

CHAPTER XI

How in the Creation of All Things the Lord had Present to His Mind Christ our Lord and His Most Holy Mother, and how He Chose and Favored His People Prefiguring these Mysteries.

133. In chapter VIII of the Proverbs Wisdom says of Himself that in the creation of all things He was present with the Most High forming all things (Prov. 8:30). And I said above (54) this Wisdom is the Incarnate Word, who with his most holy Mother was present when in his divine mind God resolved upon the creation of the whole world; for in that instant the Son was not only with the eternal Father and the Holy Ghost in the unity of the divine essence, but also the humanity which He was to take occupied the first place among all creation foreseen and formed in the divine mind of the Father, with the human nature of his most holy Mother, who was to administer his humanity in her most pure womb. In these two persons were foreseen all his works, and for their sake the Most High obliged Himself not to heed (according to our manner of speaking) all the human race could do to disoblige Him, along with the fallen angels themselves, which could cause Him not to proceed with the creation of the rest of the human race and of the creatures He was preparing for the service of men.

134. The Most High looked upon his onlybegotten Son made man, and upon his most holy Mother, as Models whom He had formed by the grandeur of his wisdom and power, so they could serve as the originals from whom would be copied the entire human race. Thus by assimilating it to these two images of his divinity, all the rest of men could issue forth similar to God by means of these Models. He also created the material things necessary for human life, but with such wisdom that some of them also serve as symbols to represent in a certain way these two beings whom He primarily saw and they would serve, Christ and Mary most holy. For this reason He made the two luminaries of heaven, the sun and the moon (Gen. 1:16), that in dividing the day and the night they would symbolize Christ, the Sun of justice, and his most holy Mother, who is beautiful as the moon (Cant. 6:9), for they divide the light and day of grace from the night of sin; and by its continual influences the sun illumines the moon, and both together illumine all other creatures from the firmament, along with the stars and the rest unto the limit of the universe.

135. He created the rest of the beings and added to them greater perfection, seeing they were to serve Christ and most holy Mary, and through them the rest of men, for whom before they issued from their nothingness He set a most delightful table, abundant, secure, and more memorable than that of Assuerus (Esther 1:3), because He was to create man for his delight, and invite them to the feasts of his knowledge and love; and as a courteous and generous Lord, He did not desire the invited guests to wait, but rather each one find himself seated and served at the table of the divine knowledge and love,* losing no time in what was of such importance as knowing and praising their omnipotent Creator.

136. On the sixth day of creation He formed and created Adam (Gen. 1:27) as a thirty-three year old man, the same age in which Christ our Good would be at his death, and so similar to the most holy humanity of Christ that in body he was scarcely distinguishable, and in soul also assimilated to his. From Adam He formed Eve so similar to the Virgin that she resembled Her in all her features and person. God looked with highest pleasure and benevolence upon these two

* cf. Lk. 22:27 [Ed.]

portraits of the originals, and for their sake He gave them many blessings, as if to delight Himself with them and their descendants until the time would arrive in which He would form Christ and Mary.

137. But the happy state in which God had created the two first parents of the human race did not last long; for immediately the envy of the serpent was aroused against them, as one who was waiting for their creation. Although Lucifer could not see the formation of Adam and Eve, as he saw all other things the moment they were created, because the Lord did not desire to manifest to him the work of the creation of man, nor the formation of Eve from the rib, all this being hidden from him for a certain space of time until the two were together; yet when the demon saw the admirable composition of human nature above all other creatures, and the beauty of their souls, as well as the bodies of Adam and Eve, and recognized the paternal love which the Lord looked upon them, and that He had made them masters and lords of all creation, giving them hope of eternal life, then the wrath of this dragon was even more infuriated, and there is no language which can express the uproar with which that ferocious beast was shaken, driving his envy to take away their lives. Like a lion he would have done so if he did not know that a superior force was holding him back; yet he conferred and deliberated the means by which he could cast them down from the grace of the Most High and turn them against Him.

