَا أَوْ دَقَّهَا أَوْ كَسَرَهَا. 118 أَمَّا الْبُلُورَةُ فَتُوطَأُ وَتُدَاسُ وَتُكْسَرُ، وَأَمَّا الضُّوْءُ الَّذِي فِيهَا فَلَا يَنَالُهُ شَيْءٌ مِنْ جَمِيعِ ذَلِكَ. 119 كَذَلِكَ كَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ الْأَزَلِي اتَّحَدَ بِجِسْمٍ بَشَرِيٍّ ذِي نَفْسٍ نَاطِقَةٍ، 120 فَلَمَّا لَمْ يَلْهُوْتِهِ وَأَلْهُهُ، وَلَمَّا أَنَّ الْأَوَانَ تَأَلَّمُ بِهِ وَمَاتَ بِمُفَارَقَةِ النَّفْسِ مِنْهُ، 121 كَذَلِكَ الْجَسَدُ الْإِلَهِيُّ لَمْ يَدْخُلْ عَلَى جَوْهَرٍ لَاهُوتِهِ مِنْ جَمِيعِ ذَلِكَ الْبَيْتَةُ ضَرَرٌ. 122 كَذَلِكَ أَيْضًا الْكَلِمَةُ الْمَوْلُودَةُ مِنَ الْعَقْلِ، كَمَا أَنَّهَا (حَسَنًا تَقَدَّمَ بِهِ الْقَوْلُ قَبْلًا) لَمْ تَتَزَلْ فِي طَبِيعَتِهَا عَرِيَّةً مِنَ الْهَيُولِي، 123 وَإِذَا سَطُرَتْ فِي كِتَابٍ تَجَسَّمتْ، مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تُفَارِقُ الْعَقْلَ الَّذِي مِنْهُ بُرُوزُهَا، وَلَا اسْتَحَالَتْ وَلَا تَعَبَّرَتْ، 124 فَهِيَ بِجُمْلَتِهَا فِي الْعَقْلِ، غَيْرٌ مُتَحَرِّجَةٌ،²⁵⁰ مُنْذَرَةٌ وَمُخْبِرَةٌ بِمَكْتُومَاتِ الْعَقْلِ مَعَ رُوحٍ لَا يُفَارِقُهَا. 125 فَإِنْ عَمَدَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِلَى ذَلِكَ الْقُرْطَاسِ قُوطَأَهُ، أَوْ بَصَقَ عَلَيْهِ، أَوْ مَرَّقَهُ، 126 فَإِنَّ جَمِيعَ هَذِهِ الْأَعْرَاضِ، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ إِثْمًا تُثَالُ عَلَى الْكَلِمَةِ نَفْسِهَا، لَكِنَّهَا إِثْمًا تُسَبُّ إِلَى الْقُرْطَاسِ وَالْمِدَادِ فَقَطْ، 127 لِأَنَّ الْكَلِمَةَ لَمْ يَنَالْهَا وَلَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا فِي طَبِيعَتِهَا مِنْ جَمِيعِ ذَلِكَ شَيْءٌ الْبَيْتَةُ. 128 كَذَلِكَ كَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ الْإِبْنِ الْأَزَلِيِّ خَرَجَ مِنْ أَبِيهِ كَمَا شَاءَ، وَخَاءَ إِلَى الْعَالَمِ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يُفَارِقْهُ، 129 فَتَحَسَّدَ مِنْ رُوحِ الْفُلُدِسِ وَمِنْ مِرْيَمَ الْعَذْرَاءِ، وَصَارَ لَحْمًا دَا نَفْسٍ نَاطِقَةٍ، وَسَكَنَ فِيهَا مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَسْتَجِيلَ فِي طَبِيعَتِهِ، 130 وَظَهَرَ لَنَا بِجُمْلَةٍ لَاهُوتِهِ، وَهُوَ مَخْدُودٌ وَمُخْصُورٌ فِي الْمَأْخُودِ مِنْ طَبِيعَتِنَا، مِنْ حَيْثُ أَنَّهُ لَا يَخْلُو مِنْهُ مَكَانٌ. 131 فَأَنْذَرَ إِلَيْنَا مِنْ سَرَائِرِ الْآبِ فِي بَابِ خَلَاصِنَا، مِنْ حَيْثُ أَنَّهُ تَأَلَّمُ بِمُشَارَكَةِ الْجَسَدِ الْمَأْخُودِ مِنَّا، وَأَمَّا فِي جَوْهَرِهِ الْإِلَهِيِّ فَلَمْ يَنَالْهُ، وَلَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ الْبَيْتَةُ لَا أَمَّا²⁵¹ وَلَا مَوْتٌ.²⁵²

249 ب. ف. ل. ح. وقال

250 ب. ف. س. متحسمة. س. يضيف: "وهي بمشاركة القرطاس والمذاد متحسمة. وهي مع هذا أيضاً بعينها في قلب من سمعها بكلبيها"

251 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. الما

252 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. موتاً

الْحُجَّةُ الثَّالِثَةُ

[اعْتِرَاضٌ عَلَى سَمَاحِ اللَّهِ لِأَدَمَ بِالسُّقُوطِ وَسَبَبِ عَدَمِ صَدِّ اللَّهِ لِخَدِيعَةَ إِبْلِيسَ]

[1. صُورَةُ الْحُجَّةِ]

132 صُورَتُهَا هَذِهِ الصُّورَةُ. وَذَلِكَ أَنَّهُ²⁵³ لَمَّا كَانَ الْبَارِي (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) عَارِفًا بِمَا سَيَكُونُ مِنْ آدَمَ وَزَلَّتْهُ، فَلِمَ خَلَقَهُ؟
133 وَلِمَا خَلَقَهُ فَلِمَ لَمْ يَصُدِّ²⁵⁴ خَدِيعَةَ إِبْلِيسَ عَنْهُ؟ لَكِنَّهُ تَخَلَّى عَنْهُ وَتَرَكَهُ أَنْ يُطِيعَهُ وَيَتَّبِعَهُ. 134 وَلِمَا خَلَّ
بِهِ مَا خَلَّ مِنَ الْمَصَائِبِ، بَعْدَ الْمَعْصِيَةِ، لِمَا لَمْ يُسَارِعْ فِي خَلَاصِهِ فِي حِينِهِ، قَبْلَ أَنْ تَرَايَدَتْ فِيهِ الشُّرُورُ وَعَظُمَتْ؟

[2. الْجَوَابُ عَنِ الْحُجَّةِ]

135 إِنَّ اللَّهَ (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) خَلَقَ أَبَانَا الْأَوَّلَ، جُودًا مِنْهُ، مِنْ الْعَدَمِ إِلَى الْوُجُودِ. 136 ثُمَّ أَنَّهُ فَضَّلَهُ عَلَى جَمِيعِ مَا
فِي هَذَا الْعَالَمِ الْمُخْتَلِسِ مِنْ مَخْلُوقَاتِهِ، 137 وَجَعَلَهُ مَلِكًا وَرَيْسًا عَلَى جَمِيعِ مَا فِيهِ، لِأَنَّهُ عَلَى صُورَتِهِ وَمِثَالِهِ خَلَقَهُ.
138 وَمِنْ جَمَلَةٍ مَا خَصَّ هَذِهِ الصُّورَةَ هِيَ الْحُرِّيَّةُ، أَغْنَى التَّحَكُّمَ فِي الذَّاتِ، 139 وَأَعْطَاهُ بَعْدَ هَذَا وَصِيَّةً جَعَلَهَا
لَهُ مَادَّةً فِي تَصَرُّفِهِ الْاِخْتِيَارِيِّ. 140 وَأَظْهَرَ لَهُ طَرِيقَيْنِ فِيهِمَا الْحَيَاةَ وَالْمَوْتَ، حَتَّى أَنَّهُ [إِذَا] اخْتَارَ لِدَاتِهِ الْحَيَاةَ،
بِالطَّاعَةِ، يَصِيرُ لَهُ الْفَضْلُ، (لَيْسَ بِدُونِ مَايُحِ السَّبَبِ فِيهِ). 141 وَإِنْ اخْتَارَ الْمَوْتَ، بِالْمَعْصِيَةِ، تَعُودُ الْأَلِيمَةُ²⁵⁶
عَلَى ذَاتِهِ، إِذْ قَدْ تَصَرَّفَ فِي الْمُوَهَّبَةِ (أَغْنَى الْقُوَّةَ الْاِسْتِطَاعِيَّةَ) تَصَرُّفًا زِدِيًّا، وَاخْتَارَ لِدَاتِهِ الْمَوْتَ عَنِ الْحَيَاةِ.
142 فَلَوْ كَانَ لِهَذَا السَّبَبِ لَمْ يَخْلُقْهُ فَقَدْ كَانَ سُوءُ تَصَرُّفِ آدَمَ، الْعَتِيدِ كَوْنُهُ، وَالسَّابِقِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ، غَلَبَ
عَرَضَ اللَّهِ فِي خَلْقَتِهِ لَهُ، وَعَطَّلَ جُودَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَبَطَّلَهُ. 143 وَقَدْ كَانَ، لِعُمْرِي، مِنْ هَذَا الْوَجْهِ، اتَّسَعَتْ حُجَّةُ
الْمُعَانِيدِينَ عَلَى الْبَارِيِّ فِي أَشْيَاءٍ أُخْرَى غَيْرِ هَذِهِ، وَهِيَ بِأَنْ يَقُولُوا: "لَمَّا كَانَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَارِفًا أَنَّ الْحَدِيدَ يَكُونُ فِيهِ
الْقَتْلُ، فَلِمَ خَلَقَهُ؟" 144 وَكَذَلِكَ عَنِ التَّبِيدِ لِأَجْلِ السُّكْرِ، وَعَنِ آلَاتِ التَّنَاسُلِ لِأَجْلِ الزُّنَا، وَعَنِ اللِّسَانِ [لِأَجْلِ]
الْكَذِبِ وَالشَّيْبَةِ، وَمَا أَشْبَهَ ذَلِكَ.

[2. 1. سَمَحَ اللَّهُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ بِالسُّقُوطِ لِأَنَّهُ لَا يُرِيدُ سَلْبَ حُرِّيَّتِهِ]

145 فَأَمَّا سَبَبُ تَرْكِه إِيَّاهُ أَنْ يَسْفِطَ هُوَ، أَنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ قَهْرَهُ عَلَى طَاعَتِهِ لَهُ فِي حِفْظِ الْوَصِيَّةِ، فَقَدْ كَانَ سَلْبَهُ الْقُوَّةَ
الْاِسْتِطَاعِيَّةَ، الَّتِي أَتَعَمَّ عَلَيْهِ وَكَرَّمَهُ بِهَا، 146 وَلَقَدْ كَانَ لِلْقَائِلِ أَنْ يَقُولَ مُفْتَرِيًّا عَلَى الْبَارِيِّ: "إِنَّهُ يُجُودُ بِنَعْمِهِ، ثُمَّ
يَعُودُ يَسْتَعِيدُهَا بِمَنْ كَانَ أَتَعَمَّ عَلَيْهِ بِهَا بُحْلًا وَسُخْطًا."²⁵⁷ وَمَوَاجِبُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لَا تَعُودُ تُسْتَرَدُّ. 147²⁵⁸ وَلَا جِلْ

253 س. وهي قولهم لنا

254 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. لا

255 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. صد

256 ح. ب. السلامة

257 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. سقوطا

258 ح. الجملة ناقصة

ذَلِكَ تَرَكَهُ أَنْ يَتَصَرَّفَ بِدَائِهِ كَيْفَمَا شَاءَ، بِمُقْتَضَى حُرِّيَّتِهِ الَّتِي أُتْعِمَ عَلَيْهَا²⁵⁹ فِي مَرَّةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَلَا يَعُودُ يَسْتَرُدُّهَا مِنْهُ أَبَدًا.

[2. 2. سَمَحَ اللَّهُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ بِالسُّقُوطِ لِيَعْرِفَ الْإِنْسَانَ قِيَمَةَ النِّعْمَةِ وَالرَّحْمَةَ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ]

148 وَهُوَ عَارِفٌ بِمَا سَيَكُونُ مِنْهُ وَمُتَيَقِّنٌ مِنْ خَلَاصِهِ فِي وَقْتِهِ، 149 حَتَّى إِذَا مَا سَقَطَتْ مِنْهُ نِعْمَةُ اللَّهِ²⁶⁰ الَّتِي كَانَ فِيهَا، وَأَتَتْهُ الْبَلَايَا مُتَوَاتِرَةً وَذَاقَهَا، عَادَ فَرِحَهُ وَخَلَّصَهُ مِنْهَا بِالسِّيَاسَةِ وَالتَّدْبِيرِ، 150 فَيَعْرِفُ مِقْدَارَ مَضَرَّةِ الْمَعْصِيَةِ وَفَائِدَةِ الطَّاعَةِ، فَيُعِيدُ الِالْتِمَامَ عَلَى ذَاتِهِ. 151 ثُمَّ بَعْدَ هَذَا يَعْرِفُ أَيْضًا مِقْدَارَ إِحْسَانِ خَالِقِهِ عَلَيْهِ وَرَحْمَتِهِ لَهُ، لِأَنَّهُ حَيْثُ تَكَارَّرَتِ الخَطِيئَةُ وَتَفَاقَمَتِ، تَزِيدُ النِّعْمَةُ وَالرَّحْمَةُ.²⁶¹ 152 [تَمَّ] وَيُحَسِّنُ مَعَ هَذَا بِالنِّعْمَةِ الَّتِي كَانَ قَبْلَ فِيهَا وَيَعْقِلُ عَلَيْهَا، وَيَعْرِفُ مِقْدَارَهَا، لِأَنَّ الضِّدَّ أَقْوَى فِعْلًا فِي إِظْهَارِ ضِدِّهِ، فَتَلَدُّ لَهُ، 153 حِينَئِذٍ إِذَا مَا عَادَ إِلَيْهَا يَنْتَعِمُ بِهَا أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا كَانَ يَلْتَدُّ وَيَنْتَعِمُ بِهَا قَبْلَ ذَوِقِهِ²⁶² أَلْبُؤْسِ الحَادِثِ عَلَيْهِ بَعْدَ الْمَعْصِيَةِ. لِأَنَّ كُلَّ لَذَّةٍ لَا يَتَقَدَّمُهَا شَقَاءٌ لَا تُعَدُّ بِلَذَّةٍ، وَبِالضِّدِّ. 154 وَالدَّلِيلُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ لَذَّةُ الطَّعَامِ بَعْدَ الجُوعِ، وَالشُّرْبُ بَعْدَ العَطَشِ، وَالصِّحَّةُ بَعْدَ المَرَضِ، وَالحُرِّيَّةُ بَعْدَ العُبُودِيَّةِ، وَمَا يُشَاكِلُ ذَلِكَ وَيُنَاسِبُهُ. 155 لِأَنَّ آيَةَ لَذَّةٍ [تَكُونُ] لِكُلِّ وَاحِدَةٍ مِمَّا وَصَفْنَا إِنْ لَمْ يَتَقَدَّمْهَا ضِدُّهَا. 156 وَيُضَافُ إِلَى مَا ذَكَرْنَاهُ أَيْضًا هَذَا، وَهُوَ أَنَّ يَتْرَكَ الشُّرُورَ تَتَزَايَدُ إِلَى أَنْ تَتَنَاهَى وَتَبْلُغَ، فَتَصِلَ إِلَى أَقْصَى حَدِّهَا، لِتَتَزَايَدَ حِينَئِذٍ فِي ذَلِكَ وَتَظْهَرَ الرَّحْمَةُ الَّتِي اسْتَحَقَّهَا، 157 نَظِيرُ مَا تَرَى يَفْعَلُهُ²⁶³ الْأَطْبَاءُ المَاهِرُونَ،²⁶⁴ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَبْدَأُونَ فِي اسْتِيفْرِاغِ الخُلْطِ الحَبِيثِ إِلَى أَنْ يَنْتَهِيَ انْصِبَابُهُ وَيَتَكَامَلَ نُضْجُهُ. 158 كَذَلِكَ الجُرْحُ أَيْضًا لَا يَبْطُ الجُرْحُ فِي الْإِتْبَادِ، وَصِدِيدُهُ²⁶⁵ بَعْدَ فِيهِ فَجَاءَهُ²⁶⁶، لَكِنْ إِذَا مَا بَانَ لَهُ تَبَالُغَ نَضْجِهَا.

[2. 3. مَثَلُ الطَّيِّبِ وَتَلْمِيذِهِ المَحْبُوبِ]

159 وَالمَثَلُ فِي ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ رَجُلٍ طَيِّبٍ، كَانَ لَهُ خَانُوتٌ قَدْ حَوَى فِيهِ مِنْ جَمِيعِ الْأَدْوِيَةِ وَالمَعَاجِينِ وَالأَشْرَبَةِ،²⁶⁷ وَعَبَّرَ ذَلِكَ بِمَا يُجْتَنَجُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ مُقْتَضَى صَنْعَتِهِ. 160 وَكَانَ لَهُ تَلْمِيذٌ، وَهُوَ عِنْدَهُ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الوَلَدِ، وَهُوَ عِنْدَهُ عَزِيزٌ حَبِيبٌ لَا بَعْدَ حَبِيبَتِهِ لَهُ حَبِيبَةٌ أُخْرَى تَعَادِلُهَا. 161 وَإِقْرَاطُ حَبِيبَتِهِ لَهُ، مَلَكَهُ ذَلِكَ الخَانُوتُ بِجَمِيعِ مَا فِيهِ، وَحَدَّرَهُ مِنْ اسْتِعْمَالِ مَعْجُونٍ وَاحِدٍ، كَانَ بَيْنَ تِلْكَ الْأَدْوِيَةِ، رَكْبَةُ لِبَارِدِي المَرَجِ، وَالبَالِغِينَ²⁶⁸ فِي سِنِّ الكُهُولَةِ. 162 وَلِأَجْلِ إِقْرَاطِ حَدَّرَهُ،²⁶⁹ عَرَبٌ لَهُ تِلْكَ البَرِّيَّةُ الَّتِي كَانَ ذَلِكَ المَعْجُونُ فِيهَا، مُنْذِرًا لَهُ، وَحَقِيقًا عِنْدَهُ، أَنَّ هَذَا المَعْجُونُ لَا يُؤَافِقُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي سِنِّ الصَّبِيِّ (مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ التَلْمِيذِ). 163 فَإِنْ اسْتَعْمَلَ مِنْهُ، وَلَوْ الِيسِيرَ، وَهُوَ بَعْدَ فِي سِنِّ الشَّبَابِ، أَخْرَقَ

259 ح. الجملة ناقصة

260 ح. النعمة

261 رومية 5: 20

262 ح. ناقص

263 ب. ف. ل. س. ح. يفعلونه

264 ب. ف. ل. س. ح. الماهرين

265 ب. ح. ف. ل. مَذَنَّهُ، س. مادته

266 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. فحوة

267 ب. ح. ف. ل. الشرابات

268 س. الشيوخ

269 ب. ف. ل. س. ح. حرارته

مِرَاجَهُ وَشَيْطَ أَخْلَاطِهِ²⁷⁰ وَأَهْلَكَهُ.

[2. 3. 1. رِفَاقُ التِّلْمِيذِ يَنْعِيهِ بِاسْتِعْمَالِ الدَّوَاءِ]

164 وَكَانَ رُفْقَاءُ هَذَا الْعُلَامِ قَدْ تَدَاخَلَهُمْ²⁷¹ الْحَسَدُ لَهُ، لِمَا غَابَتْهُ مِنْ إِحْسَانِ صَاحِبِهِ وَأُسْتَاذِهِ إِلَيْهِ، فِي مَنْحِيهِ إِيَّاهُ الْحَانُوتَ بِجَمِيعِ مَا فِيهِ. 165 فَعَمَدُوا إِلَيْهِ²⁷² بِالنَّصِيحَةِ الْكَادِبَةِ قَائِلِينَ لَهُ: "إِنَّ هَذَا الْمَعْجُونُ (الَّذِي تَهَاكَ أُسْتَاذُكَ عَنْ اسْتِعْمَالِهِ) هُوَ مَعْجُونُ الْحَيَاةِ الَّذِي لَا يَغْدِرُ أَحَدٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ [الْحُصُولُ] عَلَيْهِ، 166 فَمَنْ تَسَرَّرَ لَهُ أَنْ يَتَنَاوَلَ مِنْهُ، وَلَوْ الْبَيْسِرَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَمْزُضُ قَطُّ، وَلَا يَمُوتُ، 167 وَأُسْتَاذُكَ فَإِنَّمَا مَنَعَكَ عَنْهُ، لَيْسَ مِنْ مَحَبَّتِهِ، وَلَا شَفَقَةً مِنْهُ عَلَيْكَ، لَكِنْ مُجَلًّا وَبَعْضَةً لَكَ، لِقَلَّا تَسْتَعْمِلُهُ وَتَعْيِشُ أَبَدًا، وَتُشَارِكُهُ فِي حَيَاتِهِ، 168 وَلَا يُمْكِنُهُ مِنْ هَهُنَا أَنْ يَسْتَعِيدَ الْحَانُوتَ مِنْكَ، لِأَنَّهُ²⁷³ مُنْتَظَرٌ فَتَدْرِكُ لِيَعُودَ الْحَانُوتُ بِجَمِيعِ مَا فِيهِ إِلَيْهِ." 169 فَصَدَّقَ الشَّقِيُّ نَصِيحَةَ حُسَايدِهِ، وَعَمَدَ إِلَى تِلْكَ الْبَرِّيَّةِ، فَفَتَحَهَا وَاسْتَعْمَلَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ الْمَعْجُونِ غَيْرَ الْمُوَافِقِ لِمِرَاجِهِ.

[2. 3. 2. مَرَضُ التِّلْمِيذِ وَخُرُوجُهُ مِنَ الْحَانُوتِ]

170 فَبَعِي الْحَالِ اشْتَعَلَ عَلَيْهِ جَسَدُهُ، وَاخْتَرَقَ كَبِدُهُ مَعَ أَخْلَاطِهِ، وَسَرَى فِي عُرُوفِهِ كَالسَّمِّ الْقَاتِلِ، 171 وَكَثُرَتْ فِيهِ الْعِلَالُ، وَطَالَتْ مُدَّتُهَا مَعَهُ، حَتَّى أَشْرَفَ عَلَى الْعَطَبِ، وَوَقَعَ فِي الْيَأْسِ.²⁷⁴ 172 وَكَانَ، لِعُمْرِي، أُسْتَاذُهُ (الْمُقَدَّمُ ذِكْرُهُ) مُتَيْقِنًا بِمَا سَيَكُونُ مِنْهُ، لِخَفَةِ²⁷⁵ عَقْلِهِ وَإِكْتَارِهِ فِي الْحَدِيثِ مَعَ حُسَايدِهِ.²⁷⁶ 173 فَأَخْرَجَهُ مِنَ الْحَانُوتِ أَوَّلًا (خَوْفًا عَلَيْهِ) لِقَلَّا يَعُودُ إِلَى مِثْلِهَا، فَيَسِمُ هَلَاكُهُ. 174 فَلَمَّا تَنَاهَى فِيهِ الْمَرَضُ وَقَرَّبَ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ، تَحَرَّكَتْ حِينِيذٍ حِينِيَّةٌ أُسْتَاذِهِ عَلَيْهِ، فَرَكَّبَ لَهُ دَوَاءً مُبَرَّرًا مِنْ مُفْتَضَى صَنْعَتِهِ الْمُحْكَمَةِ وَتَنَاوَلَهُ إِيَّاهُ. 175 فَلَمَّا اسْتَعْمَلَهُ، عَادَتْ إِلَيْهِ فِي الْحِينِ صِحَّتُهُ، وَتَجَدَّدَتْ عَلَيْهِ حَيَاتُهُ.

[2. 3. 3. أَسْئَلَةُ حَيَاتِيَّةٍ]

176 أَفْتَرَى لَوْ أَنَّ أُسْتَاذَهُ رَفَعَ تِلْكَ الْبَرِّيَّةَ مِنَ الْحَانُوتِ، وَعَيَّيَهَا عَنْهُ، أَمَا كَانَ قَالَ: "إِنَّ أُسْتَاذِي غَدَرَ بِي،" 177 وَنَدِمَ عَلَيَّ مَا مَنَّ عَلَيَّ بِهِ، وَكَانَتْ صَحَّتْ عِنْدَهُ نَصِيحَتُهُ حُسَايدِهِ الْكَادِبَةُ. 178 وَلَوْ أَنَّهُ فِي الْحِينِ عَالِمُهُ وَشَفَاهُ، وَمِمَّ يَبْتَزُّكَ الْمَرَضُ يَتِمَّكُنْ مِنْهُ، مَا كَانَ عَرَفَ حَدَّ فَائِدَةِ الطَّاعَةِ، وَحَدَّ مِقْدَارِ شَرِّ الْمَعْصِيَةِ وَضَرَرِهَا، 179 وَمَا كَانَ تَحَقَّقَ [مِنْ] عَظَمِ حِينِيَّةِ أُسْتَاذِهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِفْرَاطِ مَحَبَّتِهِ لَهُ، وَبَلَغَةِ صَنْعَتِهِ فِي بَرِّهِ.²⁷⁷

270 الأخلاط الأربعة (الدم والبلغم والصفراء والسوداء) التي زعم القدماء إنها تقرر صحة المرء ومزاجه. س. أخلاقه

271 س. داخلهم منه

272 س. إلى الشباب

273 س. ندما على ما فعله معك

274 س. الأياس

275 س. لحسافة

276 س. بضيف: "الحريصين في هلاكه. فلما شعر بما جرى"

277 س. بروء وعلاجه

[2. 3. 4. التفسير لهذا المثل]

- 180 فالطبيب إذا هو الله تعالى، 181 وأما الحائوث فهو (278 الجنة وما فيها من باقي الحوائج وكلها 279 تجارها).
 182 والمعجون الذي منعه عنه (الذي لا يوافق الشناب بل الكهول) فهو (280 عود معرفة الخير والشر) (الذي لم
 يكن بعد يوافق المبتدئين في معرفة الله). 183 والتلميذ فهو الإنسان الأول، 184 وحساده فهم الشياطين. 281
 185 والأمراض 282 والأوجاع 283 والبلابا، فجميع ذلك [هو] مرض الطبيعة في الخطيئة، بعد المعصية والسقطه.
 186 وخروج المخدوع من الحائوث فهو خروج آدم من الجنة. 284 187 والدواء الشافي، المحيي، 285 هو
 المعمودية المقدسة والقرآن المقدس.

278 س. "الفردوس وما فيها من الأدوية المختلفة فهي الأشجار والأثمار وأثمارها"

279 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. الكلي

280 س. "العود الذي منه صارت معرفة خير الطاعة وشر المعصية وهو أيضاً شر المبالغة في إدراك معرفة الله تعالى."

281 س. يضيف: "والإذعان لنصيحته هو أكله من الشجرة"

282 س. الأسقام

283 س. يضيف: "التي لحقته بعد الأكل"

284 س. الفردوس

285 ح. ناقص

الْحُجَّةُ الرَّابِعَةُ

[سَبَبُ تَنَازُلِ اللَّهِ وَمَوْتِهِ عَلَى الصَّلِيبِ]

[مَا مَعْنَى الْقَوْلِ: "إِنَّهُ اشْتَرَانَا بِدَمِهِ"]

1. صُورَةُ الْحُجَّةِ

188 صُورَتُهَا هَذِهِ الصُّورَةُ. إِنَّ الْبَارِيَّ (جَلَّ اسْمُهُ) قَادِرٌ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، فَلِمَ لَمْ يُكْمِلْ غَرَضَهُ فِي بَابِ خَلَاصِ آدَمَ وَدُرَّتِيهِ بِكَلِمَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ؟ لِأَنَّهُ إِذَا مَا قَالَ لِلشَّيْءِ: "كُنْ". فَيَكُونُ لَوْفِيهِ. 189 فَلِمَ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ بِمُذْرَتِهِ؟ وَمِمَّ احْتِاجَ إِلَى تَنَازُلِ هَذَا مِقْدَارُهُ، وَلَا تَكَادُ الْعُقُولُ تُصَدِّقُهُ عَلَى جَلَالَتِهِ (وَهُوَ مَوْتُهُ عَلَى الصَّلِيبِ²⁸⁶ بَعْدَ آلامِهِ تِلْكَ الْمَهُولَةِ).

[1. 1. مَا مَعْنَى الْقَوْلِ اشْتَرَانَا بِدَمِهِ؟]

190 وَيُضَافُ إِلَى هَذَا الشَّكِّ أَيْضًا شَكٌّ آخَرٌ فِي الْقَوْلِ عَنْهُ، "إِنَّهُ اشْتَرَانَا بِدَمِهِ". 191 لِأَنَّهُ مِنَ الْمَعْلُومِ الْبَيِّنِ هُوَ أَنَّ الْبَيْعَ وَالشِّرَاءَ لَا يَتَيَمَّنُّ إِنْ لَمْ يَفْبُضِ الْبَائِعُ مِنَ الْمُشْتَرِي تَمَنُّ الْبِضَاعَةِ الْمُبْتَاعَةِ أَوَّلًا. 192 فَإِنْ كَانَ الْمُبْتَاعُ هُوَ الْإِنْسَانُ، وَالْبَائِعُ هُوَ الشَّيْطَانُ، وَالْمُشْتَرِي هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ، وَالْتَمَنُّ دَمُهُ، فَكَيْفَ يَجُوزُ أَنْ يَفْبُضَ الشَّيْطَانُ دَمَ الْمَسِيحِ وَيَسْتَوْلِيَ عَلَيْهِ وَيَمْلِكُ (مَعَادَ اللَّهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ!)

[2. الْجَوَابُ عَنِ الْحُجَّةِ]

193 إِنْ غَرَضَ مُخْلِصَنَا فِينَا لَمْ يَكُنْ أَنْ يَخْلُصَنَا بِالْقُوَّةِ وَالْقَهْرِ، لَكِنْ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِنْصَافِ،²⁸⁷ 194 وَإِنَّ الْقُدْرَةَ إِنَّمَا هِيَ وَاحِدَةٌ مِنْ أَرْبَعِ صِفَاتٍ لِأَزْمَةِ لَهُ (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) 195 وَهِيَ: الرَّحْمَةُ وَالْحِكْمَةُ وَالْعَدْلُ وَالْقُدْرَةُ (الْمُقَدَّمُ دِكْرُهَا)، حَتَّى إِنْ عَاذَهُ، وَلَوْ وَاحِدَةً مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأَرْبَعِ صِفَاتٍ، صَارَ تَحْتَ النَّقْصِ.

