

**Chapter
Two**

**Lecture
two**

COMMENTARY ON

THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN

St. Thomas Aquinas

Lectio 2

12 μετὰ τοῦτο κατέβη εἰς καφαρναοῦμ αὐτὸς καὶ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ [αὐτοῦ] καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐκεῖ ἔμειναν οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας. 13 καὶ ἐγγὺς ἦν τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων, καὶ ἀνέβη εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ὁ Ἰησοῦς. 14 καὶ εὔρεν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τοὺς πωλοῦντας βόας καὶ πρόβατα καὶ περιστεράς καὶ τοὺς κερματιστὰς καθημένους, 15 καὶ ποιήσας φραγέλλιον ἐκ σχοινίων πάντας ἐξέβαλεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ, τὰ τε πρόβατα καὶ τοὺς βόας, καὶ τῶν κολλυβιστῶν ἐξέχεεν τὸ κέρμα καὶ τὰς τραπέζας ἀνέτρεψεν, 16 καὶ τοῖς τὰς περιστεράς πωλοῦσιν εἶπεν, ἄρατε ταῦτα ἐντεῦθεν, μὴ ποιεῖτε τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρὸς μου οἶκον ἐμπορίου. 17 ἐμνήσθησαν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι γεγραμμένον ἐστίν, ὁ ζῆλος τοῦ οἴκου σου καταφάγεται με.

Supra Evangelista posuit signum quod fecit Christus pertinens ad virtutem immutativam naturae, ad discipulorum confirmationem; hic consequenter agit de signo resurrectionis ad eandem virtutem pertinente, quod proposuit Christus ad turbarum conversionem.

LECTURE 2

12 After this he went down to Capernaum together with his mother, his brethren and his disciples; but they did not remain there many days. 13 The Jewish Passover was near at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple precincts he came upon merchants selling oxen, sheep and doves, and moneychangers seated at tables. 15 And when he had made a kind of whip from cords, he drove everyone, including sheep and oxen, out of the temple, swept away the gold of the money changers, and knocked over their tables. 16 To those selling doves he said, "Get Out of here! And stop making my Father's house into a marketplace." 17 His disciples then remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house consumes me."

366 Above, the Evangelist presented the sign Christ worked in order to confirm his disciples; and this sign pertained to his power to change nature. Now he deals with the sign of his resurrection; a sign pertaining to the same power, but proposed by Christ to convert the people.

Circa hoc ergo miraculum duo facit Evangelista. Primo ponit miraculi proponendi occasionem; secundo ipsius miraculi praenuntiationem, ibi *responderunt ergo Iudaei et cetera*. Circa primum duo facit. Primo describit locum; secundo narrat factum, quod fuit occasio miraculi proponendi, ibi *et invenit in templo vendentes oves et boves*. Locus autem in quo hoc fuit, est Ierosolyma: et ideo Evangelista gradatim ostendit quo ordine Ierosolyma dominus venerit. Primo ergo ostendit quomodo in Capharnaum descendit; secundo vero quomodo Ierosolymam ascendit, ibi *et prope erat Pascha*. Circa primum tria facit. Primo assignat locum quo descendit; secundo, describit societatem quam habuit; tertio innuit moram quam protraxit.

Locus quidem quo descendit est Capharnaum; et ideo dicit *post hoc*, scilicet miraculum de vino, *descendit Capharnaum*. Videtur, quantum ad historiam pertinet, huic dicto contrariari quod dicitur Matth. IV, v. 12 s., scilicet quod dominus descenderit Capharnaum post incarcerationem Iohannis. Hoc autem quod hic refert Evangelista, totum factum est ante incarcerationem Iohannis.

Respondeo dicendum, quod ad huius quaestionis intelligentiam sciendum est, quod sicut ex ecclesiastica historia habetur, reliqui Evangelistae, scilicet Matthaeus, Marcus et Lucas narrationem evangelicam inceperunt ab eo tempore quo Iohannes fuit inclusus in carcere. Unde statim Matth. IV, 12, post Baptismum, et ieiunium, et tentationem eius, texere incepit suam narrationem ante incarcerationem Iohannis, dicens: *cum audivisset Iesus quod traditus esset Iohannes* etc., et similiter Marcus; unde dicit: *postquam autem traditus est Iohannes, venit Iesus in Galilaeam* et cetera. Iohannes vero Evangelista qui supervixit aliis, cum trium Evangelistarum ad ipsum notitia pervenisset, ditorum fidem et veritatem probavit; tamen, quia vidit aliqua deesse, illa scilicet quae primo praedicationis suae tempore, ante Iohannis incarcerationem, dominus gesserat, ideo ad preces fidelium ipse Evangelium suum altius inchoans, ea quae praeterierant, priora,

The Evangelist does two things as to this miracle. First, he mentions its occasion. Secondly, the prediction of the miracle (v 18). As to the first he does two things. First, he describes the place. Secondly, he tells of the incident which was the occasion for proposing this miracle (v 14). Now the place where this happened was Jerusalem. And so the Evangelist recounts step by step how the Lord had come to Jerusalem. First, then, he shows how he went down to Capernaum. Secondly, how he then went up to Jerusalem. As to the first he does three things. First, he mentions the place to which he went down. Secondly, he describes his company. Thirdly, he mentions the length of his stay.

367 The place to which Christ went down was Capernaum; and so he says, **After this**, i.e., the miracle of the wine, **he went down to Capernaum**. Now as far as the historical truth is concerned, this seems to conflict with Matthew's account that the Lord went down to Capernaum after John had been thrown into prison (Mt 4:12), while the entire series of events the Evangelist refers to here took place before John's imprisonment.

