

The Epistle of Barnabas

By Saint Basil the Great (329 – 379)

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Chapter 1. After the salutation, the writer declares that he would communicate to his brethren something of that which he had himself received.

All hail, you sons and daughters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us in peace.

Seeing that the divine fruits of righteousness abound among you, I [rejoice](#) exceedingly and above measure in your [happy](#) and honoured spirits, because you have with such effect received the engrafted spiritual gift. Wherefore also I inwardly [rejoice](#) the more, hoping to be saved, because I [truly](#) perceive in you the Spirit poured forth from the rich Lord of [love](#). Your greatly desired appearance has thus filled me with astonishment over you. I am therefore persuaded of this, and fully convinced in my own [mind](#), that since I began to speak among you I understand many things, because the Lord has accompanied me in the way of righteousness. I am also on this account bound by the strictest obligation to [love](#) you above my own [soul](#), because great are the [faith](#) and [love](#) dwelling in you, while you hope for the life which He has promised. Considering this, therefore, that if I should take the trouble to communicate to you some portion of what I have myself received, it will prove to me a sufficient reward that I minister to such spirits, I have hastened briefly to write unto you, in order that, along with your [faith](#), you might have perfect [knowledge](#). The doctrines of the Lord, then, are three: the hope of life, the beginning and the completion of it. For the Lord has made [known](#) to us by the [prophets](#) both the things which are past and present, giving us also the [first-fruits](#) of the [knowledge](#) of things to come, which things as we see accomplished, one by one, we ought with the greater richness of [faith](#) and elevation of spirit to draw near to Him with reverence. I then, not as your teacher, but as one of yourselves, will set forth a few things by which in present circumstances you may be rendered the more joyful.

Chapter 2. The Jewish sacrifices are now abolished.

Since, therefore, the days are [evil](#), and [Satan](#) possesses the power of this world, we ought to give heed to ourselves, and diligently inquire into the ordinances of the Lord. Fear and patience, then, are helpers of our [faith](#); and long-suffering and continence are things which fight on our side. While these remain pure in what respects the Lord, Wisdom, Understanding, Science, and Knowledge [rejoice](#) along with them. For He has revealed to us by all the [prophets](#) that He needs neither [sacrifices](#), nor burnt-offerings, nor oblations,

saying thus, "What is the multitude of your [sacrifices](#) unto Me, says the Lord? I am full of burnt-offerings, and desire not the fat of lambs, and the blood of bulls and goats, not when you come to appear before Me: for who has required these things at your hands? Tread no more My courts, not though you bring with you fine flour. Incense is a vain abomination unto Me, and your new moons and sabbaths I cannot endure." He has therefore abolished these things, that the new law of [our Lord Jesus Christ](#), which is without the yoke of necessity, might have a human oblation. And again He says to them, "Did I command your fathers, when they went out from the land of [Egypt](#), to offer unto Me burnt-offerings and [sacrifices](#)? But this rather I commanded them, Let no one of you cherish any [evil](#) in his heart against his neighbour, and [love](#) not an [oath](#) of [falsehood](#)." ; [Zechariah 8:17](#) We ought therefore, being possessed of understanding, to perceive the gracious intention of our Father; for He speaks to us, desirous that we, not going astray like them, should ask how we may approach Him. To us, then, He declares, "A [sacrifice](#) [pleasing] to [God](#) is a broken spirit; a smell of sweet savour to the Lord is a heart that [glorifies](#) Him that made it." We ought therefore, brethren, carefully to inquire concerning our [salvation](#), lest the [wicked](#) one, having made his entrance by deceit, should hurl us forth from our [\[true\]](#) life.

Chapter 3. The fasts of the Jews are not true fasts, nor acceptable to God.

He says then to them again concerning these things, "Why do you fast to Me as on this day, says the Lord, that your voice should be heard with a cry? I have not chosen this fast, says the Lord, that a man should [humble](#) his [soul](#). Nor, though you bend your neck like a ring, and put upon you sackcloth and ashes, will you call it an acceptable fast." [Isaiah 58:4-5](#) To us He says, "Behold, this is the fast that I have chosen, says the Lord, not that a man should [humble](#) his [soul](#), but that he should loose every band of iniquity, untie the fastenings of harsh agreements, restore to liberty them that are bruised, tear in pieces every [unjust](#) engagement, feed the hungry with your bread, clothe the naked when you see him, bring the homeless into your house, not despise the [humble](#) if you behold him, and not [turn away] from the members of your own [family](#). Then shall your dawn break forth, and your healing shall quickly spring up, and righteousness shall go forth before you, and the [glory](#) of God shall encompass you; and then you shall call, and God shall hear you; while you are yet speaking, He shall say, Behold, I am with you; if you take away from yourself the chain [binding others], and the stretching forth of the hands [to [swear falsely](#)], and words of murmuring, and give cheerfully your bread to the hungry, and show compassion to the [soul](#) that has been humbled." [Isaiah 58:6-10](#) To this end, therefore, brethren, He is long-suffering, foreseeing how the people whom He has prepared shall with guilelessness [believe](#) in His Beloved. For He revealed all these things to us beforehand, that we should not rush forward as rash acceptors of their [laws](#).

Chapter 4. Antichrist is at hand: let us therefore avoid Jewish errors.

