

gunt quidem, sed non percussit : si  
 rripiatur, ita exprobrat, ut tamen  
 : sifelo inflammatus Malchi au-  
 io præcide  
 o suo resti  
 profugiat, i  
 cum adve  
 posceris,  
 onem ob  
 perit, eun  
 n introdu  
 enigna on  
 affiones: q  
 us ac præf  
 rtem ipia  
 e, nos con  
 injurias a  
 Quin hæc c  
 ue etiam n  
 e) de quit  
 erui. Hi de  
 empla, no  
 d viva vive  
 vivæ, holo

# THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH



ORIGEN

HOMILIES ON ISAIAH

Translated by  
 Elizabeth Ann Dively Lauro

perfecta, Dii denique, Trinitatis  
 beneficio. Hi populos habent, nos  
 hi temeritatem & audaciam, nos  
 minas, nos orationes: hi quod per-  
 nos quod ferimus : hi aurum & ar-  
 nos repurgatam doctrinam. Feci-  
 duplices & triplices contignatio-  
 nosce Scripturæ verba ) domum  
 m, fenestris distinctam : at hæc  
 fide mea sublimiora sunt, nec cœ-  
 os tendo. At mihi grex exiguus ?  
 recipitia non fertur. At angusta mi-  
 sed quæ lupis non pateat, sed quæ  
 non admittat, nec a furibus, & ex-  
 scendatur. Nec dubito quin eam  
 latiore aliquando visurus sim.

αὐτῶν πρὸς τοὺς ἡ. ἐκείνῳ ἡ. ἐκείνῳ ἡ. ἐκείνῳ ἡ.  
 ἄφνω συλληφθῇ, ὁνειδίζῃ μὲν  
 μαχαίρα Μάλχας τέμνης τὸ

ἔτοι δῆμους, ἡμεῖς ἀγγέλους  
 πῶς ἡμεῖς ἔτοι τὸ ἀπειλεῖν  
 εὐχεσθαι ἔτοι τὸ βάλλειν,  
 ἔτοι χρυσὸν καὶ ἄργυρον, ἡμ  
 θαρμένον. ἐποίησας σεαυτῶν  
 ροφα; γινώσκει τὰ ῥήματα τῶ  
 πῶς ὄν, διεσπασμένον θυρίσιν,  
 τῶ ἔμῃς πίστεως ὑψηλότερα κα  
 ἔς φέρομαι. μικρὸν μοι τὸ π  
 ἐπὶ κρημνῶν φερόμενον. σε  
 πλὴν λύκοις ἀνεπίδατ, ,  
 δεχομένη λησὴν, ὅδε ὑπερβα  
 καὶ ξένοις. ὅψομαι ταύτην  
 τιτέραν, πολλὰς καὶ τῶν νι

ἀποκαλ  
 ρισελῆι  
 τὰς ἀγού  
 διὰ κακ  
 εἰσάξῃ  
 λανθρά  
 -ῃ παθ  
 Θεῷ καὶ  
 ὁμοίοις  
 -ρὸς δὲ  
 ὁμαι, κα  
 ἢ πολλὰ  
 τοι τὰς  
 , ἡμεῖς  
 ὦν! ὁ  
 μαλα λ  
 ἀδὲ πα

# *THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH*

A NEW TRANSLATION

VOLUME 142

# THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

A NEW TRANSLATION

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ORIGEN  
HOMILIES ON ISAIAH

*Translated by*

ELIZABETH ANN DIVELY LAURO



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*In dedication to my husband,  
Lino,*

*and*

*in memory of my mentor and friend,  
The Reverend Rowan A. Greer (1934–2014),*

*and*

*my mother-in-law,  
Marie Wayda Lauro (1936–2015),*

*and*

*my mother,  
Mona Rose Maurer Dively (1935–2017)*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

### *Primary Works*

<i>Hist. eccl.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>Comm in Is</i>	Jerome, <i>Commentary on Isaiah</i>
<i>C Cels</i>	Origen, <i>Contra Celsum</i>
<i>Comm Cant</i>	Origen, <i>Commentary on the Song of Songs</i>
<i>Comm in Jn</i>	Origen, <i>Commentary on John</i>
<i>Comm in Mt</i>	Origen, <i>Commentary on Matthew</i>
<i>Comm in Rom</i>	Origen, <i>Commentary on Romans</i>
<i>De princ</i>	Origen, <i>On First Principles</i>
<i>Hom in Cant</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on the Song of Songs</i>
<i>Hom in Ex</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Exodus</i>
<i>Hom in Ezek</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Ezekiel</i>
<i>Hom in Gn</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Genesis</i>
<i>Hom in Is</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Isaiah</i>
<i>Hom in Jer</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Jeremiah</i>
<i>Hom in Jgs</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Judges</i>
<i>Hom in Jos</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Joshua</i>
<i>Hom in Lk</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Luke</i>
<i>Hom in Lv</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Leviticus</i>
<i>Hom in Nm</i>	Origen, <i>Homilies on Numbers</i>

### *Editions, Translations, Series, and Journals*

ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers series
GCS	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller

FOTC	The Fathers of the Church series
LXX	Septuagint
NPNF 2d	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SC	Sources Chrétiennes series
SP	Studia Patristica series
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen

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# INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

### *Significance of these Homilies*

Origen of Alexandria and Caesarea (c. 185–254) is a pre-conciliar thinker whose prolific theological exploration has generated both praise and criticism throughout the ages. Yet he commands attention from all sides for providing terminology and logic relevant to multiple aspects of future theological debates. His homilies on Isaiah are no exception. These homilies are fundamental to understanding how Origen views the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit within the Trinity. By identifying the two Seraphim around the throne of the Lord in Isaiah 6 as the Son and Holy Spirit around the throne of the Father, he has sparked tensions between his followers and his opponents from the beginning, resulting in accusations of proto-Arianism and even a pointed anathema from Emperor Justinian. Are these accusations accurate? Do they interfere with valuable insights that Origen may have for the Trinity and the spiritual goals and growth of believers? This allegorical portrayal of the Trinity is not mentioned merely once but pervades Origen's nine extant homilies on Isaiah.

As a result of this portrayal, these homilies contribute to a greater understanding of how Origen's view of the Trinity drives his telling of the story of salvation history.<sup>1</sup> A careful reading of these homilies reveals his ever-present mission to tell the story of the soul's ascent to God, set in motion by God's act of creation,

1. In 1979, Rowan A. Greer masterfully directed the future of academic discourse about Origen's intimate commitment to the unfolding story of salvation history in the introduction to his select translations of Origen's works for Paulist Press. Rowan A. Greer, *Origen: An Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer and Selected Works*, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 1–37.



facilitated by Christ's resurrection and the age of the Church, and culminating in a union with the Trinity in the heavenly feast.<sup>2</sup> These homilies reveal Christ's central roles at all stages of this salvation story and Origen's mission to encourage his audience to be purposeful and effective players within it, all against the backdrop of the Father-Son-Holy Spirit relationship.<sup>3</sup>

We are fortunate to have available to us nine homilies on Isaiah by Origen.<sup>4</sup> In this introduction we consider the following: (1) the likely dating of Origen's deliveries and makeup of his audience; (2) the likelihood of Jerome as translator and the reliability of his translation methods; (3) Origen's exegetical method, the main themes that he develops in these homilies, and how they rely on his view of the Trinity in order to tell the story of salvation history; and (4) finally, a brief consideration of the history of manuscript preservation, the Latin edition used, and notes about the methods of translation used in this volume.