[2. 1. اللَّهُ أَرَادَ خَلَاصَنَا بِنَفْسِ الطَّرِيقَةِ الَّتِي خَدَعَ فِيهَا إِبْلِيسُ آدَمَ]

196 فَمِنْ حَيْثُ إِذْ كَانَ جُنُوحُ الْأَبِ²⁸⁸ الْأَوَّلِ إِلَى إِبْلِيسَ طَوْعًا، وَبِالْحَالِدِيَّةِ لَا قَسْرًا، مَا كَانَ لِأَيُّهَا²⁸⁹ يَعْدِلُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى أَنْ يَسْتَرْجِعَهُ إِلَيْهِ إِلَّا عَلَى هَذِهِ الصِّفَةِ نَفْسِهَا، 197 لِتُعَابِلَ الْمَثَلُ بِالْمِثْلِ، وَالصِّدْقَ بِضِدِّهِ، وَهُوَ أَنْ يَنْخَدِعَ خَادِعُ آدَمَ الْأَوَّلِ بِطَمَعِ النَّالَةِ بِجَسَدِ آدَمَ الثَّانِي، 198 لِأَنَّهُ سَتَرَ لَاهُوتَهُ فِي جَسَدِهِ، كَمَا يَسْتُرُ الصَّيَّادُ حَدِيدَ الْبُلُوغِ بِالطَّعْمِ الظَّاهِرِ فِيهِ، لِيَخْدَعَ الْحَوْتَ بِهِ. 199 وَلَوْ صَارَ الْأَمْرُ كَذَلِكَ كَانَ جَائِرًا لِلْمُحْتَالِ أَنْ يَشْمُولَ، مُتَحَيِّنًا عَلَى

286 س. مصلوباً

287 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. النصفة

288 س. أينا

289 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. اللائق

عَدَلِ الْمَسِيحِ، (لِدِكْرِهِ السُّخُودِ) بِأَنَّهُ اغْتَصَبَ مِنْهُ قَسْرًا لِمَنْ كَانَ صَارَ فِي حَوَاهِ²⁹⁰ طَوْعًا.
 200 فَإِذَا عِنْدَمَا لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُحْتَمَلِ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَتَخَفَلَ عَنْ صُورَتِهِ وَصَنَعَةَ يَدَيْهِ الْكَيْمَتَيْنِ وَتَشْرِكَهَا فِي ذَلِكَ
 الضَّرِّ أَكْثَرَ [مِنْ ذَلِكَ]، وَلَا كَانَ يُجَوِّزُ لِعَدْلِهِ أَنْ يُخَلِّصَهَا قَهْرًا، 201 دَعَتِ الصَّرُورَةَ إِلَى تَنَازُلِ هَذَا مِقْدَارُهُ فِي بَابِ
 السِّيَاسَةِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ، 202 وَهُوَ أَنَّهُ اتَّشَعَ بِالْحَسَنِدِ الْمَأْخُودِ مِنْ طَبِيعَتِنَا هَذِهِ، الْمَخْدُوعَةِ، وَسَتَرَ فِيهِ لَاهُوتَهُ، لِيُخْفِيَ
 عَنْ الْمُحْتَمَلِ أَمْرَهُ، فَيَعْرِضُهُ وَيَطْمَعُ فِي صِرَاعِهِ وَمُلَاحَمَتِهِ، أَسْوَأُ مِنْ تَقَدُّمِهِ. 203 فَإِذَا مَا خَابَ ظَنُّهُ فِيهِ، وَعُغِلِبَ
 وَخَطَمَتْ²⁹¹ قُوَّتُهُ، حِينَئِذٍ يَصِيرُ لِمُخْلِصِنَا الْحَقُّ فِي بَابِ خَلَاصِنَا مِنْهُ. 204 لِأَنَّ الْمُبَادَاةَ وَالتَّحَرُّشَ بِهِ فِي الْأَوَّلِ إِنَّمَا
 كَانَتْ مِنْهُ وَمِنْ إِتْرَاطِ حُبِّيَّتِهِ فِيهِ طَمَعًا.
 205 قَلُوْهُ كَانَ مُخْلِصِنَا (الْقَادِرُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ) صَدَرَ إِلَيْهِ²⁹² فِي بَدْءِ تَحْرِيْشِهِ مَعَهُ وَقَابَلَهُ²⁹³ بِلَاهُوتِهِ، فَقَدْ كَانَ قَرَّ
 مِنْهُ، وَكَانَ خَلَاصِنَا عَلَى هَذِهِ الصَّفَةِ تَعَطَّلَ. 206 كَمَا أَنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ اللَّعِيْنُ أَيْضًا فِي خِدَاعِهِ الْإِنْسَانَ الْأَوَّلَ صَدَرَ
 إِلَيْهِ غُرْبَانًا وَلَمْ يَتَوَشَّحْ بِالْحَيَّةِ، فَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَمَاحَةِ صُورَتِهِ وَقَبِيْحَتِهَا فِي الْحَيْنِ قَرَّ مِنْهُ، وَكَانَ عَلَى هَذِهِ الصَّفَةِ تَعَطَّلَ
 قَصْدُهُ وَتَبَطَّلَتْ حِيلَتُهُ. 207 فَلِهَذَا السَّبَبِ أُوجِبَتِ السِّيَاسَةُ أَنْ يُقَابِلَ الْمِثْلَ بِمِثْلِهِ.

[2.2]. اللَّهُ أَرَادَ تَعْلِيمَنَا الطَّرِيقَةَ الَّتِي بِهَا نُصَارِعُ إِبْلِيسَ]

208 وَيُضَافُ إِلَى ذَلِكَ أَيْضًا أَنْ يَصِيرَ لِطَبِيعَتِنَا الْقُوَّةُ عَلَيْهِ بِاِحْتِسَابِنَا وَتَعَلُّمِهَا الصَّنَعَةَ فِي صِرَاعِهَا، مِمَّا شَاهَدَتْهُ فِي
 الْمُنَجِّدِ بِهَا فِي قُبُومِهِ، 209 فَتَصِيرُ مُتَشَبِّهَةً بِهِ، وَمُقْتَنِصَةً أَمْرَهُ، وَمُتَرَاقِيَةً مَعَهُ، مِنْ أَقْصَى السُّفْلِ إِلَى الْعُلُوِّ الْأَقْصَى،
 لِأَنَّهُ صَارَ لَنَا مِقَالًا وَمُؤَدِّجًا وَهَادِيًا لِمَنْ تَبِعَهُ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ.

[2.3. خُلَاصَةٌ]

210 وَبِالْحَمْلَةِ، فَكَمَا أَنَّهُ بِحَاطِقَةِ وَاحِدٍ مَخْدُوعٍ اثْبَتَ الْمَوْتُ سَارِيًّا فِي جِنْسِ الْبَشَرِ كَافَّةً، كَالسُّمِّ فِي سَائِرِ الْجِسْمِ،
 فَاتَّخَذْنَا مِنَ الْعُلُوِّ السَّمَائِيِّ إِلَى اسْتِفْلِ الْأَرْضِ، 211 كَذَلِكَ وَبِذَكَاءٍ²⁹⁴ وَاحِدٍ اتَّخَذَ الْحَادِغُ، وَمَاتَ الْمَوْتُ،
 وَصَارَتِ الْحَيَاةُ وَالذِّكَاؤُ لِلْكَلِّ بِذَلِكَ، كَالْتِرْيَاقِ الْبَالِغَةِ صَنَعَتُهُ، وَتَرَاقِيْنَا بِهِ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ.
 212 فَلَا حِيَلَةَ إِذَا كَانَتْ لِمُخْلِصِنَا (الْقَادِرُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ)، الْعَادِلِ وَالرُّؤُوفِ²⁹⁵ وَالْحَكِيمِ (فِي هَذَا الْاِنْعِكَاسِ،
 الْمَحْمُودِ وَالْمُعْجِزِيِّ،²⁹⁶ إِلَّا عَلَى هَذِهِ الصَّفَةِ، 213 وَهِيَ سِيَاسَةُ سِرِّ تَجَسُّدِهِ وَآلَامِهِ الْمُحْيِيَّةِ، الَّتِي بِهَا كَمَالَ أُنْتَعَالِ
 صِفَاتِهِ الْأَرْبَعِ، وَهِيَ: الرَّحْمَةُ وَالْقُدْرَةُ وَالْعَدْلُ وَالْحِكْمَةُ.

290 س. عبده

291 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. انحطمت

292 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. له

293 ب. ف. ل. ح. مقابله. س. مقاتله

294 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. الزكاة

295 س. الرحوم

296 ب. ح. ناقص

[2. 4. مثال المَلِكِ وَقَائِدِهِ الْمُتَمَرِّدِ]

214 فَصَارَ مِثَالَهُ فِي ذَلِكَ، وَفِي شِرَائِهِ إِيَانًا بِدَمِهِ أَيْضًا، مِثَالُ مَلِكٍ عَظِيمٍ شَأْنُهُ، سَامٌ سُلْطَانُهُ، كَانَتْ فِيهِ مَوْجُودَةٌ الْأَرْبَعَةُ²⁹⁷ صِفَاتٍ، الْمُقَدَّمُ ذِكْرُهَا. 215 وَكَانَ قَدْ تَمَرَّدَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِدٌ مِنْ بَعْضِ قَوَادِمِهِ، مَعَ كَافَّةِ طَائِفَتِهِ، فَأَرَالَ عَنْهُ نِعْمَتَهُ وَأَقْصَاهُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ.

[2. 4. 1. القَائِدُ الْمُتَمَرِّدُ يُؤْذِي رِعَايَا المَلِكِ]

216 فَلَمَّا بَعُدَ مِنْهُ صَارَ يَتَعَاطَى الحَرَامَ، وَيَرْتَضِدُ العَابِرِينَ فِي الطَّرِيقِ المَلِكِيَّةِ، فَيَحْتَاخُ وَيَسِي بِمَنْهُم الحَائِدِينَ عَنْهَا نُحُوهُ بِالْمَكْرِ والحَدِيدَةِ.

217 وَقَدْ كَانَ لَعْنُورِي ذَلِكَ السُّلْطَانُ رَبَّتَ مَعَ كُلِّ مَنْ كَانَ لَا بُدَّ لَهُ مِنَ السُّلُوكِ فِيهَا غَفِيرًا مِنْ حَاشِيَةِ دَوْلَتِهِ، حَتَّى مَتَى مَا جَازَ بِذَلِكَ الشَّارِعِ المَلِكِيِّ، لَا يَجْسُرُ ذَلِكَ المَارِدُ عَلَيْهِ.

218 وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ المَارِدُ (المُقَدَّمُ ذِكْرُهُ) قَدْ ابْتَنَى لَهُ عَلَى هَذَا الشَّارِعِ المَلِكِيِّ فُنْدَقًا، وَنَصَبَ حَوْلَهُ بُسْتَانًا، وَعَرَسَ فِيهِ مِنْ جَمِيعِ الأَنْمَارِ الحُسْنَى المُنظَرِ، الطَّيِّبَةِ الطَّعْمِ، اللَّذِيذَةِ الرَّايِحَةِ، 219 مُسْتَعْرَضًا بِهَا كُلَّ مَنْ يَجُوزُ بِذَلِكَ الشَّارِعِ وَمُشْتَهِيهَا لَهُ، مَعَ لَذِيذِ حُسْنِ ذَلِكَ الرِّزْقِ²⁹⁸ الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ فِي دَاجِلِ فُنْدَقِهِ. 220 حَتَّى مَتَى أَمَكَّنَهُ بِأَنْ يَمِيلَ المَخْدُوعُ المَعْلُوبُ مِنْ خِدَاعِهِ وَمَكْرِهِ، وَيُجَيِّدُهُ عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ المَلِكِيَّةِ، وَيُفَرِّقُهُ مِنْ غَفِيرِهِ، أَدْخَلَهُ إِلَى حُوزَتِهِ وَاسْتَوَلَى عَلَيْهِ، 221 لِأَنَّهُ مَتَى مَا كَانَ لَا يَمُكِّنُهُ أَنْ يَفْصِلَهُ مِنْ غَفِيرِهِ، وَيُجَيِّدُهُ عَنِ ذَلِكَ الشَّارِعِ المَلِكِيِّ، مَا كَانَ يَفُو عَلَيْهِ، لَكِنَّهُ كَانَ يَفِرُّ مِنْهُ عَنِ فَرِقٍ وَخَوْفٍ.

222 فَصَارَ كَافَّةُ المُخْتَارِينَ فِي تِلْكَ الطَّرِيقِ المَلِكِيَّةِ (حَتَّى وَخَوَاصُ المَلِكِ وَأَوْلِيَاؤُهُ) عِنْدَ سَمَاعِهِمْ تِلْكَ النِّعَمَاتِ مِنَ الأَعْيَانِ الَّتِي دَاجِلُ الفُنْدُقِ، مَعَ مُعَايَنَتِهِمْ ثَمَارَ ذَلِكَ البُسْتَانِ المُخْتَلِفَةِ الأَلْوَانِ، وَاسْتِنْسَافِهِمْ لَذِيذَ نَسِيبِهَا وَطِيبِ رَايِحَتِهَا، وَتَدْوُقِهِمْ²⁹⁹ طَعْمَهَا،³⁰⁰ تَعْلُبُهُمْ حَوَاسُهُمْ مِنْ جَمِيعِ ذَلِكَ. 223 فَقَوْمٌ مِنْهُمْ كَانُوا يَنْخَدِعُونَ بِالبَعْضِ، وَقَوْمٌ بِالأَقْلَى، وَقَوْمٌ بِالأَكْثَرِ، وَقَوْمٌ بِالكُلِّ. 224 فَتَبْتَغُونَ العَفِيرَ، وَيَجِيدُونَ عَنِ الشَّارِعِ المَلِكِيِّ، وَيَدْخُلُونَ إِلَى ذَلِكَ الفُنْدُقِ، وَيَجُولُونَ فِي ذَلِكَ البُسْتَانِ الَّذِي يُجَاوِزُهُ 225 فَيَسْتَوَلِي عَلَيْهِمْ ذَلِكَ المَارِدُ، وَيَسْتَمْلِكُهُمْ وَيَحْشُرُهُمْ فِي سِخْنِهِ، مُكْبِلِينَ بِالحَدِيدِ بِصَبِّمْ لَا يُوصَفُ، لِعَظَمَةِ شِدَّتِهِ.

[2. 4. 2. المَلِكُ يَتَوَشَّحُ بِرِيٍّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْ عَامَّةِ الشَّعْبِ]

226 فَلَمَّا عَايَنَ المَلِكُ جَمِيعَ ذَلِكَ، حَزَنَتْهُ الرَّحْمَةُ عَلَى خَلَاصِ عِبِيدِهِ. 227 لَكِنَّهُ عِنْدَ تَحْقِيقِ مَعْرِفَتِهِ بِمَسَاوَةِ الحِصْمِ وَسُوءِ طِبَاعِهِ وَأَخْلَاقِهِ، أَيَقِنَ بِأَنَّ لَا حِيلَةَ لَهُ فِي اسْتِرْجَاعِهِمْ مِنْهُ بِوَجْهِ المُرَاضَاةِ، 228 لِأَنَّهُ كَانَتْ قَدِ اجْتَمَعَتْ فِي ذَلِكَ المَارِدِ أَرْبَعُ حِصَالٍ أُخْرُ تُقَابِلُ تِلْكَ الأَرْبَعِ (الَّتِي ذَكَرْنَاهَا فِي المَلِكِ قَبْلًا) وَتُضَادِدُهَا وَهِيَ: المُسَاوَةُ وَالتَّظَلُّمُ وَالتَّضَعُّفُ وَالمَكْرُ. 229 فَبَقِيَ حَازِرًا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ، لِأَنَّهُ إِنْ كَانَ يَتَعَاطَلُ عَنْهُمْ فَقَدْ أَبْطَلَ رَحْمَتَهُ، وَإِنْ اسْتَعْمَلَ فِي بَابِ خَلَاصِهِمْ القُدْرَةَ فَقَدْ ضَيَّعَ عَدْلَهُ، وَإِنْ تَرَكَهُمْ وَأَهْمَلَ أَمْرَهُمْ، عَجَزًا، فَقَدْ ضَعُفَتْ قُوَّتُهُ وَقُدْرَتُهُ. 230 فَإِذَا لَمْ يَبْقَ لَهُ طَرِيقٌ فِي بَابِ خَلَاصِهِمْ إِلَّا بِالحِكْمَةِ، 231 عَمَدًا، فَتَوَشَّحَ فَوْقَ اللِّبَاسِ المَلِكِيِّ، بِرِيٍّ وَاحِدٍ

297 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. الأربع

298 الرزق. مظلة يتخذونها فوق السطح

299 س. ذوق

300 س. طعومها

مِنْ عَامَّةِ³⁰¹ دَوْلِيهِ، وَخَرَجَ مِنْ قَصْرِ الْمَلِكِيِّ، مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يُخْلَوُ مِنْهُ عَظِيمُ سُلْطَانِيهِ، وَاجْتَازَ فِي تِلْكَ الطَّرِيقِ الْمَلِكِيَّةِ عَمْدًا وَمُعَرَّضًا³⁰² لِذَلِكَ الْمَارِدِ.

[2. 4. 3. الْقَائِدُ الْمُتَمَرِّدُ يُعَذِّبُ الْمَلِكَ]

232 فَعِنْدَمَا وَاثَاهُ وَأَخْفَى³⁰³ عَنْهُ بَاطِنَهُ، عَرَضَ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَرَضَهُ عَلَى مَنْ تَقَدَّمَ، 233 فَلَمَّا أَبَى ذَلِكَ وَلَمْ يَنْطَوِ³⁰⁴ بِجِدَاعِهِ وَمَكْرِهِ، وَلَا حَادَ عَنْ تِلْكَ الطَّرِيقِ الْمَلِكِيَّةِ أُسْوَةً بِالْبَاقِينَ، لَا يَمِينًا وَلَا يَسَارًا،³⁰⁵ 234 حَرَكَهُ ظُلْمُهُ وَتَعَدِيهِ أَنْ يَطْرَحَ يَدَهُ عَلَيْهِ طَمَعًا وَاسْتِحْقَارًا بِهِ وَيُوَحِّدِيهِ (لِأَجْلِ تَقَرُّدِهِ³⁰⁶ وَوَحْدِيهِ وَضِعْفِهِ). 235 فَعَمِدَ إِلَيْهِ وَسَجَّهَهُ إِلَى سَجِينِهِ عَمْدًا، بَعْدَمَا أَدْمَاهُ بِالضَّرْبِ الْمَوْجِعِ، وَالْجُلْدِ الَّذِي جَلَدَهُ مِنْ وَجْهِ قَسَاوَتِيهِ، وَالْمَلِكِ صَابِرٍ مُخْتَمِلٍ جَمِيعَ ذَلِكَ.

[2. 4. 4. الْمَلِكُ يَكْشِفُ عَنْ حَقِيقَةِ هَوِيَّتِهِ]

236 فَلَمَّا أَذْخَلَهُ إِلَى سَجِينِهِ بِتِلْكَ الصَّفَةِ، حَتَّى يَبْدَأَ ظَهْرَ ذَاتِهِ، فَكَشَفَ عَنْ مَسْتَوْرِهِ، 237 فَبَادَرَتْ إِلَيْهِ جُنُودُهُ الْمَلِكِيَّةُ، مُتَحَرِّينَ مِنْ تَنَالِهِ إِلَى حَدِّ هَذَا مِقْدَارِهِ. 238 فَلَمَّا عَايَنَ الْمَارِدُ جَمِيعَ ذَلِكَ أَرْنَكْتَهُ الدَّهْشَةَ، فَانْدَهَلَ وَأَخْطَطَ قُوَّتَهُ مَعَ كَافَّةِ صَحَابَتِهِ،³⁰⁷ 239 وَشَعَرَ بِالْمَلَاكِ وَالْإِبَادَةِ مِنْ بَابِ الْحَقِّ وَالْعَدْلِ، لِأَنَّهُ تَعَدَّى ظُلْمًا وَجَوْرًا عَلَى مَنْ لَمْ يَقُوْ عَلَيْهِ بِجِدَاعِهِ، وَلَا انْحَرَفَ الْبَيْتَةَ عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ الْمَلِكِيَّةِ إِلَى نَحْوِهِ. 240 (فَصَارَتْ الْأَدِلَّةُ لِلْمَلِكِ عَلَيْهِ) مِنْ وَجْهَيْنِ: الْوَاحِدُ مِنْهَا لِأَنَّهُ رَفَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَى سُلْطَانِيهِ، وَالْآخَرُ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَحْدِ³⁰⁹ عَنْ طَرِيقِهِ لِلْبَيْتَانِ، وَلَا جَنَحَ إِلَيْهِ الْبَيْتَةَ، وَلَا أَتَرَتْ فِيهِ مُخَادَعَتَهُ.

[2. 4. 5. تَفْسِيرُ الْمَثَلِ]

241 فَالْسُلْطَانُ إِذَا هُوَ الْبَارِي، مَلِكُ الْمُلُوكِ، وَرَبُّ الْأَرْبَابِ، ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ. 242 وَالْقَصْرُ هُوَ السَّمَاءُ. 243 وَالْجُنُودُ هُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ. 244 وَالْمَارِدُ، مَعَ طَائِفَتِهِ، فَهُوَ إِبْلِيسُ اللَّعِينُ مَعَ جُنُودِهِ. 245 وَتَغْيِبُهُ مِنْ قَصْرِ الْمَلِكِ، فَهُوَ سَقَطَةُ الشَّيْطَانِ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ، وَمَا تَحْتَهَا. 246 وَالطَّرِيقُ الْمَلِكِيَّةُ، فَهِيَ التَّامُوسُ الطَّبِيعِيُّ الْعَرَبِيُّ فِينَا، بِمُقْتَضَى الصُّورَةِ الْمَلِكِيَّةِ مَدَّةَ أَعْمَارِنَا. 247 وَالْغَفِيرُ،³¹⁰ فَهُوَ الْمَلَاكُ الْمُرْتَبُّ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي حِفْظِ كُلِّ إِنْسَانٍ مِمَّا مَدَّةَ حَيَاتِهِ مِنْ شَرِّ إِبْلِيسَ وَتَعَدِيهِ، 248 لِأَنَّهُ ضَعِيفٌ، لَا قُوَّةَ لَهُ عَلَى اغْتِنَابِ أَحَدٍ مِمَّا إِلَّا بِالْمَكْرِ وَالْحِدَاعِ، وَإِنْ كَانَ جَبَّارًا ظَالِمًا. 249 وَالْفُنْدُقُ، مَعَ الرَّفْنِ الَّذِي يَدَاخِلُهُ، وَالْبَيْتَانُ وَأَتْمَارُهُ، فَهِيَ³¹¹ جَمِيعُ نُصُبِ³¹² الْعُدُوِّ

301 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. أعيان

302 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. معترضاً

303 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. غيبي

304 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. ينطوي

305 س. بظلالاً

306 س. بضيف عبارة "زارة لباسه"

307 س. طائفته

308 ح. ناقص

309 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. بجيد

310 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. للمغرب

311 س. شهوات هذا العالم

312 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. مناصب

وَأَشْرَاكِهِ، الَّتِي مَوَّادُهَا مَفْرَحَاتُ هَذَا الْعَالَمِ وَمَلْدَاتُهُ، 250 يَمَا يَعْتَرُّ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ، لِأَجْلِ اخْتِلَافِ فَنُوخَهَا، عِنْدَمَا تَغْلِبُهُمْ حَوَاشُهُمْ وَتَقْوُدُهُمْ إِلَيْهَا، 251 فَيَجِيدُونَ عَنِ النَّامُوسِ الطَّبِيعِيِّ (وَهُوَ السَّأُولُ مِنَ الطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ وَعَبْرِهِمَا يَمَا فِيهِ وَمِنَّهُ قِوَامُ حَيَاتِنَا الطَّبِيعِيَّةِ) 252 وَيَنْخَنُونَ مُنْخَرِفِينَ إِلَى الْعَيْشِ الْبُهَيْمِيِّ، بِالْأَكْلِ وَالشَّرْبِ وَالزَّانَا وَالْإِسْتِعْنَامِ مِنَ الظُّلْمِ، 253 وَإِلَى الْحَيْلِ الشَّيْطَانِيَّةِ بِالْحَمْسِ وَالْكَبْرِيَاءِ وَالنَّيْبِ، وَمَا شَاكَلَ ذَلِكَ يَمَا فِيهِ فَسَادُ الصُّورَةِ الْمَلَكِيَّةِ. 254 وَالْحَبْسِ 313 فَهُوَ 314 الْحَجِيمُ وَمَسَاكِينُهُ وَالْحَالُونَ 315 فِيهِ. 255 وَحَوَاصُّ الْمَلِكِ هُمْ 316 جَمَاعَةُ الْعَالَمِ وَالصَّالِدِيْقُونَ، لِأَنَّ أَحَدًا مِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ لَمْ يَكْمَلْ فَرَايِضَ النَّامُوسِ، 317 وَلَمْ يَزَلْ عَنْهَا النَّبْتَةَ، إِلَّا الْمَسِيحُ وَحْدَهُ، كَمَا ذَكَرَ بُولُسُ الرَّسُولِ. 318

256 وَلَيْسَ الْمَلِكُ زَيْيَ الْعَامَّةِ، 319 فَهُوَ تَجَسَّدُ الْكَلِمَةِ، وَسَتَرَهُ قُوَّةَ لَاهُوتِهِ بِجَسَدِهِ. 257 وَسَلُوْكَهُ فِي الطَّرِيقِ الْمَلَكِيَّةِ يَعْبُرُ الْجِرَافِ فَهُوَ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَزَلْ وَلَا يُوَاحِدَةَ. 258 وَجَلْدُهُ مَعَ جِرَاحَاتِهِ (ظَلْمٌ وَتَعَدُّ) ثُمَّ انْسِحَابُهُ وَقِيَادَتُهُ 320 إِلَى السَّجْنِ (وَهُوَ مُخْتَمَلٌ لَا يَعْصِي 321 ظَالِمَةً) هِيَ الْآلَمُ سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْئِئَةُ الْإِخْتِيَارِيِّ، 259 لِأَنَّهُ سَبَقَ إِلَى الدَّبْحِ كَالشَّاقِ، وَكَالْمُخْرُوفِ أَمَامَ ذَابِحِهِ لَا يَتَكَلَّمُ، 260 فَيَجْرُوحَاتِهِ شَفَانَا، وَبِدَمِهِ الرَّكْبِيِّ، وَبِعَمَّوْتِهِ، اشْتَرَانَا مِنَ الْمَوْتِ. 322 261 وَالْجُنُودُ الْمَلَكِيَّةُ، الْمُتَرَادِفَةُ فِي الْحِدْمَةِ، هِيَ حُضُورُ طُعْمَاتِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مَعَ رُؤُسَائِهَا، لَمَّا نَادَتْ قُوَاتِ الْجَحِيمِ وَرُؤُسَاءَهُ بِأَنْ يَرْفَعُوا أَبْوَابَهُ لِيَدْخُلَ مَلِكُ الْمَجْدِ (كَمَا ذَكَرَ دَاوُدُ وَتَبَّتْ مُتَقَدِّمًا). 323 262 فَعَلَى هَذِهِ الصَّفَةِ خَلَصْنَا سَيِّدِنَا، وَاشْتَرَانَا بِدَمِهِ، الَّذِي احْتَمَلَ إِهْرَاقَهُ لِأَجْلِنَا. تَمَّتِ الْحُجَّةُ الرَّابِعَةُ.

313 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. الجيوس

314 س. مطابق الجحيم

315 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. الحاصلون

316 س. لا يكثر "جماعة العالم" بل يضيف "هم الآباء والأنبياء والأبرار والصديقون"

317 س. يضيف "العنق"

318 راجع رومية 8: 2 - 4

319 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. الأعمام

320 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. قوده

321 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. يعاصي

322 راجع اشعيا 53: 7 ، أعمال 8: 32

323 راجع مزموور 24 (23): 7 ، 9

الْحُجَّةُ الْخَامِسَةُ

[لِمَاذَا غَيَّرَ الْمَسِيحُ فَرَائِضَ النَّامُوسِ وَمُمَارَسَاتِهِ؟]

1. صُورَةُ الْحُجَّةِ

263 صُورَتُهَا هَذِهِ الصُّورَةُ أَيْضًا. لِمَاذَا يَرْتَسِمُ اللَّهُ (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) رُسُومًا كَانَتْ عَتِيدًا أَنْ يُبْطِلَهَا؟ وَالنَّامُوسُ عَادَ غَيْرُهُ وَتَقْضُهُ (لِأَنَّهُ كَانَ مُفِيدًا) فَلِمَ بَطَلَهُ؟ 264 وَإِنْ كَانَ لَا فَائِدَةَ مِنْهُ، فَلِأَيِّ سَبَبٍ أَمَرَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ بِحِفْظِهِ؟ 265 وَلِمَ اسْتَعْمَلَ الْحِثَانَةَ وَأَكَلَ الْفِصْحَ هُوَ تَفْسُهُ؟ وَلِمَ لَا يَلْزِمُنَا أَنْ تَشَبَّهُ بِهِ وَتَتَّبِعَهُ فِيهِمَا (نَظِيرٌ مَا أَوْصَانَا أَنْ نُمَاقِلَهُ فِي بَاقِي صِفَاتِهِ).

266 فَإِنْ كَانَ بَعْدَ إِتْيَانِهِ بِكَمَالٍ مُوهِبَةِ الْمُعْمُودِيَّةِ، وَالذَّبِيحَةِ السَّبْدِيَّةِ، صَرُورِيًّا هُوَ اسْتِعْمَالُهَا، فَلِمَ لَا يَلْزِمُنَا بِذَلِكَ؟ وَإِنْ كَانَ لَا فَائِدَةَ مِنْهَا، فَلِمَ لَمْ يَتَوَقَّفَ عَنْ اسْتِعْمَالِهَا، وَإِبْطَالِهَا بِالْكُلِّيَّةِ؟

267 كَمَا أَنَّهُ غَيَّرَ أَشْيَاءَ أُخْرَى مِنَ النَّامُوسِ، عِنْدَمَا وَتَعَ الْيَهُودَ عَلَيْهَا، وَمِنْ جُمْلَتِهَا³²⁴ بَطَالَةُ السَّبْتِ، وَخُرْبُ مَا كَانَ عِنْدَهُمْ بِحَسَا مِنَ الطَّعَامِ، وَغَيْرِ ذَلِكَ.

2. الْحَوَابُ عَلَى الْحُجَّةِ

268 إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى لَمْ يَرْتَسِمِ رُسُومًا وَعَادَ فَأَبْطَلَهَا، وَلَا أَمَرَ بِحِفْظِ فَرَائِضِ نَامُوسٍ عَادَ وَتَقْضُهُ، لَكِنَّهُ إِنَّمَا تَبَيَّنَتْ وَكَمَلَتْ عِنْدَمَا ظَهَرَتْ دَلَائِلُهُ وَإِشَارَاتُهُ، وَتَمَّتْ تَقْضُهُ، 269 كَمَا قَالَ فِي إِنْجِيلِهِ الْمُقَدَّسِ: "لَمْ آتِ لِأَبْطُلِ النَّامُوسَ وَالْأَنْبِيَاءَ (325) وَلَكِنْ حَتَّى أَتَمِّمَ". 270 الْحَقُّ الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ، (326) مُمَكِّنٌ أَنْ تَعْبُرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَعْجُرَ مِنَ النَّامُوسِ وَالْأَنْبِيَاءِ نُسخَةُ آيَةٍ أَوْ حَرْفٍ وَاحِدٍ حَتَّى تَبِيَّتَ." (327)

[2. 1. الْمَسِيحُ نَقَلْنَا مِنْ رُسُومِ النَّامُوسِ إِلَى دَلَائِلِهَا وَإِشَارَاتِهَا]

271 لِأَنَّ جَمِيعَ مَا آتَى بِهِ مُوسَى وَسَنَّهُ وَرَسَمَهُ إِنَّمَا كَانَ عَتِيدًا أَنْ يَصْحَحَ³²⁸ بِالْمَسِيحِ³²⁹ حَقَائِقُ إِشَارَاتِهِ وَدَلَائِلُهُ وَبِهِ وَفِيهِ. 330 وَلَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ كَذَلِكَ لَقَدْ كَانَ جَمِيعُهُ بَاطِلًا. 272 هَكَذَا ثَبُوتُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ لَوْ لَمْ تَطْهَرْ وَتَبَيَّنْ فِيهِ، فَقَدْ كَانَتْ بَاطِلَةً وَلَا مَعْنَى لَهَا، حَيْثُ أَنَّ كُلَّ مَا لَا مَعْنَى لَهُ بَاطِلٌ هُوَ. 273 لِأَنَّهُ (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) نَقَلْنَا مِنَ الرُّسُومِ إِلَى دَلَائِلِهَا، وَمِنَ الْإِشَارَاتِ الْمُخْفِيَّةِ إِلَى الْحَقِّ الظَّاهِرِ تَفْسِيرِهِ. 274 فَاسْتَعَوْضْنَا بِدَلِّ تَطْهِيرِ الْجَسَدِ الْوَقْتِيِّ بِالْمَاءِ وَخَدَهُ ظَاهِرًا، بِالتَّطْهِيرِ الْأَبَدِيِّ، 275 وَوَلَيْسَ بِالْمَاءِ وَخَدَهُ، لَكِنْ وَبِالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ أَيْضًا، وَوَلَيْسَ بِالْجِسْمِ ظَاهِرًا، لَكِنْ وَبِالرُّوحِ بَاطِلًا.

324 س. مثل

325 س. لم أجيء لأبطل لكن لأتمم

326 س. "حتى تعبر السماوات والأرض ولا يجوز من الناموس والأنبياء آية حتى تتم"

327 متى: 5: 17 - 18.