It therefore behoves us, who inquire much concerning events at hand, to search diligently into those things which are able to save us. Let us then utterly flee from all the works of iniquity, lest these should take hold of us; and let us [hate](#) the [error](#) of the present time, that we may set our [love](#) on the world to come: let us not give loose reins to our [soul](#), that it should have power to run with sinners and the [wicked](#), lest we become like them. The final stumbling-block (or source of danger) approaches, concerning which it is written, as [Enoch](#) says, "For for this end the Lord has cut short the times and the days, that His Beloved may hasten; and He will come to the inheritance." And the [prophet](#) also speaks thus: "Ten kingdoms shall reign upon the earth, and a little king shall rise up after them, who shall subdue under one three of the kings." In like manner Daniel says concerning the same, "And I beheld the fourth beast, [wicked](#) and powerful, and more savage than all the beasts of the earth, and how from it sprang up ten horns, and out of them a little budding horn, and how it subdued under one three of the great horns." You ought therefore to understand. And this also I further beg of you, as being one of you, and loving you both individually and collectively more than my own [soul](#), to take heed now to yourselves, and not to be like some, adding largely to your [sins](#), and saying, "The covenant is both theirs and ours." But they thus finally lost it, after [Moses](#) had already received it. For the [Scripture](#) says, "And [Moses](#) was [fasting](#) in the mount forty days and forty nights, and received the covenant from the Lord, tables of stone written with the finger of the hand of the Lord;" [Exodus 31:18](#), [Exodus 34:28](#) but turning away to [idols](#), they lost it. For the Lord speaks thus to [Moses](#): "[Moses](#) go down quickly; for the people whom you have brought out of the land of [Egypt](#) have transgressed." [Exodus 32:7](#); [Deuteronomy 9:12](#) And [Moses](#) understood [the meaning of God], and cast the two tables out of his hands; and their covenant was broken, in order that the covenant of the beloved Jesus might be sealed upon our heart, in the hope which flows from believing in Him. Now, being desirous to write many things to you, not as your teacher, but as becomes one who loves you, I have taken care not to fail to write to you from what I myself possess, with a view to your purification. We take earnest heed in these last days; for the whole [past] time of your [faith](#) will profit you nothing, unless now in this [wicked](#) time we also withstand coming sources of danger, as becomes the sons of [God](#). That the Black One may find no means of entrance, let us flee from every vanity, let us utterly [hate](#) the works of the way of [wickedness](#). Do not, by retiring apart, live a solitary life, as if you were already [fully] justified; but coming together in one place, make common inquiry concerning what tends to your general welfare. For the [Scripture](#) says, "Woe to them who are wise to themselves, and [prudent](#) in their own sight!" [Isaiah 5:21](#) Let us be spiritually-minded: let us be a perfect temple to [God](#). As much as in us lies, let us meditate upon the [fear](#) of [God](#), and let us keep His commandments, that we may [rejoice](#) in His ordinances. The Lord will judge the world without respect of [persons](#). Each will receive as he has done: if he is righteous, his righteousness will precede him; if he is [wicked](#), the reward of [wickedness](#) is before him. Take heed, lest resting at our ease, as those who are the called [of God], we should fall asleep in our [sins](#), and the [wicked](#) prince, acquiring power over us, should thrust us away from the kingdom of the Lord. And all the more attend to this, my brethren, when you reflect and behold, that after so great signs and wonders were wrought in [Israel](#), they were thus [at length] abandoned. Let us beware lest we be found [fulfilling that saying], as it is written, "Many are called, but few are chosen."

Chapter 5. The new covenant, founded on the sufferings of Christ, tends to our salvation, but to the Jews' destruction.

For to this end the Lord endured to deliver up His flesh to corruption, that we might be sanctified through the remission of [sins](#), which is effected by His blood of sprinkling. For it is written concerning Him, partly with reference to [Israel](#), and partly to us; and [the [Scripture](#)] says thus: "He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities: with His stripes we are healed. He was brought as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb which is dumb before its shearer." [Isaiah 53:5, 7](#) Therefore we ought to be deeply grateful to the Lord, because He has both made [known](#) to us things that are past, and has given us wisdom concerning things present, and has not left us without understanding in regard to things which are to come. Now, the [Scripture](#) says, "Not [unjustly](#) are nets spread out for birds." This means that the man perishes [justly](#), who, having a [knowledge](#) of the way of righteousness, rushes off into the way of darkness. And further, my brethren: if the Lord endured to suffer for our [soul](#), He being Lord of all the world, to whom God said at the foundation of the world, "Let us make man after our image, and after our likeness," [Genesis 1:26](#) understand how it was that He endured to suffer at the hand of men. The [prophets](#), having obtained [grace](#) from Him, prophesied concerning Him. And He (since it behoved Him to appear in flesh), that He might abolish death, and reveal the resurrection from the dead, endured [what and as He did], in order that He might fulfil the promise made unto the fathers, and by preparing a new people for Himself, might show, while He dwelt on earth, that He, when He has raised [mankind](#), will also judge them. Moreover, teaching [Israel](#), and doing so great [miracles](#) and signs, He preached [the [truth](#)] to him, and greatly loved him. But when He chose His own [apostles](#) who were to preach His [Gospel](#), [He did so from among those] who were sinners above all [sin](#), that He might show He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Then He manifested Himself to be the [Son of God](#). For if He had not come in the flesh, how could men have been saved by beholding Him? Since looking upon the sun which is to cease to exist, and is the work of His hands, their eyes are not able to bear his rays. The [Son of God](#) therefore came in the flesh with this view, that He might bring to a head the sum of their [sins](#) who had [persecuted](#) His [prophets](#) to the death. For this purpose, then, He endured. For God says, "The stroke of his flesh is from them;" and "when I shall smite the Shepherd, then the sheep of the flock shall be scattered." [Zechariah 13:7](#) He himself willed thus to suffer, for it was necessary that He should suffer on the tree. For says he who prophesies regarding Him, "Spare my [soul](#) from the sword, fasten my flesh with nails; for the assemblies of the [wicked](#) have risen up against me." And again he says, "Behold, I have given my back to scourges, and my cheeks to strokes, and I have set my countenance as a firm rock." [Isaiah 50:6-7](#)

Chapter 6. The sufferings of Christ, and the new covenant, were announced by the prophets.