I answer that in order to settle this question we should bear in mind what is learned from the *Ecclesiastical History*, that is, that the other Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, began their account of the public life of Christ from the time that John was thrown into prison. Thus Matthew (4:12), after describing the baptism, fast and temptation of Christ, began at once to weave his story after John's imprisonment, saying: "When Jesus heard that John had been arrested." And Mark (1:14) says the same: "After John had been arrested, Jesus came into Galilee." John, who outlived the other three Evangelists, approved the accuracy and truth of their accounts when they came to his notice. Yet he saw that certain things had been left unsaid, namely, things which the Lord had done in the very first days of his preaching before John's imprisonment. And so, at the request of the faithful, John, after he began his own Gospel in a loftier manner, recorded events that took place during the first year in which Christ was baptized before John's imprisonment, as is plain from

ante traditionem Ioannis, domini gesta conscripsit, scilicet a primo anno quo baptizatus est; ut in eius Evangelii serie apparet. Secundum hoc ergo Evangelistae non dissonant; sed quia dominus bis Capharnaum descendit, semel ante incarcerationem Ioannis, de quo agitur hic, et semel post incarcerationem eius, de quo agitur Matth. IV, 13 et Lc. IV, 31.

Capharnaum autem interpretatur villa pulcherrima, et significat mundum istum, qui habet decorem ex ordine et dispositione divinae sapientiae; Ps. XLIX, 11: *pulchritudo agri mecum est*. Descendit ergo dominus in Capharnaum, idest mundum istum, cum matre, et fratribus, et discipulis. Nam in caelis dominus patrem habet sine matre, in terris matrem sine patre; et ideo signanter matrem solum nominat. In caelis etiam fratres non habet; sed est ipse *unigenitus, qui est in sinu patris*: supra I, 18. In terris vero est *primogenitus in multis fratribus*, ut dicitur Rom. VIII, v. 29. In terris habet discipulos quos doceat mysteria divinitatis, quae ante hominibus ignota fuerant, quia, ut dicitur Hebr. I, 2, *novissime diebus istis locutus est nobis in filio et cetera*.

Vel Capharnaum interpretatur ager consolationis: per quod signatur omnis homo qui fructum bonum facit; Gen. XXVII, 27: *ecce odor filii mei sicut odor agri pleni*. Et talis homo dicitur ager consolationis, quia dominus consolatur, et gaudet de profectu eius; Is. LXII, 5: *gaudebit dominus super te etc.*, quia de eius bono Angeli gaudent; Lc. XV, v. 10: *gaudium est Angelis Dei super uno peccatore poenitentiam agente*. Dicit ipse, et mater.

Societas eius fuit primo matris; unde dicit *et mater eius*, quia enim ad nuptias venerat, et fuerat miraculi procuratrix, reducebat eam dominus Nazareth, quae erat villa in Galilaea, in qua Capharnaum metropolis erat.

Secundo fuit fratrum; unde dicit *et fratres eius* et cetera. Ubi cavendi sunt duo errores, scilicet Elvidii dicentis, quod beata virgo

the order of the events in his Gospel. According to this, then, the Evangelists are not in disagreement. Rather, the Lord went down to Capernaum twice: once before John's imprisonment (which is the one dealt with here), and once after his imprisonment, which is dealt with in Matthew (4:13) and Luke (4:31).

368 Now "Capernaum" means "very pretty village," and signifies this world, which has its beauty from the order and disposition of divine wisdom: "The beauty of the land is mine" (Ps 49:2). So the Lord went down to Capernaum, i.e., this world, with his mother and brethren and disciples. For in heaven the Lord has a Father without a mother; and on earth a mother without a father. Thus, he significantly mentions only his mother. In heaven he does not have brothers either, but is "the Only Begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father" (above 1:18). But on earth he is "the Firstborn of many brothers" (Rom 8:29). And on earth he has disciples, to whom he can teach the mysteries of the divinity, which were not known to men before: "In these days he has spoken to us in his Son" as we read in Hebrews (1:1).

Or, "Capernaum" means "the field of consolation"; and this signifies every man who bears good fruit: "The odor of my son is like the odor of a fruitful field" (Gn 27:27). Such a person is called a field of consolation because the Lord is consoled and rejoices in his achievement: "God will rejoice over you" (Is 62:5), and because the angels rejoice over his good: "There is joy in the angels of God over one repentant sinner" (Lk 15:10).

369 His companions were, first of all, his mother. So he says, **with his mother**, for because she had come to the wedding and had brought about the miracle, the Lord accompanied her back to the village of Nazareth. Nazareth was a village in Galilee, whose chief town was Capernaum.

370 Secondly, his companions were his brethren; and so he says, **his brethren** (*fratres*, brothers, brethren). We must avoid two errors here.

post Christum alios filios habuit, et hos dicit fratres domini, quod est haereticum: quia fides nostra tenet, quod mater Christi sicut fuit virgo ante partum, ita et in partu, et post partum virgo permansit. Item error quorundam dicentium, Ioseph ex alia coniuge filios genuisse, et hos vocari fratres domini, quod Ecclesia non tenet.

Et ideo Hieronymus eos improbat: nam dominus in cruce pendens virginem matrem virgini discipulo custodiendam dimisit. Cum ergo Ioseph fuerit specialis custos virginis et etiam salvatoris in pueritia, credibile est eum virginem fuisse. Et ideo sane intelligentes, fratres domini dicimus consanguineos virginis matris, in quocumque gradu, vel etiam Ioseph, qui putabatur pater; et hoc quidem secundum consuetudinem Scripturae, quae communiter consanguineos fratres appellat. Unde Gen. XIII, v. 8: *ne quaeso sit iurgium inter me et te: fratres enim sumus*, dicit Abraham ad Lot; cum tamen esset nepos eius. Et attende, quod separatim nominat fratres et discipulos: quia non omnes consanguinei Christi, eius discipuli erant. Unde infra VII, 5 dicitur: *nondum credebant in eum fratres eius*.

Tertio socii eius fuerunt discipuli sui: unde dicit *et discipuli eius*. Sed ex hoc insurgit quaestio, qui fuerint eius discipuli. Videtur enim, secundum Matthaeum, quod primi qui conversi sunt ad Christum, fuerint Petrus et Andreas, Ioannes et Iacobus; sed hi vocati sunt a Christo post incarcerationem Ioannis, ut patet Matth. IV, v. 18 ss. non videtur ergo quod descenderint cum Christo in Capharnaum, ut hic habetur, cum hoc fuerit ante Ioannis incarcerationem.