### *Likely Dates and Audience of Origen's Homilies*

Origen likely delivered his transcribed homilies in Caesarea of Palestine between AD 245 and AD 248, given that (1) his

2. In prior works this volume's translator demonstrates how this heavenly feast is not only union with Christ, who is virtue and wisdom, but a union with the whole Trinity, sharing in the relationship between the Father and the Son, consisting dynamically of the Father's eternal begetting of the Son and the Son's eternal contemplation of the Father (or reflection of the Father's glory). See Elizabeth Ann Dively Lauro, "The Meaning and Significance of Scripture's Sacramental Nature within Origen's Thought," SP 94: 153–85 (Leuven: Peeters, 2017); and eadem, "The Eschatological Significance of Scripture's Sacramental Character According to Origen," SP 56: 83–102 (Leuven: Peeters, 2013).

3. This volume's translator is preparing a larger work on Origen's Trinitarian theology and its place within his soteriological theology. For an introduction to some of the facets of that work, see Dively Lauro, "Origen's Relational Trinity: A Clarification from His *Fourth Homily on Isaiah*," *Studia Patristica* (Peeters, forthcoming in 2021; presented at the Oxford Patristics Conference, 2019).

4. Jerome reported that Origen's homilies on Isaiah comprised 25 homilies (in his commentary *In Is* 1.1) and 32 homilies (in his *Letter* 33.4). Alfons Füst, however, argues that Jerome's report of 25 homilies is a more reliable source. See Alfons Füst, "Jerome Keeping Silent: Origen and his Exegesis of Isaiah," *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings and Legacy*, ed. Andrew Cain and Josef Lössl (Surrey, England, and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2009), 141–52, esp. 141 nn. 1 and 2.

preaching followed his ordination in 232, (2) his preaching began after travels ended in 238, (3) his preaching likely occurred in a three-year cycle, and (4) according to Eusebius, Origen did not allow transcription of his homilies until, at age sixty, he felt sufficiently experienced at preaching.<sup>5</sup> Given that Origen lived from around 185 to 254, he would have turned sixty years old in approximately 245, making this year a likely beginning for the three-year cycle of his preaching during which his homilies were recorded. While the homilies on Isaiah include no recognizable indicators of timing, such as, for example, reference to the publishing of another work by Origen, we proceed with the hypothesis that he delivered these transcribed homilies between approximately 245 and 248.

Origen's homiletic audience has been explored in a prior work by this volume's translator,<sup>6</sup> but, in summary here, it is likely that his intended audience comprised church leaders and teachers as well as less spiritually advanced people. When he himself asks for the cleansing of the second Seraph,<sup>7</sup> he reveals his understanding that believers from all levels within the Church (leaders and non-leaders) continue to need further cleansing and understanding in order to become ready for salvation. When he presents his somatic (historical and moral), psychic (moral), and pneumatic (spiritual) readings of Scriptural text (as defined

5. For a full treatment of the timing of Origen's transcribed homilies, see Elizabeth Ann Dively Lauro, trans. Origen, *Homilies on Judges*, FOTC 119 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 15–20. For supplementary sources, see Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6, trans. Arthur Cushman McGiffert, in NPNF 2d series, 1, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994; reprinted from 1890), 249–92; Pierre Nautin, *Origène: Sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977), esp. 409–12; Henri Crouzel, *Origen: The Life and Thought of the First Great Theologian*, trans. A. S. Worrall (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989; originally, Paris: Pierre Zech Editeur, 1985), esp. 29–30; R. P. C. Hanson, *Origen's Doctrine of Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1954), 1–30; Ronald Heine, trans., Origen, *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, FOTC 71 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1982), 21–24. For the argument that Origen preached his homilies in a three-year cycle, see specifically Nautin, *Origène*, 401; Heine, trans., FOTC 71, 20–21; Hanson, *Tradition*, 27; and Dively Lauro, FOTC 119, 23.

6. See Dively Lauro, FOTC 119, 20–24.

7. Origen displays humility by asking the second Seraph to come down and cleanse his lips in *Hom in Is* 1.4 and *Hom in Is* 5.2.

below), he does so in front of a varied audience and arguably believes that some of the more advanced in the faith will grasp deeper insights while the less advanced will grasp more elementary understandings. All understandings help lead the believer to growth and toward salvific union with Christ and the Trinity. The exploration below of the main themes of the homilies shows that Origen sees all believers, at whatever level of advancement, as in need of prodding to grow in the virtues and wisdom that are Christ and are necessary for eternal union with God.

It is, however, always best to proceed cautiously when trying to identify Origen's audience from rhetorical and other literary analyses of the homilies, since (1) we cannot be certain that the intended audience for the transcribed homilies was the same as for the preached homilies (or even transcribed "word-for-word"),<sup>8</sup> and (2) we would need to distinguish Origen's intended third-century Greek audience from Jerome's intended fourth-century Latin audience. Further historical and rhetorical analysis of the Latin translations of Origen's homilies is merited to determine Origen's audience, and, preliminarily, how many characteristics of his audience can be gleaned through that of the Latin translators.

### *Jerome as Likely Translator*

Since these homilies are extant only through Latin translation, it is important to consider, first, the identity of the translator, and, second, his reliability in rendering Origen's authentic meaning. While extant manuscripts of Origen's homilies on Isaiah make no mention of the Latin translator, a variety of considerations supports St. Jerome of Stridon (c. 347–420)<sup>9</sup> as the

8. We must be open to the possibility that transcription may not have been exactly word-for-word, either due to recording mistakes or because summaries were facilitated at points within the transcriptions due to having an audience in mind for the transcribed homilies that was different from the audience to which Origen delivered them orally in the context of a church service.

9. Scholars old and new tend to agree on the date of Jerome's death as 420, but recent scholarship places his birth in 347, while the older scholarly view proposed 331. For 331, see J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998; originally published, London: Gerald Duck-

Latin translator of these homilies as well as the dating of this translation at around 381–382.<sup>10</sup> To support the identification of Jerome as translator, we consider statements provided by the other major Latin translator of his time, Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411),<sup>11</sup> as well as the timing and claims of Jerome's other works. The best reading of the information available to us is that in his earlier years Jerome translated Origen's homilies on Isaiah, but then became more cautious over time to avoid direct association because of the incendiary nature of their arguably proto-Arian leanings.<sup>12</sup>

Jerome never states that he translated Origen's homilies on Isaiah, neither in his autobiographical list of works in *Lives of Illustrious Men* (*De viris illustribus*) 135 (392–393)<sup>13</sup> nor in his own commentary on Isaiah (408–410). Rufinus, however, directly refers to Jerome as the translator of these homilies twice in his apology (400).<sup>14</sup> In the course of explaining that he employs the

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worth & Co. Ltd., 1975), 2–3. For 347, see Stefan Rebenich, *Jerome*, The Early Christian Fathers (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), and Megan Hale Williams, *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship* (University of Chicago Press, 2006).

10. See note 14 below.

11. For a formidable study of Rufinus, see Francis X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411): His Life and Works* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1945).