138. Here Lucifer deluded himself; for the Lord from the beginning had mysteriously revealed to him that the Word would be made man in the womb of most holy Mary, yet not declaring to him how and when, and therefore concealed from him the creation of Adam and the formation of Eve, so he would immediately begin to experience this ignorance of the mystery and time of the Incarnation. And since his anger and vigilance were specifically directed against Christ and Mary, he suspected that Adam had come forth from Eve, and She was the Mother and he was the Incarnate Word. This suspicion grew even stronger in the demon when he felt the divine power which prevented him from harming the life of these creatures. Yet on the other hand when he became aware of the precepts of God given them (for these were not hidden from him, since he heard the discussion of Adam and Eve about them), he emerged little by little from his doubt, listening to the conversations of the two first parents, testing their natures, and beginning to surround them like a ravenous lion (I Peter 5:8), seeking an entrance through the inclinations he recognized in each of them. However, until he was completely disillusioned, he always wavered between his wrath against Christ and Mary, and the fear of being conquered by them; and most of all he dreaded the confusion of being conquered by Mary, the Queen of heaven, who would be a mere creature and not God.

139. Considering therefore the precept which Adam and Eve had received, and armed with the deceitful lie, Lucifer entered by it to tempt them, beginning to oppose and contradict the divine will with all determination. He did not approach the man first, but the woman, because he recognized her nature was more delicate and weak, and it was most certain she would not be Christ, and he had the highest wrath against her due to the sign he had seen in heaven, and the threat which God had made against him through that Woman. All this drew and drove him first against Eve rather than Adam. Before he manifested himself to her he cast many powerful and disordered thoughts or imaginings at her, in order to find her somewhat troubled and preoccupied; yet since I have written something about this elsewhere I will not elaborate here in describing how forcefully and inhumanly he tempted her. It is enough here for my purpose to know what the Holy Scriptures say, that he took the form of a serpent (Gen. 3:1), and in it spoke

to Eve, drawing her into a conversation which she should not have permitted; for listening to him and responding to him,* she came to believe him, and he convinced her to break the precept of God for herself, and finally to persuade her husband to break it for himself, causing damage to him and all mortals, losing for them and for us the happy state in which the Most High had placed them.

140. When Lucifer saw the fall of both of them, and the interior beauty of grace and original justice had been changed into the ugliness of sin, incredible was the elation and triumph which he showed to his demons. But this elation was soon lost, because he learned how kindly (and not as he wished) the merciful divine love had been shown to the transgressors, and how He gave them a chance of penance and hope of pardon and his grace, for which they disposed themselves by sorrow and contrition. Lucifer recognized that the beauty of grace and the friendship of God was restored to them, so once again all hell was in turmoil upon seeing the effects of contrition. His lamentation grew greater seeing the sentence which God pronounced upon the guilty ones, in which the demon was proven wrong; and above all he was tormented by hearing that threat repeated to him: The Woman shall crush thy head (Gen. 3:15), as he had heard in heaven.

141. The offspring of Eve multiplied after the sin, and through it arose the distinction and multiplication of the good and the bad, the elect and the reprobate, ones who followed Christ our Redeemer and Master, and the others following Satan. The elect follow their Leader by faith, humility, charity, patience, and all the virtues; and in order to achieve victory they are assisted, helped and beautified by divine grace and gifts which the Lord himself, the Repairer of all, bestowed upon them. But the reprobate, without receiving any of these benefits from their false leader, nor await any other reward than the eternal pain and confusion of hell, follow him by pride, presumption, ambition, foolishness, and wicked deeds, led into them by the father of lies and the author of sin.

142. Nevertheless, the Most High in his ineffable goodness gave them his blessing, so with it the human race could grow and multiply. Yet his most exalted providence permitted in the firstborn of Eve to exhibit the first fruits of the first sin in the unjust Cain, and the second to signify in the innocent Abel (Gen. 4:3ff.) the Repairer of sin, Christ our Lord, beginning jointly to signify Him both in figure and in imitation, so in the first just man were inaugurated the law of Christ and his doctrine, of which all the rest of the just were to be disciples, suffering for justice' sake, and being hated and oppressed by sinners, the reprobate, and their own brothers (Mt. 10:21-22). Thus patience, humility and meekness began to appear in Abel, and envy and all wickedness in Cain, which wrought the benefit of the just man and his own perdition, the wicked triumphing and the good suffering; and thus began in these spectacles those the world would witness in its progress, composed of the two cities, Jerusalem for the just and Babylon for the reprobate, each with its own leader and head.