When, therefore, He has fulfilled the commandment, what says He? "Who is he that will contend with Me? let him oppose Me: or who is he that will enter into judgment with Me? let him draw near to the servant of the Lord." [Isaiah 50:8](#) "Woe unto you, for you shall all wax old, like a garment, and the moth shall eat you up." [Isaiah 50:9](#) And again the [prophet](#) says, "Since as a mighty stone He is laid for crushing, behold I cast down for the foundations of Zion a stone, precious, elect, a corner-stone, [honourable](#)." Next, what says He? "And he who shall trust in it shall live for ever." Is our [hope](#), then, upon a stone? Far from it. But [the language is used] inasmuch as He laid his flesh [as a foundation] with power; for He says, "And He placed me as a firm rock." [Isaiah 50:7](#) And the [prophet](#) says again, "The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner." And again he says, "This is the great and wonderful day which the Lord has made." I write the more simply unto you, that you may understand. I am the off-scouring of your [love](#). What, then, again says the [prophet](#)? "The assembly of the [wicked](#) surrounded me; they encompassed me as bees do a honeycomb," and "upon my garment they cast lots." Since, therefore, He was about to be manifested and to suffer in the flesh, His [suffering](#) was foreshown. For the [prophet](#) speaks against [Israel](#), "Woe to their [soul](#), because they have counselled an [evil](#) counsel against themselves, [Isaiah 3:9](#) saying, Let us bind the just one, because he is displeasing to us." And [Moses](#) also says to them, "Behold these things, says the Lord God: Enter into the good land which the Lord swore [to give] to [Abraham](#), and Isaac, and Jacob, and inherit it, a land flowing with milk and honey." [Exodus 33:1](#); [Leviticus 20:24](#) What, then, says Knowledge? Learn: "Trust," she says, "in Him who is to be manifested to you in the flesh—that is, Jesus." For man is earth in a suffering state, for the formation of Adam was from the face of the earth. What, then, means this: "into the good land, a land flowing with milk and honey?" Blessed be our Lord, who has placed in us wisdom and understanding of secret things. For the [prophet](#) says, "Who shall understand the [parable](#) of the Lord, except him who is wise and [prudent](#), and who loves his Lord?" Since, therefore, having renewed us by the remission of our [sins](#), He has made us after another pattern, [it is His purpose] that we should possess the [soul](#) of children, inasmuch as He has created us anew by His Spirit. For the [Scripture](#) says concerning us, while He speaks to the [Son](#), "Let Us make man after Our image, and after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of heaven, and the fishes of the sea." [Genesis 1:26](#) And the Lord said, on beholding the fair creature man, "Increase, and multiply, and replenish the earth." [Genesis 1:28](#) These things [were spoken] to the Son. Again, I will show you how, in respect to us, He has accomplished a second fashioning in these last days. The Lord says, "Behold, I will make the last like the first." In reference to this, then, the [prophet](#) proclaimed, "Enter into the land flowing with milk and honey, and have dominion over it." [Exodus 33:3](#) Behold, therefore, we have been refashioned, as again He says in another [prophet](#), "Behold, says the Lord, I will take away from these, that is, from those whom the [Spirit of the Lord](#) foresaw, their stony hearts, and I will put hearts of flesh within them," [Ezekiel 11:19](#), [Ezekiel 36:26](#) because He was to be manifested in flesh, and to sojourn among us. For, my brethren, the habitation of our heart is a [holy](#) temple to the Lord. [Ephesians 2:21](#) For again says the Lord, "And wherewith shall I appear before the Lord my [God](#), and be [glorified](#)?" He says, "I will confess to you in the Church in the midst of my brethren; and I will praise you in the midst of the assembly of the [saints](#)." We, then, are they whom He has led into the good land. What, then, mean milk and

honey? This, that as the infant is kept alive first by honey, and then by milk, so also we, being quickened and kept alive by the [faith](#) of the promise and by the word, shall live ruling over the earth. But He said above, "Let them increase, and rule over the fishes." [Genesis 1:28](#) Who then is able to govern the beasts, or the fishes, or the fowls of heaven? For we ought to perceive that to govern implies authority, so that one should command and rule. If, therefore, this does not exist at present, yet still He has promised it to us. When? When we ourselves also have been made perfect [so as] to become heirs of the covenant of the Lord.

Chapter 7. Fasting, and the goat sent away, were types of Christ.

Understand, then, you children of [gladness](#), that the good Lord has foreshown all things to us, that we might [know](#) to whom we ought for everything to render thanksgiving and praise. If therefore the [Son of God](#), who is Lord [of all things], and who will judge the living and the dead, suffered, that His stroke might give us life, let us [believe](#) that the [Son of God](#) could not have suffered except for our sakes. Moreover, when fixed to the [cross](#), He had given Him to drink vinegar and gall. Harken how the [priests](#) of the people gave previous indications of this. His commandment having been written, the Lord enjoined, that whosoever did not keep the fast should be [put to death](#), because He also Himself was to offer in [sacrifice](#) for our [sins](#) the vessel of the [Spirit](#), in order that the type established in Isaac when he was offered upon the altar might be fully accomplished. What, then, says He in the [prophet](#)? "And let them eat of the goat which is offered, with [fasting](#), for all their [sins](#)." Attend carefully: "And let all the [priests](#) alone eat the inwards, unwashed with vinegar." Wherefore? Because to me, who am to offer my flesh for the [sins](#) of my new people, you are to give gall with vinegar to drink: eat alone, while the people fast and mourn in sackcloth and ashes. [These things were done] that He might show that it was necessary for Him to suffer for them. How, then, ran the commandment? Give your attention. Take two goats of goodly aspect, and similar to each other, and offer them. And let the [priest](#) take one as a burnt-offering for [sins](#). And what should they do with the other? "Accursed," says He, "is the one." Mark how the type of Jesus now comes out. "And all of you spit upon it, and pierce it, and encircle its head with scarlet wool, and thus let it be driven into the wilderness." And when all this has been done, he who bears the goat brings it into the [desert](#), and takes the wool off from it, and places that upon a shrub which is called *Rachia*, of which also we are accustomed to eat the fruits when we find them in the field. Of this kind of shrub alone the fruits are sweet. Why then, again, is this? Give good heed. [You see] "one upon the altar, and the other accursed;" and why [do you behold] the one that is accursed crowned? Because they shall see Him then in that day having a scarlet robe about his body down to his feet; and they shall say, Is not this He whom we once despised, and pierced, and mocked, and crucified? Truly this is He who then declared Himself to be the [Son of God](#). For how like is He to Him! With a view to this, [He required] the goats to be of goodly aspect, and similar, that, when they see Him then coming, they may be amazed by the likeness of the goat. Behold, then, the type of Jesus who was to suffer. But why is it that they place the wool in the midst of thorns? It is a type of Jesus set before the view of the [Church](#). [They place the wool