12. For another development of this view, see Fürst, “Jerome Keeping Silent,” 141–52.

13. Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, translation in NPNF 2d series, 3 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 359–84, esp. 384.

14. Rufinus, *The Apology of Rufinus* (against Jerome) 2.27 and 2.46, quoting *Hom in Is* 1.2, NPNF 2d 3, 472 and 481. Relying mainly on references in Rufinus's *Apology Against Jerome*, Kelly attributes the translation of these homilies to Jerome. Following the considerations of Latin editor W.A. Baehrens, Kelly offers the two following additional reasons: (1) Jerome's use of the homilies “in his later expositions of Isaiah,” namely, Jerome's own *Commentary on Isaiah*, and (2) the “style and content” of the Latin translation of the homilies as reflective of Jerome; Kelly, *Jerome*, 76–78, esp. 76, referring to W.A. Baehrens, *Origenes Werke* 8, GCS 33, 937–72, intro., 43–46, and 76 n. 34. In contrast, note that the Italian translator of the homilies holds back from a direct attribution of the Latin translations of the homilies to Jerome because there is no direct link to him stated in the manuscripts of the homilies or by him in his own works. See *Origene: Omelie su Isaia*, Collana di Testi Patristici 132, trans. Maria Ignazia Danieli (Rome: Città Nuova Editrice, 1996), 47.

same methods of translating as Jerome, Rufinus insists that he, like Jerome before him, used interpolation to preserve simultaneously the writer's statements and the Latin reader's orthodoxy. As evidence, he points to Jerome's translation of Origen's treatment of the two Seraphim in the latter's homilies on Isaiah:

For instance, in the Homilies on Isaiah, at the Vision of God Origen refers the words to the Son and the Holy Spirit; and so you [Jerome] have translated, adding, however, words of your own which would make the passage have a more acceptable sense. It stands thus: "Who are then these two Seraphim? My Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit": but you add of your own, "*And do not think that there is any difference in the nature of the Trinity, when the functions indicated by the several persons are preserved.*"<sup>15</sup>

J. N. D. Kelly notes that Rufinus's "citation" here is "verbally identical" with the language in the Latin translation of Origen's homilies on Isaiah,<sup>16</sup> and Rufinus's attribution to Jerome here is without hesitation. It is reasonable to rely on Rufinus here, since he was intimately acquainted with Jerome's translations and translation methods and did not, himself, claim to be the translator of these particular homilies.

In addition, late in his career, in *Letter* 84 (400), while insisting that he has "never been an Origenist," Jerome announces that he has over time "made a *collection* of [Origen's] works" so that, "know[ing] everything that he [Origen] has written," Jerome would "not follow his errors."<sup>17</sup> During his earlier, prolific

15. Rufinus, *The Apology of Rufinus* 2.27 (again in 2.46), quoting *Hom in Is* 1.2, NPNF 2d 3:472 (and 3:481). Emphasis added. Compare *De princ* 4.3.14, where Origen states that "[m]y Hebrew master" taught that the two Seraphim of the Isaiah vision represent "our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit," "since the beginning and end of all things could not be comprehended by any except" them; *Origen: On First Principles*, trans. G. W. Butterworth (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1973), 311; *Origène: Traité des Principes*, trans. Henri Crouzel and Manlio Simonetti, SC 268 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1980), 394. Compare also *De princ* 1.3.4, where Origen also refers to "my Hebrew master" teaching that the two Seraphim of the Isaiah vision at Is 6 are "the only-begotten Son of God and the Holy Spirit"; Butterworth, *Origen*, 32; *Origène: Traité des Principes*, trans. Henri Crouzel and Manlio Simonetti, SC 252 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1978), 148, 150.

16. See Kelly, *Jerome*, 76–77.

17. Jerome, *Letter* 84.3 (AD 400), NPNF 2d series, 6 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 177. Emphasis added. Similarly, in *Letter* 85 to Paulinus (AD 400),

time of translating in Constantinople between 381 and 382, Jerome translated Origen's homilies on Jeremiah and Ezekiel.<sup>18</sup> If he was preparing a "collection" of Origen's works for scrutiny, logic suggests that he also translated Origen's homilies on the other major prophet, Isaiah, at this time, which is supported by recent scholarship.<sup>19</sup>

We know that even at this time in Constantinople Jerome did not agree with Origen's identification of the Son and the Holy Spirit with the two Seraphim in Isaiah's vision (Is 6). In his *Letter* 18 to Pope Damasus (also called *De Seraphim*, AD 381), Jerome states that he "does not agree" with "some of [his] predecessors," surely targeting Origen, who read Isaiah 6 as depicting the Father sitting on the throne and the Son and the Holy Spirit as the Seraphim surrounding the throne.<sup>20</sup> It would make sense that he wrote this statement just after or during the process of translating Origen's homilies on Isaiah and perhaps as a direct reaction to them. Moreover, this disclaimer fits well with his later declaration (in *Letter* 84, AD 400) that he prepared a "collection" of Origen's works in order to understand better their de-

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Jerome claims that he translated Origen's *De principiis* only because not only Pammachius but also many in Rome asked him to do so, "declaring that many persons were in danger, and that some even accepted Origen's heretical teaching. I have found myself forced therefore to translate a book in which there is more of bad than of good, and to keep to this rule that I should neither add nor subtract but should preserve in Latin in its integrity the true sense of the Greek." Jerome, *Letter* 85.3, NPNF 2d 6, 182.

18. Jerome includes in his list of works his translations of Origen's homilies on Jeremiah and Ezekiel in his *Lives of Illustrious Men* (*De viris illustribus*) 135 (AD 392–393). See Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, NPNF 2d 3, 384.

19. See Williams, *The Monk and the Book*, 267–301, esp. 276–77. In addition to Williams, Rebenich also reports Jerome as translating, during his stay in Constantinople from 380 to 382, Origen's homilies on the major prophets, namely Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. See also Rebenich, *Jerome*, 26. See also Fürst, "Jerome Keeping Silence," 142. Kelly points out that while some scholars date Jerome's translation of the homilies on Isaiah after his list of works that omits them in *Live of Illustrious Men* (*De viris illustribus*) in AD 392–393 (NPNF 2d 3, 384), the "clumsiness of form and style" that characterizes the Latin translation of Origen's homilies on Isaiah and is inferior to his later works, suggests an earlier date in Jerome's career, such as his time in Constantinople in 381–382. See Kelly, *Jerome*, 76–77.