328 س. يصحح

329 س. بمحيء المسيح

330 س. يظن: "يتكامل نقصه"

- 276 وَبَدَلْ أَعْتَدَاءُ³³¹ الْجِسْمِ بِالطَّعَامِ الْفَاسِدِ، بِأَعْتَدَاءِ الرُّوحِ بِالطَّعَامِ الْبَاقِي، وَهُوَ الْجَسَدُ السَّيِّدِيُّ. 277 وَبَدَلْ الرِّكَاءَ بِالنَّصِيحِ بِدَمِ الْكِبَاشِ وَالْمَجُولِ، صَارَتْ لَنَا الرِّكَاءُ وَالْعَاقِفَةُ بِالذَّمِّ الرَّكِيِّ السَّيِّدِيِّ، الْمُرَاقِ لِأَجْلِ خَلَاصِنَا.
- 278 وَبَدَلْ الْبِرَّ مِنْ سَمِّ الثُّعْبَانِ الْمُهْلِكِ، بِمُعَايِنَةِ مُحَاسِنَةِ مَرْفُوعَةٍ عَلَى عُودٍ، بِصُورَةِ حَيَّةٍ مُلْعُونَةٍ،³³² 279 صَارَ لَنَا الشِّقَاءُ مِنْ سَمِّ الْحَيَّةِ الْمَعْتُورَةِ³³³ (الْمُمَيِّتَةَ لِأَنْفُسِ) بِالْأَمَانَةِ بِالْمَرْفُوعِ فَوْقَ عُودِ الصَّيْلِيبِ، الصَّائِرِ لِأَجْلِنا لَعْنَةً وَخَطِيئَةً، وَذَلِكَ لِيُعْطِينَا الْبِرَّةَ وَالرِّكَاءَ.
- 280 وَعَوِضَ الرَّسْمِ الظَّاهِرِ بِخِتَانَةِ الْجَسَدِ، وَقَطَعَ لَحْمَ الْغُلْفَةِ، صَارَ لَنَا السَّمَّةُ الْبَاطِنَةُ فِي الرُّوحِ بِالْمَعْمُودِيَّةِ، وَمَسْحَةُ رُوحِ الْفُؤَادِ، بِالذُّهْنِ الْإِلَهِيِّ وَخِتَانَةِ الْقَلْبِ السَّرِّيَّةِ.³³⁴
- 281 وَبَدَلْ أَرْضَ الْمِعَادِ وَالرَّاحَةَ فِيهَا، بَعْدَ الْكَدِّ وَالْأَتْعَابِ وَالشِّقَاءِ فِي النَّبَرِيَّةِ، وَمَمْلَكُهَا وَتَوَزِيعَ مُدْنِهَا، وَالْإِفْتِرَاعَ عَلَيْهَا، وَالتَّمَتُّعَ بِخَيْرَاتِهَا هُنَا (الَّتِي هِيَ أورشليمُ الْأَرْضِيَّةُ الشُّغْلَى) 282 صَارَ لَنَا مَلَكُوتُ السَّمَاءِ وَالرَّاحَةَ فِيهَا، بَعْدَ الثَّقَلَةِ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ التَّعَبَةِ إِلَى هُنَاكَ، وَالسُّكْنَى فِي تِلْكَ الْمَنَازِلِ الْمُعَدَّةِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنَّا (عَلَى قَدْرِ جِهَادِهِ فِي قِتْنَةِ الْفَضِيلَةِ وَتَعَبِهِ فِيهَا) وَالتَّمَتُّعَ فِي أورشليمَ الْعُلْيَا بِالنَّعِيمِ السَّمَاوِيِّ الْأَبَدِيِّ.
- 283 وَعَوِضَ التَّكْوِينِ وَالصَّحَابَا، وَالتَّعْبِيدَ وَبَاقِي لَوَازِمِ الْعِبَادَةِ، الَّتِي لَا تَجُوزُ إِلَّا فِي مَدِينَةِ أورشليمَ وَخَدَهَا، وَبِئْسَ هَيْكَلٌ وَاحِدٌ دَاخِلٌ فِيهَا، وَبِهِ تَتَقَدَّسُ الْفَرَايِضُ، 284 صَارَ جَمِيعُ ذَلِكَ مُبَاحًا لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي جَمِيعِ الْمَسْكُونَةِ، وَاتَّعَسَنَ أَمْرُ التَّقْدِيسِ، فَصَارَتْ الْفَرَايِضُ إِنَّمَا هِيَ تَقَدَّسُ الْهَيْكَلِ، لَا الْهَيْكَلِ لَهَا.
- 285 وَعَوِضَ النَّهْيَ عَنِ اسْتِعْمَالِ لُحُومِ الْحَيَوَانَاتِ النَّجِسَةِ، النَّهْيَ عَنِ الْأَفْكَارِ الْحَيِثِيَّةِ الْقَبِيحَةِ، وَالنِّيَّاتِ الْبَاطِنَةِ الرَّدِيئَةِ مِنَ الْقَلْبِ (الْمُنْتَحَسِنَةِ لِلرُّوحِ وَخَدَهَا).³³⁵
- 286 وَعَوِضَ كَرَامَةَ السَّبَبِ (سَبَبَ رَاحَةِ الرَّبِّ فِيهِ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِ، لَمَّا خَلَقَ لَنَا هَذَا الْعَالَمَ الْمُحْسُوسَ الْفَانِي) كَرَامَةَ يَوْمِ الْأَخْدِ (287 الَّذِي فِيهِ كَمَلَ عَمَلُ تَدْبِيرِ خَلَاصِنَا، وَأَعْطَانَا، بِقِيَامَتِهِ فِيهِ، حَقِيقَةَ الْإِنْعَاثِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ، وَالتَّقَلُّةَ إِلَى عَالَمٍ آخَرَ بَاقٍ، بِحَيَاةٍ أَبَدِيَّةٍ، وَرَاحَةٍ دَائِمَةٍ فِي مَمْلَكِ³³⁶ السَّمَاءِ).
- 288 وَبَدَلْ الْبَطَالََةَ فِيهِ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ بِحَرَكَةِ الْجَسَدِ، الْبَطَالََةَ مِنَ عَمَلِ الْخَطِيئَةِ، لَيْسَ بِالْجَسَدِ فَقَطْ، لَكِنْ بِالْفِكْرِ³³⁷ وَقِتْنَةِ الْفَضِيلَةِ، لَيْسَ فِي وَقْتٍ مُعَيَّنٍ لَكِنْ فِي كُلِّ الْأَوْقَاتِ³³⁸ وَالْأَزْمِنَةِ.

[2. 2. نَامُوسُ الْمَسِيحِ يُرِيدُ مِنَّا الْكَمَالَ الْإِلَهِيَّ]

- 289 لِأَنَّ نَامُوسَ مُوسَى إِنَّمَا يُشْبِهُ شَجَرَةً تَمْرِيًّا وَقَفِيًّا، لِأَنَّهُ لَا يَأْمُرُ بِالْمَحَبَّةِ الْكَامِلَةِ الرُّوحَانِيَّةِ لِكُلِّ أَحَدٍ وَكُلِّ حِينٍ. كَذَلِكَ فِي بَاقِي الْفَضَائِلِ لَا يَرُودُ فِيهَا عَنِ الْمُسَاوَاةِ. 290 وَأَمَّا نَامُوسُ الْمَسِيحِ فَيُشْبِهُ الشَّجَرَةَ الَّتِي لَا تَخْلُو³³⁹ مِنَ الثَّمَرِ أَبَدًا، لِأَنَّهُ لَا يَقِفُ عِنْدَ الْمُسَاوَاةِ فِي الْمَحَبَّةِ مَعَ بَاقِي الْفَضَائِلِ الَّتِي تَنَاسِبُهَا، لَكِنَّهُ يُرِيدُ مِنَّا الْكَمَالَ الْإِلَهِيَّ، 291 وَهُوَ أَنَّ نَحْبَ وَنُحْسِنَ وَتَرْحَمَ وَتُبَارِكْ، وَمَا أَشْبَهَ ذَلِكَ، لَيْسَ لِلْمُسْتَحَقِّينَ مِنَّا وَفِي أَوْقَاتٍ مُعَيَّنَةٍ فَقَطْ، وَلَكِنْ

331 ب. اغتيال

332 راجع، عدد 8: 21

333 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. المعقولة

334 راجع، غلاطية 5: 6-2. س. بضيف "الإلهية"

335 س. نفسها

336 س. ملكوت

337 س. بأفكار النفس

338 س. الأيام

339 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. بخلو

لِعَبْرٍ 340 الْمُسْتَحْقِينَ 341 مِنَّا وَلِكُلِّ أَحَدٍ فِي كُلِّ وَقْتٍ.
 292 وَقَدْ يُشْبِهُ نَامُوسَ مُوسَى أَيْضًا ذَلِكَ الْفَلَاخُ الَّذِي يُعْشَبُ أَرْضُهُ، وَيَقْطَعُ النَّبَاتَ الْبَرِّيَّ مِنْهَا، لَيْسَ مَعَ عُزُوفِهِ
 الَّتِي فِي بَاطِنِ الْأَرْضِ، لَكِنَّ الظَّاهِرَ مِنْهَا عَلَى وَجْهِ الْأَرْضِ قَطَعْتُ، 293 لِأَنَّهُ يَنْتَهِي عَنِ الرِّثَا، وَلَا يَمْتَنِعُهُ مِنْ أَصْلِهِ
 وَسَبَبِهِ، وَهُوَ النَّظَرُ.
 294 وَأَمَّا نَامُوسُ الْمَسِيحِ فَيُشْبِهُ الْفَلَاخَ الَّذِي يَتَلَعُّ عُزُوفَهُ، وَلَا يَنْتَهِي عَنِ الرِّثَا وَعَبْرِهِ مِنَ الْخَطَايَا فَقَطُّ، لَكِنَّ وَعَنْ
 أُصُولِهَا وَأَسْبَابِهَا، 295 حَيْثُ يَقُولُ: "الْحَقُّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنَّ لَمْ يَتَفَاضَلْ بِرُحْمٍ عَنِ الْكُتْبَةِ وَالْفَرَسِيِّ لَنْ 342 تَدْخُلُوا
 مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاءِ، 296 وَقَدْ سَمِعْتُمْ أَنَّهُ قِيلَ لِلأَوَّلِينَ: "لَا تَعْتَلُوا، فَكُلُّ مَنْ قَتَلَ قَدْ اسْتَحَقَّ الْقَتْلَ." وَأَنَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ
 كُلُّ مَنْ غَضِبَ عَلَى أُخِيهِ بِاطِّلًا فَقَدْ اسْتَوْجَبَ الْعُقُوبَةَ." 297 343 وَقَالَ: "قَدْ سَمِعْتُمْ أَيْضًا أَنَّهُ قِيلَ لِلأَوَّلِينَ: "لَا
 تَزْنُ." وَأَنَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ: إِنَّ كُلَّ مَنْ نَظَرَ إِلَى امْرَأَةٍ وَهَوَاهَا 344 فَقَدْ زَنَا بِهَا فِي قَلْبِهِ." 298 345 وَقَالَ أَيْضًا: "قَدْ سَمِعْتُمْ
 أَنَّهُ قِيلَ: "لَا تَحْلِفُوا بِاسْمِ الرَّبِّ كَذِبًا." 346 وَأَنَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ لَا تَحْلِفُوا الْبَتَّةَ." 299 347 هَكَذَا، وَعَلَى هَذِهِ الصَّفْعَةِ،
 يَصُدُّ وَيَنْتَهِي عَنِ بَاقِيِ الْخَطَايَا فِي تَبْطِيلِهِ وَقَطْعِهِ مِنَّا أُصُولَهَا وَأَسْبَابِهَا.

[2. 3. نَامُوسُ الْمَسِيحِ يُكْمَلُ نَامُوسَ مُوسَى وَيُقَسِّرُهُ]

300 فَإِذَا مَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ هَذَا يَنْقُضُ ذَاكَ وَيَبْطِلُهُ فَقَدْ كَذَبَ، لِأَنَّ لَيْسَ كُلُّ مَنْ كَمَّلَ الْبَيْتَانَ وَتَمَّمَهُ قَدْ تَقَضَّهَ،
 301 وَلَا كُلُّ مَنْ قَسَّرَ بِالذَّهْنِ 348 صُورَةً (كَانَ قَبْلَ رَسْمِهَا أَوَّلًا) يُقَالُ إِنَّهُ قَدْ بَطَّلَ رَسْمَهَا. 302 لِأَنَّ تَفْسِيرَ
 الصُّورَةِ، إِنْ كَانَ قَدْ أَخْفَى رَسْمَهَا وَسَتَرَهُ فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَبْطِلْهُ.
 303 كَمَا أَنَّ ضَوْءَ الشَّمْسِ إِذَا أَشْرَقَ، لَيْسَ أَنَّهُ يُطْفِئُ ضَوْءَ الْقَمَرِ، لَكِنَّهُ إِذَا يَخْفِيهِ، لِأَنَّ ضَوْءَ الْقَمَرِ مُكْتَسَبٌ فِي
 جُزْئِهِ مِنْ ضَوْءِ الشَّمْسِ، 304 وَإِنَّمَا [هُوَ] ظَاهِرٌ وَمُفِيدٌ فِي ظُلْمَةِ اللَّيْلِ فَقَطُّ، وَإِذَا مَا أَشْرَقَ ضَوْءُ الشَّمْسِ خَفَا،
 وَأَعْنَانَا عَنْهُ وَعَنْ فَايِدَتِهِ.
 305 كَذَلِكَ نَامُوسُ مُوسَى (الْمُكْتَسَبَةُ نِعْمَتُهُ مِنَ الْمَسِيحِ مُرْسِلِهِ) إِذَا كَانَتْ فَايِدَتُهُ فِي ظُلْمَةِ اللَّيْلِ الْعَتِيمَةِ، 306
 فَعِنْدَمَا أَشْرَقَتْ شَمْسُ الْعَدْلِ وَصَارَ تَهَارًا بَطَلَتْ (بِمَعْنَى خَفِيَتْ). 307 وَأَيْضًا لَبِنُ التَّذْيِ إِذَا يُعِيدُ وَيُؤَافِقُ الْأَطْفَالَ
 لِأَجْلِ ضَعْفِ آلَاتِ مَضْعِعِهِمْ، فَإِذَا مَا قَوِيَتْ عِنْدَ سِنِّ الْحَدَاثَةِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ يَسْتَعْتُونَ عَنْهُ وَلَا يُؤَافِقُهُمْ.

[2. 4. نَامُوسُ مُوسَى رُسْمٌ لِلْمُبْتَدِئِينَ فِي مَعْرِفَةِ اللَّهِ]

308 وَنَامُوسُ مُوسَى إِذَا رُسِمَ لِلْمُبْتَدِئِينَ فِي مَعْرِفَةِ اللَّهِ وَعِبَادَتِهِ، 309 فَلِأَجْلِ ذَلِكَ لَمْ يُثَقَّلْ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمَا لَا طَاقَةَ
 كَانَتْ لَهُمْ فِي حَمَلِهِ، وَلَمْ يَرُدَّهُمْ عَنِ النَّامُوسِ الْبَشَرِيِّ الْأَوْسَطِ (349 لِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا فِي السُّغْلِ الشَّيْطَانِيِّ، تَحْتَ النَّامُوسِ

340 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. للغير

341 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. مستحقين

342 ب. ف. ل. ح. س. ليس

343 متى 5: 20 - 22

344 ب. ح. ل. ف. هواها. س. نظرة شهوة

345 متى 5: 27 - 28

346 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. كاذب

347 متى 5: 33 - 34

348 س. بالألوان

349 ح. إلا وسقط

النَّسْرِيِّ³⁵⁰). 310 وَلَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُمَكِّنِ أَنْ يَتَرَفَقَا مِنَ السُّفْلِ الْأَفْصَى إِلَّا بِتَدْرُجٍ وَمُتَوَسِّطٍ بَيْنَ الْاِثْنَيْنِ، 311 لِأَنَّ الْإِثْتِمَالَ مِنَ الطَّرْفِ³⁵¹ الْأَفْصَى إِلَى الطَّرْفِ الَّذِي يُقَابِلُهُ فِي كَرَّةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ بَعْتُهُ (حَسَبَ مَا يَذْكَرُ بَعْضُ الْحُكَمَاءِ) خَطَرٌ. 312 وَالذَّلِيلُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ بِمَا تَرَاهُ مِنْ تَرْتِيبِ الْحَالِقِي فِي الْأُزْمَةِ، لِأَنَّهَا إِنَّمَا تَنْتَقِلُ مِنْ بَرْدِ الشِّتَاءِ إِلَى حَرَارَةِ الصَّيْفِ بِوَسَاطَةِ فَضْلِ الرَّبِيعِ، وَمِنْ حَرِّ الصَّيْفِ إِلَى بَرْدِ الشِّتَاءِ بِوَسَاطَةِ فَضْلِ الْحَرِيفِ. 313 كَذَلِكَ أَيْضًا، فِي بَابِ الْعِبَادَةِ، لَمْ يَذْكَرْ لَهُمْ ثَلَاثَةٌ³⁵² أَقَابِيمَ لَقَالًا إِذَا سَمِعُوا أَبًا وَابْنًا وَزَوْجَ فَدَسَّ³⁵³ يَتَصَوَّرُونَ فِي الْأُبُوتِ وَالْبُنُوتِ تَصَوُّرًا هَيُولَانِيًّا، وَيَعُوذُونَ إِلَى عِبَادَةِ جَمِيعِ الْأَهْلِ. 314 وَأَمَّا فِي التَّوَابِ وَالْعِقَابِ فَلَمْ يَأْخِمْ بِأَكْثَرِ مِمَّا هَهُنَا مِنَ التَّنْعَمِ وَالشَّقَاءِ، لِأَنَّ عَمَلَهُمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تُصَدِّقُ الشُّشُورَ وَمَلَكَوَتِ السَّمَاءِ وَعَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ الْأَبَدِيِّ. 315 لِأَنَّ الصَّبِيَّ يَخْتَارُ لِدَاتِهِ الْحَاضِرَةَ³⁵⁴ الْأَحْقَرَ عَنِ الْمُسْتَأْنَفِ وَالْأَشْرَفِ، 316 وَيُحْفِيهِ الْأَدْنَى مِنَ صُنُوفِ التَّأْدِيبِ، مَثَلًا لِللَّطْمَةِ بِالْيَدِ عَلَى الْحَدِّ، وَالضَّرْبِ بِالْقَضِيبِ، أَكْثَرَ مِنَ السُّهُوطِ مِنَ الْمِيزَاتِ وَالْفَقْرِ الْمُسْتَأْنَفِ، وَمَا يُشَاكِلُ ذَلِكَ. 317 وَالْوَالِدَانِ³⁵⁵ أَيْضًا فَإِنَّمَا تَرَاهُمْ يَلْتَدُونَ مُبْنَاغَاةَ أَطْفَالِهِمْ وَيُحْتَمِلُونَ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ مَا لَا يَسْتَحْسِنُونَهُ وَلَا يَصْبُرُونَ عَلَيْهِ إِذَا مَا كَبُرُوا.

318 وَيُضَافُ إِلَى مَا ذَكَرْنَاهُ وَتَرَاهُ مَا يَفْعَلُهُ الْمُبْتَدِئُونَ³⁵⁶ فِي تَعَلُّمِ صَنْعَةِ الْجُنْدِيَّةِ،³⁵⁷ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَرُوضُونَ ذَوَاتِهِمْ قَبْلَ³⁵⁸ يَحْمِلِ سَيْفٍ مِنْ خَشَبٍ،³⁵⁹ وَالْوَلَعِ³⁶⁰ بِهِ، وَالتَّوَاتُعِ³⁶¹ مَعَ بَعْضِهِمْ بَعْضًا وَفِيمَا بَيْنَهُمْ، 319 فَإِذَا مَا أَحْكَمُوا الصَّنْعَةَ، وَدَعَتْهُمْ الضَّرُورَةُ إِلَى حَرْبِ الْعَدُوِّ وَالِدُخُولِ فِي مَعْرَكَةِ الْقِتَالِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ يُبَدِّلُونَهَا بِسُيُوفٍ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ تَنَاسِبَهَا. 320 وَبِالْجَمَلَةِ، لَمَّا كَانَ اللَّهُ (تَعَالَى ذِكْرُهُ) يَنْقَرُ وَيَتَعَالَى عَنْ كُلِّ مَادَّةٍ وَصُورَةٍ وَسَكَلٍ. 321 وَهُوَ، كَمَا ذَكَرْنَا آيْفًا،³⁶² مِمَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ مَسْطُورًا فِي كُتُبِ الْحُكَمَاءِ الْبِرَانِيِّينَ عَنْهُ، مِنْ صُورَةٍ تَمَازِلُهُ لَا يَعْرِفُ، وَبَعِيْنٌ لَا يَرَى، وَلَا يُشَبِّهُه أَيْضًا، 322 وَإِنَّ هَذَا مِقْدَارٌ مَا يُدْرِكُ مِنْهُ فَقَطْ، وَهُوَ أَنْ تَتَحَقَّقَ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ لَا يُدْرِكُ. 323 وَكَانَ الْمَقْصُودُ مِنْ جُودِهِ أَنْ يُوَصِّلَ عَقْلَنَا إِلَى مَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَيُعَلِّمَنَا، وَيُوضِحَ لَنَا طَرِيقَ الشَّسْبِ بِهِ بِالسِّيَرَةِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ، وَالْمُسَاهَمَةِ فِي مَلَكَوتِهِ، وَالتَّمَتُّعِ مَعَهُ فِي نَعِيمِ خَيْرَاتِهِ. 324 أَوْجَبَتِ السِّيَاسَةُ أَنْ يَصِيرَ ذَلِكَ بِالتَّدْرُجِ وَبِالْإِثْتِمَالِ مِنْ قَلْبٍ إِلَى قَلْبٍ، 325 لِأَنَّ مَبْدَأَ كُلِّ عِلْمٍ فِي أَيِّ صَنْعَةٍ مِنَ الصَّنَائِعِ إِنَّمَا يَكُونُ مِنَ الْأَنْقِصِ، وَالْأَسْهَلِ، وَالْأَضْعَفِ، حَتَّى يَنْتَهِيَ إِلَى الْأَكْمَلِ، وَالْأَصْعَبِ، وَالْأَقْوَى.

350 يقوم المؤلف في القسم الأول من الكتاب بتمييز ثلاثة أنواع من النواميس: الناموس الأول ناموس أرضي ومكانه في الوسط، والثاني سماوي وهو فوق، والثالث شيطاني

في الأسفل. راجع الجزء الأول

351 ح. الأطراف

352 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. الثلاث

353 ف. قدساً

354 ب. الحاسرة

355 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. الوالدين

356 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. المتبتدين

357 ح. الجنودية

358 س. بضيف: "قبل حمل السيف الحديد"

359 س. بضيف: "عدة تناسبها"

360 س. ويولعون

361 س.

362 ح. أيضاً

[2. 5. كَيْفِيَّةُ التَّدْرِجِ مِنَ التَّامُوسِ الْقَدِيمِ إِلَى التَّامُوسِ الْجَدِيدِ]

326 فَأَوَّلُ ظُهُورِ أَظْهَرَ لَنَا فِيهِ ذَاتَهُ فِي الْإِبْتِدَاءِ كَانَ بِالتَّرَائِي، لِقَوْمٍ بَعْدَ قَوْمٍ، يُفْنُونَ وَصُورٌ مُخْتَلِفَةٌ. 327 فَصَارَ يُوصَفُ بِصِفَاتٍ جِسْمَانِيَّةٍ بِأَنْ يُقَالَ عَلَيْهِ بِأَنَّ لَهُ يَدَانِ وَرِجْلَانِ وَعَيْنَانِ وَشَمٌّ،³⁶³ 328 وَأَنَّهُ يَهُومُ وَيَقْعُدُ وَيَسْتَقْبَلُ مِنْ مَوْضِعٍ إِلَى مَوْضِعٍ، وَمَا يُشَاكِلُ ذَلِكَ بِمَا نَجِدُهُ مَسْطُورًا عَنْهُ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْأَنْبِيَاءِ، وَبَاقِي كُتُبِ الْعَيْقَةِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ. 329 [وَهُوَ] لَيْسَ أَنَّهُ كَانَ بِالْحَقِيقَةِ شَيْءٌ مِنْ جَمِيعِ هَذَا (مَعَادَ اللَّهِ!) لَكِنْ إِنَّمَا قِيلَ وَكُتِبَ عَنْهُ مِثْلُ هَذَا بِاللَّفْظِ فَقَطُّ، 330 وَتَثْرِيًا لِمَعْرِفَتِنَا، وَثَبُوهٌ أَيْضًا عَلَى مَا كَانَ عَتِيدًا أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنْهُ فِيمَا بَعْدَ وَفِي وَقْتِهِ مُحَقَّقًا. 331 لِأَنَّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ يَسْتَأْزِلَانِ³⁶⁴ فِي حَدِيثِهِمْ مَعَ أَطْفَالِهِمْ بِأَنْ يَسْتَعْمِلُوا مَعَهُمُ الْفَاطَا تُخْصُهُمْ ذُنُوبُهُمْ، وَذَلِكَ لِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَمَهْمُونَ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَهَا.

332 فَلَمَّا عَابَنَ طَبِيعَتَنَا الْمَخْلُوقَةَ عَلَى صُورَتِهِ وَمِثَالِهِ (الْمُسْتَمَدَّةَ مِنْهُ بِمَاؤُهَا وَحَيَاتِهَا الرُّوحَانِيَّةَ) أَتَتْهَا بِبُعْدِهَا عَنْهُ، بَعْدَ الْمَعْصِيَةِ، فَذُ اغْتَلَّتْ وَعَظُمَ مَرَضُهَا بِالرِّيَازَةِ، 333 صَارَ كَالطَّبِيبِ الْمَاهِرِ، وَالْوَالِدِ الشُّفُوقِ، يَرَكِّبُ لَهَا أَدْوِيَةَ الشِّفَاءِ، وَيُعَالِجُهَا بِمَا يَلْتَدْرِجُ 334 (أَعْيِي مِنَ الْأَطْفَالِ إِلَى الْأَقْوَى) إِلَى أَنْ أَظْهَرَ تَمَامَ صَنْعَتِهِ فِي كَمَالِ بِرِّهَا.³⁶⁵

[2. 5. 1. التَّامُوسِ الطَّبِيعِيِّ وَالتَّامُوسِ الْمَسْطُورِ]

335 فَأَوَّلُ مَا نَاوَلْنَا وَدَفَعَ إِلَيْهَا مِنَ الْأَدْوِيَةِ بِالتَّامُوسِ الطَّبِيعِيِّ [هُوَ] الرُّؤْيِيَّةُ وَالنَّمْيِيرُ³⁶⁶ (الَّذِي بِهِ تَثْرَرُ الْحَيَّرُ مِنَ الشَّرِّ، وَمَا يُؤَافِقُهَا بِمَا لَا يُؤَافِقُهَا). 336 ثُمَّ بَعْدَ هَذَا أَعْطَانَا التَّامُوسَ الْمَسْطُورَ، مَعَ مَا بَيْنَ هَذَيْنِ أَيْضًا مِنْ أَصْنَافِ أَدْوِيَةِ³⁶⁷ الْبَارِي لِحَيْسِ الْبَشَرِيَّةِ وَاخْتِلَافِهَا.

337 فَلَمَّا لَمْ يَفْعُ³⁶⁸ وَلَا وَاحِدٌ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأَدْوِيَةِ عَلَى كَمَالِ بِرِّهَا، وَتَزَايَدَ فِيهَا الْمَرَضُ، إِلَى حَدِّ أَنْ أَشْرَفَتْ عَلَى الْعَطَبِ الْكُلِّيِّ، 338 حَانَ الْوَقْتُ وَلَزِمَ حَيْبِدُ تَنَاوُلِهَا الدَّوَاءَ الْأَعْظَمَ، الْمُنَاسِبَ لِعَظَمَةِ عِلَّتِهَا، وَهُوَ الْمُسْتَاهِيَّةُ صَنْعَتُهُ لِسَبَبِ تَنَاهِي مَرَضِهَا.

[2. 5. 2. الظُّهُورُ بِالْجَسَدِ]

339 وَلَمَّا كَانَ لَا يُمْكِنُ أَنْ يَنَاوِلَهَا إِثَاهُ أَحَدٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ غَيْرِهِ، دَعَتْهُ الصُّورَةُ إِلَى أَنْ يَتَّحِدَ بِجِسْمِ هَيُولَانِيٍّ مِنْ طَبِيعَةِ أَجْسَادِنَا، أَوَّلًا لِيَمَانِلَنَا بِهِ، وَيَسْتَقِيمَ لَهُ أَنْ يُكْمَلَ بِالْعَمَلِ بِهِ جَمِيعَ مَا يُعَلِّمُنَا. 340 كَذَلِكَ وَيَسْتَقِيمُ لَنَا نَحْنُ أَيْضًا التَّشَبُّهُ بِهِ فِي عَمَلِهِ بِمَا تُعَابِتُهُ فِيهِ مِنَ الْمَسَاوَاةِ بِنَا.

341 فَلَمَّا دَعَتْ الصُّورَةُ إِلَى مِثْلِ هَذَا، ظَهَرَ³⁶⁹ لَنَا ظُهُورًا كَامِلًا، جَوْهَرًا مُحَقَّقًا، لَا خَيَالِيًّا، كَمَا ظَهَرَ لِلْأَنْبِيَاءِ قَبْلَ هَذَا. 342 فَخَاطَبْنَا،³⁷⁰ وَتَصَرَّفَ مَعَنَا، وَخَالَطَنَا، لَا بِالتَّرَائِي³⁷¹ وَالرُّؤْيَا، لَكِنْ بِأَلَاتِ جِسْمَانِيَّةٍ كَوَاحِدٍ مَثًا. 343

363 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. مشم

364 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. بينارلون

365 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. بورها

366 ح. الثمنية

367 س. ما أدب

368 س. بقدر

369 س. أظهر لنا ذاته

370 س. فخالطنا

371 ح. ل. ب. بالتراي

فَصَارَ مِنْ هَهُنَا كُلِّ مَا قِيلَ وَكُتِبَ عَنْهُ بِاللَّفْظِ فَقَطُّ قَرِيبًا إِلَى مَعْرِفَتِنَا (كَمَا دَكَّرْنَا قَبْلَ) فِعْلًا مُحَقَّقًا لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ. 344
 ثُمَّ نَاوَلْنَا حَيْبِلِي هَذَا الدَّوَاءَ الْأَعْظَمَ (الْمُقَدَّمُ دِكْرُهُ) الَّذِي بِهِ كُمَلْتُ صِحَّتِي، 345 وَهُوَ الْمُعْمُودِيَّةُ الْمُقَدَّسَةُ، مَعَ
 الْأَمَانَةِ، وَمُتَشَارِكَةُ الْأَسْرَارِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ، الَّتِي بِهَا تَتَّحِدُ بِهِ إِذَا مَا حَفِظْنَا بِالْفِعْلِ وَصَانِيَاهُ الْإِجْبِلِيَّةَ.
 346 فَلَا جِلَّ هَذَا السَّبَبِ (بِمَا تَقَدَّمَ بِهِ الْقَوْلُ) لَمْ يَنْتَهَلْنَا (مُدَبِّرُ الْكُلِّ) بِحِكْمَتِهِ الْفَائِئِمَةَ مِنْ غَايَةِ النُّصْحِ إِلَى غَايَةِ
 الْكَمَالِ فِي مَرَّةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، لَكِنَّهُ تَقَلَّنَا مِنْ حَالٍ إِلَى حَالٍ بِالتَّدْرُجِ.

[2. 6. الْحَيَاتَانِ وَأَسْبَابُهُ]

347 فَأَوَّلُ مَا سَنَّ وَسَلَّمَ لِأَوَّلِ مَنْ طَلَبَهُ وَعَرَفَهُ بَعْدَ الطُّوفَانِ، وَآمَنَ بِهِ وَصَدَّقَهُ مِنْ كَافَّةِ الْعَالَمِ، أُبُونَا³⁷² إِبْرَاهِيمَ،
 وَأَعْطَاهُ الْحَيَاتَانَةَ لَا عَيْرَ (وَهِيَ رَسْمٌ وَعَلَامَةٌ تَفْصِيلُهُ³⁷³ مِنْ بَاقِي الْأُمَمِ).
 348 فَإِنْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ: "إِمَادًا صَارَتْ هَذِهِ الشُّهْرَةُ فِي هَذَا الْعُضْوِ الْمُخْفِيِّ، وَلَا كَانَتْ صَارَتْ إِمَادًا فِي الْجَبْهَةِ بِالْكَيْ
 مَثَلًا، وَإِمَادًا فِي عُضْوٍ آخَرَ مِنْ بَاقِي أَعْضَاءِ الْجِسْمِ الظَّاهِرَةِ؟" 349 أَجَبْنَا: إِنَّ الْقَصْدَ فِي تَصْوِيرِ سُبْحَانِهِ هَذِهِ
 الْعَلَامَةَ بِهَذَا الْعُضْوِ وَفِي هَذِهِ الصَّنَمَةِ، كَانَ لِمَعْنِيَيْنِ: 350 الْوَاحِدُ مِنْهَا تَبَيَّنَ الصُّورَةَ بِقَدِّ أَيِّ عُضْوٍ، 351 فَلِكَيْ
 لَا تَنْقَسِدَ الصُّورَةُ الْإِنْسَانِيَّةُ بِفَقْدَانِ عُضْوٍ لَعَلَّهُ كَانَ يُعْرَفُهَا،³⁷⁴ (غَيْرَ هَذَا) مِنْ بَاقِي أَعْضَاءِ الْجِسْمِ، أَوْ تَنْشِئَهُ
 بِالْكَيْ الظَّاهِرِ فِيهَا، 352 لِأَنَّهُ مَا كَانَ يَلِيْقُ بِجُودِ اللَّهِ مِثْلُ هَذَا الْفِعْلِ، وَهُوَ أَنْ يُفْسِدَ، أَوْ يُشَوِّهَ، صُورَةَ خَوَاصِّ
 الْمُؤْمِنِينَ. 353 وَالْآخِرُ لِقَاءَ يَتَّعَ عَلَيْهَا عَلَامَةٌ أُخْرَى تُشَبِّهُهَا، لِأَنَّ هَذِهِ الشُّهْرَةَ (أَعْيَى الْقَطْعِ وَالْكَيْ) مُؤَخَّوْدَةٌ هِيَ
 فِي اللُّصُوصِ وَفَاعِلِي الْقَبِيحِ دَائِمًا.
 354 ثُمَّ بَعْدَ هَذَا أَضَافَ إِلَى الْحَيَاتَانَةِ عَلَى يَدِ مُوسَى النَّامُوسِ الَّذِي فِيهِ الْحَالُ وَالْحَرَامُ. 355 وَهَذَا هُوَ نَامُوسُ
 الْعَدْلِ، الْأَوْسَطِ، الْمُتَقَابِلِ الْمِثْلِ³⁷⁵ بِمِثْلِهِ. 356 فَلَمَّا حَانَ وَقْتُ الْكَمَالِ أَنَا بَدَاتِهِ بِالنَّامُوسِ الْإِلَهِيِّ الْأَعْلَى (الَّذِي
 بِهِ تَتَرَفَّقَى عَنْ مُسَاوَاةِ نَامُوسِ الْعَدْلِ، وَتَرْتَفِعُ إِلَى الْكَمَالِ الْأَقْصَى³⁷⁶).