Sed ad hoc duplex est responsio. Una, secundum Augustinum, de consensu Evangelistarum, quod Matthaeus non servat ordinem historiae, sed illud quod praetermiserat recapitulans, ea narrat post Ioannis incarcerationem quae ante facta fuerant. Unde sine ulla temporis consequentis differentia dixit: *ambulans Iesus iuxta mare Galillaeae, vidit duos fratres* etc., non addens post hoc vel in diebus

First, that of Elvidius, who said that the Blessed Virgin had other sons after Christ; and he called these the brothers of the Lord. This is heretical, because our faith maintains that just as the mother of Christ was a virgin before giving birth, so in giving birth and after giving birth, she remained a virgin. We must also avoid the error of those who say that Joseph fathered sons with another wife, and that these are called the brothers of the Lord; for the Church does not admit this.

Jerome refutes this opinion: for on the cross the Lord entrusted his virgin mother to the care of his virgin disciple. Therefore, since Joseph was the special guardian of the Virgin, and of the Savior too, in his childhood, one may believe that he was a virgin. Consequently, it is a reasonable interpretation to say that the brothers of the Lord were those related to his virgin mother in some degree of consanguinity, or even to Joseph, who was the reputed father. And this conforms to the custom of Scripture which generally refers to relatives as brothers. Thus we read: "Let us not quarrel, for we are brothers" (Gn 13:8), as Abram said to Lot, who was his nephew. And note that he distinguishes between relatives and disciples, because not all of Christ's relatives were his disciples; hence we read: "Even his brethren did not believe in him" (below 7:5) .

371 Thirdly, his disciples were his companions; hence he says, **and his disciples**. But who were his disciples? For it seems, according to Matthew, that the first ones to be converted to Christ were Peter and Andrew, John and James; but they were called after John's imprisonment, as is clear from Matthew (4:18). Thus it does not seem that they went down to Capernaum with Christ, as it says here, since this was before John's imprisonment.

There are two answers to this. One is from Augustine, in his *De Consensu Evangelistarum*, namely, that Matthew does not follow the historical order, but in summarizing what he omitted, relates events that occurred before John's imprisonment as though they happened after. So, without any suggestion of a time lapse he says, "As Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers" (Mt 4:18), without adding "after this" or "at

illis. Alia est, secundum eundem, quod discipuli domini, in Evangelio dicuntur non solum illi duodecim quos elegit dominus, et apostolos nominavit, ut habetur Lc. VI, 13, sed etiam omnes qui in eum credentes, eius magisterio ad regnum caelorum erudiebantur. Potuit ergo esse quod quamvis illi duodecim nondum eum secuti fuissent, nihilominus tamen aliqui alii qui sibi adhaeserunt, hic eius discipuli nominentur. Sed prima responsio melior est.

Moram autem contraxit ibi parvam; unde dicit *et ibi manserunt non multis diebus*. Huius ratio est, quia cives Capharnaum non se exhibuerunt devotos ad suscipiendum doctrinam Christi, quia erant valde corrupti; unde et Matth. XI, 23 dominus eos obiurgat, quod nec ad virtutes in eis factas, nec ad doctrinam Christi poenitentiam egerunt, dicens: *et tu, Capharnaum, numquid ad caelum exaltaberis? Usque in Infernum descendes: quia si in Sodomis factae fuissent virtutes quae factae sunt in te, forte mansissent usque in hanc diem*. Et tamen quamquam mali essent, descendit illuc, ut deduceret matrem ad cuius consolationem et honorem ibidem aliquamdiu moratur.

Mystice autem signatur per hoc quod aliqui multis sermonibus Christi immorari non possunt, sed pauca ad eorum illuminationem de multis sufficiunt, propter intellectus eorum imbecillitatem. Unde apud tales Christus paucis documentis immoratur ut Origenes dixit; secundum illud infra XVI, v. 12: *multa habeo vobis dicere; sed non potestis portare modo*.

Consequenter cum dicit *et prope erat Pascha*, manifestat locum quo ascendit. Et circa hoc duo facit. Primo innuit occasionem ascensus; secundo ponit ascensum, ibi *et ascendit Iesus*.

Occasio autem ascensus fuit Pascha Iudaeorum. Ex. XXIII, 17 praecipitur quod ter in anno omne masculinum praesentetur coram domino, et inter illos terminos unus erat Pascha Iudaeorum. Quia ergo dominus venit ut doceret omnes humilitatis et perfectionis

that time.” The other answer, also by Augustine, is that in the Gospel not only the twelve whom the Lord chose and named apostles are called disciples of the Lord (Lk 6:13), but also all who believed in him and were instructed for the kingdom of heaven by his teaching. Therefore, it is possible that although those twelve did not yet follow him, others who adhered to him are called disciples here. But the first answer is better.

372 His stay there was short; hence he says, **but they did not remain there many days**. The reason for this was that the citizens of Capernaum were not eager to accept the teachings of Christ, being very corrupt, so that in Matthew (11:23) the Lord rebukes them for not doing penance in spite of the miracles done there and of Christ’s teaching: “And you Capernaum, will you be lifted up to heaven? You will go down to hell. For if the mighty works that were done in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have stood until this day.” But although they were evil, he went there to accompany his mother, and to stay there for a few days for her consolation and honor.

373 As for its mystical sense, this signifies that some cannot remain long with the many words spoken by Christ; a few of these words are enough for them, to enlighten them, because of the weakness of their understanding. Hence as Origen said, Christ reveals few things to such persons, according to “I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now” (Jn 16:12).

374 Then when he says, **The Jewish Passover was near at hand**, he mentions the place to which he went. And concerning this he does two things. First, the occasion is given. Secondly, the going up.

375 Now the occasion for his going up was the Jewish Passover. For in Exodus (13:17) it is commanded that every male be presented to the Lord three times a year; and one of these times was the Jewish Passover. So, since the Lord came to teach everyone by his example of humility and

exemplum, voluit legem, quamdiu statum habuit, observare: non enim venit legem solvere, sed adimplere, ut ipse dicit Matth. V, v. 17. Ex quo, quia Pascha Iudaeorum imminet, Ierusalem ascendit. Nos ergo ad eius exemplum deberemus sollicite divina praecepta servare. Si enim ipse Dei filius decreta legis a se datae implebat, celebrans solemnitates; quanto studio bonorum operum deberemus nos eas et praevenire, et celebrare?