among thorns], that any one who wishes to bear it away may find it necessary to suffer much, because the thorn is formidable, and thus obtain it only as the result of suffering. Thus also, says He, "Those who wish to behold Me, and lay hold of My kingdom, must through tribulation and suffering obtain Me." [Acts 14:22](#)

Chapter 8. The red heifer a type of Christ.

Now what do you suppose this to be a type of, that a command was given to [Israel](#), that men of the greatest [wickedness](#) should offer a heifer, and slay and burn it, and, that then boys should take the ashes, and put these into vessels, and bind round a stick purple wool along with [hyssop](#), and that thus the boys should sprinkle the people, one by one, in order that they might be purified from their [sins](#)? Consider how He speaks to you with simplicity. The calf is Jesus: the sinful men offering it are those who led Him to the slaughter. But now the men are no longer guilty, are no longer regarded as sinners. And the boys that sprinkle are those that have proclaimed to us the remission of [sins](#) and purification of heart. To these He gave authority to preach the [Gospel](#), being twelve in number, corresponding to the twelve tribes of [Israel](#). But why are there three boys that sprinkle? To correspond to [Abraham](#), and Isaac, and Jacob, because these were great with [God](#). And why was the wool [placed] upon the wood? Because by wood Jesus holds His kingdom, so that [through the cross] those believing on Him shall live for ever. But why was [hyssop](#) joined with the wool? Because in His kingdom the days will be [evil](#) and polluted in which we shall be saved, [and] because he who suffers in body is cured through the cleansing efficacy of [hyssop](#). And on this account the things which stand thus are clear to us, but obscure to them because they did not hear the voice of the Lord.

Chapter 9. The spiritual meaning of circumcision.

He speaks moreover concerning our ears, how He has [circumcised](#) both them and our heart. The Lord says in the [prophet](#), "In the hearing of the ear they [obeyed](#) me." And again He says, "By hearing, those shall hear who are afar off; they shall [know](#) what I have done." [Isaiah 33:13](#) And, "Be [circumcised](#) in your hearts, says the Lord." [And again He says, "Hear, O Israel](#), for these things says the Lord your God." [And once more the Spirit of the Lord](#) proclaims, "Who is he that wishes to live for ever? By hearing let him hear the voice of my servant." And again He says, "Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth, for God has spoken." [Isaiah 1:2](#) These are in [proof](#). And again He says, "Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of this people." [Isaiah 1:10](#) And again He says, "Hear, you children, the voice of one crying in the wilderness." Therefore He has [circumcised](#) our ears, that we might hear His word and [believe](#), for the [circumcision](#) in which they trusted is abolished. For He declared that [circumcision](#) was not of the flesh, but they transgressed because an [evil angel](#) deluded them. He says to them, "These things says the Lord your God"—(here I find a new commandment)—"Sow not among thorns, but circumcise yourselves to the Lord." And why speaks He thus: "Circumcise the stubbornness of your heart, and harden not your neck?" [Deuteronomy 10:16](#) And again: "Behold, says the Lord, all the nations are uncircumcised in the flesh, but this people are uncircumcised in heart." [But you will say, "Yea, verily the people are circumcised](#) for a seal." But so also is

every Syrian and Arab, and all the [priests](#) of [idols](#): are these then also within the bond of His covenant? Yea, the Egyptians also practise [circumcision](#). Learn then, my children, concerning all things richly, that [Abraham](#), the first who enjoined [circumcision](#), looking forward in spirit to Jesus, practised that rite, having received the [mysteries](#) of the three letters. For [the [Scripture](#)] says, "And [Abraham](#) [circumcised](#) ten, and eight, and three hundred men of his household." What, then, was the [knowledge](#) given to him in this? Learn the eighteen first, and then the three hundred. The ten and the eight are thus denoted—Ten by I, and Eight by H. You have [the initials of the, name of] Jesus. And because the cross was to express the [grace](#) [of our redemption] by the letter T, he says also, "Three Hundred." He signifies, therefore, Jesus by two letters, and the cross by one. He [knows](#) this, who has put within us the engrafted gift of His doctrine. No one has been admitted by me to a more excellent piece of [knowledge](#) than this, but I [know](#) that you are worthy.

Chapter 10. Spiritual significance of the precepts of Moses respecting different kinds of food.