[2. 7. مَثَلُ صَاحِبِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّذِي يَقْدَمُ الْمَعُونَةَ لِلْفَلَاحِينَ]

357 فَتَصِيرُ مِثْلَنَا هَذَا مِثَالِ إِنْسَانٍ كَانَتْ لَهُ قَرْيَةٌ جَمِيعُ أَرَاضِيهَا بَائِرَةٌ، وَسُكَّانُهَا مِنْ أَكْسَلِ النَّاسِ وَأَقْلَهُمْ حِرْصًا،
 358 مُفْتَبِعُونَ بِعَيْشِهِمْ يَتَلَكَّ النَّبَاتَاتِ الْبَرِّيَّةِ وَأَنْمَارِهَا، وَلَا فَائِدَةَ تَصِيرُ، وَ[لَا] مُعَالَاتٍ³⁷⁷ تَرْتَفِعُ لِصَاحِبِهِمْ مِنْ
 اتِّعَاجِهِمِ الْبَيْتَةِ، حَتَّى أَتَهُمْ لَا يَعْرِفُونَهُ وَلَا هُوَ يَعْرِفُهُمْ. 359 فَأَضْمَرَ وَاحِدٌ مِنْهُمْ بِأَنْ يَفْلَحَ³⁷⁸ سَهْمُهُ مِنْ أَرَاضِيهَا،
 وَأَنْ يَزْرَعَهُ، وَيَقْدَمَ مِنْ تَعْبِهِ مُعَالَاتٍ لِصَاحِبِهِ، فَيُعْرِفُ عِنْدَهُ وَيَتَأَلَّ مِنَ الْبَرَكَةِ عَلَيْهَا. 360 فَلَمَّا عَرَفَ صَاحِبُهُ
 بِضَمِيرِهِ وَحَسَنِ نِيَّتِهِ، ادَّعَى بِهِ، وَدَفَعَ إِلَيْهِ بِدَارًا مِنَ الْحِنْطَةِ، وَحَمَدَ فِعْلَهُ، وَأَعْجَبَهُ مَقْصُودَهُ، فَصَارَ مِنْ خَوَاصِّهِ مَعَ
 جَمَاعَتِهِ.

372 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. أينا

373 ح. ل. ب. لتفضيله، ف. لتفضيله

374 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. يعوز منها

375 ح. ب. ل. ناقص

376 س. يضيف: "وهو الناموس الأفضل"

377 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. مغل

378 ب. ل. ح. يفتح

361 فَلَمَّا انْجَازَتْ³⁷⁹ عَلَيْهِ أَدْوَارٌ مِنَ السِّنِينَ، وَهُوَ فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ مِنْهَا (هُوَ وَقَوْمُهُ) يُحْمِلُونَ مَا يُحِقُّ لِمَوْلَاهُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ الْمُعْلَآتِ، وَيَأْخُذُونَ مِنْهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ الْبِرْكَةِ وَالْوَعْدِ الصَّالِحَةِ. 362 أَحْيَرًا اخْتَارَ صَاحِبُ هَذِهِ الضَّيْعَةِ وَاحِدًا مِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ، فَصَيَّرَهُ مِنْ [بَيْنِ] الْبَاقِينَ عَلَى خَوَاصِهِ رَيْبَسًا وَمُتَقَدِّمًا، 363 وَدَفَعَ إِلَيْهِمْ نُصُوبًا مِنَ الْكُرْمِ، وَأَمَرَهُمْ أَنْ يَمْلُؤُوا أَرَاضِيَهُمْ مِنْهَا، لِتَصِيرَ لَهُمْ مَلَكًا يَسْتَفِيدُونَ مِنْ مُعْلَآتِهَا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ مُعْلَآتِ زُرُوعِ الْحِنْطَةِ. 364 لِأَنَّ تِلْكَ تَنْبُثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا تُفِيدُ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ سَنَتِهَا، فَإِذَا مَا حُصِدَتْ تَعُودُ الْأَرْضُ إِلَى مَا كَانَتْ قَبْلَ بَائِرِهِ. فَأَمَّا الْكُرْمُ فَتَنْبُثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ عِدَّةَ سِنِينَ.

365 فَلَمَّا امْتَلَأُوا أَمْرَهُ، وَامْتَلَأَتْ أَرَاضِيَهُمْ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْكُرْمِ، وَجَازَ عَلَيْهِمْ مَدَّةٌ مِنَ الزَّمَانِ وَهُمْ يَسْتَعْلُونَ مَا يَصِيرُ مِنْهَا فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ (قَوْمًا بَعْدَ قَوْمٍ) فَعَتِقَتْ³⁸⁰ وَقَارَبَتْ الْعَطَبَ. 366 حِينَئِذٍ أَنَاهُمْ بِذَاتِهِ³⁸¹ وَمَعَهُ³⁸² نُصُوبٌ مِنَ الزَّيْتُونِ، وَأَمَرَهُمْ أَنْ يَمْلُؤُوا كُرْمَهُمْ تِلْكَ مِنْهُ، قَائِلًا لَهُمْ هَكَذَا: 367 "إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْكُرْمُ تَحُورُ³⁸³ إِذَا مَا اسْتَعْلَى عَلَيْهَا هَذَا الزَّيْتُونُ، وَإِذَا مَا تَكَامَلَتْ هَذِهِ النُّصُوبُ صَارَتْ لَكُمْ وَلِمَنْ يَفُومُ بِمَقَامِكُمْ بَعْدَكُمْ، أَمَلًا كَأَنَّ أَبْدِيَّةً بَلَا تَعَبٍ يَلْحَقُكُمْ عَلَيْهَا. 369 وَالْفَائِدَةُ الصَّائِرَةُ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْهَا أَكْثَرُ وَأَرْبَحُ مِنْ غَلَّاتِ الْكُرْمِ. 370 وَإِنْ اسْتَقْبَلْتُمْ وَاسْتَصْعَبْتُمْ الْآنَ الْحَرِصَ وَالتَّعَبَ عَلَيْهَا بِسَبَبِ تَأْخِيرِهَا فِي الْفَائِدَةِ الصَّائِرَةِ مِنْ تَمَرِهَا إِلَيْكُمْ، 371 فَأَعْلَمُوا يَقِينًا أَنَّ هَذَا التَّعَبَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ الْآنَ فِي الْإِتِّدَاءِ وَمُدَّتُهُ زَمَانِيَّةٌ قَصِيرَةٌ، 372 وَبَعْدَ هَذَا سَوْفَ يَعْجُبُهَا رَاحَةٌ إِلَى سِنِينَ كَثِيرَةٍ وَأَجْيَالٍ غَيْرِ مُتَنَاهِيَةٍ لِمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ نَسْلِكُمْ وَلِغَيْرِكُمْ مِنَ الْبَاقِينَ أَيْضًا."

373 فَصَدَّقُوهُ وَتَسَلَّمُوا مِنْهُ ذَلِكَ النَّصَبَ، وَغَرَسُوهُ فِي أَرْضِهِمْ، (374³⁸⁴) فَمَنْ تَقَوَّى بِالرَّجَاءِ عَلَى الْعَمَلِ عَلَيْهِ صَارَ مِنَ الرَّاجِينَ وَبِالضَّدِّ).

[2. 8 . تَفْسِيرُ الْمَثَلِ]

375 أَمَّا الْقَرْيَةُ فَهَذَا الْعَالَمُ، 376 وَصَاحِبُهَا الْبَارِي رَبُّ الْكُلِّ، 377 وَأَرَاضِيهَا قُلُوبُ النَّاسِ، 378 وَالنَّبَاتُ الْبَرِّيُّ، الْأَفْكَارُ الرَّبِّيَّةُ، وَغَارِهَا الْحُطْبَةُ. 379 وَالْأَوَّلُ مَنْ غَرَسَ وَنَصَبَ أَرْضَهُ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ، 380 وَالْبِدَارُ، فَهُوَ حِطَابُ اللَّهِ مَعَهُ، وَجَرِيئُهُ لَهُ، وَوَعْدُهُ لَهُ بِالْمُحَازَاةِ عَنِ أَمَانِيَّتِهِ. 381 وَالْقَائِدُ³⁸⁵ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ، فَمُوسَى. 382 وَنُصُوبُ الْكُرْمِ، فَهُوَ النَّامُوسُ. 383 وَإِثْبَانُ صَاحِبِ الضَّيْعَةِ نَفْسِهِ، بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ بِالنُّصُوبِ مِنَ الزَّيْتُونِ، فَهُوَ مَجِيءٌ سَيِّدِنَا بِالْوَصَايَا الْإِلَهِيَّةِ (الَّتِي هِيَ نُورٌ وَهَدًاءٌ). 384 وَالتَّوَابُ عَنَّا فِي الْعَالَمِ الْعَتِيدِ كَوْنُهُ بِالنَّبِيِّمِ الَّذِي لَا انْقِضَاءَ لَهُ. 385 فَمَنْ صَدَّقَهَا إِذَا وَقَبَلَهَا، وَغَرَسَهَا فِي حُتْمِ قَلْبِهِ، وَتَقَوَّى عَلَى عَمَلِهَا بِالرَّجَاءِ، 386 وَحَفَرَ عَلَيْهَا بِقَاسِ الْمَحَبَّةِ، وَسَيَّحَهَا بِتَوَاضُعِ اللَّبِّ، فَإِنَّهُ يَسْتَفِيدُ مِنْهَا نُورًا فِي عَمَلِهِ. 387 فَيَتَرَفَّى بِهَا مِنَ الْعَمَلِ إِلَى النُّظَرِ، وَالْإِتِّحَادِ بِاللَّهِ (النُّورُ الْأَوَّلُ) فِي نَبِيِّمِ لَا انْقِضَاءَ لَهُ.³⁸⁶

379 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. إن جاز

380 س. فلما اعتقت جدا

381 س. صاحب الضيعة

382 س. وصحبه

383 س. تظل

384 س. فمن صدقه منهم من الباقين وتسلم منه ذاك النصب وخرسه في أرضه وتقوى بالرجاء والعمل عليه صار من الراجين وبالعكس.

385 ب. ح. ل. ف. وألقوا من بعده. س. الرئيس للمقام من بعده على ذريته.

386 س. يضيف "وبالضد أيضا"

[2. 9. سَبَبُ اسْتِعْمَالِ الْمَسِيحِ الْخِتَانَةَ وَأَكْلِ الْفَصْحِ النَّامُوسِيِّ]

388 فَأَمَّا اسْتِعْمَالُ سَيِّدِنَا الْخِتَانَةَ، مَعَ أَكْلِهِ الْفَصْحِ النَّامُوسِيِّ دُونَهَا، فَهُوَ لِسَبَبِ أَنْ مَوْهَبَةَ الْمَعْمُودِيَّةِ (الَّتِي اسْتَعْوَضْنَاهَا عَنِ الْخِتَانَةِ) لَمْ نَكُنْ بَعْدُ أُعْطِينَاهَا، وَدَلَائِلُ الرُّسُومِ كَانَتْ حَيثِيَّةً بَعْدَ تَحْقِيقِهَا لَمْ تَطْهَرْ. 389 لِأَنَّ مَا يَرْتَمُهُ الْمُصَوِّرُ قَبْلَ ظَاهِرًا سَبَبِيًّا إِلَى أَنْ يُفَسَّرَ الصُّورَةَ، وَيُكْمَلُ صَنَعَتَهُ فِيهَا بِالْأَصْنَافِ الْمُخْتَلِفَةِ، وَحَيْثِيَّةً يُخْفَى الرُّسْمُ وَيَبْطَلُ. 390 كَذَلِكَ وَأَكْلُهُ الْفَصْحِ النَّامُوسِيِّ إِنَّمَا كَانَ أَيْضًا لِأَجْلِ أَنْ خُرُوفَ اللَّهِ (الَّذِي هُوَ تَفْسُهُ حَامِلٌ خَطَايَا الْعَالَمِ) لَمْ يَكُنْ بَعْدُ دُبِحَ لِأَجْلِنَا. 391 فَاسْتَعْنَيْنَا بِهَذِهِ الدَّبِيحَةِ السَّيِّدِيَّةِ، الْعَامَّةِ، لِخِلَاصِ الْعَالَمِ، عَنِ الدَّبَائِحِ النَّامُوسِيَّةِ.

392 ثُمَّ وَلَسَبَبِ آخَرَ أَيْضًا، وَهُوَ أَنَّهُ لَا يَبْتَكَ شَيْئًا مِنْ نَامُوسِ الرُّسُومِ (حَتَّى وَلَا دَقِيقَهُ) إِلَّا وَيُكْمَلُهُ جَمِيعُهُ أَوَّلًا، 393 لِيَتَحَقَّقَ عِنْدَنَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَاضِعَهُ، بَعْدَ هَذَا يُسَلِّمُ إِلَيْنَا نَامُوسَ الْحَقِّ تَفْسُهُ، 394 فَتَيَسَّمُ فِيهِ الْقَوْلُ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ: "حَجَرٌ³⁸⁷ الرَّاوِيَّةِ. 388" لِأَنَّهُ حَاوِي الْعَهْدَيْنِ وَضَابِطُهُمَا. تَمَّتِ الْحُجَّةُ الْخَامِسَةُ

387 س. الحجر المزوي الماسك الحافظين.

388 راجع. انفس 2: 11 - 22؛ مزمو 118 (117): 23؛ متى 10: 12؛ مرقس 10: 12؛ لوقا 20: 17.

الْحُجَّةُ السَّادِسَةُ

[عَلَامَاتُ الرَّسُولِ لَا تَنْطَبِقُ كُلُّهَا عَلَى مُوسَى، فَهَلْ هُوَ أَيْضًا رَسُولٌ كَاذِبٌ؟]
[تَخْصِيصُ اللَّهِ لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ دُونَ غَيْرِهِمْ مِنَ الْأُمَمِ هُوَ ضِدُّ جُودِهِ وَعَدْلِهِ]

1. صُورَةُ الْحُجَّةِ

395 صُورَتُهَا هَذِهِ الصُّورَةُ. فَصَيِّتُكُمْ الْمُتَقَدِّمَةُ عَلَى مَنْ قَالَ أَنَّهُ مُرْسَلٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَلَا تُوجَدُ فِيهِ ثَلَاثٌ³⁸⁹ الْعَلَامَاتِ،³⁹⁰ (396 وهي: الْكِرَازَةُ الْعَامَّةُ، وَعَمَلُ الْجَرَاحِ، وَالْحَبِيرَةُ بِسَائِرِ اللَّعَاتِ) فَهُوَ كَاذِبٌ لَا يَجِبُ أَنْ يُصَدَّقَ، 397 فَهِيَ تَفْصِيحُهَا تُوجِبُ أَنْ يَكُونَ مُوسَى كَاذِبًا! لِأَنَّ الْعَلَامَتَيْنِ مِنَ الثَّلَاثِ (وَهُمَا الْكِرَازَةُ الْعَامَّةُ وَالْحَبِيرَةُ بِسَائِرِ اللَّعَاتِ) لَمْ تَكُونَا³⁹¹ فِيهِ.

[1. 1. أُمَّةُ إِسْرَائِيلَ وَالْأُمَمُ الْأُخْرَى]

398 وَإِنْ كَانَ صَادِقًا (كَمَا تَرِيدُونَ) فَقَدْ أَبْطَلْتُمْ مِنْ هُنَا مَا أَوْحَيْتُمُوهُ وَحَقَّقْتُمُوهُ عِنْدَنَا مِنْ جُودِ الْبَارِي وَعَدْلِهِ، 399 وَهُوَ أَنَّهُ لَا يُخَصَّصُ بِعَمَّتِهِ وَفَضْلِهِ لِقَوْمٍ دُونَ قَوْمٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ. 400 لَا ! وَلَا يَشَاءُ، لَكِنَّهُ إِنَّمَا يُسَبِّحُ مَوَاهِبَهُ عَلَى جَمِيعِ عِبَادِهِ بِالسُّوِّيَّةِ، وَلَا يَبْخُلُ بِهَا عَلَى أَحَدٍ، 401 وَكُلُّ بَيِّنَاتٍ مِنْهَا مَا يَسْتَحَقُّهُ مِنْ مُتَقَضِي اسْتِعْدَادِهِ لِقَبُولِ ذَلِكَ، وَالتَّهَيُّؤِ الْمَوْجُودِ فِيهِ لَهَا. 402 وَحَقَّقْتُمْ³⁹² هَذَا الْقَوْلَ عِنْدَنَا مِنْ مِثَالِ الشَّمْسِ، الَّتِي تُشْرِقُ ضِيَاءَهَا، مَعَ سُخُونَتِهَا،³⁹³ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْأَجْسَامِ الَّتِي تُحْتَمِلُهَا بِالسُّوِّيَّةِ، 403 وَكُلُّ يَسْتَفِيدُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ بِمِقْدَارِ مَا فِيهِ مِنَ الشَّهْوِ وَالطَّافَةِ لِقَبُولِهِ.

404 فَإِنْ كَانَ الْأَمْرُ إِذَا هَكَذَا، كَيْفَ عَمَلَ بَارِي الْكُلِّ عَنْ بَاقِي الْقَبَائِلِ؟ وَلَمْ لَمْ يُرْسَلْ إِلَيْهَا دَاعِيًا وَهَادِيًا إِلَى عِبَادَتِهِ نَظِيرَ مَا فَعَلَهُ مَعَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ؟ 405 لَكِنَّهُ إِنَّمَا خَصَّصَ هَذِهِ النِّعْمَةَ (أَعْنِي نَامُوسَهُ وَأَنْبِيَاءَهُ وَمُعْجَزَاتِهِ) لِهَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ وَحَدَّهَا دُونَ غَيْرِهَا، وَقَدْ كَانَتْ (كَمَا كَتَبَ عَنْهَا) أَحَقَّرَ بَاقِي الْقَبَائِلِ وَأَصْغَرَهَا وَأَفْسَاهَا لُبًّا وَقَلْبًا.

2. الْجَوَابُ عَلَى الْحُجَّةِ

406 أَمَّا عَنْ مُوسَى أَوْلًا، فَهُوَ أَنَّ مُوسَى نَفْسَهُ أَكْفَانًا فِي حَلِّ هَذَا الشَّكِّ، وَالْجَوَابُ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ فِيهِ، لِأَنَّهُ نَفَى³⁹⁴ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ هَذَا الظَّنَّ، 407 حَيْثُ سَبَقَ فَقَالَ: "نَبِيًّا آخَرَ يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ الرَّبُّ بَعْدِي، مِنْ إِخْوَتِكُمْ مِثْلِي (أَيُّ وَاضِعٍ نَامُوسٍ) فَمِنْتُمْ اسْتَمْعُوا".³⁹⁵ 408 فَهِيَ هُوَ تَفْصِيحُ كَأَنَّهُ عَارِفٌ بِنَقْصِ مَا آتَى بِهِ، وَأَنَّهُ لَا يَجُوزُ ثَبَاتُهُ دَائِمًا عَلَى خَالِهِ،

389 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. الثلاثة

390 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. علامتهم

391 س.

392 س. وأوردتم

393 ب. ح. ل. س. ف. اسخاها

394 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. أنقى

395 راجع. أعمال 3: 22؛ تفسیر 18: 15.

فَأَنْذَرَ بِذَلِكَ إِلَى مَنْ بَعْدَهُ، 409 وَالذَّلِيلُ عَلَى [ذَلِكَ] تَفْضُهُ وَسُرْعَةُ زَوَالِهِ، وَقِصْرُ مَدَّةِ زَمَانِهِ، وَصِغَرُ تَحْدِيدِ مَكَانِهِ، وَقَوْلُهُ عَدَدٌ مُسْتَعْمَلِيهِ.

[2. 1. مِثَالُ الطَّبِيبِ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ تَلْمِيذَهُ أَوَّلًا ثُمَّ يَأْتِي هُوَ بِنَفْسِهِ]

410 وَمِثَالُهُ مِثَالُ طَبِيبٍ مَاهِرٍ فِي صِنَاعَتِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ مَتَى زَامَ اسْتِفْرَاعَ أَخْلَاطِ كَثِيرَةٍ الْكَمِّيَّةِ وَرَدِيقَةَ الْكَيْفِيَّةِ، بِالمُسْهَلِ³⁹⁶ مِنَ الْمُعْتَلِي مِنْهَا، 411 فَإِنَّهُ يَتَقَدَّمُ فَيُرْسِلُ إِلَيْهِ تَلْمِيذًا مِنْ بَعْضِ تَلَامِيذِهِ أَوَّلًا، مُحْمَلًا لَهُ³⁹⁷ دُسْتُورُ الْجَمِيَّةِ، 412 فَيَأْمُرُهُ أَنْ يَسْتَعْمِلَهُ مَدَّةً مُعَيَّنَةً، إِلَى أَنْ يُلَطَّفَ بِهِ الْأَخْلَاطَ، لِيَسْرَعَ خُرُوجُهَا. 413 فَصَارَ هَذَا الدُّسْتُورُ مُوَافِقًا فِي هَذِهِ الْمُدَّةِ الْمُعَيَّنَةِ لَا غَيْرِ. 414 فَإِذَا مَا تَمَّتْ يَصِلُ هُوَ (الْأَسْتَاذُ بِنَفْسِهِ) وَمَعَهُ الدَّوَاءُ الْحَاقِظُ، الْمُنْتَقَى وَالْكَامِلُ، فَيَتَوَلَّاهُ إِثَاءً، وَيَسْتَفْرِغُهُ بِهِ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْأَخْلَاطِ الرَّدِيقَةِ الْمُجْتَمِعَةِ فِيهِ. 415 فَإِذَا مَا تَنَقَّى مِنْهَا نَقَاءً جَيِّدًا، حِينَئِذٍ يُعَيِّرُ عَلَيْهِ ذَلِكَ الدُّسْتُورَ الْأَوَّلَ، وَيُعْطِيهِ دُسْتُورًا آخَرَ غَيْرَهُ لِحِفْظِ صِحَّتِهِ، وَيَأْمُرُهُ بِاسْتِعْمَالِهِ دَائِمًا.

[2. 2. تَخْصِصُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنْ دُونِ غَيْرِهِمْ مِنَ الْأُمَمِ]

416 فَأَمَّا الْجَوَابُ الْآخِرُ عَنِ الشُّكِّ فِي جُودِ الْبَارِي وَعَدْلِهِ، وَكَيْفَ لَمْ يُسَاوِ بَاقِي الْقَبَائِلِ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ، فَتَقُولُ: 417 أَوَّلًا، لِأَنَّ آبَاءَهُمُ الْأَوَائِلَ (وَهُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمُ وَإِسْحَاقُ وَيَعْقُوبُ) عَرَفُوهُ قَبْلَ كُلِّ الْعَالَمِ، وَطَلَبُوهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ دَاعٍ دَعَاهُمْ إِلَى ذَلِكَ، 418 لَكَيْتَهُمْ، مِنْ دَوَاتِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ، عَرَفُوهُ، فَأَمَّنُوا بِهِ وَعَمَلُوا مَا يُرْضِيهِ، فَصَارُوا لَهُ شَعْبًا خَاصًّا³⁹⁸ دُونَ الْبَاقِيْنَ.

[2. 3. خَصَّصَ اللَّهُ كُلَّ قَوْمٍ بِخَصَائِصٍ مُعَيَّنَةٍ]

419 ثُمَّ بَعْدَ هَذَا نَعْمَ³⁹⁹ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى، وَأَسْبَابُهُ، وَمَوَاهِبُهُ، وَأَسْبَابُ طُرُقِهِ كَثِيرَةٌ وَخْتَلِفَةٌ. 420 لِأَنَّهُ إِنْ كَانَ خَصَّصَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ بِنَامُوسِهِ، وَأَنْبِيَائِهِ، وَمُعْجَزَاتِهِ، فَقَدْ وَهَبَ لِلْيُونَانِيِّينَ نَظِيرَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَالْفِئَةِ، كَذَلِكَ وَلِبَاقِي الْقَبَائِلِ، كُلِّ وَاحِدٍ عَلَى قَدْرِ مَا يَسْتَحِقُّهُ. 421 وَعَلَى أَنَّهُ بَعَزِيرِ رَحْمَتِهِ لَمْ يَعْغَلْ عَنْهُمْ وَيَتَرَكَّهُمْ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ دَائِمًا، لَكَيْتَهُ كَانَ مُتَبَيِّنًا دَعْوَتَهُمْ وَخِلَاصَتَهُمْ، 422 كَمَا وَعَدَ صَفِيَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، أَنْ يَجْعَلَهُ أَبَا⁴⁰⁰ لَأُمَّمٍ كَثِيرَةٍ، عَلَى الصَّفَةِ، وَفِي الْحَيْنِ، الَّذِي شَاءَ وَعَرَفَ هُوَ وَحْدَهُ.⁴⁰¹

396 ح. ناقص

397 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. محتملاً منه

398 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. خاصيا

399 ح. إنعام

400 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. اب

401 راجع، تكوين 12: 2 - 3

[2. 4. سَبَبُ تَأْخِيرِ دَعْوَةِ الْأُمَمِ]

- 423 وَسَبَبُ تَأْخِيرِ دَعْوَتِهِمْ، وَكَمَالِ وَعَدِهِ مَعَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، فَيَتَقَرَّرُ إِلَى مَعَانٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَمُخْتَلِفَةٍ، وَهِيَ:
- 424 إِلَى حِينٍ يَكْمُلُ سِرُّ التَّذْيِيرِ فِي جَمْسِدِ الْكَلِمَةِ. 425 إِلَى حِينٍ يَظْهَرُ الْحَقُّ وَتَبْطُلُ الرُّسُومُ.
- 426 إِلَى حِينٍ يَصِيرُ الصُّلْحُ وَالرِّضَى، بَيْنَ الطَّبِيعَةِ الْبَشَرِيَّةِ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ خَالِقِهَا، بِوَسَاطَةِ الْإِنِّ (الْمُجْتَمِعِ فِيهِ الطَّبِيعَتَانِ)⁴⁰² كِلْتَاهُمَا،⁴⁰³ بِغَيْرِ اخْتِلَافٍ، وَغَيْرِ افْتِرَاقٍ.
- 427 إِلَى أَنْ تَتَشَرَّفَ هَذِهِ الطَّبِيعَةُ بِاتِّحَادِهَا مَعَ لَاهُوتِهِ، اتِّحَادًا قُتُومِيًّا، وَتَتَرَاقَى مَعَهُ، وَبِهِ، فَوْقَ كُلِّ رِئَاسَةٍ وَسُلْطَانٍ، 428 وَتَجْلِسُ عَن يَمِينِ الْآبِ، وَتُعْطَى السُّلْطَانَ الْكَامِلُ، فِي السَّمَاءِ، وَفِي الْأَرْضِ، 429 وَتُجْنِي الْكُلَّ لَهَا الرَّجْبَةَ (السَّمَاوِيِّونَ، وَالْأَرْضِيِّونَ، وَالَّذِينَ تَحْتَ التَّرَى).⁴⁰⁴
- 430 إِلَى أَنْ يَصِيرَ بِذَلِكَ خَلَاصُ أَنْفُسِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، مِنَ الرَّاقِدِينَ فِي الْقُبُورِ، قَبْلَ الدُّهُورِ، 431 وَتَنْحَطُّ قُوَّةُ أَزْكَوَنِ هَذَا الْعَالَمِ، وَتَنْشَهَرُ⁴⁰⁵ بِقُوَّةِ الصَّلِيبِ،⁴⁰⁶ 432 وَيُخَسِفُ الْحَائِطُ الْأَوْسَطُ⁴⁰⁷ مِنَ السِّيَاحِ،⁴⁰⁸ وَتُعْطِينَا الْحَرَبَةُ النَّارِيَّةُ⁴⁰⁹ ظَهْرَهَا.⁴¹⁰
- 433 إِلَى أَنْ تَقْطَعَ وَتَنْحَلَّ أَغْصَانُ زَيْتُونَةِ إِسْرَائِيلَ، الطَّبِيعَةِ الدَّهَانَةِ، لِيُطْعَمَ فِي مَوْضِعِهَا وَعَوْضَهَا زَيْتُونَةُ الْأُمَمِ الْبَرِّيَّةِ، وَتَسْتَمِدَّ الدَّهَانَةَ الطَّبِيعَةَ مِنْ غُرُوقِهَا وَأَصْلِهَا.⁴¹¹ 434 إِلَى أَنْ يَعُودَ رَيْسٌ وَمُقَدَّمٌ مِنْ يَهُودًا.

[2. 4. 1. ظُهُورُ الْعَذْرَاءِ مَرِيَمَ]

- 435 وَبِالْجَمَلَةِ، إِلَى أَنْ يَجِدَ وَيَظْهَرَ الْكِتَابُ الْمَخْتُومُ،⁴¹² وَالْبَابُ الْمَعْلُوقُ،⁴¹³ وَالْإِنَائَةُ الْمُقَدَّسُ،⁴¹⁴ 436 وَالْجَبَلُ الْمُظَلَّلُ، الَّذِي مِنْهُ انْقَطَعَ حَجَرٌ بِغَيْرِ يَدٍ (الْحَجَرُ الَّذِي مِنْهُ امْتَلَأَتْ سَائِرُ الْمَسْكُونَةِ).⁴¹⁵ وَالْجَبَلُ الْمُجْبَلُ الدَّيْسِمُ.⁴¹⁶ 437 غَلْبَةُ مُوسَى الْمُشْتَعَلَةَ، مِنْ غَيْرِ اخْتِرَاقٍ،⁴¹⁷ وَ عَصَا هَارُونَ الْمُفْرَعَةَ.⁴¹⁸ مَرِيَمَ الْبُتُولَ، النَّقِيَّةَ فِي جَسْمِهَا وَوُجْهِهَا، الْمُنْعَمَ عَلَيْهَا، 438 مُوفِيَّةَ دَيْنِ حَوَاءَ⁴¹⁹ (أُمَّنَا الْأُولَى) مِنْ جَسْمِهَا الطَّاهِرِ. 439 الْمُخْتَارَةَ مِنْ قَبْلِ كُلِّ الدُّهُورِ، وَالْمُعَيَّنَةَ لِتَكْمِيلِ هَذَا السَّرِّ الْعَظِيمِ. 440 الَّتِي مِنْ دِمْهَا، مَعَ قُوَّةِ الرُّوحِ الْقُدْسِ، كَانَ عَتِيدًا تَكْوِينُ الْحَسَدِ السَّيِّدِيِّ. 441 الَّتِي لَا خَلْقَ قَطُّ، وَلَا يُخْلَقُ مِنْ زَرْعِ آدَمَ فِي

402 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. الطبيعيتين

403 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. كلتيهما

404 راجع، فيليبى 9: 2 - 10

405 س. ضعفه

406 ف. ح. ل. بالصليب

407 س. ينهدم سباح الناموس من الوسط

408 راجع، انفس 2: 14

409 س. تعطى الحرية يظهر نعمة المسيح

410 راجع، تكوين 3: 24

411 راجع رومية 11: 16 - 18.