Notandum est, quod in Evangelio Iohannis in tribus locis fit mentio de Pascha, scilicet hic, et infra VI, 4, ubi fecit miraculum de panibus, ubi dicitur: *erat autem proximum Pascha, dies festus Iudaeorum*; et infra c. XIII, 1, ubi dicitur: *ante diem festum Paschae*. Unde secundum hoc Evangelium, habemus quod post miraculum de vino Christus praedicavit duobus annis, et quantum est a diebus Baptismi usque ad Pascha; nam hoc quod fecit hic, fuit prope Pascha, ut hic dicitur, et postea, revoluto anno, prope aliud Pascha fecit miraculum de panibus, et tunc Iohannes fuit decollatus. Unde Iohannes circa Pascha decollatus fuit; quia, ut dicitur Matth. c. XIV, 13, statim post decollationem Iohannis, Christus secessit in desertum, et ibi fecit miraculum de panibus: quod quidem miraculum fuit factum prope Pascha, ut dicitur infra VI. Sed tamen festum huius decollationis celebratur eo die quo caput eius inventum est. Postea, in alio Paschate, passus est Christus.

Secundum opinionem ergo illorum qui dicunt, quod miraculum factum in nuptiis, et ea quae hic dicuntur, eodem anno gesta sunt quo baptizatus est Christus, a Baptismo Christi usque ad eius passionem fuerunt duo anni et dimidius: et ideo, secundum eos, Evangelista dicit *prope erat Pascha Iudaeorum*, ut ostendat quod ante paucos dies fuerat baptizatus.

Sed Ecclesia tenet contrarium. Credimus enim quod eodem die quo dominus baptizatus est, revoluto anno, factum fuerit miraculum de vino; et postea revoluto anno, prope Pascha, Iohannes fuerit decollatus; et quod ab isto Paschate circa quod Iohannes fuit

perfectionem, he wished to observe the law as long as it was in force. For he did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it (Mt 5:17). And so, because the Passover of the Jews was at hand, he went up to Jerusalem. So we, after his example, should carefully observe the divine precepts. For if the Son of God fulfilled the decrees of a law he himself had given, and celebrated the great feasts, with what zeal for good works ought we both to prepare for them and observe them?

376 It should be noted that in John's Gospel mention is made of the Passover in three passages: here, and in (6:4), when he worked the miracle of the loaves, where it is said: "Now the Jewish Passover was near at hand", and again in (13:1), where it says: "Before the feast day of the Passover." So, according to this Gospel, we understand that after the miracle of the wine Christ preached for two years plus the interval between his baptism and this Passover. For what he did here occurred near the Passover, as it says here, and then a year later, near the time of another Passover, he performed the miracle of the loaves, and in the same year John was beheaded. Thus John was beheaded near the time of the Passover, because we read in Matthew (14:13) that immediately after John was beheaded Christ withdrew to the desert, where he worked the miracle of the loaves; and this miracle took place near Passover time, as stated below (6:4). Nevertheless, the feast of this beheading of John is celebrated on the day his head was found. It was later, during another Passover, that Christ suffered.

So, according to the opinion of those who say that the miracle worked at the wedding and the events being discussed here occurred in the same year in which Christ was baptized, there was an interval of two and one half years between Christ's baptism and his passion. So, according to them, the Evangelist says, **The Jewish Passover was near at hand**, in order to show that Christ had been baptized just a few days before.

But the Church holds the opposite. For we believe that Christ worked the miracle of the wine on the first anniversary of the day of his baptism; then a year later, near Passover time, John was beheaded; and then there was another year between the Passover near which John was beheaded and

decollatus, fuerit unus annus usque ad Pascha in quo Christus passus est. Unde oportet aliud Pascha a Baptismo Christi usque ad miraculum de vino intermedium esse, de quo nullus Evangelista facit mentionem: et sic, secundum quod Ecclesia tenet, Christus tribus annis et dimidio praedicavit.

Ait autem *Iudaeorum*, non quod alterius nationis homines Pascha celebrarent, sed duplici de causa. Una quia quando aliqui festum aliquod sancte et pure celebrant, dicitur illud domino celebrare; cum vero nec pure, nec sancte celebrant, non domino, sed sibi solemnizant; Is. I, 14: *Kalendas vestras, et festivitates vestras odivit anima mea*; quasi dicat: quia vobis, et non mihi celebratis, non placent mihi; Zach. VII, 5: *cum ieiunaretis, numquid ieiunium ieiunastis mihi?* Quasi dicat, non, sed vobis. Quia ergo isti Iudaei depravati erant, et eorum Pascha indebite celebrabant, ideo Evangelista non dicit: prope erat Pascha domini, sed *Iudaeorum*.

Vel hoc dicit ad differentiam nostri Paschae: nam Pascha Iudaeorum erat figurale, utpote immolatione agni figuralis celebratum; sed nostrum Pascha verum est, in quo recolimus veram passionem agni immaculati; I Corint. V, 7: *Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus*.

Ascensus fuit in Ierusalem; et ideo dicit *et ascendit Iesus Ierosolymam*. Ubi nota, secundum ordinem historiae, Iesum bis circa festum Paschae Ierosolymam ascendisse, et expulisse de templo ementes et vendentes. Semel quidem ante incarcerationem Ioannis, quod hic Evangelista commemorat, alia vice, imminente Paschate, et tempore passionis, quod narrat Matthaeus. Nam frequenter dominus similia facta operatus est, sicut patet de duplici illuminatione caecorum: una Matth. IX, 28, et alia Mc. c. X, 46 ss. Et similiter bis eiecit ementes et vendentes de templo.

the Passover during which Christ suffered. So between the baptism of Christ and the miracle of the wine there had to be another Passover which the Evangelist does not mention. And so, according to what the Church holds, Christ preached for three and one half years.