Now, wherefore did [Moses](#) say, "You shall not eat the swine, nor the eagle, nor the hawk, nor the raven, nor any fish which is not possessed of scales?" He embraced three doctrines in his mind [in doing so]. Moreover, the Lord says to them in Deuteronomy, "And I will establish my ordinances among this people." [Deuteronomy 4:1](#) Is there then not a command of God they should not eat [these things]? There is, but [Moses](#) spoke with a spiritual reference. For this reason he named the swine, as much as to say, "You shall not join yourself to men who resemble swine." For when they live in pleasure, they forget their Lord; but when they come to want, they acknowledge the Lord. And [in like manner] the swine, when it has eaten, does not recognize its master; but when hungry it cries out, and on receiving food is quiet again. "Neither shall you eat," says he "the eagle, nor the hawk, nor the kite, nor the raven." "You shall not join yourself," he means, "to such men as [know](#) not how to procure food for themselves by labour and sweat, but seize on that of others in their iniquity, and although wearing an aspect of simplicity, are on the watch to plunder others." So these birds, while they sit idle, inquire how they may devour the flesh of others, proving themselves pests [to all] by their [wickedness](#). "And you shall not eat," he says, "the lamprey, or the polypus, or the cuttlefish." He means, "You shall not join yourself or be like to such men as are ungodly to the end, and are condemned to death." In like manner as those fishes, above accursed, float in the deep, not swimming [on the surface] like the rest, but make their abode in the mud which lies at the bottom. Moreover, "You shall not," he says, "eat the hare." Wherefore? "You shall not be a corrupter of boys, nor like such." Because the hare multiplies, year by year, the places of its conception; for as many years as it lives so many it has. Moreover, "You shall not eat the hyena." He means, "You shall not be an adulterer, nor a corrupter, nor be like to them that are such." Wherefore? Because that animal annually changes its sex, and is at one time male, and at another female. Moreover, he has rightly detested the weasel. For he means, "You shall not be like to those whom we hear of as committing [wickedness](#) with the mouth, on account of their uncleanness; nor shall you be joined to those impure [women](#) who commit iniquity with the mouth. For this animal conceives by the mouth."

[Moses](#) then issued three doctrines concerning meats with a spiritual significance; but they received them according to fleshly desire, as if he had merely spoken of [literal] meats. David, however, comprehends the [knowledge](#) of the three doctrines, and speaks in like manner: "Blessed is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly," even as the fishes [referred to] go in darkness to the depths [of the sea]; "and has not stood in the way of sinners," even as those who profess to [fear](#) the Lord, but go astray like swine; "and has not sat in the seat of scorers," even as those birds that lie in wait for prey. Take a full and firm grasp of this spiritual [knowledge](#). But [Moses](#) says still further, "You shall eat every animal that is cloven-footed and ruminant." What does he mean? [The ruminant animal denotes him] who, on receiving food, recognizes Him that nourishes him, and being satisfied by Him, is visibly made glad. Well spoke [[Moses](#)], having respect to the commandment. What, then, does he mean? That we ought to join ourselves to those that [fear](#) the Lord, those who meditate in their heart on the commandment which they have received, those who both utter the judgments of the Lord and observe them, those who [know](#) that meditation is a work of [gladness](#), and who ruminate upon the word of the Lord. But what means the cloven-footed? That the righteous man also walks in this world, yet looks forward to the [holy](#) state [to come]. Behold how well [Moses](#) legislated. But how was it possible for them to understand or comprehend these things? We then, rightly understanding his commandments, explain them as the Lord intended. For this purpose He [circumcised](#) our ears and our hearts, that we might understand these things.

Chapter 11. Baptism and the cross prefigured in the Old Testament.

Let us further inquire whether the Lord took any care to foreshadow the water [of [baptism](#)] and the cross. Concerning the water, indeed, it is written, in reference to the [Israelites](#), that they should not receive that [baptism](#) which leads to the remission of [sins](#), but should procure another for themselves. The [prophet](#) therefore declares, "Be astonished, O heaven, and let the earth tremble at this, because this people has committed two great [evils](#): they have forsaken Me, a living fountain, and have hewn out for themselves broken cisterns. Is my [holy](#) hill Zion a desolate rock? For you shall be as the fledglings of a bird, which fly away when the nest is removed." [Isaiah 16:1-2](#) And again says the [prophet](#), "I will go before you and make level the mountains, and will break the brazen gates, and bruise in pieces the iron bars; and I will give you the secret, hidden, invisible treasures, that they may [know](#) that I am the Lord God." [Isaiah 45:2-3](#) And "He shall dwell in a lofty cave of the strong rock." Furthermore, what says He in reference to the Son? "His water is sure; you shall see the King in His [glory](#), and your [soul](#) shall meditate on the [fear](#) of the Lord." [Isaiah 33:16-18](#) And again He says in another [prophet](#), "The man who does these things shall be like a tree planted by the courses of waters, which shall yield its fruit in due season; and his leaf shall not fade, and all that he does shall prosper. Not so are the ungodly, not so, but even as chaff, which the wind sweeps away from the face of the earth. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the counsel of the just; for the Lord [knows](#) the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Mark how He has described at once both the water and the cross. For these words imply, Blessed are they who, placing their trust in the [cross](#),

have gone down into the water; for, says He, they shall receive their reward in due time: then He declares, I will recompense them. But now He says, "Their leaves shall not fade." This means, that every word which proceeds out of your mouth in [faith](#) and [love](#) shall tend to bring conversion and hope to many. Again, another [prophet](#) says, "And the land of Jacob shall be extolled above every land." [Zephaniah 3:19](#) This means the vessel of His Spirit, which He shall glorify. Further, what says He? "And there was a river flowing on the right, and from it arose beautiful trees; and whosoever shall eat of them shall live for ever." [Ezekiel 47:12](#) This means, that we indeed descend into the water full of [sins](#) and defilement, but come up, bearing fruit in our heart, having the [fear](#) [of God] and trust in Jesus in our spirit. "And whosoever shall eat of these shall live for ever," This means: Whosoever, He declares, shall hear you speaking, and [believe](#), shall live for ever.

Chapter 12. The cross of Christ frequently announced in the Old Testament.