412 راجع، رؤية 5: 1

413 راجع، حزقيال 43: 27 - 44

414 راجع، خروج 32: 34

415 راجع، دانيال 2: 31 - 36

416 راجع: اشعيا 2: 2؛ ميخا 4: 8؛ حيقوق 3: 4-3

417 راجع، خروج 3: 1 - 16

418 ح. عصاه المفرعة

419 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. حوى

الْقِدَاسَةِ، وَالطَّهَارَةَ، أَبْلَغُ مِنْهَا، وَلَا أُمَّ مِثْلَهَا.⁴²⁰

[2. 4. 2] ظُهُورُ يُوْحَنَّا الْمَعْمَدَانِ

442 وَإِلَى أَنْ يَجِدَ الصَّوْتِ الصَّارِحَ فِي الْبَرِّيَّةِ، الْمَلَائِكِ الْأَرْضِيِّ، وَالْإِنْسَانَ السَّمَاوِيِّ، الَّذِي لَمْ يَثْمُ فِي مَوَالِيدِ النِّسَاءِ (بَعْدَ الْمَسِيحِ) أَعْظَمُ مِنْهُ. 443 خَاتِمَةُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، وَمُقَدِّمُ إِبْلِيسَ الْثَّانِي، الْعَبُورَ لِلْحَقِّ، وَمُسْتَشْهِدًا مِنْ أَجْلِهِ. 444 السَّابِقِ، وَمُضَاعَفُ⁴²¹ الْكِرَارَةِ، الْمُضَاعَفَةُ⁴²² لِلْأَخْيَارِ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ. 445 الَّذِي أَعَدَّ وَاخْتَبَرَ لِلْخِدْمَةِ فِي سِرِّ الْمُعْمُودِيَّةِ. 446 وَاسْتَحَقَّ (لِأَجْلِ بِلَاعَةِ فَضِيلَتِهِ، وَشَرَفِ مَنَزَلَتِهِ) أَنْ يُظَهَرَ حُزْنَ⁴²³ كُلِّ طَهَارَةٍ، وَأَنْ يَضَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَى رَأْسِ مَنْ يَبْدُو الْبَرَانَا جَمِيعُهَا،⁴²⁴ 447 يُوْحَنَّا⁴²⁵ الْعَظِيمِ فِي الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، الْمُسْتَشْرَفَ فِي الرُّسُلِ، الْمُتَقَدِّمَ فِي الشُّهَدَاءِ، الْعَجِيبَ فِي الْأَبْرَارِ.

[2. 4. 3] ظُهُورُ الرُّسُلِ وَبِشَارَتِهِمْ لِلْمَسْكُونَةِ

448 وَإِلَى أَنْ تَظْهَرَ وَتُوْحَدَ الْآنِيَةُ الْمُخْتَارَةُ، وَالْأَخْبَارُ النَّمِينَةُ، الْمُعَدَّةُ لِتُبُولِ لَمِيعِ نُورِ الرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ الْمُعْزِيِّ، بِالْأَلْسُنِ النَّارِيَّةِ، 449 حَيْثُ الْمَسِيحِ، السَّرِيعِ عَدْيُهَا فِي الْبِشَارَةِ، وَفِرْسَانُهُ⁴²⁶ عَلَى الْحَيْلِ⁴²⁷ الْمُتَخَبِّطَةِ⁴²⁸ بِمِيَاهِ بَحْرِ الْكُفْرِ الْكَثِيرَةِ. 450 الْمُتَقَلِّبُونَ بِالنِّعْمَةِ مِنْ صَيْدِ السَّمَكِ إِلَى صَيْدِ النَّاسِ. 451 الْحَسَنَةُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ فِي بِشَارَةِ السَّلَامِ. 452 الْأَبْرَاجُ⁴³⁰ الْمُعَلَّقَةُ⁴³¹ فِي سَمَاءِ الْكَيْسَةِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ، الْإِثْنَا عَشَرَ عَدَدُهَا. 453 الْوَاصِفُونَ⁴³² مُجَدِّدِ اللَّهِ لِكَاثَةِ الْمَسْكُونَةِ. 454 النُّجُومُ الْمُسْتَنِيرَةُ⁴³³ مِنْ⁴³⁴ ضِيَاءِ شَمْسِ الْعَدْلِ. 455 الْإِثْنَا عَشَرَ تَلْمِيذًا، أَجْلَاءُ الْمَسِيحِ وَأَصْفِيَاؤُهُ، وَمُجَالِسُوهُ⁴³⁶ فِي مَجِيئِهِ الثَّانِي بِمَجْدِهِ، وَسَائِرِ مَلَائِكَتِهِ الْقَدِيسِينَ،⁴³⁷ الْمُسَاوِي عَدَدُهُمْ عَدَدَ آيَاتِهِ. 456 فَعِنْدَمَا جَحْمَعَتْ وَتَكَامَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْأُمُورُ جَمِيعُهَا مَعًا فِي زَمَانٍ وَاحِدٍ، وَهُوَ الْمُحَدَّدُ⁴³⁸ عَنْ سَابِقِ مَعْرِفَةِ اللَّهِ وَخَدُّهُ، حِينَئِذٍ حَانَتْ دَعْوَةُ الْأُمَمِ.

420 اعتقد آباء الكنيسة الشرقية بأن هذه القصص في الكتاب المقدس ترمز الى العذراء مريم ودورها في تاريخ الخلاص. وهذه التشبيهات مأخوذة من الأناشيد الطقسية

البيزنطية التي تقال في أعياد مريم العذراء.

421 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. المضعف

422 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. المضعفة

423 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. معدن

424 س. كلها

425 س. الصابغ يحنأ

426 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. فروسيته

427 س. "خلاص الخيل المحيطة مياه بحر الكفر الكثيرة"

428 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. المختبطة

429 هذا القسم ناقص من مخطوط ل.

430 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. لابرحة

431 ف. ح. المقفولة، ب. س. المقفولة. ل. ناقص

432 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. الواصفين

433 ب. ف. ح. المنيرة

434 ب. ف. ح. في

435 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. الاثني

436 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. ومجالسيه

437 س. ناقص

438 ب. ف. ح. س. المحدود

[2. 5. إِنَّ النَّصَّ فِي نَامُوسِ مُوسَى لَا يُعْنِي أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ مُرْسَلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ]

457 فَإِذَا لَوْ كَانَ الْبَارِي (جَلَّ ذِكْرُهُ) ثَبَّتَ مَا أَتَى بِهِ مُوسَى، وَتَرَكَهُ عَلَى خَالِ تَفْصِيهِ دَائِمًا، (لَا يُرَادُ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ).
 458 ثُمَّ أَيْضًا غَقَلَ بَعْدَ هَذَا عَنِ الْأُمَمِ، وَلَمْ يُرْسِلْ إِلَيْهِمْ دَاعِيًا وَهَادِيًا،⁴³⁹ فَقَدْ كَانَ بَقِيَ هَذَا الشُّكُّ عَلَى خَالِهِ،
 وَ لَا حِيلَةَ لِأَحَدٍ فِي حَلِّهِ. 459 لِأَنَّ قِيَّاسَ الْعُقُلِ الصَّائِبِ⁴⁴⁰ لَا يُوجِبُ أَنْ تُكُونَ دَعْوَةُ مُوسَى مِنَ اللَّهِ، لِجَلِّ مَا
 أَتَى بِهِ مِنَ النَّصِّ، 460 أَوْ لِجَلِّ أَنَّ الْعَلَامَتَيْنِ (الْمُقَدَّمِ ذِكْرُهُمَا) لَمْ يَكُونَا فِيهِ، 461 وَلَكِنْ مِنْ وَجْهِ اعْتِرَافِهِ هُوَ
 نَفْسُهُ بِتَفْصِيهِ، وَأَنَّ الْكَمَالَ مَعَ عَرِيهِ الْوَارِدِ بَعْدَهُ، 462 وَمِنْ وَجْهِ شَهَادَةِ الْمَسِيحِ لَهُ أَيْضًا، أَنَّهُ هُوَ أَرْسَلَهُ، أَوْجَبَ
 قِيَّاسَ الْعُقُلِ تَصْدِيقَهُ. 463 فَصَارَ الْمَسِيحُ،⁴⁴¹ عَلَى هَذِهِ الصِّفَةِ،⁴⁴² كَأَزُورٍ⁴⁴³ مُوسَى، مُحَقَّقًا عِنْدَ الْكَافَةِ دَعْوَتَهُ،
 وَمُدَّعِيًا بِخَبْرِهِ، وَمُنَادِيًا بِالتَّشْرِيفِ لِاسْمِهِ عِنْدَ سَائِرِ قَبَائِلِ الْأَرْضِ.

[2. 6. مَجِيءُ الْمَسِيحِ هُوَ الَّذِي يُعْطِي أَهْمِيَّةً لِمُوسَى]

464 لِأَنَّ قَبْلَ إِتْيَانِ الْمَسِيحِ (لِذِكْرِهِ السُّجُودِ) لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنْ سَائِرِ قَبَائِلِ الْأَرْضِ أَحَدٌ يَعْرِفُ مُوسَى. 465 حَتَّى أَنَّهُ
 وَلَا أَكْثَرَ أُمَّتِهِ (الَّذِينَ شَاهَدُوا مِنْهُ تِلْكَ الْآيَاتِ الْمُعْجَزَةِ فِي خَلَاصِهِ لَهُمْ مِنْ مِصْرَ) صَدَّقُوهُ، أَوْ عَبْدُوهُ،⁴⁴⁴ 466
 لِكِنِّهِمْ، مَعَ تَكْذِيبِهِمْ إِيَّاهُ، وَثَبُّوا عَلَيْهِ عِدَّةَ دَفْعَاتٍ لِيَرْتَجِمُوهُ.⁴⁴⁵ 467 هَذَا وَقَدْ كَانَتْ الْعُقُوبَةُ حَالَةً⁴⁴⁶ فِي حِينِهَا
 عَلَى مُعَانِدِيهِ. 468 فَأَمَّا بَعْدَ مَجِيءِ الْمَسِيحِ، صَارَتْ أَرْبَعَةُ أَقْطَارِ الدُّنْيَا، مَعَ سَائِرِ اللُّغَاتِ، تَعْتَرِفُ بِمُوسَى وَتُكْرِمُهُ،
 وَتُصَدِّقُ جَمِيعَ مَا قَالَهُ وَأَتَى بِهِ.

[2. 7. مَثَلُ الْمَلِكِ الَّذِي يَحْضُرُ بَيْنَ شَعْبِهِ بِتَوَاضِعٍ مُخْفِيًا قُوَّتَهُ وَجَبْرُوتَهُ]

469 فَصَارَ الْمَثَلُ فِي هَذَا مَثَلِ مَلِكٍ كَانَ عَظِيمًا فِي شَأْنِهِ، قُوِّيًّا فِي سُلْطَانِهِ، 470 وَقَدْ اجْتَمَعَتْ فِيهِ، مَعَ قُدْرَتِهِ
 الْمَلِكِيَّةِ، جَمِيعَ الْفَضَائِلِ الْحَسَنَةِ (الَّتِي مِنْ جُمَلَتِهَا الدَّعَةُ، مَعَ الْمِيَّاسَةِ الْوَالِيَّةِ بِكُلِّ رِئَاسَةٍ). 471 وَكَانَ قَوْمٌ مِنْ
 عِبِيدِهِ، مَعَ رَجْمٍ مِنْ جُنُودِهِ، قَدْ اجْتَمَعَتْ فِيهِمْ مِنَ الشُّرُورِ⁴⁴⁷ نَظِيرٌ مَا وَصَفْنَا مِنْ الْفَضَائِلِ فِي الْمَلِكِ الْمَذْكُورِ.⁴⁴⁸
 فَتَمَرَّدُوا عَلَيْهِ، وَعَصَوْهُ، وَخَادُوا عَنْ أَمْرِهِ وَتَعَدَّوْهُ.

439 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. مهديا

440 ب. الصليب

441 س. سيدنا

442 س. كافه

443 س. لموسى

444 س. عنوانه

445 راجع سورة 29: 39-40، عدد 10: 14.

446 ب. ف. ح. حاللة

447 س. الضدية

448 س. المقدم ذكره

[2. 7. 1. مُحاوَلَةُ الأَعْدَاءِ اسْتِمَالَةَ رَعَايَاهُ بِالْمَكْرِ وَالْخَدِيعَةِ]

472 وَلَا جُلَّ مَا كَانَ فِيهِمْ مِنَ الشَّرِّ، وَالْحُبْبِ، وَالْمَكْرِ، اسْتَمَالُوا سَائِرَ بُلْدَانِهِ، مَعَ جَمِيعِ سَكَّانِهَا مَعَ عِلْمَانِهِ، إِلَى الإِسْتِعْبَادِ لَهُمْ دُونَهُ. 473 فَصَيَّرُوهُمْ بِالْخَدِيعَةِ لَا يَخَافُونَهُ وَلَا يَعُودُونَ يُذَرُّونَهُ. 474 وَذَلِكَ كَمَا⁴⁴⁹ جَزَتْ العَادَةُ بِهَذَا القِيَاسِ فِي كَثِيرِينَ مِنَ النَّاسِ، وَهُوَ أَنَّهُمْ يَجِدُونَ عَنِ الصَّوَابِ، 475 فَتَطْمَعُونَ فِي الصَّالِحِ مِنَ الأَصْحَابِ، وَيَطْرَحُونَهُ (وَلَوْ أَنَّهُ الأَقْوَى والأَشْرَفُ) وَيَخَافُونَ الشَّرَّ مِنْهُمْ، فَيَكْرَهُونَهُ (وَلَوْ أَنَّهُ الأَخْفَرُ والأَضْعَفُ). 476 فَأَمَّا المَلِكُ (المُقَدَّمُ ذِكْرُهُ، السَّامِيُّ قَدْرُهُ) فَكَانَ⁴⁵⁰ مَا مِنْ وَجْهِ [عَدَمِ] اقْتِدَارِهِ، وَ [عَدَمِ] قُوَّتِهِ، يَعْجُزُ لِأَنْ يُعِيدَ أَناسَهُ إِلَى طَاعَتِهِ لِكِنَّةِ لِأَجْلِ عَدْلِهِ وَدَعْوَتِهِ كَانَ يَمْتَنِعُ عَنِ مِثْلِ هَذَا الفِعْلِ، بِمُقْتَضَى سُلْطَانِهِ، 477 بَلْ فَعَلَ كَمَا يَلِيْقُ بِغَزِيرِ رَحْمَتِهِ وَفَائِقِ حِكْمَتِهِ، طَوْعًا، بِالْجُودِ وَالإِحْسَانِ، لَا قَسْرًا،⁴⁵¹ بِالْجُورِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ.

[2. 7. 2. طَائِفَةٌ مِنَ الشَّارِدِينَ تَقْدِمُ لَهُ الوَلَاءَ]

478 فَتَقَدَّمَتْ إِلَيْهِ طَائِفَةٌ مِنَ هؤُلَاءِ الشَّارِدِينَ، وَاسْتَمَرَّتْ⁴⁵² لِسُلْطَانِهِ طَوْعًا دُونَ البَاقِينَ، 479 فَقبِلَهَا أَحْسَنَ قَبُولٍ، وَشَرَفَهَا بَعْدَ الحُجُومِ، وَصَارَتْ بِهِ مَعْرُوفَةً، وَبِإِنْعَامِهِ عَلَيَّهَا مَوْصُوفَةً. 480 وَدَعَا⁴⁵³ مِنْ أَشْرَافِهَا إِلَيْهِ،⁴⁵⁴ مِنْ عَوَلٍ مِنْهُمْ عَلَيْهِ، فَشَبِّدَهُ وَقَوَاهُ، بِمَا دَفَعَهُ إِلَيْهِ مِنَ الأَمْوَالِ، 481 وَأَعْطَاهُ وَزَادَهُ مِنَ التَّحْفِ المَلِكِيَّةِ مَا يُفْجِزُهُ وَجِلَّتُهُ،⁴⁵⁵ وَأَلْبَسَهُ مِنَ السَّلَاحِ⁴⁵⁶ مَا يُمَكِّنُهُ حُمْلَهُ. 482 وَجَعَلَهُ لِذَاتِهِ عَلَيْهِمْ نَائِبًا، وَعَنْهُ لَهُمْ مَخَاطِبًا، وَإِمَامًا مُقَدَّمًا، وَرَبِيسًا مُكْرَمًا. 483 وَأَوْصَاهُ جُمْلَةً مَا يَنْصَرِفُ فِيهِ مَعَهُمْ، وَيَتَكَلَّمُهُ، وَيَأْمُرُهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَابِ الطَّاعَةِ، إِلَى⁴⁵⁷ الوُقُوفِ وَالسَّاعَةِ الَّتِي فِيهَا حَدَدَ وَرُودَهُ، 484 لِيَتِمَّ فِيهِمْ، وَفِي البَاقِينَ، مَقْصُودُهُ، بِمُقْتَضَى مَا سَبَقَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ وُجُودِهِ، 485 وَهُوَ أَنْ يَمْلِكَ عِنْدَهُمْ وَيُسَاقِنَهُمْ، وَيَحْفَظَ بِقُوَّةِ سُلْطَانِهِ ثَعُورَهُمْ وَأَمَانَتَهُمْ، وَيَصْبِرُونَ لَهُ بَيْتًا خَاصًّا وَمَرْكَزًا مَلِكِيًّا، 486 وَيَسْتَنْتَمُّ فِيهِ جَيْشٌ سُلْطَانِيٌّ، إِذَا مَا أُرْسِلَ مِنْ مَكَانِهِ خَوَاصَّهُ مِنْ عِلْمَانِهِ إِلَى الشَّارِدِينَ عَنِ بُلْدَانِهِ، لِيَكُونُوا بِالعُودَةِ إِلَيْهِ فِي حِفْظِهِ وَأَمَانِهِ.

[2. 7. 3. ظُهُورُ المَلِكِ بَيْنَ رَعَايَاهُ بِتَوَاضُعِ عَظِيمٍ]

487 فَلَمَّا تَمَّ زَمَانُهُ، وَحَانَ وَفَتْ إِثْبَانُهُ، (الَّذِي كَانَ عَتِيدًا أَنْ يُظْهَرَ فِيهِ إِقْرَاطُ إِحْسَانِهِ) قَدِمَ إِلَيْهِمْ كَأَخْلَاقِهِ وَإِخْوَانِهِ، 488 لَا عَلَى مَا كَانَ يَلِيْقُ بِعَظِيمِ شَأْنِهِ، وَبِالصَّفَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ فِي ظَنِّهِمْ مِنْ قُوَّةِ سُلْطَانِهِ، 489 لَكِنْ عَلَى تِلْكَ السَّجِيَّةِ الَّتِي لَمْ تَزَلْ فِيهِ دَائِمًا طَبِيعِيَّةً، وَهِيَ مُلَامَةٌ [لَهُ]، وَفِيهِ مُسْتَوْتِيَّةٌ، نَائِبَةٌ، غَرِيزِيَّةٌ. 490 فَعِنْدَمَا عَايَنُوا مِنْهُ ذَلِكَ التَّوَاضُعَ العَرِيبَ، المُنْكَرَ العَجِيبَ، مَعَ اِحْتِمَالِهِ وَصَرِّهِ بِرُفْقِي وَدَعْوَةِ يُنَافِرِينَ عَظَمَ قَدْرِهِ، ظَلُّوا حَائِرِينَ فِي أَفْرِهِ. 491 فَاتَّفَقَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ عَلَى تَكْذِيبِهِ، وَمُقَاوَمَتِهِ، وَتَأْنِيْبِهِ، لَعَنَّا رَأَى كُلُّ مِنْهُمْ مَا يُرِيدُهُ، 492

449 ب. ح. ل. فكان، س. كذلك

450 س. لم تجزع قدرته عن أن يعيد رعيته إلى طاعته

451 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. فصرأ

452 ب. ف. ح. ل. س. أثمره

453 س. دعا واحدا

454 ف. عليه.

455 ب. ح. ل. ف. يحلي

456 ب. ح. ل. ف. السلام

457 ب. ح. ل. ف. إذا

فَسَبُّوا جَمِيعَ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ إِلَى ضَعْفٍ وَحَقَارَةٍ لِمَا كَانَ صَائِرًا⁴⁵⁸ بِاخْتِيَارِهِ. 493 وَاسْتَحْفُوهُ بِوَرَفُضُوهُ، بِافْتِرَاءٍ، وَضَرْبٍ، وَجَلْدٍ. وَمَنْ بَنِيَهُمْ صَرَفُوهُ، وَمَنْ يُصَدِّقُهُ وَيُغَلِّبُهُ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا الْجُرُءُ الْأَقْلُ (وَهُمْ)⁴⁵⁹ الْأَحْقَرُ⁴⁶⁰ مِمَّنْ فِيهِمْ، وَالْأَدْلُ، وَمِمَّنْ كَانَ مُنْحَطًّا عِنْدَهُمْ مَوْضِعُهُ، وَمَطْرُوحًا حُلَّةً وَمَوْضِعَهُ).

[2. 7. 4. الْمَلِكُ يَمْنَحُ الْجَوَائِزَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَصَدَّقُوهُ]

494 فَلَمَّا فَارَقَهُمْ عَلَى تِلْكَ السَّجِيَّةِ الْقَبِيحَةِ، الرَّدِيئَةِ، السَّمَجَةِ، الْمُرِيَّةِ، دَفَعَ جَمِيعَ مَا مَعَهُ مِنَ الْمَتَاعِ الشَّرِيفَةِ، وَالتَّخْفِ الْمُنِيفَةِ،⁴⁶¹ 495 مَعَ تِلْكَ الْحُلَلِ الْجَلِيلَةِ الْقَدْرِ، الْبَهِيَّةِ (الَّتِي صَحَبَتْهُ مِنَ الْمَخَازِنِ الْمَلِكِيَّةِ) لِمَنْ تَبِعَهُ مِنْهُمْ مُصَدِّقًا، وَلِكَلَامِهِمْ حَقًّا، وَمَوَاعِيدِهِ وَإِنْعَاءً،⁴⁶² 496 وَحَمَلَهُمْ⁴⁶³ أَيْضًا السَّلَاحَ الْمَلِكِيَّ الشَّرِيفَ، الْمُرْهَبَ، الْمُخَيِّفَ (وَهُوَ الَّذِي لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَحَدٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ مُحَارَبَةَ حَامِلِهِ، أَوْ التَّحَرُّشَ بِمَنْ كَانَ عِزُّهُ شَامِلَهُ).

[2. 7. 5. الْمَلِكُ يُرْسِلُ الْعُلَمَاءَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ إِلَى الْبُلْدَانِ الْمَارِدَةِ]

497 وَيَمِيلُ⁴⁶⁴ هَذَا زَوْدَهُمْ، وَقَوَاهِمَ، وَشَيْدَهُمْ، وَأَطْلَقَهُمْ، وَسَرَّحَهُمْ، مُوجِّهًا لَهُمْ إِلَى تِلْكَ الْمُدُنِ الْمَارِدَةِ (الَّتِي عَنْ الطَّاعَةِ الْمَلِكِيَّةِ حَائِدَةٌ). 498 وَأَوْصَاهُمْ أَنْ يَدْعُوا سُكَّانَهَا إِلَى عَدْلِهِ، وَجُودِهِ، وَفَضْلِهِ، وَأَنْ يُكْمَلُوا فِيهِمْ مَقْصُودُهُ، وَمَا يَنْبَغِيهِ وَيُرِيدُهُ. 499 وَبَعْدَ أَنْ يَبْدُلُوا لَهُمْ مَا مَعَهُمْ مِنَ الْمَتَاعِ⁴⁶⁵ (الَّتِي تُحَوِّزُ جَمِيعَ الصِّفَاتِ الْكَثِيرَةِ النَّضْعِ، الْفَاضِلَةِ، الزَّائِدَةِ، الْعَظِيمَةِ الْفَائِدَةِ). 500 وَحَتَّى يَصِيرَ⁴⁶⁶ اسْتِرْجَاعُهُمْ إِلَى طَاعَتِهِ اخْتِيَارًا، لَا تَعَادِيًا. وَذَلِكَ فِيمُفْتَضَى مَا تَقَدَّمَ بِهِ قَبْلَ وَقَرَضَهُ، وَكَانَ فِيهِ عَرَضُهُ.

501 ثُمَّ قَوَى بَعْدَ هَذَا مَعَهُمُ الْمَوَائِيقَ، بِأَنْ يَصِيرَ مَعَهُمْ وَلَهُمْ كَالْأَبِ الشَّفُوقِ،⁴⁶⁷ وَأَنْ تَصْصِبَهُمْ مَعُونَتُهُ دَائِمًا كَالرَّفِيقِ. 502 وَأَنَّهُ لَا يَبْرَأُ أَبَدًا لَهُمْ مُسَاعِدًا، وَمُقَوِّيًا، وَمُعْضِدًا، وَإِلَى كُلِّ نَجَاحٍ هَادِيًا وَمُرْتَبِدًا.

[2. 7. 6. الْمَلِكُ يَعُودُ إِلَى مَقَرِّهِ]

503 فَلَمَّا وَجَّهَهُمْ⁴⁶⁸ فِي هَذِهِ الْخِدْمَةِ، وَهُوَ سَاحِطٌ عَلَى تِلْكَ الْأُمَّةِ (الَّتِي لَمْ تَقْبَلْ مِنْ كَلَامِهِ حَتَّى وَلَا كَلِمَةً، 504 بَلْ إِنَّمَا اتَّفَقَتْ عَلَى سَبِّهِ⁴⁶⁹ وَذَمِّهِ، وَقَابَلَتْهُ عَمَّا سَبَقَ مِنْهُ إِلَيْهَا مِنَ الْإِحْسَانِ وَالتَّعَمُّعِ بِاسْتِحْلَالِهَا دَمَهُ). 505 ثُمَّ إِنَّهُ عَادَ إِلَى مُسْتَقَرِّهِ سَالِمًا، وَعَمَّا أَصَابَهُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْمَسَاوِي بِالْحَقِّ عَلَيْهِمْ حَاكِمًا، وَلِلْبَاقِينَ بِرِجَائِهِ الْمُسْتَأْنَفِ فِيهِمْ عَامًّا.

458 س. لأجل ما تجشمه

459 ب. ح. ل. ف.

460 ب. ح. ل. ف. فالأحقر

461 س. دفع جميع ما أتى معه من الأمتعة الظرفية والتحف الشريفة

462 ب. ح. ل. ف. موثقًا، س. متفقًا

463 س. دحجهم

464 ب. ح. ل. ف. فلما أن تحيل

465 س. المناعات

466 س. ليكون

467 ب. ح. ل. ف. الشفوق

468 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. وجهه لهم

469 س. شتمه

[2. 7. 7. العبيد المؤمنون يتوجهون إلى البلدان الماردة لاستعادة سلطة الملك]

506 وأما هؤلاء [فقد] توجهوا إلى حيث أمرهم، إلى تلك البلدان التي إليها سيرهم، بعد أن اقتسموها بينهم، واسترحفوا أهلها مع سلاطينها ومواليها.⁴⁷⁰ 507 ونالوا لهم أحسن الثواب، بما بذلوه لهم في الحاضر من تلك الأموال، 508 وبما وعدوهم به في المستقبل من تلك المواهب، والتشريف لهم بمدينة ملكه بأعلى المراتب، وحملوهم ذلك السلاح المزهب المضيف. 509 فاتفق بعد هذا جماعة هؤلاء على تلك المدينة (الطاعة أولاً في الإبداء، وعاصية في الانتهاء) فاستأصلوا قوتها وسبوتهم، وإلى الأبعد منهم أفضوهم، 510 فصار الأولون⁴⁷¹ آخرين، والآخرين أوليين.

[2. 7. 8. التفسير لهذا المثل]

511 أما الملك فهو سيدنا المسيح، الملك السماوي (له التسيب والتمجيد). 512 وأما المتمردون⁴⁷² عليه من جنوده فهم الشياطين، والحادثون⁴⁷³ عن طاعته من قبائل الأمم. 513 والشعب الطائع له قتل والباقيين هم بنو إسرائيل. 514 والمرتب عليهم مقدماً هو موسى أولاً، ثم من رأسهم بعده من القضاة والملوك والكهنة. 515 والقوة التي كانت معه من الملك، هي الأعاجيب الصائرة على يده، وبعدة من النبوات وغيرها. 516 والسلاح الذي دفعه إليه هو التاموس العتيق. 517 ووژود الملك إليهم بعده (في ذلك التواضع) فهو يحيى سيدنا، وظهوره في العالم في صورة عبيد، بتلك الحفارة المعجزة.

518 وأما تكديبهم له عندما عاينوه في تلك الصورة، مع افتراءهم عليه، وطردهم إياه بعد الجلد المؤلم، فهو ما احتمله سيدنا من اليهود من آلامه المقدسة، وعند موته على الصليب. 519 والذين صدقوه، وتبعوه منهم، فهم الائمة عشر تليداً أولاً، ثم ومن آمن بعدهم معهم. 520 وأما الخلل⁴⁷⁵ والمواهب الملكية الثمينة (التي زودهم بها) فهي القوة على عمل المعجزات، والكلام بسائر الألسن واللغات والنبوة، وغير ذلك من مواهب الروح القدس. 521 وأما عودده الملك إلى مستقره فهو طلوع سيدنا وجلوسه عن يمين الأب. 522 وأما توجيهه لمن صدقه وتبعه، وإرساله إليهم إلى باقي المدن العاصية، فهو إرسال سيدنا يسوع المسيح لتلاميذه الرسل⁴⁷⁶ بعد قيامته إلى سائر الأمم، 523 ودعوتهم لهم إلى طاعته، وبذلهم⁴⁷⁷ لهم بما معهم من الحاضر، ووعدهم لهم بالمستأنف من الكرامة والتشريف في قصوره.

524 فأما الذي صار للمؤمنين في ذلك الحين من مواهب الروح القدس (من عمل المعجزات وغيرها) فهو غروب ليعا سوف يتألمونه⁴⁷⁸ في ملكوت السماء من التشريف الحق والتعظيم الأبدي. 525 وأما السلاح الأعظم، الملكي، المضيف، فهو التاموس الإلهي، المحتوي على الوصايا الإجمالية (التي لا يطبق عدو خلاصنا على محاربة المتصرفين بها والمكملين لها).

526 فأما عودده الشارين إلى الطاعة فهو أمانة الأمم. 527 وأما اتفائهم على أهل تلك المدينة فهو استيلاء

470 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. موابها

471 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. الأولين

472 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. المتمردين

473 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. الحالدين

474 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. بني

475 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. الخلع

476 س. رسله القديسين

477 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. إيداهم

478 ب. ح. ل. ف. س. يناله

سَيْفِ النَّصَارَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الْآنَ عَلَى مَدِينَةِ الْقُدْسِ، وَطَرَدَهُمُ الْيَهُودَ مِنْهَا وَمِنْ تَحْوِمِهَا (السَّالِفِينَ مِنْهُمْ وَالْبَاقِينَ إِلَى عَصْرِنَا هَذَا). 528 بَعْدَ تِلْكَ الْمَصَائِبِ الَّتِي لَا تُوصَفُ، الَّتِي حَلَّتْ⁴⁷⁹ عَلَيْهِمْ وَعَلَى أَسْلَافِهِمْ قَبْلَ هَذَا، مِنْ الرُّومِ فِي مَلِكِ⁴⁸⁰ فَاسْتَبَاسِيَانُوسَ⁴⁸¹ وَأَبِيهِ تَيْتُسَ،⁴⁸² 529 وَذَلِكَ بَعْدَ صُغُودِ سَيِّدِنَا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ بِأَرْبَعِينَ⁴⁸³ سَنَةً، حَسَبَ⁴⁸⁴ مَا نَطَّلَقُ بِهِ وَسَطْرَهُ الْمُصَنَّفُ الْعِبْرَانِيُّ يُوْسَيْبُسَ.⁴⁸⁵ 530 (486 فَصَارَ الْآخِرُونَ،⁴⁸⁷ وَالْبَعِيدُونَ مِنْ قَبْلُ، أَوْلِيَيْنَ⁴⁸⁸ وَقَرِيبِينَ مِنْ بَعْضٍ، وَهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ مِنَ الْأُمَّمِ) 531 حَسَبَ مَا يَذْكُرُ سَيِّدُنَا فِي إِجْبَالِهِ الْمُقَدَّسِ،⁴⁸⁹ وَبُولُسُ السَّعِيدُ فِي رَسَائِلِهِ. وَأَمَّا الْيَهُودُ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ فَبِالضَّدِّ.

532 وَتَحْتِ تَعَدُّمِ الْمَجْدِ، وَالشُّكْرِ، وَالْعُظْمَةِ، وَالْقُدْرَةِ، لِأَبِ وَالْإِبْنِ وَالرُّوحِ الْقُدْسِ، مِنَ الْآنَ وَإِلَى كُلِّ أَوَانٍ، وَإِلَى دَهْرِ الدَّاهِرِينَ. آمِينَ.