20. See Jerome, *Letter* 18, NPNF 2d 6, 22.

partures from orthodoxy so that he would be sure to avoid the same errors. In *Letter 18 (De Seraphim)*, Jerome claims reliance on John 12.41 to argue that Christ is the one on the throne and the two Seraphim around him represent the two testaments of Scripture.<sup>21</sup> Jerome points to the meanings of the word “Seraphim” as “glow” or “beginning of speech” as further support for his argument that the two Seraphim “stand for the Old and New Testaments.”<sup>22</sup>

One might argue that Jerome would have omitted from his translation Origen’s identification of the two Seraphim as the Son and the Holy Spirit and replaced it with his preferred treatment of them as allegorically representing the two testaments. While, however, his methods, as discussed below, include correcting perceived corruptions of text by unorthodox culprits, (1) it was not Jerome’s intention to replace the original author’s meaning, that is, Origen’s real intentions, and (2) Origen’s intent to identify the two Seraphim with the Son and the Holy Spirit is unmistakable given his repeated use of this association throughout the nine extant homilies and its foundational role in his readings of other texts from Isaiah that he treats in these homilies. Therefore, it makes sense that Jerome, instead of

21. Jerome, *Letter 18*, NPNF 2d 6, 22. In a previous work I argue, contrary to Jerome’s reasoning, that the author of the Gospel of John may well have understood the one on the throne in the vision at Isaiah 6 to be the Lord, that is, the Father, and Jesus to be the second Seraph whom the Father has sent to “save the world” (Jn 12.44–50) and the one whose “glory,” as a Seraph sent by the Father, Isaiah “saw and spoke of” (Jn 12.41). See Elizabeth Ann Dively Lauro, “History and Context of Origen’s Relation of the Two Seraphim to the Son and Holy Spirit,” *Origeniana Duodecima* 14 (*Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium* 302), ed. Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony, Oded Irshai, Aryeh Kofsky, Hillel Newman, and Lorenzo Perrone (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 547–62. Also, see Fürst, “Jerome Keeping Silence,” 144–48, for a treatment of Jerome’s reliance on Jn 12.41 and Acts 28.25–27, in both Jerome’s *Letter 18* to Damasus and his commentary on Isaiah (*In Is*), all considered below.

22. *Letter 18*, NPNF 2d 6, 22. For analysis of Jerome’s interpretation of the two Seraphim as the two testaments and the adoption of this tradition by Pope Gregory and other subsequent theologians, see Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, vol. 1, trans. Mark Sebanc (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, and Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 255–56. Also see Kelly’s analysis of Jerome’s treatment of the two Seraphim in *Letter 18*, in Kelly, *Jerome*, 77–78.

omitting the association of the two Seraphim with the Son and the Holy Spirit, simply added statements stressing the orthodox view of the Trinity despite this association. For example, after the announcement in the first homily that the two Seraphim are the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Latin translator adds that this is not meant to “divide ... the nature of the Trinity” or to refute the “oneness of the divine nature in three.”<sup>23</sup> Various passages such as these can be identified as arguably corrective interpolations within Origen’s homilies on Isaiah and are marked in footnotes within this volume’s English translation, all consistent with Rufinus’s indication that Jerome inserted such corrective statements in his translations.

In certain works Jerome defends himself against accusations that he has been sympathetic to Origen’s theology and, in so doing, more than once specifically rejects the identification of the two Seraphim as the Son and the Holy Spirit. In *Letter 84* (AD 400), Jerome rebuts Rufinus’s claim<sup>24</sup> that he praised Origen’s treatment of Scripture, stating that he praised Origen only twice, and “merely praised the simplicity of his rendering and commentary[,] and neither the faith nor the dogmas of the Church come in at all.”<sup>25</sup> He stresses that he has “praised the

23. See *Hom in Is* 1.2 and 1.4. Latin edition: *Origenes: Die Homilien zum Buch Jesaja* (Werke mit deutscher Übersetzung, 10), trans. Alfons Fürst and Christian Hengstermann (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter; Freiburg, Basel, and Vienna: Herder, 2009), 200 (*Nec putes trinitatis dissidere naturam, si nominum servantur officia*) and 202 (*unitatem deitatis in trinitate cognoscas*). Rufinus stated that they are interpolations. See note 13 above. See also Kelly, *Jerome*, 76–77. Also, Fürst argues that these passages are interpolations. See Fürst, “Jerome Keeping Silent,” respectively, 144 and 143 n. 15.

24. In his *Preface to Translations of De Principiis* (AD 397), NPNF 2d 3, 427, Rufinus refers to Jerome’s praise of Origen in Jerome’s *Preface to the Translation of Origen’s Two Homilies on the Song of Songs* to Pope Damasus (AD 383), NPNF 2d 6, 485: “I [Jerome] have translated these two short treatises, which he [Origen] composed in the form of daily lectures for those who were still like babes and sucklings, and I have studied faithfulness rather than elegance. You can conceive how great a value the larger work possesses, when the smaller gives you such satisfaction,” noting that Origen “wrote ten volumes upon ... the Song of Songs.”

25. Jerome, *Letter 84.2* to Pammachius and Oceanus (AD 400), NPNF 2d 6, 175–81, esp. 176. Jerome here is specifically replying to Rufinus’s words in his *Preface to Translations of De Principiis*, and he insists that he “praised Origen ... only ... in two places, in the short preface (addressed to Damasus) to his



commentator but not the theologian, the man of intellect but not the believer, the philosopher but not the apostle,”<sup>26</sup> and he has “always opposed [Origen’s] doctrines.”<sup>27</sup> Specifically, he points to his past record of disagreeing with Origen on the two Seraphim, stating: “[i]n the portion of Isaiah which describes the crying of the two Seraphim[,] he [Origen] explains these to be the Son and the Holy Ghost; but have not I altered this hateful explanation into a reference to the two testaments?”<sup>28</sup> Jerome arguably refers here to his *Letter* 18 (*De Seraphim*) of 381, in which, as mentioned above, he sets forth what he considers to be the correct reading of the two Seraphim as relating to the two testaments of Scripture.<sup>29</sup>

Also, in *Letter* 61 (AD 396), Jerome defends himself against Presbyter Vigilantius’s charges that he has shown favor to Origen’s exegetical views, and, in so doing, specifically labels Origen’s association of the two Seraphim with the Son and the Holy Spirit as especially egregious. Jerome first declares that, while Origen “in many passages ... has interpreted the scriptures well,” also “on very many points [Origen] is heretical.”<sup>30</sup> He then lists four specific errors of Origen, the first three “concerning the resurrection of the body ... the condition of souls, ... [and] supposing it possible that the devil may repent.”<sup>31</sup> Jerome sets apart the fourth error as the most offensive, stating that Origen “has declared in his commentary upon Isaiah that the Seraphim mentioned by the prophet [Isaiah] are the divine Son

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homilies on the Song of Songs and in the prologue to [Jerome’s] book of Hebrew names ... merely prais[ing] the simplicity of his rendering and commentary[,] and neither the faith nor the dogmas of the Church come in at all.”

26. Jerome, *Letter* 84.2, NPNF 2d 6, 176.

27. Jerome, *Letter* 84.2, referring to Jerome’s commentaries on Ecclesiastes and his three books on Ephesians, NPNF 2d 6, 176.

28. Jerome, *Letter* 84.3, NPNF 2d 6, 176.

29. Jerome, *Letter* 18 to Pope Damasus (*De Seraphim*), NPNF 2d 6, 22. This letter is likely the short work that in his commentary, *In Is* 3.3, Jerome states that he prepared some 30 years previously at the request of friends to deal with the vision in Is 6. See Fürst, “Jerome Keeping Silent,” 142.

30. *Letter* 61.2 to Vigilantius (AD 396), NPNF 2d 6, 131.

31. *Letter* 61.2, NPNF 2d 6, 131–32.

and the Holy Ghost.”<sup>32</sup> As in *Letter 18 (De Seraphim, AD 381)*<sup>33</sup> and in *Letter 84 (AD 400)*,<sup>34</sup> here in *Letter 61 (AD 396)* Jerome stresses that, unlike Origen, he understands the two Seraphim in the Isaiah vision to represent the two testaments of Scripture. He speaks as one who, upon having prepared a “collection” of Origen’s works, can speak authoritatively about Origen’s departures from orthodoxy.