377 He says, **the Jewish Passover**, not as though the people of other nations celebrated a Passover, but for two reasons. One, because when people celebrate a feast in a holy and pure way, it is said that they celebrate it for the Lord; but when they celebrate it in neither of those ways, they do not celebrate it for the Lord, but for themselves: "My soul hates your new moons and your feasts" (Is 1:14). It is as though he said: Those who celebrate for themselves and not for me, do not please me: "When you fasted, did you fast for me?" (Zec 7:5), as if to say: You did not do it for me, but for yourselves. And so because these Jews were corrupt and celebrated their Passover in an unbecoming manner, the Evangelist does not say, "the Passover of the Lord," but the Jewish Passover was at hand.

Or, he says this to differentiate it from our Passover. For the Passover of the Jews was symbolic, being celebrated by the immolation of a lamb which was a symbol. But our Passover is true, in which we recall the true passing [passion] of the Immaculate Lamb: "Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed" (1 Cor 5:7).

378 The journey was to Jerusalem, and so he says, **and Jesus went up to Jerusalem**. Note here that according to the historical order, Jesus went up to Jerusalem near the time of the Passover and expelled the merchants from the temple on two occasions. The first, before John's imprisonment, is the one the Evangelist mentions here; the other is mentioned by Matthew (21:13) as occurring when the Passover and the hour of his passion were at hand. For the Lord frequently repeated works that were similar. For example, the two cases of giving sight to the blind: one in Matthew (9:28) and another in Mark (10:46). In like manner he twice cast merchants from the temple.

Mystice autem ascendit Ierosolymam, quae interpretatur visio pacis, et significat aeternam beatitudinem: in quam ascendit, et suos transduxit. Sed non vacat a mysterio, quod in Capharnaum descendit, et postmodum Ierosolymam ascendit. Nisi enim descendisset primum, non competisset ei ascendere: quia, ut dicitur Eph. IV, 10, *qui descendit, ipse est et qui ascendit*. Non facit autem mentionem de discipulis in ascensu ad Ierosolymam: quia discipulorum ascensus est ex ascensu Christi; infra III, 13: *nemo ascendit in caelum nisi qui descendit de caelo, filius hominis*.

Consequenter cum dicit *et invenit in templo vendentes oves et boves* etc. narrat Evangelista factum quod movit Christum ad signum resurrectionis proponendum. Et circa hoc tria facit. Primo manifestat Iudaeorum vitium; secundo innuit Christi remedium, ibi *et cum fecisset quasi flagellum* etc.; tertio subdit prophetiae oraculum, ibi *recordati vero sunt discipuli* et cetera.

Circa primum sciendum, quod Diabolus insidiatur his quae Dei sunt, et ea nititur corrumpere. Inter cetera autem quibus sancta corrumpit, praecipuum est vitium avaritiae; unde dicitur Is. LVI, 11: *pastores eius nescierunt intelligentiam, omnes in viam suam declinaverunt: unusquisque ad avaritiam suam a summo usque ad novissimum*. Quod quidem ab antiquis temporibus Diabolus fecit. Nam sacerdotes veteris testamenti, qui instituti erant ut divinis vacarent, avaritiae studebant. Praeceptum autem erat a Deo in lege, quod in certis solemnitatibus domino immolarent aliqua animalia; ad quod quidem praeeptum implendum de prope venientes ad templum, secum animalia ducebant, illi autem qui a remotis veniebant, non valebant animalia ducere de domibus suis. Quia ergo oblationes huiusmodi cedebant in utilitatem sacerdotum, ne deessent animalia de remotis venientibus ad offerendum, providerunt ipsi sacerdotes ut animalia in templo venderentur; et ideo faciebant ea in templo, id est in atrio templi, exponi ad

379 In the mystical sense, Jesus went up to Jerusalem, which is translated as the “vision of peace,” and signifies eternal happiness. It is to here that Jesus ascended, and he took his own with him. There is no lack of mystery in the fact that he went down to Capernaum and later went up to Jerusalem. For if he did not first go down, he would not have been suited to go up, because, as it is said: “He who descended is the same as he who ascended” (Eph 4:10). Further, no mention is made of the disciples in the ascent to Jerusalem because the ascent of the disciples comes from the ascent of Christ: “No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man, who lives in heaven” (below 3:13).

380 Then when he says, **In the temple precincts he came upon merchants selling oxen, sheep and doves**, the Evangelist sets down what moved Christ to propose the sign of the resurrection. He does three things with this. First, he exposes the faulty behavior of the Jews. Secondly, he discloses Christ’s remedy (v 15). Thirdly, he gives the announcement of the prophecy (v 22).

381 With respect to the first, we should note that the devil plots against the things of God and strives to destroy them. Now among the means by which he destroys holy things, the chief is avarice; hence it is said: “The shepherds have no understanding. All have turned aside to their own way; everyone after his own gain, from the first one to the last” (Is 56:11). And the devil has done this from the earliest times. For the priests of the Old Testament, who had been established to care for divine matters, gave free rein to avarice. God commanded, in the law, that animals should be sacrificed to the Lord on certain feasts. And in order to fulfill this command, those who lived nearby brought the animals with them. But those who came a long distance were unable to bring animals from their own homes. And so because offerings of this kind resulted in profit for the priests, and so animals to offer would not be lacking to those who came from a distance, the priests themselves saw to it that animals were sold in the temple. And so they had them shown for sale in the temple, i.e., in the atrium of the temple. And this is what he says: **In the temple precincts he came upon merchants selling oxen, sheep and doves**.

vendendum. Et hoc est quod dicit *et invenit dominus in templo vendentes oves, et boves, et columbas et cetera.*

Ubi primo facit mentionem de duobus animalibus terrestribus, quae secundum legem domino offerri poterant, scilicet de bove et ove. Tertium vero animal terrestre, quod offerebatur capra scilicet, annumeratur cum ove: similiter etiam turtur annumeratur cum columba.