479 س. الحالة عليهم الآن

480 س. مملكته

481 س. اسباسيانوس. ب. ح. ل. ف. سافستيانوس

482 ب. ح. ل. بنطس. س. تيطس. تيتوس فيلافيوس فاسباسيانوس، المعروف بانجاز تيتوس. كان الإمبراطور الروماني الذي ساد من 69 – 81 ميلادية. هو ثاني إمبراطور من السلالة الفلافياية والتي حكمت الإمبراطورية الرومانية بين 69 – 96 وهي تشمل والد تيتوس فاسباسيان (69 – 79) وتيتوس نفسه.

www.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/titus.

483 س. بسبعين

484 ب. ح. ف. ل. س. حيث

485 هنا إشارة إلى خراب أورشليم على يد الإمبراطور تيتس سنة 70 للميلاد

486 س. وصاروا آخرين وبعيدين وصاروا المؤمنون من الأمم بعددهم أولين قريبين

487 ب. ح. ل. ف. الآخرون

488 ح. أولون

489 متى 20: 16، مرقس 10: 31

English Translation

Part 5 of Gerasimus's *Apology*: Defending the Christian Faith and Answering the Objections of its Resisters

1 The First Objection: Regarding the spread of the Christian faith throughout the world

1.1 Statement of the Objection

2 The [objectors'] statement is this: "We are not satisfied with what you have said to prove your religion. You say that the preaching [of the Christian faith] is spread throughout the world; 3 the name of Christ is honored by all the tribes of the earth everywhere; pagan temples are replaced by the temples of the saints; 4 and the former persecution and humiliation (that was inflicted on believers in Christ) has been inverted to power and honor. 5 However, what we see is the opposite, for in our current time nonbelievers in Christ are more numerous than believers in Him.

[1.1.1 Has God overlooked the rest of the nations?]

6 Moreover, if the matter is as you say (and with this you conclude that Christians are right), then it is evident that Ḥanīfs⁴⁹⁰ were just as right as you are; rather more than you, 7 because the whole world was in darkness and oppression before Christ for more than five thousand years. 8 There was no one in the world who knew God and worshiped Him truly, except the children of Israel alone, and they were the most humble and the smallest nation in the world. 9 Moreover, [we wonder] how did God ignore his servants which are the rest of the countless nations.

[1.1.2 Christian temples are degraded and trampled on]

10 Regarding your honor and that of your temples and the ascendance of your sultans, what we see is contrary to what you say. 11 Your temples, in many places, are ruined and humbled, and the instruments of your priestly rituals, with your crosses and the rest of what you honor, and what is needed in your worship, are trampled on and insulted. 12 Your sultans, with their armies, have often been defeated. 13 Most

490 See the comments on this word in Chapter 4.

of the influence and [rule of] countries, which you had in your hands, have been transferred to others, and in most places, you are cast out from [these countries]. 14 You are humiliated and under the Covenant of Protection;⁴⁹¹ you pay taxes to your Muslim enemies who have overtaken you. 15 You are downcast or below, and they are above you up. 16 No miracle is being manifested in your midst, and no power can save you from the oppression that surrounds you. 17 Therefore, from this viewpoint, your religion is not the religion of truth; otherwise (as we mentioned before) the Ḥanīf's religion would have been true in the past, and the Muslim religion would now be the religion of truth.

1.2 Answers to this Objection

18 Regarding the Christian religion, it is not the least among the tribes of the world. 19 As to the reason why miracles are not manifested (as they were before), we already answered this in prior sections, and there is no need to add more to what we already said in refuting this [objection].⁴⁹²

[1.2.1 Ḥanīfs do not agree among themselves, but all Christians agree regarding the foundations of their faith]

20 The objection [states] that God (be He exalted!) overlooked the world for a long period of time, and thus [the world] remained in error; therefore, it is more adequate, from that point of view, [to say] that Ḥanīfs also have the truth. [The response] is as follows: 21 The characteristics of Ḥanīfs at that time were dissimilar to the characteristics of Christians in our time. The erroneous doctrines of the Ḥanīfs are not presented as a unified message [without any contradiction]; their error is not according to one method and not according to one form. 22 The differences [in the religions of Ḥanīfs] are many and diverse, not only in the matter of the gods they worshiped, but also in their laws and promises of rewards. 23 No student agrees with another student, or with his master, in even one of [these points]. No teacher agrees with his student, or with another teacher [in any of these matters].

24 In regard to the doctrine of the Children of Baptism, although in our current time there are some differences [of opinions among them] in the area of the mystery of salvation, in the articles [of religion] (the God who is worshipped, law, and rewards, these are the foundations of religion) they all agree on [the foundations of faith] 25 because they are the children of one baptism; they follow the preaching of one Gospel,

⁴⁹¹ He uses the word *ḍimmaḥ*.

⁴⁹² Gerasimus answers this question in Part 3 of his Apology, discussed here in Chapter 4.

and they all look for One Hope. 26 They all walk in one rightly guided and royal way, while all others are following many dark counsels.

[1.2.2 God did not overlook the nations but died for them and saved them]

27 In response to [the accusation that] God disregarded [the nations] and let them perish in error, we say: 28 God (the Precious and the Honorable!) did not disregard them, as you assume. 29 How would He do that while He is their Creator (praise be to Him!), the Generous, the Compassionate, the Father of all, the God of all might and mercy, the Just Judge, who desires the salvation not only of some nations to the exclusion of others, but of all nations equally? 30 He did not neglect them, but preached to them, through His Holy Soul, when it was separated from His venerable Body on the Cross, and descended into the farthest depths of Hell. 31 There too, He manifested the power of His Divinity and wrought salvation to the souls of the believing saints who had fallen asleep in previous times, as He did on earth for those who were still alive.⁴⁹³ 32 Thus, whoever believed in His preaching [there in Hell] was saved from the judgment of unbelief. 33 This fulfills what the apostle said: “Every knee shall bow, the heavenly and earthly, and those under the earth.”⁴⁹⁴

[1.2.3 Muslim ascendance over Christians as a means of chastisement]

34 As to the reason for the ascendance of the nation of Mohammad (I mean the Muslims) over the children of the Holy Baptism, and their oppressiveness toward them, it is because [the Christians] strayed from keeping the divine and life-giving commandments (that have in them what sustains the health of their souls) and inclined toward sin (that sickens their souls and destroys them). 35 When their spirits got sick and approached destruction, God (the Almighty!) did not overlook them, lest they perish, but hastened to provide a remedy for them with medicine that He formulated according to His supreme wisdom. His purpose was to restore their health. 36 If He did not do so, He could not be called the compassionate Father. For which son is not disciplined by his father? And if [the son] becomes ill, [the father] cures him. 37 As Solomon said: “For whom the Lord loves He corrects, and He flogs a son who

493 Cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

494 Philippians 2:10.

accepts Him.”⁴⁹⁵ 38 And Paul says: “But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.”⁴⁹⁶

39 Moreover, there are many kinds of punishment. (I mean the punishments of the Lord are many and different, such as locusts, lice, snakes, rats, savage beasts, and others similar to this.) 40 The sword of Islam and its authority over the Children of Baptism is but one form of these punishments, 41 similar to the chastisement of [the Lord] in the past when the children of Israel deviated from the commandments of His laws.

[1.2.4 The parable of the faithful servant who offers a gift to his master]

42 Thus, it is to our benefit that He overlooks the destruction of His holy temples and the humiliation of their honored and holy instruments, 43 because He has no need for our worship and priestly rituals, and [has no need] for whatever honor and exaltation reaches Him from us. All this is rubbish for Him when we stray from His commands and anger Him with our deeds.

44 It is like a sultan who has plentiful riches. His stores are full of money, splendid clothes, valuable gems and other precious materials. 45 When one of his servants offers him a gift (even if it is the cheapest and lowest item), if he is satisfied with his servant, it will please [the king] and he will honor and exalt the gift (just to honor [the servant], not because he desires [the gift]). 46 But if he is angry with [the servant], [the king] will throw the gift out and will not pay attention to it, for he does not need it.

[1.2.5 God glorifies whoever glorifies Him and disgraces whoever lets go of Him]

47 He (the Almighty and Honorable!) said, “I honor whoever honors me, I disgrace whoever disgraces me, and I reject whoever rejects me.”⁴⁹⁷ 48 As for us, our goal in this treatise is to reveal the honor of the religion of Christians (the Children of Baptism) and its truthfulness in [and of] itself, not based on our own conduct. 49 For if any fault or defect is revealed in any profession, it is from the sin and the misconduct of its practitioners.

⁴⁹⁵ Proverbs 3:12 “For whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights” (NKJ).

⁴⁹⁶ Hebrews 12:8.

⁴⁹⁷ Cf. 1 Samuel 2:30.

[1.2.6 Our hope is not in this world]

50 In addition to this, our hope in this world (we, the Children of Baptism) is not in any desirable thing of this world, because it is vanity and everything in the world is fleeting. 51 As Solomon said: “all is vanity and redundant.”⁴⁹⁸ 52 And as Paul also said: “If for this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.”⁴⁹⁹ 53 Therefore, our hope (as our Lord promised us) is in the renewed world, where eternal glory and bliss does not decay and does not vanish. 54 For as Paul said, what is here is “temporary,” and what is there is “eternal.”⁵⁰⁰

498 Cf. Ecclesiastes 1:14.

499 1 Corinthians 15:19.

500 Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:53.

2 The Second Objection: Regarding the mysteries of the Holy Trinity and the divinity of Christ

2.1 Statement of the Objection

55 The objection is this: how dare you, oh community of Christians, attribute to God a son! Then you say He has three faces (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). 56 Therefore, it is necessary, given this belief, to say that you worship three gods. 57 Furthermore, you are not content with such audaciousness against the One and Exalted God, but you insist and believe that Jesus (your worshiped God) was indeed crucified, that he died and was buried! 58 And after you describe Him with all kinds of characteristics that describe created man (as one of the children of Adam!) you turn and make him a god and worship him.

2.2 The Answers to this Objection

59 We were already convinced in this inquiry, by what we clarified and by what our minds could grasp about the knowledge of God, by the example of the sun and [the example of] the human mind that God is threefold (a cause and two effects). 60 God (be He exalted!), His Word and His Spirit are Father, Son and Holy Spirit.⁵⁰¹

[2.2.1 The birth of Christ must be honored by silence]

61 As for the eternal birth of our Lord Jesus Christ (the eternal Son) from His Father before the ages, it is appropriate (as the fathers of our church mentioned) to honor it with silence, 62 for since there was no observer present, nor anyone who is advanced in years to be an intermediary 63 how then could the mind imagine it? Or how do our tongues handle it? There is no ability to understand it, or to talk about its form, other than to say: 64 “He was a Father, and a Son was begotten from Him,” either like a ray from the sun, or like a word from the mind, or another similar analogy.

[2.2.2 The differences between human expressions and the reality of the Trinity]

65 Nevertheless, in order not to suppose that He is similar to a mere human word which is ephemeral and has no existence in [and of] itself, (for, to “become” it needs

⁵⁰¹ Gerasimus explains this in the first part of the apology.

bodily organs such as tongue, wind pipes, and so forth), He was called “Son.”⁵⁰² 66 Furthermore, in order not to suppose filiation similar to what we have, and what our nature needs, namely, that the father precedes the son in time through a normal human birth process, He was called “the bright glory of the Father.”⁵⁰³ 67 And in order not to suppose that His attributes are different from the Father and dissimilar to the [Father], (as we see the difference among us humans), He was called, “the form of His person.”⁵⁰⁴ 68 And in order not to suppose Him as from a different substance, other than His own substance, He was called “His arm.”⁵⁰⁵ 69 He is also called, from a different perspective, “His power and His wisdom.”⁵⁰⁶

70 Moreover, added to this, when we consider man’s virtues (that were bestowed on him by his Creator when He created him in His likeness and image), 71 we realize that the most honored and most noble [creature] has made the lower [creature], and in its entirety has generated his own nature [in creation]; the analogy of the mind portrayed the Creator in a similar way. 72 When we look at God we are in error if we compare the birth of a human [that the most noble gives birth to the lower] to the birth of God. 73 [Comparing] the birth of God (that surpasses all imagination, time and nature, and is above every form and material) and the birth of man (temporary, transitory, and bodily) is similar to [comparing] the shadow of a picture (that is in a mirror) with a real picture that corresponds to reality. More than this, no analogy can contain [the reality].

[2.2.3 Christians do not worship three gods]

74 The answer to their saying that we worship three gods is this: 75 We, the community of Christians, do not believe this at all, and we do not imagine, as they think we do, that the three Persons (that are the Persons of the Holy Trinity) are separate, as [human] individuals are from each other. 76 For if we were all gathered under one mind, we would share one substance, and one form would prevail over all of us, 77 but we are different in many things (I mean, time, place, determined will, and other characteristics that are parting and dividing us are different from person to person. They can be found in one individual, but can never be shared with another one). 78 It is to the point that these differences are not only present among us, but every person, from time to time, also experiences transformation, change, and fluctuation, from one state of mind to another. 79 Regarding the Creator of all, although He consists

502 Hebrews 1:5; Psalm 2:7.

503 Hebrews 1:3.

504 Cf. Colossians 1:15; Hebrew 1: 3; 2 Corinthian 4: 4.

505 Psalm 79:1; Luke 1:51.

506 Colossians 2:3; 1 Corinthians 1:24.

of three persons, the difference is only in the “personified forms and attributes,” [that is to say], each person [of the Trinity] has special attributes that distinguish and differentiate Him from the other persons; however, the agreement between [the persons of the Trinity] are many 80 because He is one God with one substance, one nature, one honor, and one eternity. ([These characteristics] are not uniform among us humans. Every one of us has a different nature.) 81 The totality of every one of the three is in the totality of the other two, yet He is fully God; and the three are one God, 82 and every one of the three is Himself the other two, except in the personal attributes (mentioned above). Through [these attributes] only, not by any other, [the human] mind distinguishes the one from the other.

83 It is like three lamps, or three lights, lit in one house, and every one of them fills the house with its light. It would not be possible for anyone to differentiate the light of the one from the others and say, “I saw three lights in the house.” Rather [the person would say] “I saw light.” 84 Or, if a man hears three persons chanting one Psalm, it would not be possible to say, “I listened to three Psalms.” He would have to say, “I heard one Psalm, chanted by three persons.” 85 Likewise, if we say, “we worship three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and each one of the three is fully God,” it would not compel us to say “we worship three gods,” but we would say, “[we worship] one God.”

[2.2.4 The reason Christians honor the passion of Christ]

86 In regard to the passion of our Lord and Savior, we not only do not despise it, but we affirm it about Him and confess that through it our salvation was wrought. 87 We, therefore, proclaim it, honor it, and declare it, not only by words, but also by deeds. 88 We display it in the Holy Church, on the roads, and in most places (I mean His crucifixion and passion) that we may remember it and be proud of it. 89 Our purpose in this is to announce the favor of our Lord upon us, His level of grace regarding our salvation.

90 It is similar to a servant who fell into the harshness of captivity to the point of almost perishing. He was in iron chains and in the most oppressive prison. 91 His master seized the opportunity to redeem him [at the cost of] himself, so [the master] endured the hardship that the servant would have had to endure. 92 [The master] put on the servant’s filthy garment and the chains of captivity on his feet, and, in this way, saved [the servant] from that harshness and from total destruction. 93 The servant, after his liberation, and because of the favor of his master, continued to walk around with chains and with the filthy cloth of captivity, 94 proclaiming to everyone the favor and goodness of his master toward him.

95 These are the holy passions. According to wisdom, analogies, and the human mind, they are indeed an odd atrocity that surpasses all likelihood, 96 as the Apostle Paul said, “Speaking about the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but

to those who are saved it is the power of God. 97 For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise men, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.' 98 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the deep examiner of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 99 For since, in the wisdom of this world, the world through wisdom did not know God; it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who did not believe"⁵⁰⁷ 100 Furthermore, he said: "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than the [wisdom] of men and the weakness of God is stronger than men."⁵⁰⁸ 101 And he said again: "When I came to you, I did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God, 102 for I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."⁵⁰⁹ 103 He also said: "I should not boast except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁵¹⁰

[2.2.5 Why humble terms are used to describe Christ]

104 In regard to the humble terms that are used to describe Jesus, that depict Him as inferior to His Father, why are they found in the Holy Gospel and in the rest of the holy books of the church? The answer is that these terms must be said about Him. 105 He is fully God, equal to His Father in the divine nature; yet, He is also fully man, equal to His mother, and us, in human nature. 106 Everything that is said to honor the divine nature is said about Him, and every humbling term that is used [to describe his] human nature is also said about Him.

107 This is similar to a child that is fathered by a king and born of a maid. If the child says: "I am a slave, son of a maid," he tells the truth. And if he says: "I am a king, son of a king," he also tells the truth.

[2.2.6 The reason for God's condescendence]

108 The reason for His condescendence to the point of being equal to us is that we may become equal to Him, and follow His steps. 109 For it is impossible for a pedestrian to reach a horseman, follow his steps, and become equal to him if the horseman does not dismount his horse and walk with the pedestrian. 110 And nobody can teach another to swim if he is in a boat; he needs to take off his clothes and dive into the water with [the other person]. 111 For this and similar reasons, it was necessary that

507 1 Corinthians 1:18-21.

508 1 Corinthians 1:25.

509 1 Corinthians 2:1-2.

510 Galatians 6:14.

the Lord of all (according to the law of the economy of our salvation, and out of His favor and goodness) would condescend from His exalted glory to the point of being equal to us. 112 [He did this] to communicate with the human body by a human body, and to teach us divine conduct through a human body taken from our physical nature. 113 If He did not do this, we would not have benefited from his teachings and deeds. 114 It is also similar to a mute and deaf person who cannot understand one word of a speaker's speech. The speaker needs to stop speaking and become equal to the mute and deaf, communicating to him the same way the mute speaks, which is by using his hands and fingers.

[2.2.7 The Incarnation of God and His suffering does not harm the divine nature]

115 The example of the union [with a human body] and the suffering of the Word of God in His human body without harming the divine nature parallels the example of the sun and the man (which we already mentioned).

[2.2.7.1 The example of the Sun]

116 If the light of the sun, which is compared to the Word, encountered a piece of glass, the light would penetrate and fill the glass; yet, at the same time, the light would not be separated from the disk that it emerged from. 117 If someone purposes to step on the glass, or to hammer it, to break it, 118 the glass would be stepped on, smashed, and broken, but none of these acts of violence would offend the light. 119 Likewise, the Eternal Word of God was united with a human body and with a speaking soul. 120 God filled it with His divinity, divinizing it. When the time was fulfilled, He suffered in the body and died, separating the soul from it. 121 Like [the light,] the substance of divinity in the body was not harmed at all.

[2.2.7.2 The example of the written word]

122 It is also similar to a word, which when generated from the mind is by its nature (as we mentioned before) naked, not [clothed] with a body, 123 but when it is written in a book, it becomes incarnate. Yet, it is not separated from the mind that it emerged from, nor transformed or changed. 124 It is in its entirety in the mind, undivided, [but it emerges from it] announcing and proclaiming the secrets of the mind with a spirit that is not separated from it. 125 If someone intended to step on the sheet of paper [that the word is written on] or spit on it, or tear it up, 126 despite the fact that these actions are [directed] toward the word, they would be ascribed only to the sheet of

paper and ink. 127 The actions would not reach, or enter, the word and its nature at all.

128 In a similar way, the Word of God, the eternal Son, emerged from His Father as He willed and came down to the world; yet, [the Son] was not separate from [the Father]. 129 [The Son] was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, became flesh with a speaking soul, and dwelled among us without any change in His nature. 130 His divinity, in its totality, appeared to us (though He was limited and confined by what [He] took from [our] human nature, He was nevertheless present everywhere), 131 announcing to us the intentions of the Father concerning our salvation. He suffered in the human body, yet no pain or death reached, or entered, the divine substance at all.

3 The Third Objection: Regarding God not preventing Satan's deception and Adam's fall

3.1 Statement of the Objection

132 The form [of the objection] is as follows: Since God (the Precious and Honorable!) foreknew that Adam would fall, why did He create him? 133 In addition, why did He not repel the deception of Satan, rather than abandon Adam and allow him to obey and follow [Satan]? 134 And when, after the Fall, calamities came upon [Adam], why did He not hasten to save him at that time, before [his] transgressions became great and increased in him?

3.2 The Answers to this Objection

135 God (the Blessed and the Exalted!) created our first father out of His goodness. From nothing He brought him into existence, 136 and because He created him in His likeness and image, He favored him over all His creations in the sensory world. 137 He appointed him king and leader over what was in [the world] because [God] created him in His likeness and image. 138 One of the characteristics of this image is freedom: I mean self-control. 139 After [God created man in His image,] He gave [man] a command which became a provision for Adam's free action. 140 He showed him two paths, life and death; if he were to choose life, by obedience, favor would befall him (not without the One who bestowed and caused it for him). 141 And if he were to choose death, through disobedience, the blame would be his for he would have misused the gift (I mean the enabling power) and chosen for himself death instead of life.

142 If for this reason [that is the ability of Adams to choose death] God had not created him, Adam's misconduct (that would be, and that was foreknown to God) would have defeated the purpose of God in creating him, and would have impeded His goodness toward Adam and disabled it. 143 By my life! From this perspective, the resisters' objection to the Creator's work could extend to many other things as well, such as: "If God (be He exalted!) foreknew that iron would be used for killing, why then did He create it?" 144 The same thing [could be said] about wine for drunkenness, or about the member of procreation for adultery, or about the tongue for lying and cursing, and other similar [arguments].

[3.2.1 Not to rob man of his freedom]

145 The reason God allowed [Adam] to fall is that if He would have coerced him to obey the command, He would have robbed him of the enabling power that He favored and

honored [Adam] with. 146 Along this line, one could say, fabricating lies against the Creator, “He bestows His favors generously, and then He gets them back (meagerly and indignantly) from the one whom He favored.” The gifts of God (be He exalted!) are never taken back. 147 For this reason, God allowed [Adam], once and forever, to conduct himself as he wished, according to the freedom that He favored him with. [God] never took [the gift of freedom] back from [Adam].

[3.2.2 That man may know the value of God’s grace and mercy]

148 [Moreover, God] knew, and was certain, about [man’s] salvation in its time. 149 Even if [man] fell from grace and he frequently experienced calamities, God would have mercy on him and would save him [from the calamities] through His saving economy.

150 In this way, [man] would know the measure and the harm of disobedience and the benefits of obedience, and would return the blame to himself. 151 [Man would also experience] the degree of goodness and mercy of his Creator toward him, for when sin increases and worsens, grace and mercy also increase.⁵¹¹ 152 Furthermore, man will appreciate and be more conscious of the grace that was before the fall, for the opposite is more powerful and more desirable when its opposite is revealed. 153 Then, when he returns to [grace], he will enjoy it more than he did before experiencing the misery [of sin] which was brought on him by disobedience. Any pleasure is not considered so if it is not preceded by misery and vice versa. 154 The proof of this is the pleasure [given] by food after hunger, drink after thirst, health after sickness, freedom after slavery, and other similar comparisons. 155 For what pleasure is in any of what we have already described if it is not preceded by its opposite? 156 In addition to what we mentioned, [God] allows calamities to increase until man reaches his limit; then the mercy that was given to [man] will increase and be evident, greater than ever.

157 It is similar to what skillful physicians do; they do not begin to empty a malicious mixture until it is totally poured out and its maturity is completed. 158 Also, the surgeon does not treat a wound, while it is in its beginning stage and its purulence is still a hole, but [waits] until its maturity is evident.⁵¹²

511 Cf. Romans 5:20.

512 The reference here is to medieval medical practices based on the “balancing the humors”, since proven to actually do more harm than good. A more contemporary example of the point Gerasimus is trying to make might be, “One must not try to pop a pimple before it has come to a head.”

[3.2.3 The parable of a good physician and his beloved apprentice]

159 The parable [showing God’s grace and mercy] is that of a good physician who owned a store that contains all kinds of medicines, creams, drinks, and all that he needed for his profession. 160 He had an apprentice who was like a son to him. [The apprentice] was so dear and beloved that no love was equal to the love his master had for him. 161 [The physician], out of his great love, appointed him as the owner of his store and all that was in it, but he cautioned him not to use a certain cream, which kept among the medicines there, because he had assembled it for the cold-natured and elderly. 162 Out of his great caution, he showed him the clay pot where the cream was, warning and affirming that the cream was not appropriate for a young man (like the apprentice), 163 and if he were to use it at his young age, even a small amount, it would burn his mood, scorch his humor,⁵¹³ and [eventually] kill him.

[3.2.3.1 The peers of the apprentice convince him to use the forbidden medicine]

164 The peers of the apprentice envied him when they witnessed the generosity of his master in appointing him the owner of the store and all that was in it. 165 They intentionally came to [the apprentice] with false advice saying, “This cream (that your master forbade your use of) is the cream of life that no man can have, 166 and whoever has access to even a small portion of it will never be ill or die. 167 Your master forbade your use of it, not out of his love and mercy, but out of stinginess and hatred against you, for he does not want you to use it and live forever, sharing his possessions with you. 168 If he [shares it with you] he will not be able to get the store back from you, for he is waiting for your death to get the store and its contents back.” 169 The miserable [apprentice] believed the advice of his envious [peers] and reached out to the clay pot, opened it and used the cream that was not appropriate for his disposition.

[3.2.3.2 The sickness of the apprentice and his removal from the store]

170 Immediately [the apprentice’s] body burned; his liver, with his humor, scorched; the cream flowed in his veins like a killing poison. 171 The illness increased in him and its duration prolonged to the point that he almost reached destruction, and [the apprentice] fell into desperation. 172 The master (that was mentioned) absolutely

⁵¹³ “Humor,” in medieval physiology, refers to the balance between four types of bodily fluids: blood, phlegm, cholera, and black bile. This balance was believed to determine the character and general health of an individual.

knew in advance that this would happen to the apprentice, for he knew of [the apprentice's] foolishness and his habit of talking with his envious [peers].

173 Thus, to start with, and out of caution, he took the apprentice out of the store in order to protect him from further harming himself [by using this cream]. 174 When the illness worsened and [the apprentice] approached death, his master was moved by mercy and, using his professional skill, put together an antidote and gave it to [his apprentice]. 175 When [the apprentice] used it, he immediately recovered his health, and his life was renewed in him.

[3.2.3.3 The physician's potential alternatives]

176 I wonder, if the master had hidden the clay pot from [him], if [the apprentice] would have said, "My master deceived me!" 177 The apprentice would have resented the way his master treated him, and the slanderous advice of his envious [peers] would have been true. 178 And if the master had treated and healed him immediately, without letting the sickness actually take hold of him, [the apprentice] would not have appreciated the value and benefit of obedience, and the extent of the harm disobedience entails. 179 [The apprentice] would not have realized his master's plenteous mercy on him, his great love for him, nor his professionalism in healing him.

[3.2.3.4 The interpretation of the parable]

180 The physician is God Almighty. 181 The store is paradise, its necessities, and its fruits. 182 The cream that was forbidden from [the student], that is not appropriate for the youngster but for elders, is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (that is not befitted for beginners in the knowledge of God). 183 The apprentice is the first man, 184 his envious [peers] are the devils. 185 The sickness, pain and tribulations [which he experienced] are the problems of the sinful nature after disobedience and the fall. 186 The exit of the deceived from the store is the exit of Adam from paradise. 187 The healing medicine is the Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist.

4 The Fourth Objection: Regarding the reasons for God's condescendence, Christ's passion and the meaning of the atonement by His blood

4.1 Statement of the Objection

188 The form of the objection is this: If the Creator (Exalted be His name!) is able to do anything, why then did He not complete His plan in the matter of Adam's salvation and his descendants in one word? For if He says to anything, "Be!" it will immediately become. 189 Why then did He not accomplish this by His power? Why did He need such condescendence that minds cannot believe its significance, that is His death on the Cross after His horrible sufferings?

190 Furthermore, it adds to this doubt another one, that is to say about [Christ,] "He bought us by His blood," 191 for it is well known and evident that buying and selling are not completed if the seller was not first paid the price of the merchandise. 192 Therefore, if we suppose that the purchased is the man, the seller is Satan, the buyer is Christ, and the price is His blood, how could this be possible for Satan to be paid the blood of Christ, and take possession of it and contain it (God forbid this from happening!)?

4.2 The Answers to this Objection

193 The purpose of our Savior is not to save us by might and coercion but by justice and fairness 194 because might is only one of the four attributes that are necessary for Him (the Blessed and the Exalted!) [to have]. 195 [The four attributes are] mercy, wisdom, justice, and power (that have been already mentioned), and if He lacked just one of them, He would be defective.

[4.2.1 God wanted to save us by the same method the Devil used to deceive Adam]

196 Since the inclination of the first father [Adam] to the devil was willingness, by deception not coercion, it was not appropriate for the justice of God (the Exalted!) to retaliate except by the same method, 197 that is, to pay back in kind, like for like. This means that the deceiver of the first Adam, who coveted the rank of deity, would be deceived when he saw the Second Adam in the flesh. 198 For [God] concealed His divinity in His flesh, as the fisherman conceals the hook in the bait to deceive the big fish.

199 If the [salvation of Adam was completed through force], it would have been possible for the deceitful one to deny that Christ (worshiped be His name) is just, and say that [Christ] had "extorted from him, forcefully, those who had willingly become

his own.” 200 Therefore, when it was not feasible for the mercy of God to overlook and abandon [the one created in] His Image, nor to allow the work of His honored hands to remain in such hardship, [God decided to restore him]. Yet, it was not permissible for His justice to save [humanity] by force. 201 Therefore, the economy and wisdom [of salvation] required such a level of condescendence, 202 that is, to clothe Himself with a body that is taken from our (deceived) nature and conceal in it His divinity, to hide His plan from the cunning [one]. [Consequently the devil] would intercept Him and want to wrestle and spar with Him (as he did with the one before Him). 203 Only when [the devil] was disappointed and defeated, with his power destroyed, would our Savior have the right to save us from him 204 because [the devil] is the one who started the provocation and initiated it out of his excessive desire and covetousness of [Jesus].

205 Therefore, if our Savior (Who is able to do anything) would have come to [the devil] at the start of his provocation, and would have confronted him with His divinity, [the devil] would have run away from Him, and our salvation would have been interrupted. 206 It would be as if the accursed [that is Satan] had come in his deceitfulness to the first man, naked, and without clothing himself with the body of a snake. The [first man] would have run away from him because of his atrocity and the ugliness of his image. Then [the devil’s] purpose and deception would have been interrupted. 207 Thus, for this reason, the economy [of our salvation] necessitated encountering like with its likeness.

[4.2.2 God wanted to teach us a way to wrestle with Satan]

208 Furthermore, [through this method] our nature will acquire [understanding] and will learn how to wrestle with [Satan] and how to have power over him by observing the One who is united with [human nature] through His person, [Jesus]. 209 [Human beings] can emulate and follow His steps, advancing from the lowest of the low to the highest of the high, for He became an example, guide, and pattern to those who followed Him from earth to heaven.

[4.2.3 Summary of the answer]

210 In summary, through the sin of one deceived, death flowed in humankind like venom to the rest of the body, and we went down from the heavenly heights to the lowest of the earth. 211 Likewise, through the cleverness of one, the deceiver was deceived; death was defeated; life and cleverness were brought to all through the cure that was made with great wisdom, and through it we ascended from earth to heaven. 212 Thus, our Savior (Who is able to do anything, the Just, Compassionate, and Wise) did not have any other way to procure this miraculous and commendable outcome

than the way He did it — 213 through the economy of the mystery of His incarnation; His life-giving passions. In it is the fulfillment of [His] four attributes: mercy, power, justice and wisdom.

[4.2.4 The parable of the emperor and his treasonous vassal]

214 [This teaching] is like the story of a mighty emperor who had tremendous power and authority, and who possessed all of the aforementioned four attributes. 215 One of his vassals, with some of his officials and their followers, rebelled against him. [The emperor thus] withdrew his favor from [this vassal] and expelled him from the empire.

216 When [the rebellious leader] was far from [the emperor] he began to do mischief. He would watch for passersby on the royal road, and through deception and cunning, he would assault and capture the ones who strayed from [the royal road]. 217 The emperor had appointed a watchman from his national guard troops [to protect] those traveling on the road; so the treasonous vassal would not dare to harm anyone on the royal road itself. 218 So the (aforementioned) rebellious [vassal] built an inn, erected a garden around it and planted that garden with all kinds of alluring, tasty and fragrant fruits. 219 He would show it to everyone passing by on the road, and this beautiful garden around his inn would whet the appetites of the passersby, 220 until those who were fooled and drawn in by his deception and cunning would turn away from the royal road, leaving behind the protection of the watchman. In this manner, [the treasonous vassal] would capture and bring [the passersby] under his control. 221 For if [the passersby] had not been separated from the watchman, and had not strayed from the royal road, [the rebellious leader] would not have been able to successfully attack them and scare them away from the protected area.