The question remains why Jerome did not identify himself as translator of Origen’s homilies on Isaiah simply as part of his “collection” of works to guard against heresies. Perhaps the best answer is that the larger context of growing anti-Origenism was engulfing Jerome from 392 onward, for in this post-Nicene era, the Father-Son relationship was one of the most heated theological issues.<sup>35</sup> Alfons Füst convincingly argues that Jerome translated the homilies but kept silent about this fact to avoid accusations of heresy. Füst argues that in *Letter 18* or *De Seraphim* (AD 381), Jerome “depended strongly on Origen’s homilies on the vision of Isaiah” and “took over Origen’s exegesis of the vision of Isaiah in nearly all details,” except that “he rejected his Trinitarian explanation of the Seraphim,” relying instead on

32. *Letter 61.2*, NPNF 2d 6, 132. Jerome admits in this letter that “in many other passages he [Origen] has interpreted the scriptures well, has explained obscure places in the prophets, and has brought to light very great mysteries, both in the old and in the new testament.” Still, he stresses that if he does not expose Origen’s errors, such as relating the two Seraphim in Isaiah’s vision to the Son and the Holy Spirit, then he becomes a “partaker of his [Origen’s] fault.”

33. Jerome, *Letter 18 (De Seraphim)*, NPNF 2d 6, 22.

34. Jerome, *Letter 84.3*, NPNF 2d 6, 176.

35. Two events mark Jerome’s actual turn toward overt anti-Origenism:

(1) In 393, Epiphanius challenged Jerome and Rufinus to “sign an anti-Origenist formula,” which Jerome signed but Rufinus refused to sign. See Williams, *The Monk and the Book*, 284.

(2) In 396, Jerome released his translation of Epiphanius’s letter to John of Jerusalem condemning Origen’s views (attacking John for his support of Origen). This letter (AD 394) is known as *Letter 51* in the collection of Jerome’s letters but also as *Against John of Jerusalem*. For the text of the letter, see NPNF 2d 6, 83–89. For historical treatments and context, see Williams, *The Monk and the Book*, 284–86; Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton University Press, 1992), 122; and Kelly, *Jerome*, 201–4.

John 12.39–41 and Acts 28.25–27 to argue that, respectively, Christ or the Holy Spirit is the one on the throne surrounded by the two testaments of Scripture.<sup>36</sup> Fürst explains that this

combination of passages quoted from ... Isaiah, ... John and ... Acts[,] ... was an invention of the fourth-century theologians. Against the subordinationism of the “Arians” these theologians were searching for Biblical testimonies in which the same features are attributed to all the persons of the trinity alike.... Their subject matter is the same, though in Isaiah the motif [of the one on the throne] is ascribed to the Father, in ... John to the Son, and in [] Acts ... to the Holy Spirit. In his exegesis of the vision of Isaiah, Jerome took over this pattern and used it against the trinitarian explanation of the *seraphim* in Origen’s homilies.<sup>37</sup>

Fürst reasons that “the Arian controversy ... on the Trinity,” then, “was the context in which Jerome altered the text of Origen’s homilies on Isaiah.”<sup>38</sup> Yet his own interpolations did not make him content to reveal himself as translator as time progressed. Fürst argues that “Jerome suppressed his translation of Origen’s homilies on Isaiah in order to evade allegations against himself of unorthodoxy.”<sup>39</sup> This argument is convincing if indeed Origen’s treatment of the two Seraphim developed into an especially incendiary sentiment in the heated post-Nicene debates about proper articulations of the Trinity.<sup>40</sup>

Perhaps Jerome’s instincts to protect his orthodox persona

36. Fürst, “Jerome Keeping Silent,” 141–52, esp. 142 and 145–47. Emphasis added. Fürst points out that Jerome stresses this reading of the Seraphim again in his commentary on Isaiah (*Comm in Is* 3.4, AD 408–410). Fürst, “Jerome Keeping Silent,” 147.

37. Fürst, “Jerome Keeping Silent,” 148. See note 21 above for my argument elsewhere that Jn 12.41 is arguably best read as the Father and not the Son residing on the throne in the Isaiah vision.

38. Fürst, “Jerome Keeping Silent,” 148.

39. Fürst, “Jerome Keeping Silent,” 151.

40. Kelly argues that perhaps Jerome was silent about his early translation of Origen’s homilies on Isaiah simply “because of their clumsiness of form and style,” which alone can be a reason to argue that he translated them early in his career, such as in 381–382, as opposed to later, such as after his list of works in *Lives of Illustrious Men* (*De viris illustribus*) of 392–393 (NPNF 2d 3, 384), and that Jerome had “awareness of their stylistic and other defects” and thus was essentially embarrassed by the low quality of his early work. See Kelly, *Jerome*, 76–77.

over this issue of the Seraphim were especially well-founded, for Origen's treatment of the two Seraphim not only became a target of anti-Origenists but drew special attention in Emperor Justinian's anathemas against Origen nearly two centuries later. In 553, Justinian issued Anathematism 4 against Origen's portrayal of the "Word of God" as a "Seraph," because it suggested that he is a "power" of God and so not equal to God.<sup>41</sup> Justinian declared, "Anathema to Origen ... and to whomsoever there is who thinks thus, or defends these opinions, or ... shall presume to protect them."<sup>42</sup> With foresight, Jerome sought to expose, as Elizabeth Clark states, "Origen's theology [as] the root of Arius' subordinationism," in spite of the fact that, or perhaps because of the fact that, "the Fathers at Nicaea never condemned Origen."<sup>43</sup> Jerome even admits this in *Letter* 84 (AD 400), where he claims that the Council of Nicaea "covertly struck at Origen as the source of the Arian heresy: for, in condemning those who deny the Son to be of the substance of the Father, they have condemned Origen as much as Arius."<sup>44</sup> Jerome seems to have correctly judged, then, that Origen's identification of the two Seraphim as the Son and the Holy Spirit would eventually be cemented in the cast of Arius's condemnation at Nicaea and lead to unqualified condemnation of anyone who could in any way be seen as associated with it.

41. Justinian's Anathematism 4 against Origen in 553 condemns Origen for "thinking that the Word of God has become like all heavenly orders, so that for the cherubim he was a cherub, for the seraphim a seraph: in short, like all the superior powers ..." See "The Anathematisms of the Emperor Justinian against Origen" (AD 553), in *The Seven Ecumenical Councils*, NPNF 2d series 14 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994; originally published with Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), 320. The anathematisms end with this statement: "Anathema to Origen and to that Adamantius, who set forth these opinions together with his nefarious and execrable and wicked doctrine, and to whomsoever there is who thinks thus, or defends these opinions, or in any way hereafter at any time shall presume to protect them." Note that Fürst makes a non-specific reference to Justinian's later condemnations. Fürst, "Jerome Keeping Silent," 151.

42. "The Anathematisms of the Emperor Justinian against Origen," NPNF 2d 14, 320.

43. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, 138.