In like manner He points to the [cross](#) of [Christ](#) in another [prophet](#), who says, "And when shall these things be accomplished? And the Lord says, When a tree shall be bent down, and again arise, and when blood shall flow out of wood." Here again you have an intimation concerning the [cross](#), and Him who should be crucified. Yet again He speaks of this in [Moses](#), when [Israel](#) was attacked by strangers. And that He might remind them, when assailed, that it was on account of their [sins](#) they were delivered to death, the Spirit speaks to the heart of [Moses](#), that he should make a figure of the [cross](#), and of Him about to suffer thereon; for unless they put their trust in Him, they shall be overcome for ever. [Moses](#) therefore placed one weapon above another in the midst of the hill, and standing upon it, so as to be higher than all the people, he stretched forth his hands, and thus again [Israel](#) acquired the mastery. But when again he let down his hands, they were again destroyed. For what reason? That they might [know](#) that they could not be saved unless they put their trust in Him. And in another [prophet](#) He declares, "All day long I have stretched forth My hands to an unbelieving people, and one that gainsays My righteous way." [Isaiah 65:2](#) And again [Moses](#) makes a type of [Jesus](#), [signifying] that it was necessary for Him to suffer, [and also] that He would be the author of life [to others], whom they [believed](#) to have destroyed on the cross when [Israel](#) was failing. For since transgression was committed by Eve through means of the serpent, [the Lord] brought it to pass that every [kind of] serpents bit them, and they died, [Numbers 21:6-9](#); [John 3:14-18](#) that He might convince them, that on account of their transgression they were given over to the straits of death. Moreover [Moses](#), when he commanded, "You shall not have any graven or molten [image] for your [God](#)," did so that he might reveal a type of Jesus. [Moses](#) then makes a brazen serpent, and places it upon a beam, and by proclamation assembles the people. When, therefore, they were come together, they besought [Moses](#) that he would offer [sacrifice](#) in their behalf, and [pray](#) for their recovery. And [Moses](#) spoke unto them, saying, "When any one of you is bitten, let him come to the serpent placed on the pole; and let him hope and [believe](#), that even though dead, it is able to give him life, and immediately he shall be restored." [Numbers 21:9](#) And they did so. You have in this also [an indication of] the [glory](#) of Jesus; for in Him and to Him are all things. [Colossians 1:16](#) What, again, says [Moses](#) to Jesus (Joshua) the son of Nave, when he

gave him this name, as being a [prophet](#), with this view only, that all the people might hear that the Father would reveal all things concerning His Son Jesus to the son of Nave? This name then being given him when he sent him to spy out the land, he said, "Take a book into your hands, and write what the Lord declares, that the [Son of God](#) will in the last days cut off from the roots all the house of Amalek." [Exodus 17:14](#) Behold again: Jesus who was manifested, both by type and in the flesh, [1 Timothy 3:16](#) is not the [Son of man](#), but the [Son of God](#). Since, therefore, they were to say that Christ was the son of David, fearing and understanding the [error](#) of the [wicked](#), he says, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool." And again, thus says Isaiah, "The Lord said to [Christ](#), my Lord, whose right hand I have holden, that the nations should yield [obedience](#) before Him; and I will break in pieces the strength of kings." [Isaiah 45:1](#) Behold how David calls Him Lord and the [Son of God](#).

Chapter 13. Christians, and not Jews, the heirs of the covenant.

But let us see if this people is the heir, or the former, and if the covenant belongs to us or to them. Hear now what the [Scripture](#) says concerning the people. Isaac [prayed](#) for Rebecca his wife, because she was barren; and she conceived. [Genesis 25:21](#) Furthermore also, Rebecca went forth to inquire of the Lord; and the Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples in your belly; and the one people shall surpass the other, and the elder shall serve the younger." [Genesis 25:23](#) You ought to understand who was Isaac, who Rebecca, and concerning what [persons](#) He declared that this people should be greater than that. And in another [prophecy](#) Jacob speaks more clearly to his son Joseph, saying, "Behold, the Lord has not deprived me of your presence; bring your sons to me, that I may bless them." And he brought Manasseh and Ephraim, desiring that Manasseh should be blessed, because he was the elder. With this view Joseph led him to the right hand of his father Jacob. But Jacob saw in spirit the type of the people to arise afterwards. And what says [the [Scripture](#)]? And Jacob changed the direction of his hands, and laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, the second and younger, and blessed him. And Joseph said to Jacob, "Transfer your right hand to the head of Manasseh, for he is my [first-born](#) son." [Genesis 48:18](#) And Jacob said, "I [know](#) it, my son, I [know](#) it; but the elder shall serve the younger: yet he also shall be blessed." [Genesis 48:19](#) You see on whom he laid [his hands], that this people should be first, and heir of the covenant. If then, still further, the same thing was intimated through [Abraham](#), we reach the perfection of our [knowledge](#). What, then, says He to [Abraham](#)? "Because you have [believed](#), it is imputed to you for righteousness: behold, I have made you the father of those nations who [believe](#) in the Lord while in [a state of] uncircumcision."

Chapter 14. The Lord has given us the testament which Moses received and broke.

Yes [it is even so]; but let us inquire if the Lord has really given that testament which He swore to the fathers that He would give to the people. He did give it; but they were not

worthy to receive it, on account of their [sins](#). For the [prophet](#) declares, "And [Moses](#) was [fasting](#) forty days and forty nights on Mount Sinai, that he might receive the testament of the Lord for the people." [Exodus 24:18](#) And he received from the Lord [Exodus 31:18](#) two tables, written in the spirit by the finger of the hand of the Lord. And [Moses](#) having received them, carried them down to give to the people. And the Lord said to [Moses](#), "[Moses, Moses](#), go down quickly; for your people has [sinned](#), whom you brought out of the land of [Egypt](#)." [Exodus 32:7](#); [Deuteronomy 9:12](#) And [Moses](#) understood that they had again made molten images; and he threw the tables out of his hands, and the tables of the testament of the Lord were broken. [Moses](#) then received it, but they [proved](#) themselves unworthy. Learn now how *we* have received it. [Moses](#), as a servant, [Hebrews 3:5](#) received it; but the Lord himself, having suffered in our behalf, has given it to us, that we should be the people of inheritance. But He was manifested, in order that they might be perfected in their iniquities, and that we, being constituted heirs through Him, might receive the testament of the [Lord Jesus](#), who was prepared for this end, that by His personal manifestation, redeeming our hearts (which were already wasted by death, and given over to the iniquity of [error](#)) from darkness, He might by His word enter into a covenant with us. For it is written how the [Father](#), about to redeem us from darkness, commanded Him to prepare a [holy](#) people for Himself. The [prophet](#) therefore declares, "I, the Lord Your [God](#), have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand, and will strengthen You; and I have given You for a covenant to the people, for a light to the [nations](#), to open the eyes of the blind, and to bring forth from fetters them that are bound, and those that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." [Isaiah 42:6-7](#) You perceive, then, whence we have been redeemed. And again, the [prophet](#) says, "Behold, I have appointed You as a light to the [nations](#), that You might be for [salvation](#) even to the ends of the earth, says the Lord God that redeems you." And again, the [prophet](#) says, "The [Spirit of the Lord](#) is upon me; because He has anointed me to preach the [Gospel](#) to the [humble](#): He has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to announce the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of recompense; to comfort all that mourn." [Isaiah 61:1-2](#)

Chapter 15. The false and the true Sabbath.