Et quia contingebat aliquando aliquos ad templum venire, qui nec animalia secum ducebant, nec pecuniam, unde emere non valebant; ideo sacerdotes aliam avaritiae artem adinvenerant, ut scilicet in templo constituerent nummularios et campsores, qui praedictis non habentibus pecuniam mutuarent. Et licet usuram inde non reciperent, quia hoc erat in lege prohibitum, loco tamen eius quaedam collibia, idest parva munuscula et vilia recipiebant. Et haec ipsa in utilitatem sacerdotum cedebant; et hoc est quod dicit *et nummularios sedentes* scilicet in templo, paratos ad pecuniam mutuandam.

Sed hoc quidem mystice tripliciter intelligi potest. Primo enim per vendentes et ementes significantur illi qui ecclesiasticas res vendunt, vel emunt: nam bona ecclesiastica spiritualia, et eis annexa, significantur per oves, et boves, et columbas. Ipsa consecrata quidem, et confirmata sunt ex doctrinis apostolorum et doctorum, qui significantur per boves; Prov. XIV, 4: *ubi plurimae sunt segetes, ibi manifesta fortitudo bovis.* Item ex sanguine martyrum, qui significantur per oves. Unde in persona eorum dicitur in Ps. XLIII, et Rom. VIII, 36: *aestimati sumus ut oves occisionis.* Item dona spiritus sancti, quae significantur per columbas: quia, ut dicitur supra I, 32, spiritus sanctus in specie columbae apparuit. Omnia ergo haec vendunt, scilicet doctrinam apostolorum, sanguinem martyrum et dona spiritus sancti, quicumque bona ecclesiastica spiritualia, et eis annexa vendere praesumunt.

Mention is first made of two land animals, which according to the law could be offered to the Lord: the ox and the sheep. The third land animal offered, the goat, is implied when he says “sheep”, similarly, the turtle-dove is included when he says “doves.”

382 It sometimes happened that some came to the temple not only without animals, but also without money to buy them. And so the priests found another avenue for their avarice; they set up moneychangers who would lend money to those who came without it. And although they would not accept a usurious gain, because this was forbidden in the law, nevertheless in place of this they accepted certain “*collibia*”, i.e., trifles and small gifts. So this also was turned to the profit of the priests. And this is what he says, **moneychangers seated at tables**, i.e., in the temple, ready to lend money.

383 This can be understood mystically in three ways. First of all, the merchants signify those who sell or buy the things of the Church: for the oxen, sheep and doves signify the spiritual goods of the Church and the things connected with them. These goods have been consecrated and authenticated by the teachings of the apostles and doctors, signified by the oxen: “When there is an abundant harvest the strength of the ox is evident” (Prv 14:4); and by the blood of the martyrs, who are signified by the sheep: so it is said for them: “We are regarded as sheep for the slaughter” (Rom 8:36): and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, signified by the doves, for as stated above, the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove. Therefore, those who presume to sell the spiritual goods of the Church and the goods connected with them are selling the teachings of the apostles, the blood of the martyrs, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Secundo, contingit aliquos praelatos, seu Ecclesiarum praepositos, etsi non manifeste per simoniam, occulte tamen per negligentiam boves, et oves, et columbas vendere, tunc scilicet quando tantum inhiant temporalibus lucris, et occupantur in eis, et negligunt spiritualem salutem subditorum: nam per hoc vendunt oves, et boves, et columbas, idest tria genera hominum eis subditorum. Scilicet praedicatores et operatores, qui significantur per boves; Is. XXXII, 20: *beati qui seminatis super omnes aquas, immittentes pedem bovis et asini*. Quia praelati debent ordinare boves, idest doctores et sapientes cum asinis, idest rudibus et simplicibus. Vendunt etiam activos, et ministeriis vacantes, qui significantur per oves, infra X, 27: *oves meae vocem meam audiunt* etc.; II Reg. ult., 17: *isti, qui oves sunt, quid fecerunt?* Vendunt et contemplantes, qui significantur per columbas; Ps. LIV, 7: *quis dabit mihi pennas sicut columbae et volabo?*

Tertio per templum Dei potest intelligi spiritualis anima, ut dicitur I Cor. III, 17: *templum Dei sanctum est, quod estis vos*. Tunc ergo homo vendit in templo oves, et boves, et columbas, quando in anima bestiales motus retinet, pro quibus homo vendit se Diabolo. Nam per boves, qui agriculturae deserviunt, significantur terrena desideria; per ovem, quae est animal stultum, significatur hominis stoliditas; per columbas vero hominis instabilitas: quae quidem Deus de cordibus hominum expellit.

Et ideo statim ponitur domini remedium, cum dicit *et cum fecisset quasi flagellum de funiculis, omnes eiecit de templo*: ubi dominus apposuit remedium et operis, et verbi, ut doceret eos qui curam habent Ecclesiae, subditos facto et verbo debere corrigere. Et ideo circa hoc duo facit. Primo ponitur remedium quod adhibuit facto; secundo remedium quod adhibuit verbo, ibi *et his qui vendebant columbas dixit* et cetera.

Circa primum tria facit. Primo eiecit homines; secundo oves et boves; tertio effudit pecuniam.

Secondly, it happens that certain prelates or heads of churches sell these oxen, sheep and doves, not overtly by simony, but covertly by negligence; that is, when they are so eager for and occupied with temporal gain that they neglect the spiritual welfare of their subjects. And this is the way they sell the oxen, sheep and doves, i.e., the three classes of people subject to them. First of all, they sell the preachers and laborers, who are signified by the oxen: "Happy are you who sow beside all the streams, letting the ox and the donkey range free" (Is 32:20); because prelates ought to arrange the oxen, i.e., teachers and wise men, with the donkeys, i.e., the simple and uneducated. They also sell those in the active life, and those occupied with ministering, signified by the sheep: "My sheep hear my voice" (below 10:27); and as is said in 2 Samuel (24:17): "But these, who are the sheep, what have they done?" They also sell the contemplatives, signified by the doves: "Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly?" (Ps 54:7).