44. Jerome, *Letter* 84.4, NPNF 2d 6, 177.

*Jerome's Method of Translation and Reliability*

Jerome proclaims his reliability as a translator when he describes his methods of translating. He states that he captures the true meaning of the author by not translating “word for word,” but rather “sense for sense.” In *Letter* 57 to Pammachius (AD 395), Jerome states:

I myself do not admit but freely proclaim that in translating from the Greek (except in the case of the holy scriptures where even the order of the words is a mystery) I render sense for sense and not word for word.<sup>45</sup>

For this approach, Jerome claims the authority of not only translators of Greek philosophers such as Plato and dramatists such as Menander, but also the Gospel authors’ translations of passages of the Hebrew Scriptures (not always consistent with the translation in the LXX).<sup>46</sup> In *Letter* 57, Jerome exhaustively offers examples showing that the Gospel writers,

in translating old testament scriptures[,] have sought to give the meaning rather than the words, and that they have not greatly cared to preserve forms or constructions, so long as they could make clear the subject to the understanding.<sup>47</sup>

According to Jerome, then, he translates Greek theological works as the Gospel writers translated the Hebrew Scriptures. By citing the Gospel authors as precedence for his method of interpretation, he suggests that the Holy Spirit directs his translations as the Holy Spirit directed theirs, with all writings directed by the Holy Spirit resulting in a “*oneness of spirit*.”<sup>48</sup> He attributes this divine authority to his entire career of translating when he emphasizes that he “ha[s] always aimed at rendering sense not words.”<sup>49</sup>

Jerome gives at least two reasons why the word-for-word approach is inadequate. First, Jerome insists that a word-for-word translation would “sound uncouth” and *lose the “charm” of the*

45. Jerome, *Letter* 57.5, NPNF 2d 6, 113.

46. Jerome, *Letter* 57.5–12, NPNF 2d 6, 114–18.

47. Jerome, *Letter* 57.9, NPNF 2d 6, 117.

48. Jerome, *Letter* 57.7, NPNF 2d 6, 115. Emphasis added.

49. Jerome, *Letter* 57.6, NPNF 2d 6, 114.

*original language*.<sup>50</sup> He suggests that it is the responsibility of a translator to capture the “eloquence” of the passage in the new language.<sup>51</sup> Second, Jerome explains that the word-for-word approach *leaves the meaning of the original passage unclear*:

A literal translation from one language into another obscures the sense; the exuberance of the growth lessens the yield. For while one’s diction is enslaved to cases and metaphors, it has to explain by tedious circumlocutions what a few words would otherwise have sufficed to make plain.<sup>52</sup>

Jerome is convinced that a word-for-word translation hinders the conveyance of the original author’s true meaning. Therefore, to perform truly “the function of a translator,”<sup>53</sup> Jerome insists that it is crucial to aim for bringing the meaning, or sense, to the audience in the new language with both eloquence and clarity; otherwise, what is the point of translating?<sup>54</sup>

In order to secure the sense or meaning of the original author in the words of the new language, Jerome states that, like the Gospel authors, he makes “additions” and “omissions” as needed for eloquence and clarity of meaning.<sup>55</sup> He strives for “a holy simplicity but not a wordy rudeness,”<sup>56</sup> for “many phrases charming in Greek . . . if rendered word for word, do not sound well in Latin,” and vice versa.<sup>57</sup> By making additions and omissions, Jerome not only ensures charm and clarity but also “censure[s]” any “falsification” that he determines has been made to the manuscript.<sup>58</sup>

50. Jerome, *Letter* 57.5, 11, NPNF 2d 6, 114, 118.

51. Jerome, *Letter* 57.5, NPNF 2d 6, 114. See also Jerome’s *Letter* 84 (AD 400), which he ends by proclaiming: “a literal adherence to the original by no means tends to preserve the charm of its eloquence.” *Letter* 84.11, NPNF 2d 6, 181.

52. Jerome, *Letter* 57.5, NPNF 2d 6, 114.

53. Ibid.

54. Jerome also presses these two reasons and guides for translating, that is, eloquence and clarity, in his *Preface to the Chronicle of Eusebius* to Vincentius and Gallienus (381–382), NPNF 2d 6, 483–84.

55. Jerome, *Letter* 57.11, NPNF 2d 6, 117.

56. Jerome, *Letter* 57.12, NPNF 2d 6, 118.

57. Jerome, *Letter* 57.11, NPNF 2d 6, 118.

58. Jerome, *Letter* 57.12, NPNF 2d 6, 118. Jerome closes *Letter* 57 suggesting that his motivation to explain and defend his translation method extensively is that people, gossipers, have labeled him “a falsifier.” He cites in his defense a

Because Jerome sees the translator's task as crucial to the faith and directed by the Holy Spirit, he calls for the translator to "imitate" not only the translation "style of the apostles," but to "first imitate the virtue of their lives."<sup>59</sup> For Jerome, the translator's task is sacred. The translator of texts that treat Scripture and theological matters must be, like the Gospel writers, holy and worthy of the Holy Spirit's direction to ensure the truth and unity of the faith.

Rufinus considers Jerome his "brother and associate" in the task of translating Origen's works for Latin readers,<sup>60</sup> and, in this vein, gives further insight into Jerome's translation methods. Rufinus claims that, although he cannot achieve Jerome's "force and . . . eloquence,"<sup>61</sup> he follows his "rules and method, taking care not to promulgate those things which are found in the books of Origen to be discrepant and contradictory to one another," either because of "heretical and ill-disposed persons" falsifying them,<sup>62</sup> or because Origen uses "somewhat ob-

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letter by Epiphanius that he states is in both Greek and Latin, likely referring to *Letter 51* from Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, to John, Bishop of Jerusalem, written in 394 and translated later that same year into Latin by Jerome. See *Letter 57-13*, NPNF 2d 6, 118-19, and *Letter 51* by Epiphanius, NPNF 2d 6, 83-89.

59. Jerome, *Letter 57.12*, NPNF 2d 6, 118.

60. Rufinus, *Preface to Translations of De Principiis* to Macarius (AD 397), NPNF 2d 3, 427-28. This document also appears as *Letter 80* among Jerome's letters and is dated to AD 398 (NPNF 2d 6, 168-70). Though Rufinus here does not state Jerome's name, in *Letter 81* (AD 399, in NPNF 2d 6, 170) Jerome announces that he is the one to whom Rufinus refers in the latter's *Preface to Translations of De Principiis* (*Letter 80*).

61. Rufinus, *Preface to Translations of De Principiis*, NPNF 2d 3, 427. Also, Rufinus states that he wishes to "follow as far as possible the method of [his] predecessors," especially Jerome. See Rufinus, *Preface to Translations of De Principiis*, NPNF 2d 3, 428.