Further, also, it is written concerning the [Sabbath](#) in the Decalogue which [the Lord] spoke, face to face, to [Moses](#) on Mount Sinai, "And sanctify the [Sabbath](#) of the Lord with clean hands and a pure heart." [Exodus 20:8](#); [Deuteronomy 5:12](#) And He says in another place, "If my sons keep the [Sabbath](#), then will I [cause](#) my mercy to rest upon them." [The Sabbath](#) is mentioned at the beginning of the creation [thus]: "And God made in six days the works of His hands, and made an end on the seventh day, and rested on it, and sanctified it." Attend, my children, to the meaning of this expression, "He finished in six days." This implies that the Lord will finish all things in six thousand years, for a day is with Him a thousand years. And He Himself testifies, saying, "Behold, today will be as a thousand years." Therefore, my children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, all things will be finished. "And He rested on the seventh day." This means: when His Son, coming [again], shall destroy the time of the [wicked](#) man, and judge the ungodly, and change the-sun, and the moon, and the stars, then shall He [truly](#) rest on the seventh day. Moreover, He says, "You shall sanctify it with pure hands and a pure heart." If, therefore,

any one can now sanctify the day which God has sanctified, except he is pure in heart in all things, we are deceived. Behold, therefore: certainly then one properly resting sanctifies it, when we ourselves, having received the promise, [wickedness](#) no longer existing, and all things having been made new by the Lord, shall be able to work righteousness. Then we shall be able to sanctify it, having been first sanctified ourselves. Further, He says to them, "Your new moons and your [Sabbath](#) I cannot endure." [Isaiah 1:13](#) You perceive how He speaks: Your present [Sabbaths](#) are not acceptable to Me, but that is which I have made, [namely this,] when, giving rest to all things, I shall make a beginning of the eighth day, that is, a beginning of another world. Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead. And when He had manifested Himself, He ascended into the heavens.

Chapter 16. The spiritual temple of God.

Moreover, I will also tell you concerning the temple, how the wretched [[Jews](#)], wandering in [error](#), trusted not in God Himself, but in the temple, as being the house of [God](#). For almost after the manner of the [Gentiles](#) they worshipped Him in the temple. But learn how the Lord speaks, when abolishing it: "Who has meted out heaven with a span, and the earth with his palm? Have not I?" [Isaiah 40:12](#) "Thus says the Lord, [Heaven](#) is My throne, and the earth My footstool: what kind of house will you build to Me, or what is the place of My rest?" [Isaiah 66:1](#) You perceive that their hope is vain. Moreover, He again says, "Behold, they who have cast down this temple, even they shall build it up again." It has so happened. For through their going to [war](#), it was destroyed by their enemies; and now: they, as the servants of their enemies, shall rebuild it. Again, it was revealed that the city and the temple and the people of [Israel](#) were to be given up. For the [Scripture](#) says, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the Lord will deliver up the sheep of His pasture, and their sheep-fold and tower, to destruction." And it so happened as the Lord had spoken. Let us inquire, then, if there still is a temple of [God](#). There is—where He himself declared He would make and finish it. For it is written, "And it shall come to pass, when the week is completed, the temple of God shall be built in [glory](#) in the name of the Lord." [Daniel 9:24-27](#); [Haggai 2:10](#) I find, therefore, that a temple does exist. Learn, then, how it shall be built in the name of the Lord. Before we [believed](#) in [God](#), the habitation of our heart was corrupt and weak, as being indeed like a temple made with hands. For it was full of [idolatry](#), and was a habitation of [demons](#), through our doing such things as were opposed to [the [will](#) of] God. But it shall be built, you observe, in the name of the Lord, in order that the temple of the Lord may be built in [glory](#). How? Learn [as follows]. Having received the forgiveness of [sins](#), and placed our trust in the name of the Lord, we have become new creatures, formed again from the beginning. Wherefore in our habitation God [truly](#) dwells in us. How? His word of [faith](#); His calling of promise; the wisdom of the statutes; the commands of the doctrine; He himself prophesying in us; He himself dwelling in us; opening to us who were enslaved by death the doors of the temple, that is, the mouth; and by giving us repentance introduced us into the incorruptible temple. He then, who wishes to be saved, looks not to [man](#), but to Him who dwells in him, and speaks in him, amazed at never having either heard him utter such words with his mouth, nor himself having ever desired to hear them. This is the spiritual temple built for the Lord.

Chapter 17. Conclusion of the first part of the epistle.

As far as was possible, and could be done with perspicuity, I cherish the hope that, according to my desire, I have omitted none of those things at present [demanding consideration], which bear upon your [salvation](#). For if I should write to you about things future, you would not understand, because such [knowledge](#) is hid in [parables](#). These things then are so.

Chapter 18. Second part of the epistle. The two ways.

But let us now pass to another sort of [knowledge](#) and doctrine. There are two ways of doctrine and authority, the one of light, and the other of darkness. But there is a great difference between these two ways. For over one are stationed the light-bringing [angels](#) of [God](#), but over the other the [angels 2 Corinthians 12:7](#) of [Satan](#). And He indeed (i.e., God) is Lord for ever and ever, but he (i.e., [Satan](#)) is prince of the time of iniquity.