Thirdly, by the temple of God we can understand the spiritual soul, as it says: "The temple of God is holy, and that is what you are" (1 Cor 3:17). Thus a man sells oxen, sheep and doves in the temple when he harbors bestial movements in his soul, for which he sells himself to the devil. For oxen, which are used for cultivating the earth, signify earthly desires; sheep, which are stupid animals, signify man's obstinacy; and the doves signify man's instability. It is God who drives these things out of men's hearts.

384 The Lord's remedy is at once set forth (v 15). Here the Lord's remedy consisted in action and in words, in order to instruct those who have charge of the Church that they must correct their subjects in deed and in word. And he does two things with respect to this. First, he gives the remedy Christ applied by his action. Secondly, the remedy he applied by word (v 16).

385 As to the first he does three things. First, he drives the men out. Secondly, the oxen and sheep. Thirdly, he sweeps away the money.

Eiecit quidem homines flagello, et hoc est quod dicit *et cum fecisset quasi flagellum de funiculis*, quod quidem non potuit fieri nisi virtute divina; nam, et Origenes dicit, quod divina potestas Iesu poterat cum volebat accensam iracundiam hominum suffocare, sicut sedare mentium turbines; Ps. XXXII, v. 10: *dominus dissipat cogitationes hominum*. Facit autem flagellum de funiculis, quia, ut dicit Augustinus, de peccatis nostris sumit materiam, unde nos puniat: ipsa enim protelatio peccatorum, secundum quod peccata peccatis adduntur, funiculi dicuntur; Prov. V, v. 22: *funibus peccatorum suorum constringitur*, Is. V, 18: *vae qui trahitis iniquitatem in funiculis* et cetera. Sicut ergo eiecit de templo negotiatores, ita nummulariorum aes effudit, et mensas subvertit.

Attende, quod si ista, quae videbantur aliquo modo licita, quasi ad cultum Dei ordinata, de templo eiecit, quanto magis si invenisset aliqua illicita? Ideo autem eos eiecit, quia sacerdotes in hoc non intendebant honorem Dei, sed utilitatem propriam. Unde dicitur Ez. XLIV, 8: *posuistis custodes observationum mearum in sanctuario meo vobismetipsis*.

Ostendit autem dominus zelum ad ea quae sunt legis, ut ex hoc ipso confutaret pontifices et sacerdotes, qui erant ei de lege calumniam illaturi. Per hoc etiam quod huiusmodi eiecit de templo, dedit intelligere quod appropinquabat tempus quo sacrificia legis cessare debebant, et verus Dei cultus ad gentes transferri; Matth. c. XXI, 43: *auferetur a vobis regnum* et cetera. Similiter etiam ut ostenderet eorum damnationem qui spiritualia vendunt; Act. VIII, 20: *pecunia tua tecum sit in perditione*.

Consequenter cum dicit *et his qui columbas vendebant, dixit etc.*, ponit remedium quod adhibuit verbo. Ubi notandum est, quod simoniaci primo quidem fugandi sunt de Ecclesia. Sed quia adhuc dum vivunt, per liberum arbitrium possunt se convertere, et adiuti a Deo ad statum gratiae redire, non sunt desperandi. Si vero non convertuntur, tunc quidem non fugantur, sed ligantur ab illis, quibus dicitur, Matth. XXII, 13: *ligatis manibus et pedibus eius, mittite eum*

He drives the men out with a whip; and this is what he **says, when he had made a kind of whip from cords**. This is something that could be done only by divine power. For as Origen says, the divine power of Jesus was as able, when he willed, to quench the swelling anger of men as to still the storms of minds: "The Lord brings to naught the thoughts of men" (Ps 32:10). He makes the whip from cords because, as Augustine says, it is from our own sins that he forms the matter with which he punishes us: for a series of sins, in which sins are added to sins, is called a cord: "He is bound fast by the cords of his own sins" (Prv 5:22); "Woe to you who haul wickedness with cords" (Is 5:18). Then, just as he drove the merchants from the temple, so he swept away the gold of the moneychangers and knocked over their tables.

386 And mark well that if he expelled from the temple things that seemed somehow licit, in the sense that they were ordained to the worship of God, how much more if he comes upon unlawful things? The reason he cast them out was because in this matter the priests did not intend God's glory, but their own profit. Hence it is said: "It is for yourselves that you placed guardians of my service in my sanctuary" (Ez 44:8)

Further, our Lord showed zeal for the things of the law so that he might by this answer the chief priests and the priests who were later to bring a charge against him on this very point. Again, by casting things of this kind out of the temple he let it be understood that the time was coming in which the sacrifices of the law were due to cease, and the true worship of God transferred to the Gentiles: "The kingdom of God will be taken away from you" (Mt 21:43). Also, this shows us the condemnation of those who sell spiritual things: "May your money perish together with you" (Acts 8:20).

387 Then when he says, **To those selling doves he said**, he records the treatment which the Lord applied by word. Here it should be noted that those who engage in simony should, of course, first be expelled from the Church. But because as long as they are alive, they can change themselves by free will and by the help of God return to the state of grace, they should not be given up as hopeless. If, however, they are not converted, then they are not merely to be expelled, but handed over to

in tenebras exteriores. Et ideo dominus hoc attendens, primo quidem admonet; secundo rationem admonitionis inducit, ibi *et nolite facere* et cetera.

Monet quidem venditores columbarum eos increpando, quia per eos signantur illi qui vendunt dona spiritus sancti, scilicet simoniaci.

Rationem huius inducit, cum dicit: *et nolite facere domum patris mei, domum negotiationis.* Is. I, 16: *auferte malum cogitationum vestrarum ab oculis meis.* Attende autem, quod Matth. XXI, 13 dicit: *nolite facere domum meam speluncam latronum,* hic vero dicit: *domum negotiationis,* quod dominus ideo fecit ut, sicut bonus medicus, primo a levioribus incipiens, postea dura proponeret. Hoc enim quod hic factum dicitur, primo factum fuit: unde in ipso principio, non latrones, sed negotiatores eos vocat. Sed quia ex eorum duritia adhuc a tali negotiatione non cessabant, ideo dominus alia vice eos expellens de quo agitur in Mc. c. IX, 15 ss. durius eos increpat, vocans latrocinium quod primo vocaverat negotiationem.