62. Rufinus, *Preface to Translations of De Principiis*, NPNF 2d 3, 428. In his *Epilogue to Pamphilus the Martyr's Apology for Origen* to Macarius at Pinetum (also called *The Book Concerning the Adulteration of the Works of Origen*, AD 397), Rufinus admits that there are in Origen's works "things . . . repugnant to . . . the rule of faith[,] things which our canons of truth do not sanction, and which we can neither receive nor approve." NPNF 2d 3, 421-22. They are, however, the result of heretics tampering with Origen's works: "The heretics are capable of any violence, they have no remorse and no scruples. . . . Whenever they found in any of the renowned writers of old days a discussion of those things which pertain to the glory of God so full and faithful that every believer could gain profit

scure language” and “passes rapidly over” matters because he perceives his audience to “have experience and knowledge of such matters.”<sup>63</sup> Rufinus notes that Jerome “purge[d] and pare[d] away in his translation all the causes of stumbling” so that “the Latin reader will find nothing in them which jars with our faith.”<sup>64</sup> Following suit, “wherever” Rufinus “found anything contrary to the truth concerning the Trinity which he [Origen] has in other places spoken of in a strictly orthodox sense,” he has “either omitted it as ... not genuine ... or set it down in terms agreeing with the rule of faith which we find him [Origen] constantly assenting to.”<sup>65</sup> As a corrective, Rufinus, claiming to follow Jerome’s method, “made the passage plain by add-

and instruction from it, they have not scrupled to infuse into their writings the poisonous taint of their own false doctrines ... either by inserting things which the writers had not said or by changing by interpolation what they had said, so that their own poisonous heresy might more easily be asserted and authorized by passing under the name of all the church writers of the greatest learning and renown; they meant it to appear that well-known and orthodox men had held as they did[,] ... in order to gain authority for their own heresies by the use of the names of holy men.” NPNF 2d 3, 422–23. Rufinus claims that “this adulteration of books is to be found in the case of many of the ancients.... [N]ow it may be more easily understood what has befallen the writings of Origen.” NPNF 2d 3, 422. Rufinus insists that Origen would not “contradict the book of life [Scriptures].” NPNF 2d 3, 423. Rufinus points out that in his own letters Origen refers to misrepresentations of his writings even during his lifetime: “[W]e may learn clearly from his own letter which he wrote to certain intimate friends at Alexandria” that he was aware of “corruption of his books and treatises” and “counterfeit versions of them.” NPNF 2d 3, 423 (and see n. 1 claiming that the letter to which Rufinus is referring is “from the fourth book of the letters of Origen”). Rufinus explains that “Origen in his letter complains with his own voice that he has suffered such things at the hands of heretics who wished him ill.” NPNF 2d 3, 426. Rufinus claims: “The fact is that the prompters of Origen’s accusers are men who make long controversial discourses in the churches, and even write books the whole matter of which is borrowed from him [Origen], and who wish to deter men of simple mind from reading him, for fear that their plagiarisms should become widely known, though, indeed, their appropriations would be no reproach to them if they were not ungrateful to their master.” NPNF 2d 3, 426.

63. Rufinus, *Preface to Translations of De Principiis*, NPNF 2d 3, 428.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid. Rufinus also points to Origen’s commitment to the rule of faith in his *Epilogue to Pamphilus the Martyr’s Apology for Origen* to Macarius at Pinetum (AD 397), NPNF 2d 3, 421–22.



ing words ... [from] other books of his [Origen's] where the matter was more fully treated."<sup>66</sup> In a counter-response, Jerome expresses doubt that Origen's works could have been tampered with so thoroughly: "can it be possible that all [Origen's] works, published ... at different times and places, have been corrupted?"<sup>67</sup> And, in addition, if every part of Origen's works that Je-

66. Rufinus, *Preface to Translations of De Principiis*, NPNF 2d 3, 428. Rufinus defends himself, saying: "I have done this in the interest of clearness[,] but I have put in nothing of my own; *I have only given him back his own words*, though taken from other passages." Rufinus, *Preface to Translations of De Principiis*, NPNF 2d 3, 428. Emphasis added. Three years later, in his *Apology in Defense of Himself* to Bishop Anastasius of Rome (AD 400, in NPNF 2d 3, 430–32), Rufinus again defends himself as a translator of Origen at the requests of others and states that in the process of translating the only changes he has made are those that lend clarification and, where he deems texts to be corrupted by heretics, correction. He states: "I am told that objections have been raised against me because ... I translated certain works of Origen from Greek into Latin. ... I was asked to exhibit in Latin what stands written in the Greek text; *and I did nothing more than fit the Latin words to the Greek ideas*. If ... there is anything to praise in these ideas, the praise does not belong to me; and similarly as to anything to which blame may attach. *I admit that I put something of my own into the work*; as I stated in my Preface, I used my own discretion in cutting out not a few passages; but only those as to which I had come to suspect that the thing had not been so stated by Origen himself; and the statement appeared to me in these cases to have been inserted by others, *because in other places I had found the author state the matter in a catholic sense*. ... I am not a defender of Origen; nor am I the first who has translated his works. Others before me had done the very same thing, and I did it, the last of many, at the request of my brethren. If an order is to be given that such translations are not to be made, such an order holds good for the future, not the past; but if those are to be blamed who have made these translations before any such order was given, the blame must begin with those who took the first step." NPNF 2d 3, 431–32. Emphasis added. Here Rufinus is likely referring, though perhaps among others, to Jerome specifically, as a predecessor to him in translating Origen and using the same methods of clarification and correction that he himself has implemented. So Rufinus in essence is saying that if you wish to attack those who have translated Origen, do not start with himself—Rufinus—for he is not the first or only one.

67. Jerome, *Letter* 84.9, NPNF 2d 6, 180. Two years later (in 402), Jerome reiterates many of his arguments against Rufinus in his *Apology Against Rufinus*, Books 1–3, to Pammachius and Marcella (NPNF 2d 3, 518–41). He strives to distinguish his translation methods from those of Rufinus, arguing that Rufinus took too many freedoms in translating Origen. Though Rufinus claims that he added words from others of Origen's works but never his own, he does not say which works of Origen he drew from when ensuring orthodoxy and clarity in

rome deemed unorthodox were falsified by heretics, then, he asks, what, at least in some cases, is left to translate that is genuinely Origen?<sup>68</sup> Rufinus, however, replies that it is not so difficult to believe heretics would have made changes throughout all of Origen's works, and, at the same time, he still argues that what is authentically Origen and useful can be separated out.<sup>69</sup>

In the end, these later, strong views of Jerome might suggest that he advises against reading Origen. It is not, however, that simple. Despite viewing Origen as heretical on many points, Jerome states: "My opinion is that we should sometimes read him for his learning[,] . . . and we should select what is good and avoid what is bad."<sup>70</sup> If, however, a reader cannot be so discerning, it is better, Jerome declares, "to be a pious boor than a learned blasphemer,"<sup>71</sup> in which case one should avoid reading Origen altogether.

And Jerome may have come to see Origen's homilies on Isaiah and, therefore, his own translation of them to be examples of works to avoid. For he likely became aware that a monumental amount of "discerning" would be required for any reader of these homilies to avoid being swayed by their seemingly Arian treatment of the Father-Son-Holy Spirit relationship. This is especially so because Origen identified the two Seraphim as the Son and the Holy Spirit throughout the homilies and used this association as the basis for his exegetical readings throughout the rest of the homilies.

Arguably, Jerome's reliability as a translator is enhanced by his attempt to distance himself from the Latin translation of Origen's homilies on Isaiah. For, as such, we have an interpretation of the two Seraphim that was obviously intended by Origen and not omitted or replaced by Jerome. Instead, we see Jerome's hand augmenting Origen's homilies only with interpolations

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the works of Origen that he was translating. Jerome assures his readers that he changed nothing but simply tried to expose false doctrines, indeed, heresies.