Chapter 19. The way of light.

The way of light, then, is as follows. If any one desires to travel to the appointed place, he must be [zealous](#) in his works. The [knowledge](#), therefore, which is given to us for the purpose of walking in this way, is the following. You shall [love](#) Him that created you: you shall glorify Him that redeemed you from death. You shall be simple in heart, and rich in spirit. You shall not join yourself to those who walk in the way of death. You shall [hate](#) doing what is displeasing to God: you shall [hate](#) all hypocrisy. You shall not forsake the commandments of the Lord. You shall not exalt yourself, but shall be of a lowly mind. You shall not take [glory](#) to yourself. You shall not take [evil](#) counsel against your neighbour. You shall not allow over-boldness to enter into your [soul](#). You shall not commit fornication: you shall not commit [adultery](#): you shall not be a corrupter of youth. You shall not let the word of God issue from your lips with any kind of impurity. You shall not accept [persons](#) when you reprove any one for transgression. You shall be meek: you shall be peaceable. You shall tremble at the words which you hear. You shall not be mindful of [evil](#) against your brother. You shall not be of doubtful mind [James 1:8](#) as to whether a thing shall be or not. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain. You shall [love](#) your neighbour more than your own [soul](#). You shall not slay the child by procuring [abortion](#); nor, again, shall you destroy it after it is born. You shall not withdraw your hand from your son, or from your daughter, but from their infancy you shall teach them the [fear](#) of the Lord. You shall not [covet](#) what is your neighbour's, nor shall you be avaricious. You shall not be joined in [soul](#) with the haughty, but you shall be reckoned with the righteous and lowly. Receive as [good](#) things the trials which come upon you. You shall not be of double mind or of double tongue, for a double tongue is a snare of death. You shall be subject to the Lord, and to [other] masters as the image of [God](#), with modesty and [fear](#). You shall not issue orders with bitterness to your maidservant or your man-servant, who trust in the same [God], lest you should not reverence that God who is above both; for He came to call men not according to their outward appearance, [Ephesians 6:9](#) but according as the Spirit had prepared them. [Romans 8:29-30](#) You shall

communicate in all things with your neighbour; you shall not call things your own; for if you are partakers in common of things which are incorruptible, how much more [should you be] of those things which are corruptible! You shall not be hasty with your tongue, for the mouth is a snare of death. As far as possible, you shall be pure in your [soul](#). Do not be ready to stretch forth your hands to take, while you contract them to give. You shall [love](#), as the apple of your eye, every one that speaks to you the word of the Lord. You shall remember the day of judgment, night and day. You shall seek out every day the faces of the [saints](#), either by word examining them, and going to exhort them, and meditating how to save a [soul](#) by the word, or by your hands you shall labour for the redemption of your [sins](#). You shall not hesitate to give, nor murmur when you give. "Give to every one that asks you," and you shall [know](#) who is the good Recompenser of the reward. You shall preserve what you have received [in charge], neither adding to it nor taking from it. To the last you shall [hate](#) the [wicked](#) [one]. You shall judge righteously. You shall not make a [schism](#), but you shall pacify those that contend by bringing them together. You shall confess your [sins](#). You shall not go to [prayer](#) with an [evil conscience](#). This is the way of light.

Chapter 20. The way of darkness.

But the way of darkness is crooked, and full of cursing; for it is the way of [eternal](#) death with punishment, in which way are the things that destroy the [soul](#), viz., [idolatry](#), overconfidence, the arrogance of power, hypocrisy, double-heartedness, [adultery](#), [murder](#), rapine, haughtiness, transgression, deceit, [malice](#), self-sufficiency, poisoning, magic, [avarice](#), want of the [fear](#) of [God](#). [In this way, too,] are those who [persecute](#) the good, those who [hate truth](#), those who [love falsehood](#), those who [know](#) not the reward of righteousness, those who cleave not to that which is [good](#), those who attend not with just judgment to the [widow](#) and orphan, those who watch not to the [fear](#) of [God](#), [but incline] to [wickedness](#), from whom meekness and patience are far off; [persons](#) who [love](#) vanity, follow after a reward, pity not the needy, labour not in aid of him who is overcome with toil; who are prone to [evil](#)-speaking, who [know](#) not Him that made them, who are murderers of children, destroyers of the workmanship of [God](#); who turn away him that is in want, who oppress the afflicted, who are advocates of the rich, who are [unjust](#) judges of the [poor](#), and who are in every respect transgressors.

Chapter 21. Conclusion.

It is well, therefore, that he who has learned the judgments of the Lord, as many as have been written, should walk in them. For he who keeps these shall be [glorified](#) in the [kingdom of God](#); but he who chooses other things shall be destroyed with his works. On this account there will be a resurrection, on this account a retribution. I beseech you who are superiors, if you will receive any counsel of my good-will, have among yourselves those to whom you may show kindness: do not forsake them. For the day is at hand on which all things shall perish with the [evil](#) [one]. The Lord is near, and His reward. Again, and yet again, I beseech you: be good lawgivers to one another; continue faithful counsellors of one another; take away from among you all hypocrisy. And may [God](#), who

rules over all the world, give to you wisdom, intelligence, understanding, [knowledge](#) of His judgments, with patience. And be taught of [God](#), inquiring diligently what the Lord asks from you; and do it that you maybe safe in the day of judgment. And if you have any remembrance of what is [good](#), be mindful of me, meditating on these things, in order that both my desire and watchfulness may result in some good. I beseech you, entreating this as a favour. While yet you are in this fair vessel, do not fail in any one of those things, but unceasingly seek after them, and fulfil every commandment; for these things are worthy. Wherefore I have been the more earnest to write to you, as my ability served, that I might cheer you. Farewell, you children of [love](#) and peace. The Lord of [glory](#) and of all [grace](#) be with your spirit. [Amen](#).