Dicit autem *domum patris mei,* ad excludendum errorem Manichaei, qui dicebat, quod Deus veteris testamenti non fuerat pater Christi, sed Deus novi. Sed si hoc verum esset, cum templum fuisset domus veteris testamenti, non utique Christus dixisset templum domum patris sui.

Sed quare non sunt turbati Iudaei de hoc quod hic vocat Deum patrem suum, sicut dicitur infra V, 18, quod propter hoc eum persequerentur? Ad quod dicendum est, quod Deus est pater aliquorum per adoptionem, puta iustorum, et hoc non erat novum apud Iudaeos; Ier. III, 19: *patrem vocabis me, et post me ingredi non cessabis.* Sed per naturam solius Christi est, Ps. II, 7: *dominus dixit ad me: filius meus es tu,* scilicet verus et naturalis; et hoc

those to whom it is said: “Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness” (Mt 22:13). And so the Lord, attending to this, first warns them, and then gives the reason for his warning, saying, **stop making my Father’s house into a marketplace.**

388 He warns those selling the doves by reproaching them, for they signify those who sell the gifts of the Holy Spirit, i.e., those who engage in simony.

389 He gives his reason for this when he says, **stop making my Father’s house into a marketplace.** “Take away your evil from my sight” (Is 1:10). Note that Matthew (2 1:13) says: “Do not make my house a den of thieves,” while here he says, **a marketplace.** Now the Lord does this because, as a good physician, he begins first with the gentler things; later on, he would propose harsher things. Now the action recorded here was the first of the two; hence in the beginning he does not call them thieves but merchants. But because they did not stop such business out of obstinacy, the Lord, when driving them out the second time (as mentioned in Mark 11:15), rebukes them more severely, calling robbery what he had first called business.

He says, **my Father’s house,** to exclude the error of Manicheus, who said that while the God of the New Testament was the Father of Christ, the God of the Old Testament was not. But if this were true, then since the temple was the house of the Old Testament, Christ would not have referred to the temple as **my Father’s house.**

390 Why were the Jews not disturbed here when he called God his Father, for as is said below (5:18), this is why they persecuted him? I answer that God is the Father of certain men through adoption; for example, he is the Father of the just in this way. This was not a new idea for the Jews: “You will call me Father, and you will not cease to walk after me” (Jer 3:19). However, by nature he is the Father of Christ alone: “The Lord said to me: ‘You are my Son’ “ (Ps 2:7), i.e., the true and natural Son.

inauditum erat apud eos. Et ideo quia Christus se verum Dei filium dicebat, Iudaei persequebantur ipsum; infra V, 18: *propter hoc persequebantur Iudaei Christum, quia non solum solvebat sabbatum; sed et patrem suum dicebat Deum, aequalem se Deo faciens*. Cum autem hic Deum vocat patrem, dicebant de eo quod esset per adoptionem.

Quod autem domus Dei non debeat fieri domus negotiationis, habetur Zach. c. ult., 21: *non erit ultra mercator in domo domini exercituum in die illo*. Et in Ps. LXX, v. 16 secundum aliam litteram: *quoniam non cognovi negotiationem, introibo in potentias domini*.

Consequenter cum dicit *recordati sunt vero discipuli eius* etc. ponit prophetiae oraculum, quod quidem scriptum est in Ps. LXVIII, 10: *zelus domus tuae comedit me*. Ubi sciendum, quod zelus proprie dicit quamdam intensionem amoris, qua intense diligens, nihil sustinet quod amori suo repugnet. Et inde est quod viri diligentes intense uxores, nec in eis sustinentes aliorum consortium, utpote amori eorum contrarium, zelotypi dicuntur. Ille igitur proprie zelum Dei habet qui nihil patienter sustinere potest contra honorem Dei, quem maxime diligit; III Reg. c. XIX, 10: *zelo zelatus sum pro domino exercituum* et cetera. Nos autem debemus diligere domum domini, secundum illud Ps. XXV, 8: *domine, dilexi decorem domus tuae*. Et intantum debemus diligere quod zelus eius nos comedat: dum si quid contrarium fieri videbimus, studeamus etiam quantumcumque cari nostri sint qui hoc facient, remove, nec timeamus propter hoc aliqua mala perpeti. Unde dicitur in Glossa: bonus zelus est fervor animi, quo quis mortis abiecto timore, pro defensione veritatis accenditur. Eo comeditur, qui quaelibet prava quae viderit, corrigere satagit; et si nequit, tolerat, et gemit.

It is this that was unheard of among the Jews. And so the Jews persecuted him because he called himself the true Son of God: “the Jews tried all the harder to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath rest, but even called God his own Father, making himself equal to God” (below 5:18). But when he called God his Father on this occasion, they said it was by adoption.

391 That the house of God shall not be made a marketplace is taken from Zechariah (14:21): “On that day there will no longer be any merchants in the house of the Lord of hosts”; and from the Psalm (70:16), where one version has the reading: “Because I was not part of the marketplace, I will enter into the strength of the Lord.”

392 Then when he says, **His disciples then remembered**, he sets down a prophecy which was written in Psalm 69 (v 9): “Zeal for your house consumes me.” Here we should remark that zeal, properly speaking, signifies an intensity of love, whereby the one who loves intensely does not tolerate anything which is repugnant to his love. So it is that men who love their wives intensely and cannot endure their being in the company of other men, as this conflicts with their own love, are called “zelotypes.” Thus, properly speaking, one is said to have zeal for God who cannot patiently endure anything contrary to the honor of God, **whom** he loves above all else: “I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts” (1 Kgs 19:10). Now we should love the house of the Lord, according to the Psalm (25:8): “O Lord, I have loved the beauty of your house.” Indeed, we should love it so much that our zeal consumes us, so that if we notice anything amiss being done, we should try to eliminate it, no matter how dear to us are those who are doing it; nor should we fear any evils that we might have to endure as a result. So the Gloss says: “Good zeal is a fervor of spirit, by which, scorning the fear of death, one is on fire for the defense of the truth. He is consumed by it who takes steps to correct any perversity he sees; and if he cannot, he tolerates it with sadness.”