143. The Most High also desired the first Adam to be a figure of the second in the order of creation; for just as before the creation of the first man He created and ordered for him the republic of all creatures, of which He made him lord and head, so likewise with his Onlybegotten He allowed many ages to pass before sending Him, so He would find a people in the multiplication of the human race, of whom He was to be Head, Master, and true King, in order that there would not be a single moment in which He was without a people and followers. This is the wonderful harmony and order in which the divine wisdom arranged all things, making that later in execution which was first in intention.

* cf. *Incarnation* 355 [Ed.]

144. As the world progressed, in order for the Word to descend from the bosom of the Father and vest Himself in our mortality, God chose and prepared a people set apart and most noble, the most admirable there ever was before or since,* and within it an illustrious and holy lineage, from which He would descend according to human flesh. I will not linger in referring to this genealogy of Christ our Lord, because it is not necessary, and the holy Evangelists have recounted it (Mt. 1:1-16; Lk. 3:23-38). I will only note, with all the praise of the Most High of which I am capable, that on many occasions and at various times He has shown me the incomparable love He had for his people, the favors He bestowed upon them, and the sacraments and mysteries He enshrined in them, as they have later been manifested in his holy Church; for at no time has He slumbered or slept who has constituted Himself the keeper of Israel (Ps. 120:4).

145. He made most holy Prophets and Patriarchs, who in figures and prophecies announced to us from afar that which we now have in possession, in order for us to venerate them, knowing the appreciation they had for the law of grace, and the longings and clamors with which they desired and prayed for it. To this people God manifested his immutable being by many revelations, and they revealed them to us by the Scriptures, containing in them immense mysteries which we learn and know by faith. All of them were fulfilled and confirmed by the Incarnate Word, leaving us with this secure doctrine and the nourishment of the Holy Scriptures in his Church. Although the Prophets and just of that people could not see Christ with their eyes, yet the Lord was very generous with them, manifesting Himself by prophecies, and stirring their hearts so they might pray for his coming and for the Redemption of the whole human race. The consonance and harmony of all these prophecies, mysteries and longings of the ancient Fathers were for the Most High a most sweet music which resonated in the depths of his bosom, with which (as it seems to us) He delighted Himself until the time (and even shortening it) He would descend and converse with men.[†]

146. In order not to detain myself too much in what the Lord revealed to me about this subject, and in order to arrive at the preparations which the Lord made for sending to the world the Incarnate Word and his most holy Mother, I will speak briefly about them in the order of Holy Scriptures. Genesis contains what concerns the beginning and the creation of the world for the human race; the division of the lands and peoples; the chastisement and restoration; the confusion of tongues, and the origin of the chosen race, brought low in Egypt; and many other great sacraments which God declared to Moses, so through him we could be given to know the love and justice He had shown to men from the beginning in order to draw them to his knowledge and service, and point out what He had determined to do in the future.

147. Exodus contains what happened in Egypt with the chosen people; the plagues and punishments He sent in order to mysteriously rescue them; their departure and crossing through the sea; the written law given with such great preparations and wonders; and many other sacraments and mysteries which the Lord worked for his people, sometimes afflicting their enemies and other times themselves, chastising their enemies as a severe Judge and correcting the chosen people as a most loving Father, teaching them to recognize the benefit of hardships. He performed great wonders through the rod of Moses, as a symbol of the cross upon which the Incarnate Word was to be sacrificed as the Lamb, a remedy for some and ruin for others (Lk.

* Most Rev. Samaniego in note XX of Part I of his Spanish edition explains that Ven. Mary is here speaking of the children of Israel as superior to all other *temporal* peoples, whereas Christians are a *spiritual* people and hence superior in this regard. [Ed.]

[†] cf. Baruch 3:38 [Ed.]

2:34), as the rod was, and the Red Sea which protected the people with walls of water, and by them drowned the Egyptians. With all these mysteries He wove the lives of the holy ones with joy and sorrow, with labors and comforts; and all of it with infinite wisdom and providence He copied from the Life and Death of Christ our Lord.

148. Leviticus describes and ordains many sacrifices and legal ceremonies to appease God, because they signified the Lamb who was to be sacrificed for all, and afterward what we would do regarding His Majesty in the true execution of these figurative sacrifices. It also describes the vestments of Aaron, high priest and figure of Christ, though Christ was not to be of that inferior order, but *according to the order of Melchisedech* (Ps. 109:4).