222 When passersby on the royal road (even leading personalities and close friends of the emperor) would hear the sounds and songs coming from the inn, and would see the various colorful fruits of the garden and smell their delicious fragrance on the breeze, their senses would overwhelm them. 223 Everyone [passing by the inn] was deceived by [their senses] to one extent or another; some less so, others more so. 224 Consequently, they would leave the watchman, stray from the royal road, enter that inn, and roam around in the garden around it. 225 Then the [rebellious vassal] would capture them, take them prisoner and toss them into his dungeon; chained with irons, subjected to indescribable tortures.

[4.2.4.1 The emperor's brave rescue plan]

226 When the emperor became aware of all this, his mercy moved him to save his subjects. 227 However, when he learned of the harshness of his enemy and the

viciousness of his nature and character, he was certain that there was no way to get his subjects back in an amicable way. 228 He recognized four attributes in the rebel [vassal] that were diametrically opposed to his own (aforementioned) virtues: harshness, injustice, insecurity and cunning.

229 [For a time the emperor] was perplexed about how to save [his subjects]. If he were to ignore their plight it would abrogate his mercy. If he used his superior strength to save them it would abrogate his justice. If he were to avoid confrontation, however, it would call his power into question. 230 No other way remained but to intentionally save them with wisdom. 231 Thus, [the emperor] clothed himself with ordinary clothes (over his royal robe) and went out of his royal palace, in such a way that his great authority was not absent from it. [He] intentionally took the royal road, where he would be exposed to the rebel [leader].

232 When the emperor came and concealed his real nature, [the rebellious vassal] offered him the same temptations he had offered to all who had come before. 233 When [the emperor] refused these, did not fall for the cunning trick and did not stray from the royal road to the left or to the right, as everyone else had, 234 [the rebellious vassal's] harshness and defiance took him over. As the emperor was there on his own, isolated and unprotected, the vassal, driven by envy and disdain, went and captured him. 235 [The treasonous vassal] willfully imprisoned [the emperor], harshly beat him, and whipped him to the point of bleeding. In all this, the emperor was patient and endured it all.

[4.2.4.2 The emperor's victory]

236 After [the treasonous vassal] had thrown him into his dungeon in this sort of way, the emperor finally revealed his identity, uncovering his hidden [royal robes]. 237 The royal soldiers thus rushed to his aid, amazed at such a level of condescension. 238 When the rebellious [vassal] saw this, he was baffled and stunned. He was humiliated, and his power and the power of his alliance was crushed. 239 He saw that he was done for; that he had been destroyed by justice and truth, because he had assaulted — unjustly and oppressively — the one whom he was not able to be defeated by his deception; whom he had failed to lure off of the royal road.

240 The emperor's case against [the treasonous vassal] was built on two points: first, [the rebel leader] had attacked his rightful ruler; second, [the emperor] had not turned toward the garden path. He had not strayed from [the royal road], and had not been deceived.

[4.2.4.3 Interpretation of this parable]

241 The emperor is the Creator, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, the Son of God, and His Word. 242 The empire is heaven. 243 The soldiers are angels. 244 The rebellious [vassal] with his allies is the cursed Satan with his demons. 245 His expulsion from the king's realm is the fall of Satan from heaven to earth and what is beneath [the earth]. 246 The royal road is the innate natural law which is in conformity with the Royal Image and that will be in us all the days of our lives. 247 The watchman is the angel that was arranged by God to guard every one of us from the harm of Satan and his [deception] all the days of our lives. 248 Even though [Satan] is unjust and powerful, he is weak and has no power to exploit any of us except through deception and cunning.

249 The inn with the garden is all the traps of the enemy and their pitfalls; the substance is the pleasure and enjoyment of this world. 250 Most people stumble because of the diversity of the craftiness. 251 When their senses are overcome and they turn from the natural law (that is to eat and drink and other things that constitute our natural life) 252 to the animal lifestyle of eating, drinking, fornicating and seizing opportunity through injustice, 253 then [they also turn] to satanic tricks through envy, arrogance, confusion, and similar [traits] that spoil the Royal Image.

254 The prison is hell, its abodes, and its inhabitants. 255 The emperor's subjects are the community of the world and [those who are] just, none of whom fulfilled the ordinance of the Law without transgressing, except Jesus, as the Apostle Paul reminds us.⁵¹⁴ 256 The emperor clothing himself with ordinary clothes [represents] the Incarnation of the Word, where He concealed His Divine might in [His human] body. 257 [The emperor] walking in the royal way without turning aside [describes how] he did not transgress at all. 258 The flogging and wounds [that he endured] (unjustly and in transgression) and his imprisonment (while enduring and not objecting to the transgressors) [describes] the passion of our Lord and His voluntary death, 259 for He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers was silent.⁵¹⁵ 260 He healed us by His wounds, and by His precious blood and death He bought us from death.

261 The royal soldiers [who] came to the emperor's aid are the legions of angels and archangels when they call the forces of hell and its leaders to open the gates to the king of glory to enter, as already mentioned and [as was] prophesied by David.⁵¹⁶

262 In this manner, our Lord saved us and bought us by His blood [which means] He endured the shedding of His blood on our behalf.

The fourth objection is completed.

⁵¹⁴ Cf. Romans 8:2-3.

⁵¹⁵ Cf. Isaiah 53:7; Acts 8:23.

⁵¹⁶ Cf. Psalm 24 (23):7, 9.

5 The Fifth Objection: Regarding Jesus's relation to the Law of Moses

5.1 Statement of the Objection

263 Why did God (the Precious and Exalted!) ordain ordinances that He would later change or abolish? He also changed and contradicted the practices of the Law; why did He abolish it while it was beneficial? 264 And if it was not beneficial, why did He order the children of Israel to keep it? 265 Why was He Himself circumcised and why did He eat the Passover? And why is He not commanding us to follow His steps as He commanded us to be like Him? 266 If it was necessary to practice [the Law] after the perfection of the Baptism and the Lord's Sacrifice, why is He not commanding us to practice [the Law]? And if it was not beneficial for us, why did He not abolish it completely? 267 Furthermore, He changed many other things in the Law, and He scolded the Jews for practicing [them], such as the Sabbath and the forbidden food that was considered impure.

5.2 The Answers to this Objection

268 The Exalted God did not ordain ordinances and then abolish them and did not command us to keep the practices of the law and then contradict them, but He confirmed [the Law], completed it, and brought its weakness to perfection when He revealed its foreshadows and symbols. 269 As He said in His Holy Gospel: "I did not come to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill them. 270 Truly, truly I say to you: 'it is possible for heaven and earth to pass away, but not a verse, or a letter, from the prophets and the Law will pass away, or be abrogated, until it is fulfilled.'"⁵¹⁷

[5.2.1 Jesus brings us from the symbolism of the Law to its fulfillment]

271 All the shadows and symbols that Moses brought and ordained would later be fulfilled in Jesus; if it was not so [the Law of Moses] would have been false. 272 In the same way, the prophecies of the prophets would have been false and meaningless if they were not fulfilled in Him, for anything is false if it has no meaning.

273 He (the Precious and Exalted!) brought us from [the conditions of the Law] to its [true] meaning, from unrevealed symbols to revealed truth. 274 He replaced the purification of the body (by temporary and visible water alone) with eternal purification, 275 not only with water, but also with the Holy Spirit, not only the

517 Cf. Matthew 5:17-18.

visible [purification] of the body, but also the invisible [purification] of the spirit. 276 Therefore, instead of nourishing the body with perishable food, we nourish the soul with eternal food, that is the Lord's Body. 277 Instead of being justified through the sprinkling of the blood of goats and calves, we are justified and freed by the Lord's precious blood that was shed for our salvation.

278 Instead of being healed from the poison of a lethal snake by looking at a bronze pole lifted up in the form of a snake,⁵¹⁸ 279 we were healed from the rapacious snake (that is lethal to the soul) through faith in the One Who is lifted on the Cross (who became a curse and sin for our sake) to give us blessings and justice.⁵¹⁹

280 Instead of the visible ordinance of the circumcision of the body by the cutting of the foreskin, we obtained the invisible mark in the spirit through baptism and the anointing of the Holy Spirit and by the divine anointing and the hidden circumcision of the heart.⁵²⁰

281 Instead of reposing in the promised land (after the toils and hardships in the wilderness), occupying it, taking charge of its cities, establishing their citizenship in them, and taking pleasure in the goods there (that is, the earthly and lower Jerusalem), 282 we have repose in the Kingdom of Heaven (after being transferred from this harsh life here) and the dwelling in its abodes (that are prepared for each one of us, according to the level of [our] struggle and hard work to gain virtue), and [we will take] delight in the upper Jerusalem in the heavenly and eternal bliss.⁵²¹

283 Instead of the priestly rituals, the offerings, the celebration, and that which is necessary for worship (which are allowed only in the city of Jerusalem, inside the temple where the offerings are consecrated), [worship] becomes permitted to all believers anywhere on earth. 284 The matter of consecration was reversed; the temple [does not consecrate the offerings], the offerings instead consecrate the temple.

285 Instead of forbidding the use of the meat of unclean animals, the shameful deeds and evil thoughts, the hidden and bad intentions that come from the heart and defile the Spirit are forbidden.

286 Instead of honoring the Sabbath (because the Lord rested on it from His work when He created this fleeting and rational world), we honor Sunday 287 because on it [the Lord] completed the work of the economy of our salvation. By His resurrection [on Sunday], He revealed to us the truth of the resurrection from death and the [truth] of departing to the eternal world (where there is eternal life and eternal rest in the Kingdom of heaven). 288 Instead of ceasing physical labor on the Sabbath, we refrain from the work of sin, not only in the flesh but in thoughts, and by acquiring virtue, not only in certain times but in all times and periods.

518 Cf. Numbers 21:8.

519 Cf. John 3:14-15.

520 Cf. Galatians 5:2-6.

521 Cf. Hebrews 12:22, 13:14.

[5.2.2 The Law of Christ requires divine perfection]

289 The Law of Moses is similar to the transitory nature of a tree bearing fruit, for it does not command perfect and spiritual love to everyone nor at every time. Also, in the rest of the virtues [the Law] does not provide more than fairness. 290 The Law of Christ, on the other hand, is similar to a tree that is never fruitless for it does not stop at the level of fairness in love, or the rest of the virtues that are appropriate, but it requires [of us] divine perfection,⁵²² 291 that is, [that we] love, do good, have mercy, bless, and so on, not only sometimes and to the ones who deserve [it] but also to those who do not deserve [it], to everyone and at every time.

292 The Law of Moses might also be similar to a farmer who sows his land and pulls out the [weeds], but only from the surface, not from their roots. For [the Law] forbids adultery, but it does not forbid its root and cause, that is to look. 293 The Law of Christ is like the farmer who uproots the [weeds], 294 for it not only forbids adultery and other sins, but also the causes and origins. 295 For He said: “Truly I say to you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.”⁵²³ 296 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘you shall not commit adultery,’ 297 but I say to you, whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”⁵²⁴ 298 And also He said: “Again, you heard that it was said to those of old, ‘you shall not swear falsely’ but I say to you do not swear at all.”⁵²⁵ 299 In this manner and form He opposes and forbids [all] sins by abolishing [every right to sinful activity] and by cutting them off from the origins and causes, [thoughts and lusts].

[5.2.3 The Law of Christ completes and interprets the Law of Moses]

300 Therefore, anyone who claims that [the Law of Christ] contradicts or abolishes [the Law of Moses] lies. 301 For nobody who finishes and completes a building has abolished it, and no one who adds detail to a picture (that he had previously sketched) with paint has abolished [the original]. 302 For although the completion of the picture covers and conceals the original sketch, it does not abolish it.

303 Similarly, the light of the sun, when it shines, does not turn off the light of the moon but covers it, 304 for the light of the moon is acquired in its place from the light of the sun, and it is visible and beneficial only in the dark of night. 305 When the light of the sun shines, it covers [the light of the moon] and we in turn have no need

522 Cf. Matthew 5:48, Colossians 1:28.

523 Matthew 5:20.

524 Matthew 5:27-28.

525 Matthew 5:33-34.

for [the moon] and its benefits. 306 Likewise, the benefits of the Law of Moses (that gets its dispensation from Jesus who is its message) were only [felt] in the old dark of night, but when the light of the sun of righteousness shone and the day arrived, [those benefits] ceased (meaning they were covered up).

[5.2.4 The Law of Moses was for beginners in the knowledge of God]

307 In like manner, breast milk is beneficial and appropriate for infants because their teeth and jaws are not yet properly developed. When [children] are strong and mature in age they have no need for [breast milk]. It is not appropriate for them.⁵²⁶ 308 [Likewise] the Law of Moses was ordained for beginners in the knowledge and the worship of God. 309 Therefore He did not burden them with something that they had no ability to carry and [that] would not turn them back from mid-level, human law, for they were at a base, evil level, beneath the human law.⁵²⁷

310 Furthermore, it was not possible for them to progress far from the bottom except gradually and through the middle [law] that is between [the divine and the satanic laws]. 311 Too rapid a transition from one extreme to the other is (according to some wise men) dangerous. 312 The proof of this is what we see in the order of the seasons in creation; we shift from the cold of winter to the hot of summer through spring, and from the hot of summer to the cold of winter through autumn. 313 Likewise, in the matter of worship, [the Creator] did not teach [his followers] about the three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) because if they had heard Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, they would have imagined fatherhood and filiation in human terms and it would have turned them back to the worship of all gods.

314 With regard to reward and punishment, He did not teach them about enjoyment and distress more than what is here [on earth], for their minds could not believe the resurrection, the kingdom of heaven, and the punishment in eternal hell. 315 It is similar to the way a child chooses for himself what is humble rather [than] what is enduring and honored 316 and also chooses what is inferior in the forms of discipline. (A smack on the hand or on the cheek, or [being beaten] with a stick frighten him more than the loss of inheritance, future poverty, and [such kind of loss].)

⁵²⁶ Cf. Hebrews 5:12-14.

⁵²⁷ In Part 1 Gerasimus argues that there are three kinds of law: the earthly law in the middle, the divine law in the above, and the satanic law beneath the earthly.

317 [This is also similar to the way] parents enjoy talking baby talk⁵²⁸ with infants, and how they tolerate certain childish behaviors in their children. However, when the children grow older, the [parents] will not approve [of the childish behavior].

318 In addition to the examples we mentioned and observed we can add [that] of men who enter the military life: they train using wooden swords as they have imaginary fights with each other. 319 [Then] when they learn the profession, and duty calls them to enter war and battle the enemy, they exchange these [wooden swords] for iron swords, which are then appropriate for.

320 In general, talk about God (Exalted be His mention) [tells how He] is unique and transcends every material, image and form. 321 He [cannot] (as we mentioned before and from what we found written in the books of the wise men about Him) [be known] through an image that is similar to Him; He cannot be seen by [the human] eye, and nothing can be like Him. 322 Thus, this is what we understand and conclude about Him, that He is unknown. 323 The purpose of His goodness was to get our minds to know Him and to teach and to clarify [to us] how we can emulate Him in divine conduct, [so that we can] participate in His kingdom and delight in Him in His eternal goodness. 324 Hence, the economy [of salvation] necessitated that this would be completed gradually and in various ways. 325 The principle of any discipline or any profession, is [to start] with what is most basic, easiest, and least demanding, and from there moving on to the most extensive, difficult, and rigorous parts of the discipline.

[5.2.5 How did the Old Law progress to the New Law?]

326 The first appearances to humankind were by revelation to tribe after tribe through various ways and images. 327 Thus, He was portrayed by bodily depictions, such as to say about Him [that] He has hands, feet, eyes, and nose, 328 and that He sits, stands, and moves from place to place. That is similar to what we find written about Him in the Torah and the prophets, and in the rest of the divine books of old. 329 However, in reality, He has none of all this (God forbid!), but it was said and written about Him in [words] 330 to make Him closer to our understanding, and to fulfill the prophecy that was going to be fulfilled about Him in due time. 331 Similarly, parents, in their conversation with their children, use terms that are according to [the children's] comprehension, because they don't understand other [terms].

332 When He saw that our nature (that is created in His likeness and image, and that draws its survival and its spiritual life from Him), because of its distance from

⁵²⁸ The Arabic word used here is *Munāġāt*. The verb is *Naġā*. It has no direct equivalent in English. This refers to adults indulging in “baby talk” with an infant, using many hard-g sounds – “gaga-googoo” and the like.

Him was becoming ill and the illness was advancing, 333 He started like a skillful physician and a merciful father to assemble healing medicines for [human nature], treating it gradually 334 (I mean [going from] milder [medicines] to stronger [ones]) until He revealed the perfection of his [image in mankind] by completely healing it.

[5.2.5.1 The Natural Law and the Written Law]

335 The first medicine He gave and administered to [humanity] was the Natural Law, that is, discernment and vision⁵²⁹ (which can distinguish between good and evil and between what is appropriate and not appropriate for us). 336 Then He gave it the Written Law. In it was explained the different kinds of medicine that the creator made for the human race. 337 When none of these medicines was able to complete the recovery, and the illness had progressed to the point of being terminal, 338 it was a necessary in due time for [human nature] to take the strongest medicine, which was appropriate for its grave illness. The making [of this medicine] required extreme measures because the disease was also quite extreme.

[5.2.5.2 The Incarnation]

339 And when nobody except Himself could administer [this medicine], necessity demanded that He would be united with an earthly body that was taken from the nature of our bodies. [He did this] to be like us and to rightfully be able to teach us through [the human body] what He wanted to convey. 340 Moreover, by [His] becoming equal to us we can rightfully be able to emulate what we see in Him.

341 When necessity demanded such [action], He appeared to us in a complete [embodiment] and a fulfilled substance, not in a visionary way as He appeared to the prophets before. 342 He spoke to us, lived with us, and mingled with us, not through revelation and [supernatural] apparition, but through bodily elements as one of us.

343 In this manner, all that was written in words about Him (to make Him closer to our understanding, as we mentioned before) became a fulfilled thought, in which there is no doubt. 44 Then He gave us this great medicine (that was mentioned before). Through it our recovery was completed. 345 It is the Holy Baptism, faith and participation in the divine mysteries. By them and by truly keeping His evangelical commandments, we are united with Him.

346 For this reason (as it was already said) He (the Designer of all), through His extreme wisdom, did not transfer us from extreme defect to extreme perfection all at once, but gradually, by increments.

⁵²⁹ He means spiritual vision.

[5.2.6 Circumcision and its reasons]

347 God first legislated and ordained [rules] for the first [human] who sought, recognized, and believed in Him, our father Abraham, to whom, after the flood, [God] gave [the sign] of circumcision, which is an ordinance and a sign to separate him from the rest of the nations.

348 The questioner may ask: “Why is this mark on such a hidden member? And why did it not occur, for example, on the forehead by branding, or on another visible member of the body?” 349 We respond to him that the intention of God (glory be to Him) in forming this mark on this particular member has two reasons. 350 The first is that the image is marred when it loses any member; 351 therefore, this member was chosen to avoid disfiguring the human image. 352 It would not have been proper for the goodness of God to act like this, that is, to disfigure or deform the image of His own believers. 353 The other [reason] is in order not to have other marks similar to it because this mark (I mean maiming and cutting) is always practiced by thieves and those who would cause shame.

354 After that, He added to circumcision the Law, by the hand of Moses, which tells us what is lawful and what is unlawful. 355 This is the law of justice, the middle law, which repays deeds in kind. 356 When the time of fulfillment arrived, He Himself came with the divine higher Law that lifts us from being under the Law of justice to full perfection.

[5.2.7 The parable of the owner of a village who offers help to his farmers]

357 Our analogy in this is that of a man who owned a village.⁵³⁰ Its lands were uncultivated, and its inhabitants were the laziest and most careless people. 358 They were content to live off of the fruits of wild plants. No benefits came [from them] and no harvests from their toils were assembled for their owner. It was to a point that they did not know him and he did not know them. 359 One of the villagers purposed to cultivate and sow his share of the lands, and to offer part of its harvest to the owner; in this way, he would become known and respected by him. 360 When the owner learned about his heart and his good intention, he called him in and gave him seeds of grain [to cultivate]. He also thanked him for his well-meaning intentions and his action. [This peasant] and his clan thus established themselves in good stead with the owner.

361 Years passed and [this peasant] and his clan continued to bring their dues to the owner so as to continue to get support and promises [of protection] from him.

530 In a medieval context this would have been a minor nobleman – a lord, count or duke – who officially owned the peasants who lived on land as part of his ownership of the land.

362 One day the owner of the village chose one member of this clan to be their leader and the head of the clan. 363 He then gave [to this leader] branches of [grape] vines and ordered for these to be planted throughout their land. These would become their property, and they would benefit from their harvest more than they had from the seeds of grain, 364 since the benefit of the [seeds of grain] lasted only for one year. After the grain was harvested, the land became uncultivated as it was before.

365 The [followers] obeyed his order and filled the land with vines. They continued to use the harvest of the vine for a period of time, every year, decade after decade, until [the vines] became old and started to die out. 366 Then [the owner] came and brought with him olive tree branches. He ordered them to plant the olive trees over the vines saying, 367 “These vineyards will wither away if we grow olive trees above them; 368 [but when] these [trees] are mature they will become yours as an everlasting possession, supporting you and also those who will come after you. 369 The benefits that will come from these branches are more profitable than the harvests of the vine. 370 However, you must not be slack in making the initial effort just because you see it as difficult and because there is a delay before you receive the first fruits and benefits. 371 Know that the toil is only to start with and for a short period of time; 372 it will be followed by rest for many years and endless generations that includes your descendants and [the descendants] of others.”

373 The [followers] believed him and accepted the branches from him and planted [them] on their land. 374 Thus, whoever was strengthened by hope, through work, became one of the expectants, and [whoever did not do so] was left in despair.

[5.2.8 Interpreting the parable]

375 The village is the world. 376 The owner of the village is the Creator and the Lord of all. 377 Its lands are the hearts of people. 378 The uncultivated plants are bad thoughts and their fruits are sin. 379 The first man (from the people of the village) who sowed and cultivated the land is Abraham. 380 The seed is the conversation of God with Abraham, His test of him, and His promise of reward for his faith.

381 The [next] leader is Moses. 382 The branches of vines are the Law. 383 The coming of the owner with the olive branches is the coming of our Lord with the divine commandments (that are light and guidance) 384 and their reward in the coming world with eternal bliss that has no ending.

385 Thus, whoever believes in [the Lord and his commandments], accepts them, plants them in the field of his heart, strengthens them through the work of hope, 386 aerates their roots with the acts of charity, and fences them with the humility of the heart, will enlighten his mind with their light, 387 and will advance from acting to seeing [God] and being united with Him (the first light) in the bliss that has no ending.

[5.2.9 Reason Jesus was circumcised and ate the Passover]

388 The reason our Lord practiced circumcision and ate the Passover meal according to the Law, [and did not order us to practice it], is because the gift of Holy Baptism (that was a substitute for circumcision) was not given to us yet, and the fulfillment of the Law was still concealed. 389 When an artist paints a picture, he begins with making a sketch. This [sketch] remains as the artist skillfully paints over it. Once the picture is complete, however, the sketch will be covered up and abolished.

390 Furthermore, He ate the Passover meal according to the Law because the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, had not been sacrificed for us yet. 391 [Now] we no longer have need for the sacrifices of the Law [since] this universal, Lordly sacrifice was offered for the salvation of the world. 392 In addition to this there is another reason [that he did all this is]: not to leave any from the ordinances of the Law (even the smallest detail) unfulfilled, 393 and for us also to be assured that He is the One who ordained [the Law], that He Himself is the one who handed us the Law of Truth, 394 fulfilling what was said about Him. He is the “Cornerstone,”⁵³¹ and He is the One who contains and completes both Testaments.

The fifth objection is completed.

531 See Ephesians 2:11-22; Psalm 118 (117):23; Matthew 12:10; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17.

6 The Sixth Objection: Regarding Moses not meeting the criteria for a true disciple, and God’s favoritism towards Israel not befitting true justice.

6.1 Statement of the Objection

395 Its form is this: Your case is that the person who claims to be a disciple sent from God (be He Exalted) but not having in him the three signs 396 (those being: preaching [to the whole world], performance of miracles, and speaking in commonly known languages) is a liar and must not be believed. 397 This same [case] constrains us to call Moses a liar! because two signs (that are general preaching, and the knowledge of speaking in widespread languages) out of the three were not evident in him.

398 Moreover, if this is truly your position, you are contradicting yourself in terms of what you say about the goodness and justice of the Creator, 399 that He does not limit His grace and favor to one tribe and leave another. 400 No! And He does not desire [to do that] but [He desires] to bestow His gifts to all His worshipers equally, and He does not limit them to anyone. 401 Everyone receives what he deserves, according to his willingness to receive, and [according] to the readiness that is in him to receive [God’s grace and favor]. 402 You confirmed this for us with the example of the sun that shines its light, with its heat, on the bodies that are beneath it, 403 and everyone benefits and accepts it according to the degree of readiness that is in him.

404 If the matter is this, how did the Creator overlook the other nations? And why did He not send a guide and a messenger to call them to His worship, as He did to the children of Israel? 405 But He allotted this favor (I mean His Law, His prophets, and His miracles) only to this nation, [and kept it] from the other nations, while it was (as has been written about it) the smallest and the least important and the most hardhearted nation.

6.2 The Answers to the Objection

406 In regard to Moses, he himself already provided us with a complete answer to reply to this objection. [In the answer Moses] denied this claim about himself. 407 He already said, “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet after me (meaning a Law Maker) and you must listen to him.”⁵³² 408 He himself knew the lack of what he brought and that its status could not be eternal; therefore, he announced this about the one who came after him. 409 The proof of this is the deficiency in [the Law of Moses], its fleeting, short duration, the places where it is practiced is limited [allowed in certain places], and the number of people who practice it is small.

532 Cf. Deuteronomy 18:15; Acts 3:22.

[6.2.1 The parable of the physician and his forerunner]

410 An appropriate analogy here is that of a skilled physician who wants to purge [a patient of] a large amount of bad humors through the use of a laxative. 411 He first sends one of his students [to prescribe] a dietary law, 412 ordering [the patient] to use it for a period of time until the discomfort eased and the release was accelerated. 413 The law [given by the student] was appropriate for a period of time. 414 Once it was complete, the master himself arrived with a stronger, more refined, final medicine. He gave it to [the patient], in order to release the bad mixture that was trapped inside of him. 415 Once [the patient's body] was purged, [the master] revised the first [dietary] law and gave [the patient] a new law, instructing him to use it to maintain his health.

[6.2.2 The Patriarchs' seeking after God]

416 In regard to the other objection, that is, the doubt about the Creator's goodness and justice, and how He did not treat the rest of the nations equally with the children of Israel, we say: 417 First, their ancient forefathers (who are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) knew Him before the rest of the world did. They called upon Him without anyone telling them to. 418 They sought after Him out of their personal desire to know Him, they believed in Him, and they did what pleased Him; thus, they became His own particular people apart from the rest of the world.

[6.2.3 God's gifts to other nations as well]

419 Furthermore, the gifts of God (be He Exalted), His reasons, and the intentions of His way are many and diverse. 420 Though He has allotted to the children of Israel His law, His prophets, and His miracles, He has bestowed on the Greeks similar [gifts], such as wisdom and eloquence, and to the rest of the nations what they deserve. 421 He also, by His gracious mercy, did not overlook [the other nations] and leave them in darkness forever, but He was certain of their calling and salvation, 422 just as He had promised His chosen friend Abraham to make him the father of many nations according to the form, and in the time, that He alone determined and knew.

[6.2.4 Reasons for the delay in calling other nations to salvation]

423 The explanation for delaying the calling [of the nations] and the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham is divided into many and diverse reasons. 424 [It needed to wait] until the mystery of the economy was fulfilled in the incarnation of the Word; 425 until the truth was revealed and the ordinances were abolished; 426 until reconciliation and

agreement were completed between human nature and God, its Creator, through the Son ([in whom were] combined the two natures without mixture or separation); 427 until this [human] nature was honored by its union with the divine, in a substantial union, and ascended through Him above every lordship and authority; 428 [until it] was seated at the right hand of the Father, and was given the full authority over heaven and earth, 429 so that every knee would bow (the heavenly, the earthly, and those under the earth);⁵³³ 430 until salvation was wrought to the souls of all believers that were in the graves, who passed away before the ages; 431 until the power of the leader of this world had fallen and was exposed by the power of the Cross; 432 until middle partition the wall⁵³⁴ was abolished, and the flaming sword [keeping us from entering Paradise] ceased to exist;⁵³⁵ 433 until the branches of Israel's sweet oil olive tree were cut off and destroyed, so that the wild Gentile olive tree [branches] could be grafted into their places. In this way [the Gentile branches] get their sweet oil from the root and foundation of [Israel's olive tree];⁵³⁶ 434 until the leader and head from Judea returns.

[6.2.4.1 The appearance of the Virgin Mary]

435 In general [the calling of all nations was delayed], until the sealed and concealed book,⁵³⁷ the closed door,⁵³⁸ the holy jar,⁵³⁹ 436 the shadowed mountain (from which a stone was cut without a hand, and from which the whole world was filled),⁵⁴⁰ the, well-formed mountain that abounded in blessings,⁵⁴¹ 437 Moses's bush (that was burning without being consumed),⁵⁴² and the budding rod of Aaron were found; [until] the Virgin Mary, who was pure in her body and spirit, the favored one, 438 who paid the debt of Eve (our first mother) from her pure body, 439 the one who was chosen and appointed before the ages to complete the Great Mystery, 440 [arrived so that] from her blood, with the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord's body would be

533 Cf. Philippians 2:9-10.

534 Cf. Ephesians 2:14.

535 Cf. Genesis 3:24.

536 Cf. Romans 11:16-18.

537 Cf. Revelation 5:1.

538 Cf. Ezekiel 43:27-44.

539 Cf. Exodus 16:32-34.

540 Cf. Daniel 2:31-36.

541 Cf. Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:8; Habakkuk 3:3-4.

542 Cf. Exodus 2:1-16.

formed. 441 No one from the seed of Adam was, nor is, created like her in holiness and purity, and no mother like her [was created].⁵⁴³

[6.2.4.2 The appearance of John the Baptist]

442 [The call was delayed] until the voice that was calling in the wilderness appeared, the earthly angel and heavenly human that no one who was born of woman (after Christ) is greater than.⁵⁴⁴ 443 The [one who was called] the seal of the prophets, the one given the name Second Elijah,⁵⁴⁵ zealous about the truth and a martyr for it; 444 the forerunner, who is empowered with the preaching [of the Gospel], that empowers the living and dead; 445 the one who was chosen in the service of the sacrament of baptism, 446 and deserved (because of the highest virtue and the honor of his level) to reveal the source of every purity and to place his hand on the head of the One who holds all creation in His hand: 447 John, great among the prophets, honored among the disciples, the first among the martyrs, amazing among the just.

[6.2.4.3 The appearance of the twelve apostles and their preaching in the world]

448 [The calling was delayed] until the chosen vessels, the precious stones, were revealed — those who were prepared to receive the shining light of the Holy Spirit (the Comforter) in tongues of flames; 449 [who were] the horses of Christ that run fast to preach — His cavalymen on the horses that strayed in the many waters of unbelief; 450 the ones who were moved by grace from fishing for fish to fishing for people,⁵⁴⁶ 451 their beautiful feet for the preaching of peace;⁵⁴⁷ 452 [who were] the constellations that are hung in the heaven of the holy church, whose number is twelve, 453 who explained the glory of God to all the earth, 454 [who were] the stars that shone by the light of the sun of righteousness, 453 the twelve apostles, who loved Jesus, His close friends, 455 the ones who, together with the rest of the angels and saints, will sit with Him in His second coming in His glory; those, whose numbers are equal to their miracles.

543 These passages from the Bible are read in the Byzantine Rite in the celebration of the various liturgical services dedicated to the Virgin Mary and her role in the Economy of salvation.

544 Cf. Matthew 11:11, Luke 7:28.

545 Cf. Matthew 17:11-13.

546 Cf. Matthew 4:19.

547 Cf. Isaiah 52:7, Romans 10:15.

456 When all these matters were gathered and fulfilled at the appointed time (that was determined only by God's foreknowledge), then the calling and time of the Gentiles arrived.

[6.2.5 The deficiency in the Law of Moses does not mean he was not sent from God]

457 If the Creator (Honored be His Remembrance) permanently confirmed [the Law of] Moses and its deficiency (without adding anything to it), 458 and if [God] abandoned the Gentiles and did not send them a messenger, or guide, this question would have remained valid and no one would have the ability to explain it.