149. Numbers contains the dwellings of the Israelites in the desert, prefiguring what would be done with the holy Church, with his Onlybegotten made man and his most holy Mother, and also with the rest of the just, who in various aspects were all included in those events regarding the pillar of fire, the manna, the rock which gave water, and other great mysteries which contained in other works recorded there. It also contains the mysteries pertaining to arithmetic, and in everything there are profound sacraments.

150. Deuteronomy is like a second law, not different, but repeated in a different way and more appropriately figurative of the law of the Gospel; for because the Incarnation was to be delayed (according to the hidden judgments of God and the circumstances known to his wisdom) He renewed and rearranged these laws so they would be more like to those which He was to establish through his onlybegotten Son.

151. Jesus Nave or Josue conducts the people of God into the promised land, dividing the Jordan for a passage, and performing great feats as a most express figure of our Redeemer in name and in works, which represented the destruction of the kingdoms which the demon possessed, and the separation and division of the good and bad which will take place on the last day.

152. After Josue (with the people already in possession of the promised and desired land, which first and foremost represents the Church acquired by Jesus Christ with the price of his blood) comes the book of the Judges ordained by God for the government of his people, particularly in the wars which because of their continuous sins and idolatries they suffered from the Philistines and other neighboring enemies, from which God defended and liberated them when they returned to Him by penance and amendment of life. In this book is related what Deborah did, judging the people and liberating them from a great oppression, and also those of Jahel, who contributed to the victory, strong and courageous women both. All these histories are express figures and testimonies of what happens in the Church.

153. After the Judges are the Kings for whom the Israelites petitioned, wanting to be like the other nations in their governance. These books contain great mysteries of the coming of the Messiah. The deaths of Heli the priest and Saul the king represent the passing of the old law. Sadoc and David signify the new reign and priesthood of Christ, and the Church with the small number which would be in it compared to the rest of the world. The other kings of Israel and Juda and their captivities indicate other great mysteries of the holy Church.

154. During those times lived the most patient Job, whose words are so mysterious that none of them is without profound sacraments regarding the life of Christ our Lord, the resurrection of the dead, the Last Judgment in the same flesh in the quantity which each one has, and the strength and cunning of the demon and his conflicts. Above all God placed him as a mirror of patience for mortals, so we might all learn from him how we must endure suffering after the death of Christ,

which we have present to us, since there was a saint who long before Christ suffered imitated Him with such patience.

155. Yet in the many and great Prophets whom God sent to his people in the time of their kings (because then it was more necessary for them) there were so many mysteries and sacraments that the Most High did not leave any of them unrevealed and undeclared which pertained to the coming of the Messiah and his law. He did the same, though more from afar, with the ancient Fathers and Patriarchs. All this was to multiply the portraits and as it were the images of the Incarnate Word, and predispose and prepare for Him a people, and the law which He was to teach.

156. In the three great patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob He deposited great and precious pledges so He could be called the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, desiring to honor Himself with this name in order to honor them, manifesting their dignity and excellent virtues, and the sacraments entrusted to them so they could give God such an honorable name. In order to provide that very express representation of what the eternal Father was to do with his Onlybegotten, He tempted and tried the patriarch Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice his only son Isaac (Gen. 22:1). But when the obedient father was about to execute the sacrifice, he was impeded by the same Lord who had given the command; for the execution of such a heroic work was reserved only to the eternal Father, effectually sacrificing his Onlybegotten. Only in attempt can Abraham be said to have done the same, from which it is manifest that the jealousy of divine love is strong as death (Cant. 8:6). Yet it was not proper for such an expressive figure to remain incomplete, so it was fulfilled by Abraham sacrificing a ram, being likewise a figure of the Lamb who was to take away the sins of the world (Jn. 1:29).

157. To Jacob was shown that mysterious ladder (Gen. 28:12), full of sacraments and meanings; and the greatest was to represent the Incarnate Word, who is the path and the ladder by which we ascend to the Father, and by it His Majesty descended to us. By this ladder also ascend and descend the Angels who enlighten and guard us, bearing us up in their hands so we do not stumble on the stones of the errors, heresies and vices strewn along the path of mortal life (Ps. 90:12). In their midst let us ascend safely up this ladder with the faith and hope of his holy Church, which is the house of God, where there is nothing but sanctity and the gate of heaven.