459 The requirement of a sound mind does not necessitate that Moses's calling could not have been from God merely because what [Moses] brought was imperfect 460 or because the two signs (mentioned before) were not in him; 461 rather by his own confession, [Moses said] that he was imperfect, and that perfection was to come with someone other than him, the One who will come after him. 462 Furthermore, Christ [announced] that He is the one who sent [Moses]. Therefore, the analogy of the mind necessitates belief in [Moses] 463 because Jesus preached about Moses, confirmed his calling and his message, and thereby called all the tribes of the earth to honor his name.

[6.2.6 The coming of Christ is what gives importance to Moses]

464 Furthermore, before the coming of Christ (let His Remembrance be worshipped) no one from the tribes of the earth knew Moses, 465 even many people from his own nation (who witnessed the amazing miracles in their deliverance from Egypt) did not believe or honor him, 466 but they called him a liar and jumped to stone him. 467 The punishment was also upon those who opposed him.⁵⁴⁸ 468 However, after Christ, the four corners of the earth, with their languages, recognized and honored Moses and believed in all that he had brought and said.

[6.2.7 The parable of the king who comes to his people as one of them]

469 An appropriate analogy here of this is that of a king, great in his affairs, powerful in authority. 470 Besides his royal might, [this king] possessed all the important virtues, including meekness, and had the appropriate approach to every aspect of leadership. 471 A group of his vassals with their leader had in them wickedness that

548 Here he cites both the Qur'an (Sūrah 29:39-40) and the Bible (Numbers 14:10).

paralleled the virtues we described in the king. They rebelled against him, disobeyed him, strayed from his orders, and transgressed against him.

[6.2.7.1 The rebellious soldiers attempt to attract the king's followers]

472 [The rebellious soldiers] by their wickedness, cunning, and deception convinced all the inhabitants and servants [in their kingdom] to serve them [and not to serve the king]. 473 Through deception [the rebellious vassals] alienated [the king's subjects] from their ruler.

474 In cases like this, it is quite normal for people to stray from good 475 and to covet the good things their friends have, and to later turn on [the friend] even if he is more powerful and more honorable. Furthermore, [many people] honor the wicked and are afraid of him even if he is the lowest and weakest.

476 In this case the aforementioned mighty king did not force his followers to obey him, not because he lacked the capability or power to do so, but rather because his justice and meekness kept him from using his authority in such a way. 477 [The king] acted willingly, not forcefully, according to his abundant mercy and deep wisdom by goodness and favor, not by injustice or aggression.

[6.2.7.2 A group of nomads pledge allegiance to the king]

478 A group of nomads came to [the king] and pledged allegiance to his authority. 479 [The king] accepted them with full honors, and accorded to them rank and privilege regardless of their previous humble status. He favored them and they became close to him. 480 He then called in one of the former nomads' leaders (one who he had established), set him up and strengthened him by giving him money. 481 He also gave him further royal gifts that would accord him with honor and dignity. [The king] further armed [this leader] with all the weapons he was able to carry. 482 He then appointed him as a royal envoy, as a legal guardian of the realm and as an honored leader. 483 He then advised him as to how he should behave and speak to his people; how he should keep them in submission to the king [while he was absent] until the time determined for his arrival.

484 This [absence] was in order to fulfill his purpose [for the former nomads] and for the rest of [the kingdom] according to what he had previously promised: that he would reign over the region and live among its people, 485 protecting their harbors and administrative centers by the power of his authority. In turn, [their territory] would become property of the crown. 486 Also they would enable a royal army base to be established in [their land], and they would make provisions for royal emissaries and people from his court who were passing through their territory so that [these guests] would remain safe and secure until they returned to the king.

[6.2.7.3 The king appears in amazing humility]

487 When the time of his arrival came (in which he would reveal his total majesty), [the king] came to [the inhabitants of the land] as common man, 488 not according to what they would have expected of so powerful a figure 489 but acting completely naturally in his own solid and mature fashion.

490 When his subjects saw their king in such a strange and lowly condition — in such a gentle, humble and vulnerable state, in complete contrast with his royal position — they were completely baffled by the matter. 491 One by one they began to doubt his true royal authority and so they agreed to challenge him, and call him out as a fraud. 492 They associated all that he willingly became to weakness and inferiority, and they scorned, 493 rejected, beat, flogged, and falsely accused him. Some among them even evicted him. Only a small number (the lowest, the most inferior, and those who had been rejected from their rank and place) believed and accepted him.

[6.2.7.4 The king gives gifts to those who believed him]

494 When [the king] then took his leave of the skeptics with their ugly, wicked, miserable and disgusting character, 495 He left all the royal treasures that he had with him in his luggage (prestigious possessions, precious gifts and splendid garments that he had brought with him from his royal warehouses) with those who followed and believed him, [who] fulfilled his word, and [who] trusted in his promises. 496 He also gave them respectable, powerful and dreadful royal weapons, of the sort which would make them invincible in battle.

[6.2.7.5 The king sends the believing subjects to the rebellious countries]

497 Furthermore, with similar [gifts] he supplied [his believing followers], and sent them out to deal with the rebellious cities (that had strayed from royal obedience). 498 He instructed them to call the inhabitants to his justice, goodness and royal favor; to get them to live according to his wishes and principles. 499 [Those who believed in the king] did this first by offering to share [with those in the rebellious cities] the possessions they had been given [by the king], with all the helpful, superior and magnificent qualities they contained. 500 In this way, their return to his obedience would be willing, not forced (according to what his order and purpose was before). 501 He then strengthened his covenant with [the believers]: He would be like a merciful father to them. Furthermore, as a friend, he would always be available to help them. 502 He would forever remain their helper, encourager, supporter, guide and counselor for every success.

[6.2.7.6 The king returns to his dwelling]

503 After the king directed [his followers] to this ministry, while he was still discontented with that nation (which had not only thoroughly rejected his message, 504 but on the contrary, had cursed and slandered him, and returned his favor and goodness by shedding his blood), 505 he safely returned to his dwelling, and set out to fairly judge those who had harmed him. He successfully gained back those whose renewed hope was in him.

[6.2.7.7 The king's loyal subjects subdue the rebellious countries]

506 [The king's servants] set out to where the king had ordered them. He marched them to the countries [of the non-believers], and [the servants] divided [the countries] between them, and brought their inhabitants, leaders and wealth back [under the king's authority]. 507 They offered [the countries] the best rewards of wealth, 508 and they promised them renewed gifts and honored position with the highest rank in [the king's] royal city. Then they armed them with dreadful and fearful weaponry. 509 The servants came to terms with the [inhabitants of the] royal city (who had initially obeyed but then disobeyed). They rooted out [the rebellious] people, capturing and exiling them to faraway lands. 510 In this way, the former became the latter and the latter became the former.

[6.2.7.8 Interpreting the parable]

511 The king is our Lord Jesus (the heavenly King, to Him be praise and honor). 512 The rebellious soldiers are the devils, and the tribes of Gentiles are the nomads. 513 The people who obeyed and remained obedient are the children of Israel. 514 The one who was appointed to be their leader is first Moses, then the judges, the kings, and the priests who guided them. 515 The power that [Moses] had from the king was [shown by] the miracles that were performed by him and the prophecies fulfilled after him. 516 The weapons that [the king] gave [Moses] are the Old Law. 517 The coming of the king to [the people] (in such meekness) is the coming of Our Lord, and His appearance in the world in the form of a slave in such amazing humility.

518 Regarding how [the rebels] called him a liar when they saw him in such form, and slandered him, and then expelled, beat, and flogged him, this represents what our Lord endured from the Jews in His holy sufferings when He died on the Cross.

519 Those who first believed and followed Him were the twelve disciples, and then those who believed after them. 520 The precious garments and royal gifts (that he supplied them with) are the power to perform miracles, speak in known common languages, prophesy, and the rest of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

521 The return of the king to his dwelling is the ascension and the seating of Our Lord at the right hand of the Father. 522 In regard to his instructions to those who believed and followed him, and his sending them to the rest of the disobeying cities, [this] represents Our Lord Jesus sending His disciples and apostles to all nations after His resurrection, 523 to call them to obey Him. They were offered gifts in the present, and given the promise of renewed glory and honor in his palace. 524 Regarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit that the believers received (such as the performance of miracles), they are a deposit for the true honor and eternal bliss they will have in the kingdom of heaven. 525 About the great, dreadful, royal weaponry, it is the Divine Law that contains the evangelical commandments; the enemy of our salvation cannot defeat whoever uses and is perfected in them.

526 The return of the Nomads to obedience is the faith of the Gentiles. 527 Their negotiating terms with the people of the [disobedient] city is the appropriation of the city of Jerusalem by the sword of Christians, and of the expulsion of the Jews from [Jerusalem] and its borders (the former and those remaining in our time) 528 after the indescribable calamities that happened to them and to their ancestors during the time of Vespasianus and his son Titus.⁵⁴⁹ 529 This [happened] forty years after the ascension of Our Lord to heaven, according to the Hebrew historian Josephus.⁵⁵⁰ 530 In this way the last and distant become the former and close to each other, the believers from among the Gentiles. 531 This is according to what our Lord mentioned in his Holy Gospel⁵⁵¹ and Paul the blessed [wrote] in his letters. It is the opposite in regard to the Jews (the children of Israel).

532 We, in turn, offer glory, thanksgiving, honor, and power to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now, always, forever and ever. Amen.

549 Titus was a Roman Emperor who briefly reigned from 79-81 A.D. He was the second emperor of the Flavian Dynasty, which ruled the Roman Empire from 69-96 A.D. and encompassed the reign of Titus's father Vespasianus (69-79). Cf. G. Morgan, *69 A.D. the Year of the Four Emperors*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, 170-173. B. Levick, *Vespasian, Roman Imperial Biographies*, Oxford, London, New York: Routledge, 1999.

550 This is an indication of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D. See Josephus, Flavius, *The Work of Josephus*, W. Whiston, (trans.) Fourteenth Printing, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999, 649-727.

551 Matthew 20:16; Mark 10:31.

General Conclusion

Gerasimus concludes his *Apology* by acknowledging that the treatise was assembled from the sayings of the Church Fathers whom he calls, “the Stars of the Apostolic Church.” He then appeals to the reader not to ascribe his humble style and mistakes to the Church Fathers because “the pearls are found in the shells and the gold is found in the soil.” He who attributes the mistakes and the humble terms to the teachers of the Church, not to the writer, is like the person who soaks up the juice from the sugarcane and spits out the residue. Gerasimus clearly states that the *Apology* is a summary of what the Church Fathers and Arab Christian theologians wrote about the Christian faith, and how they responded to objections made against the Christian faith. Therefore, my analysis is limited to outlining the main ideas of the *Apology* and identifying the sources Gerasimus used for his interpretations.

Theological and Doctrinal Topics

In spite of the variety of genres found in the *Apology* and reasons why it was written, some recurrent themes can be identified in it. In keeping with the standard topics found in Muslim-Christian apologetic literature, Gerasimus, concerned with a defense of Christianity, includes the usual explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity and its relationship to monotheism, as well as an exposition and defense of the teaching on the Incarnation. This, of course, was in answer to the explicit rejection of these beliefs in the Qur’an. Gerasimus’s own treatment of the charges made against Christian doctrine reveals his clear insight into the problem, and much of his writing on the subject is taken up with clarifying the disagreement about the nature of monotheism and its implications for appropriate speech about God.

In his *Apology*, Gerasimus deals with common questions about a multitude of Christian practices, such as veneration of the cross and concerns about the Christian abandonment of certain Jewish practices, including animal sacrifice, circumcision and keeping the Law of the Covenant. The *Apology* also discusses how to recognize true religion, a matter of particular concern. In addition to the standard topics (Trinity, Incarnation, Christian practices, and the signs of the true religion and a true disciple) which are customary in the writings of Arab Christian theologians, Gerasimus covers several other topics, including valid reasons for conversion and the proper use of analogy. Essential theological points treated in the *Apology* and analyzed in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of this book include the nature of true religion; characteristics of a true disciple; the existence of God; the Trinity; the Creation of human beings in the image and the likeness of God; the passion of Christ and the reason Christians honor it; free will; God’s condescension and shedding of His blood on the Cross; Jesus changing the practice of the Law; circumcision; and God’s calling to the children of Israel.

A Unified and Contextualized Christian Message

It seems that Gerasimus's Apology is not addressed to one specific Christian community; it is based on that which is common to all Christians. Gerasimus even presents a unified Christian message and defends Christian unity (5:24-26). Quotations, both direct and indirect, from the Qur'an are frequent. It is worth pointing out that Gerasimus integrates the Qur'an in his discourse for his Muslim and Christian audiences; he introduces many Qur'anic terms and expressions. This fact is very important as it means that the author is steeped in Qur'anic culture; he shares with Muslims, Jews and Sabians the common Arabic culture. He has brought into Arab Christianity many themes that could be drawn from Muslim and Qur'anic heritage, and also from pagan cultures and philosophy. Gerasimus presented Christian theology to Muslims using their cultural expressions. I thus serves as an excellent example of contextualizing the message of the Gospel.

Hermeneutical Principles

As we have already noted, Gerasimus borrows extensively from the Church Fathers and from the liturgical texts of the Eastern Churches. How did the Church Fathers approach Christian scripture? What hermeneutical principles did they use? In our approach to Christian scripture, the Fathers can teach us a few important principles.

People reading the Fathers for the first time need to keep in mind what the Fathers can and cannot offer these principles in their own exegeses of the Bible. Patristic exegetes had fewer linguistic, historical and theological tools available for study of scripture than the modern exegete has. Students coming to patristic exegesis and expecting to encounter a modern commentary will walk away disappointed. Yet patristic exegesis provides both an indispensable foundation and vital supplement for much modern commentary. It provides us with a number of hermeneutical principals that are worth mentioning. Those suggestions are applicable to all Christian churches and denominations.⁵⁵²

1) *Read the Bible holistically.* The Fathers insisted that the narrative of the Bible is a continuous, deeply connected story told from Genesis through Revelation. The Old and New Testaments are not discontinuous. Rather, the themes presented in the Old Testament find their fulfillment in the narrative of the New Testament. Continuity and fulfillment characterize the entire story. Most importantly, the Fathers argue that the biblical narrative reaches its culmination, its thematic climax, with the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of the Son of God. Indeed, the incarnational, soteriological and eschatological foci of the New Testament further

⁵⁵² Cf. C. Hall, *Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers*, Inter Varsity Press, Il 1998, 177-201.

clarify and deepen the Old Testament's witness. We will read the Bible ineffectively and incorrectly, the Fathers warn, if we fail to read its individual parts in the light of its overarching, unifying message.

Reading the Bible as a continuous account, will lead us to the second point: 2) *Read the Bible Christologically*. All the Fathers read the scripture through the prism of Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. For example, Irenaeus compares Jesus Christ to a treasure hidden in a field, Jesus being the treasure hidden and the field being the entire scripture, the Old and the New Testaments. The Apology of Gerasimus is an excellent lesson for how to read the Bible from a Christological perspective.

3) *Read the Bible communally within Christ's body, the church*. Gerasimus borrows extensively from liturgical texts, which are biblical interpretations of the Eastern Church Fathers. The Fathers insisted that exegesis is an ecclesial task. It takes place within the church for the church. Throughout the Apology, Gerasimus calls Christians "the children of the Holy Baptism" and "the children of the Holy Church." The church is a mother that generates spiritual children through faith and the sacrament of baptism. The church also nourishes her children by the Word of God and the sacrament of the Eucharist. This is what forms the church (word and sacraments) and in this context the Bible becomes a "living word" and heavenly nourishment.

4) *Read the Bible within the context of practice, prayer, worship and spiritual formation*. The Fathers insisted on the connection between spiritual health, life in the church and commentary on the Holy Bible. Throughout his Apology, Gerasimus is adamant about this point. We should observe that this point rebukes the modern tendency to separate scholarship from spirituality and worship. In an ecumenical era, where the ecumenical movement is a fact that cannot be avoided, in a context where the tendency is to present a global and universal vision for our Christian faith, we find the contribution of Gerasimus and his hermeneutical principles appealing.

Literary Form

Gerasimus provides, in his style and language, a *sylogistic form of proof*. He begins with the proposition that Christianity must either be true or false. Such style was common with the Arabs (Muslims and Christians) in light of their knowledge of the Greek philosophical tradition. He presents the rational credibility of Christianity in logical terms by juxtaposing two opposites using, *immā...wa-immā*, "either...or." His purpose is to demonstrate that his proof is logical, not scriptural or theological. In this way he leads the reader to the logical conclusion of the truth of Christianity.

The literary format is also *dialectic*, in which possible questions are posed followed by appropriate answers, and in many cases, also followed by a counter question with several potential answers with their implications. Like most Christian Arab authors in the Middle Ages, Gerasimus knew how to reach and attract his audience effectively

by using the strategies of Greek rhetoric. The objective was to ward off the danger of apostasy. In a period of an increasing number of conversions to Islam, dialectical style was a most effective literary means to respond to such social reality.⁵⁵³

Critical Reflections

1. Similar to earlier apologists, Gerasimus appeals to logically constructed arguments about the being of God and His relationship to creation as well as to reasoned proofs refuting charges of deception and duplicity made against Christians. His aim is to show that Christian teachings are not irrational, but rather, complex and subtle.
2. As a Christian philosopher and theologian, Gerasimus used the experiences of those of the past to facilitate his own response to critics. However, two important differences separated him from earlier apologists. First, the new language of intellectual discourse was Arabic, which did not easily accommodate an expression of traditional Christian doctrine; it required the development of a vocabulary out of terms already heavily influenced by the Qur'anic worldview. Second, the new religion challenging Christianity was one of absolute monotheism, which shared neither a common scriptural nor cultural heritage, and rejected the very possibility of a Trinity and incarnation. Although a common theme in early Christian apologetics was the refutation of Judaism, the debate generally centered on the interpretation of the Old Testament, showing that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. The Qur'an, while acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah, explicitly rejects the Christian doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity, and presents itself as the revelation which supersedes all previous revelation. Thus, although Christians and Muslims share certain themes and figures (such as creation and the last judgment, Abraham, Moses, Mary and Jesus), Muslims reject evidence that contradicts the Qur'an, leaving Christians without recourse to traditional scripture-based arguments. Gerasimus, as a Christian apologist and *mutakallim*, accepted these challenges and began the process of explaining and translating his faith in the new milieu to make it coherent and rational. In his treatise, Gerasimus reveals himself to be a full participant in this important period of intellectual history; he sets down the basic points of controversy and outlines a response to them in a form that would be excellent as a handout of Christian theology written for the Muslim environment.
3. The goal of Gerasimus's Apology is twofold: first, to counter the argument put forward by Muslims concerning Christian scriptures and central doctrines, and second, to commend Christianity as the true religion both to his fellow Christians

553 Cf. Pietruschka 2005, 29.

and to Muslim debate partners. For this, Gerasimus uses every tool at his disposal: traditional arguments from the Fathers (especially the Cappadocians, John of Damascus, and Theodor Abū Qurrah), Greek logic, an extensive knowledge of Christian scripture, and an accurate grasp of Islam and its theological implications. Although he rarely cites the writings of a particular author directly when he is addressing Muslims, careful examination of his argument reveals that he is well-educated in Syriac, the Greek intellectual tradition, with an added awareness of Islam and a good knowledge of Arabic.

4. It should be emphasized that Gerasimus's knowledge of Islam appears to have developed through direct engagement with Muslims. His responses exhibit the signs of having been drawn from actual conversations and debates. His accuracy in recounting the objections and the argumentation of Muslims of his day suggests that he was probably a participant in staged debates between scholars of various religions. This is clear from the context of his Apology and from the extent and precision of his knowledge.
5. Gerasimus does not launch an open attack against Islam itself, but rather constructs a complex web of questions and answers designed to lead his readers to the conclusion that Trinitarian language provides the only appropriate description of God, and consequently that Christianity is the true religion. He does this in a manner that follows the general patterns found in the apologies of Christianity of 'Ammār al-Baṣrī and Abū Qurrah. Making use of the Christian apologetic approach, he first emphasizes the importance of miracles and prophecies, supported by a comparison of Christian teachings, scripture, and the prophets with those of other religions. These are measured according to various criteria; for example Gerasimus insists that it is critical that the truthfulness of any religion must be accessible to all people. Finally, by means of a set of negative criteria, all religions, except Christianity, are eliminated from being the true religion of God. As evidence in support of his thesis, he lays out common themes concerning the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, for which he then supplies explanations of various rituals and customs in a manner that he believes will be convincing to those of his own community who are confused, or inclined to embrace Islam, as well as to those Muslims who are engaged in polemics directed at exposing what they believe are inconsistencies and errors in Christian faith and practice.
6. At its core, Gerasimus's apologetic approach is clearly Neoplatonic, with its philosophical premise that human beings can discover the existence of God through reason. Created humanity must in some manner reflect the God who created it, and human perfection points to those qualities in the Creator. Consequently, one must use reason to evaluate religious doctrines in light of what can be known by the human mind. Further, the veracity of any religion can only be established when it can be shown that the sole motivation for a person to

adhere to that faith is divine proof. This, according to Gerasimus, demonstrates that Christianity is the only religion which fulfills these criteria.

7. Gerasimus was also a *mutakallim* in his own right, the Christian counterpart to those Muslim scholars who sought to defend their faith through rational arguments. In an effort to argue the legitimacy of Christianity, Gerasimus attempts to create a common language that influences the meaning of terminology and concepts of intellectual development in Muslim-Christian debates. Such language would set the stage for centuries to come. This is certainly his greatest contribution.

Contemporary Contribution to Interfaith Dialogue

The issues discussed in the Christian Apology of Gerasimus have acquired a particular importance today. It is an obvious fact that many Christian beliefs differ from those held by Muslims. However, the fact that beliefs differ does not mean that one side should dismiss the other. These differences should not be diluted, or ignored, because they will not disappear. Acknowledging them is just as important as recognizing the beliefs Christian and Muslims hold in common. Gerasimus's Apology teaches us the right attitude in interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Christians.

Interfaith dialogue is a good way of testing how open we are in our minds and our hearts to people of other faiths. It requires commitment to both truth and love. Dialogue between Christians and Muslims is a serious business; it is primarily concerned with the truth about God, oneself, fellow human beings and the world in which we live. Political correctness, ignorance, or theological relativism may lead to a superficial agreement between us. A confrontational debate, on the other hand, may run the risk of causing antagonism, which would hinder the search for truth. Only love, demonstrated through genuinely peaceful relationships, can create the necessary conditions for the truth to emerge and for mutual understanding to develop. When we talk about interfaith dialogue, two important terms come to mind: conversion and tolerance.

While *conversion* is neither the immediate nor the only aim of dialogue, it must be accepted as a possible outcome. There are fundamental differences between Christianity and Islam on which it would be worth taking up a position. To be *tolerant* neither denies nor minimizes the theological difference between Christianity and Islam. Christians and Muslims will be genuinely tolerant only when they have accepted the idea that debate, or dialogue, may lead to conversions either to Christianity or to Islam. True tolerance is to accept the other, not by ignoring the distance between each other, but by measuring that distance accurately and by recognizing that whoever wants to cross over has the right and freedom to do so.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Gerasimus's Apology is an important piece of Arab Christian literature and is an example of what it might have been like, and might be like, to debate with Muslims. It is a part of the Christian tradition and the

immense number of records that make up the Arab Christian heritage. Arab Christian theological and dialogical writings illustrate the readiness of Christian to engage in a sincere dialogue with Muslims. By repeating who they are, Christian Arabs give a reason for their hope, as St. Peter clearly counseled Christians, “always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.”⁵⁵⁴ In his treatise, Gerasimus follows the biblical counsel and gives the reason for his hope, namely his belief in the person of Jesus Christ.

554 1 Peter 3:15.

Index of the Most Important Words in Arabic

أ			
أبو	أَبٌ	father	27, 36, 55, 60, 61, 64, 66, 85, 104, 128, 135, 196, 313, 421
	آبَاءٌ	pl. fathers	416
	الْأَبُ	the Father (God)	55, 60, 66, 64, 131, 427, 520
	أَبُوَّةٌ	fatherhood	313
ابراهيم	إِبْرَاهِيمَ	Abraham	347, 379, 421, 422
ابليس	إِبْلِيسَ	Satan	133, 196, 247, 243
أدب	أَدَّبَ	to discipline	36, 37, 41 ² , 42
	أَدَبٌ	discipline	38
	آدَابٌ	disciplines	39
آدم	آدَمَ	Adam	58, 132, 142, 186, 188, 440
أرض	أَرْضٌ	earth	31, 461, 463
	أَرْضِيٌّ	adj. earthly	33, 281, 441, 428
أزل	أَزَلِيٌّ	adj. eternal	61 ² , 80, 119, 128
اسرائيل	إِسْرَائِيلَ	Israel	8, 42, 264, 404, 415, 419, 432, 512, 530
أمن	آمَنَ	to believe	32, 347, 518
	أَمَانَةٌ	faith	525, 345, 480
	أَمَانٌ	security	485
	مُؤْمِنٌ	believer	4, 5, 31, 352, 429, 525, 283, 523, 529
اقنوم	قُنُومٌ	(Syriac) person	67, 79, 208
	أَقْنَامٌ	pl. persons	75, 79, 85, 313
	قُنُومِيٌّ	adj. personal	426
إله	تَلَّهَ	to divinize	120, 197
	إِلَهٌ	god	58, 80, 85, 105
	الله	God	8, 9, 192, 196, 200, 241, 247, 263, 268, 308, 320, 329, 353, 380, 388, 391, 395, 418, 425, 452, 455, 458
	آلِهَةٌ	pl. gods	55, 74, 85, 313
	إِلَهِيٌّ	adj. divine	34, 104, 105, 106, 112, 115, 121, 131, 290, 323, 328, 345, 356, 383
أمم	أُمَّةٌ	nation	9, 34, 405, 464, 502
	أُمَّمٌ	pl. nations	9, 18, 347, 421, 455, 457, 511, 521, 525, 529

أم	أُمُّ	mother	437
أمر	أَمَرَ	to command	229, 264, 268, 289, 363, 366, 412, 415, 482
	أَمْرٌ	matter	22, 284
	أَمْرٌ	plan	202, 365, 470
انجيل	إِنْجِيلٌ	Gospel	25, 105, 269, 530
	إِنْجِيلِيٌّ	adj. evangelical	345, 524
أنس	إِنْسَانٌ	man	58, 115, 183, 192, 206, 247, 441
	إِنْسَانِيٌّ	adj. human	59, 351
أهل	أَهْلٌ	people	379, 526

ب

بدأ	بَدَأَ	to begin	157
	بَدْءٌ	beginning	205
	مَبْدَأٌ	norm	325
برك	بَارَكَ	to bless	135, 194, 291
	بِرْكَةٌ	blessing	279, 361, 369
برأ	الْبَارِي	The Creator	71, 132, 143, 146, 188, 241, 336, 374, 379, 415, 456
برنية	بَرِّيَّةٌ	Clay pot	162, 169, 176,
بشر	بِشْرَاةٌ	preaching	2, 448, 450
بولس	بُولُسٌ	Paul	38, 52, 54, 96, 255, 530
بوب	بَابٌ	door	343
		matter	24, 131, 188, 203, 229, 230, 239, 313

ت

تبع	تَبَعَ	to follow	65, 108, 109, 133, 209, 265, 494, 518
ترك	تَرَكَ	to allow	133, 145, 147
		to abandon	200, 229, 457
خلا	(خَالَ) عَنِ	to abandon	9, 133
	(خَالَ) مِنْ	to overlook	20
تلمذ	تَلْمِذٌ	student	23 ²
	تَلَامِيذٌ	pl. students	411, 521
		pl. disciples	521
تم	تَمَّمَ	to make complete	173, 191, 262, 268, 300, 394, ² 483

ث

ثَبَتَ	ثَبَّتَ	to confirm	456
	ثَابِتٌ	adj. firm	488
	ثَبَاتٌ	lasting	20
	تَثْبِيْتٌ	confirmation	2
ثَلَاثٌ	ثَلَاثَةٌ	three	55, 56, 59, 74, 75, 79, 81, 83, 85, 313
	ثَالُوثٌ	Trinity	75
ثَمَنٌ	ثَمَنٌ	price	191, 192
	ثَمِيْنٌ	valuable	44, 519
ج			
جَاءَ	(جَاءَ إِلَى)	to come	128
	يَجِيءُ	coming	383, 516, 467
جرح	جِرَاحَاتٌ	pl. wounds	258, 260
	جَسَمٌ	to embody	123
جسَم	جِسْمٌ	flesh	112 ² , 119, 210, 236, 237, 275, 276, 339, 348, 351
	جِسْمَانِيٌّ	adj. fleshly	65, 66, 327, 342
جسد	جَسَدٌ	becomes incarnate	129
	تَجَسَّدَ	Incarnation	213, 423, 256, 423
	جَسَدٌ	body	30, 115, 121, 131, 170, 198, 202, 256, 274, 276, 280, 288 ² , 439
	أَجْسَادٌ	Pl. bodies	112, 339
جند	جُنُودٌ	Pl. soldiers	237, 244, 261, 470, 511
	جُنْدِيَّةٌ	military life	318
جهنم	جَهَنَّمَ	hell	314
جواب	جَوَابٌ	answer	18, 19, 20, 27, 74, 86, 104, 406, 415
جوهر	جَوْهَرٌ	substance	68, 76, 80, 121, 131, 341
ح			
حيد	حَاذٌ	to stray	41, 43, 232, 261
حنو	حَانُوتٌ	store	159, 161, 168, 173, 181
حَبٌّ	أَحَبُّ	to love	37
	مَحَبَّةٌ	love	160, 161, 167, 178, 204, 289, 290, 386
حجج	حَبِيْبٌ	beloved	160
	حُجَجٌ	pl. objections	1, 143
حرم	حَرَامٌ	unlawful	354
حرك	حَرَكٌ	to move	226, 234

حرر	حُرِّيَّة	freedom	138, 147, 154
حسد	حَسَدَ	to envy	164, 253
	حُسَاد	pl. envious	169, 172, 177, 184
حسس	حَوَّاس	pl. sense (five sense)	222, 250, 419
حسن	إِحْسَان	adj. charity	93, 94, 151, 164, 218, 450, 469, 486, 503
	حُسْن	beauty	219, 360
	أَحْسَن	adj. best	478, 506
حفظ	حَفِظَ	to keep	264, 268, 415
حقق	حَقَّقَ	to affirm	162
		to fulfill	330, 343, 494
	حَقَّ	truth	6, 17, 20, 270, 295
حكم	حِكْمَة	wisdom	35, 68, 95, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 194, 201, 212, 213, 230
	حَكِيم	wise	98
همي	مُحَامَاة	defense	1
حوي	حَوَى	to contain	1, 192
حيي	حَيَّة	snake	278, 280
	حَيَاة	life	140, 141, 165, 211, 281, 295

خ

خبر	خَبِرَ	knowledge	396, 397, 426
ختن	خِتَانَة	circumcision	265, 280, 347, 354, 389
خدع	خَدَعَ	to deceive	197, 198, 211, 223, 240
	خَادِع	adj. deceiver	197, 211
	خَدِيعَة	deception	196, 472
	مُخْدُوع	deceived	202, 220
	خِدَاع	deceitfulness	206, 220, 232, 239
خطب	خَاطَبَ	to communicate	112, 114
	خِطَاب	speech	114, 380
خطئ	خَطِئَ	sin	185, 210, 279, 288
	خَطَايَا	pl. sins	49, 294, 299
خلط	أَخَارَطَ	Pl. mixture	410, 412, 414
	أَخَارَطَ	humor, the four fluids of the body, blood, phlegm, choler, and black bile	163
	اخْتِلَاط	adj. Mixing	425

خلف	خَالَفَ	to differ from	67
	خِلَافٍ	difference	67, 78
	(مُخْتَلِفٍ) فِي	diverse	22, 222, 326, 390, 418
خلص	خَلَّصَ	to save	16, 32, 99, 149, 193
	خِلَاصٍ	salvation	11, 29, 31, 113, 134, 148, 185, 203, 205, 229, 230, 270, 278, 392, 420, 464, 524
	مُخَلِّصٍ	savior	193, 212
خلق	خَلَقَ	to create	70, 137, 143
	الخالق	The Creator	70, 312, 425
	مَخْلُوقٍ	creation	58, 136, 332
د			
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The book presents the medieval Christian author Gerasimus and his discussion with Islam, who as a philosopher and theologian used examples from the past to buttress his response to the critics of Christianity. His aim was to show that Christian teachings were not irrational, but complex and subtle. His work, innovative and the fruit of his own insights, marks a departure from the early apologists in response to two important changes in the cultural context of the time. The first of those was the introduction of Arabic as the new language of intellectual discourse, which was not easily accommodating for expressing the traditional Christian doctrine, and required the development of a vocabulary from the terminology that was already heavily influenced by the Qur'anic worldview. Secondly, the new religion, which challenged Christianity was an absolute monotheism, and shared neither a common scriptural or cultural heritage, while rejecting the very possibility of Trinity and Incarnation.



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