158. To Moses, in order to make him the lord of Pharaoh and the leader of his people Israel, He showed that mystical bush which burned without being consumed (Ex. 3:2), in order to prophetically signify the Divinity enclosed within the humanity, without suppressing the Divinity within the humanity, nor consuming the humanity in the Divinity. Together with this it also signified the perpetual virginity of the Mother of the Incarnate Word, not only of her body but also of her soul, and that it would not stain or dishonor Her to be a daughter of Adam, nor come vested and derived from that nature seared by original sin.

159. He also made David *according to his heart* (I Kg. 13:14), so he could worthily sing the mercies of the Most High (Ps. 88:2), comprehending in his Psalms all the sacraments and mysteries not only of the law of grace, but of the written and natural laws (Ps. 118 and 18). The testimonies, judgments and works of the Lord did not just fall from his mouth, since he also held them in his heart in order to meditate upon them day and night. In forgiving injuries he was an express image or figure of Christ who was to forgive us; and thus the most clear and firm promises of the coming of the Redeemer were made to him.

160. Solomon, a peaceful king, and in this respect a figure of the true King of kings, propagated his great wisdom by diverse kinds of writings the mysteries and sacraments of Christ, especially in the metaphor of the Canticles, in which is enclosed the mysteries of the Incarnate

Word, of his most holy Mother, and of the Church and the faithful. He taught also the instruction of morals in various ways; and from that spring the waters of truth and life have come to many other writers.

161. Yet who can worthily extol the benefit the Lord has given us, through his people, in the praiseworthy number of holy Prophets? Through them the eternal Wisdom copiously poured forth the grace of prophecy, illuminating his Church with such lights, which from so far away began to point out to us the Sun of justice, and the rays He was to give in the law of grace with his works. The two great Prophets, Isaias and Jeremias, were chosen to proclaim to us loftily and sweetly the mysteries of the Incarnation of the Word, his birth, life and death. Isaias promised us *a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel* (Is. 7:14), and that a little Child shall be born for us, and carry his rule upon his shoulder (Is. 9:6). Everything else about the life of Christ he announced with such clearness that his prophecy seems like a Gospel. Jeremias declared the news that God will cause a woman to bear in her womb a man, who alone can be Christ, God and perfect man (Jer. 31:22). He announced his coming, his passion, ignominies and death (Lam. 3). I am left in awe and admiration in the consideration of these Prophets. Isaias asks the Lord to send the Lamb who is to rule the world, from the rock of the desert to the mountain of the daughter of Sion (Is. 16:1); for this Lamb, who is the Word made flesh, calls the heavens a desert, where as God He dwelt without men. Isaias calls Him a rock due to the stability, firmness, and eternal tranquility He enjoys. The mountain, to which he asks Him to come, is in the mystical sense the holy Church, and primarily most holy Mary, the Daughter of the vision of peace, which is Sion. The Prophet interposes Her as the Mediatrix to induce the eternal Father to send the Lamb, his Onlybegotten, because in all the rest of the human race there was no one who could oblige Him so much as to have such a Mother, who was to clothe this Lamb with the flesh and fleece^{*} of his most holy humanity; this is what is contained in that most sweet prayer and prophecy of Isaias.

162. Ezekiel also saw this Virgin Mother in the figure or metaphor of that shut gate (Ez. 44:2), which was open only for the God of Israel, and through which no one else could enter. Habacuc contemplates Christ our Lord on the cross, and with profound words prophesies the mysteries of the Redemption and the wonderful effects of the Passion and Death of our Redeemer (Hab. 3). Joel describes the land of the twelve tribes, a figure of the twelve Apostles, who were to be the heads of all the children of the Church. He also announces the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the servants and handmaids of the Most High (Joel 2:28), indicating the time of the coming and the life of Christ. And all the other Prophets announced in turn the same, for the Most High desired all to be declared and prophesied, and depicted so far in advance and so abundantly, so all these admirable works would testify to the love and care which God had for men, and how He enriched his Church. He likewise desired to incriminate and reproach our lukewarmness; for these ancient Fathers and Prophets, with only the shadows and figures before them, were inflamed with divine love, and sang canticles of praise and glory to the Lord, and we, who possess the truth and the clear day of grace, remain buried in forgetfulness of such benefits, and forsaking the light we seek darkness.

^{*} cf. Ps. 71:6 [Ed.]