68. Jerome, *Apology Against Rufinus* 2.11–17, NPNF 2d 3, 506–11.

69. Rufinus, *Epilogue to Pamphilus the Martyr's Apology for Origen* to Macarius at Pinetum (AD 397), NPNF 2d 3, 424–25.

70. Jerome, *Letter* 62.2 to Tranquillinus (AD 396–397), NPNF 2d 6, 133.

71. Jerome, *Letter* 62.2, NPNF 2d 6, 134.

about the Trinity that Jerome found either corrective or at least clarifying. As Jerome claims, he translates by giving the sense and not the word in order to ensure the eloquence and clarity of the original text and by making additions and omissions that he deems necessary to free the works from unorthodox adulterations. Yet, as these homilies show, he does not mean for these additions and omissions to rewrite clear auctorial intent, and, in the case of Origen's homilies on Isaiah, Jerome preserves statements about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit that he considers to be at odds with the orthodoxy of Nicaea, because they are, quite simply, what Origen stated.

Certain scholars support the general reliability of Jerome's translations. Henri Crouzel points out that while the translations of Jerome and Rufinus are "not literal ... but have been composed as independent literary works intended for the Latin public" and are more "paraphrases ... than translations," "apart from omissions, they render the ideas closely enough."<sup>72</sup> Henri de Lubac, who would be echoed by Crouzel years later, urges students of Origen to use all renditions of his works available, whether Greek editions or Latin translations, to "make use of on a massive scale," for "from these comparisons emerges an impression of unity."<sup>73</sup> Kelly also finds Jerome a reliable translator of Origen, pointing out that Jerome takes "care ... to preserve the directness and simplicity of the master's sermon style,"<sup>74</sup> notwithstanding the fact that Kelly finds the Isaiah homilies to be

72. Henri Crouzel, *Origen*, 42.

73. Henri de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit: L'Intelligence de l'Écriture d'après Origène* (Paris: Aubier Éditions Montaigne, 1950), 42, quoted by Crouzel, *Origen*, 48–49. Also, de Lubac, *History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture according to Origen*, trans. Ann Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 46.

74. Kelly, *Jerome*, 77. See the fuller text by Kelly: "His [Jerome's] chief care, he insists, was to preserve the directness and simplicity of the master's sermon style; and, as always, he did not feel bound to produce a word-for-word rendering.... Errors of translation are remarkably few.... On the other hand, side by side with drastic periphrases, abbreviations, and interpolations designed to help the reader's understanding, we come across traces of his incorrigible tendency to heighten or intensify the colour of an expression, to give rein to his personal opinions or prejudices, or to show off his learning. Jerome had to be Jerome; and to this we owe it also that, the Isaiah homilies apart, his translations are more elegant and readable than the originals."

“clums[y] in form and style,” simply suggesting that they were translated early in Jerome’s career.<sup>75</sup>

As a general rule, scholars find Jerome’s self-proclaimed methods of interpretation to be reliably present in his translations of Origen’s works, and the homilies on Isaiah are no exception. Ultimately, Jerome’s translation of Origen’s homilies on Isaiah can plausibly be seen as even more reliable given the argument that they are rougher translations by a less experienced Jerome as well as the fact that, in them, Jerome let stand Origen’s treatment of the Seraphim as the Son and the Holy Spirit despite potential accusations of Arian leanings.

### *Origen’s Exegetical Method*

Origen, known in Christian history as the father of Scriptural interpretation, gives a comprehensive demonstration throughout his voluminous works of the foundational relevance of the Hebrew Scriptures to the Christian faith. In previous works, I have more thoroughly explained Origen’s method of exegesis, which I summarize here.<sup>76</sup> He believed that every word of the Hebrew Scriptures taught Christian truths according to three levels of meaning: (1) the literal, somatic (bodily) level, teaching truths about God and God’s plan of salvation, as well as exhorting moral growth through conveyance of God’s commands; (2) the first non-literal, psychic (soul’s) level, exhorting moral growth, which stresses the very real battle for the soul fought between sin and virtue and between the demons and the angels;

75. Kelly, *Jerome*, 76–77. While one might argue that the style of Origen’s homilies on Isaiah is not sophisticated because Jerome only translated them for his own use, we may, after weighing all matters discussed above, conclude, like Kelly, that the crude nature of the translation is due to Jerome’s inexperience (having translated these homilies early in his career) rather than to his intention to translate them only for his own use. Moreover, as discussed above, Rufinus had access to them and did not suggest that they were not meant for his or anyone else’s eyes.

76. See Elizabeth Ann Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture within Origen’s Exegesis*, *The Bible in Ancient Christianity* 3 (Leiden, The Netherlands, and Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, Inc., 2005; also in paperback, Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 37–93; and eadem, trans., Origen, *Homilies on Judges*, FOTC 119, 24–27.

and (3) the second non-literal, pneumatic (spiritual) meaning, focusing either on the “middle things” of salvation history such as Christ’s Incarnation, ministry, death, and Resurrection and the Church, or on the goal or “end of things,” namely, the eschatological culmination of Christ’s power and the eternal feast uniting believers with God.

Origen sees the story of salvation history in every word of Scripture, in both the Old and the New Testaments. By using allegory and typology, he reads every person, object, and concept in the Hebrew Scriptures as a symbol and/or foreshadowing of matters related to the unfolding story of salvation history, regarding either creation, Christ and the Church, or the Eschaton. In the homilies on Isaiah, through a psychic reading of texts, Origen urges believers to submit to the Holy Spirit’s breath through the Scriptures so that they may begin to receive the cleansing from sins that leads to understanding God’s truths, which, in turn, leads to further cleansing and even deeper understanding. This cyclical increase in virtue and wisdom makes the soul more like Christ and so ultimately ready for eternal union with the Trinity. It also prepares the believer to heed the calling to lead others through the same process of cleansing, understanding, calling, and salvation. Origen includes pneumatic readings of texts, emphasizing the role of Christ as the initiator and the reward of this same process. As these homilies show, Origen posits progress in cleansing and understanding not as purely consecutive but as building one on the other, and he also uses the psychic and pneumatic senses in the same complementary, spiraling way, to assist in this building process.<sup>77</sup>

### *Themes Developed throughout the Homilies*

Given the controversy described above, it has been tempting through the centuries to focus one’s reading of Origen’s homilies on Isaiah solely on his treatment of the two Seraphim in the prophet’s vision at Isaiah 6. Origen’s identification of the

77. For demonstrations of this interrelationship between the two higher senses of meaning in Origen’s works, see Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture*, passim.

two Seraphim with the Son and the Holy Spirit surrounding the throne of the Lord, or Father, caused Church Fathers of the fourth century to shun Origen as proto-Arian, including translator Jerome, as discussed above, and, later, Justinian, who officially anathematized Origen on this specific point. Interestingly, if we consider all nine extant homilies holistically, we find that Origen's identification of Christ as the second Seraph (who comes down to cleanse the lips of Isaiah) is *foundational* to the array of themes he develops throughout the homilies. It is not principally, however, a Trinitarian statement, but, instead, a means of motivating his audience morally, or psychically, to seek the cleansing and understanding for which Christ is both the provider and the salvific reward. While in a prior work I argue how Origen's treatment of the two Seraphim as the Son and the Holy Spirit is not necessarily a subordinationist view of the Trinity,<sup>78</sup> here I demonstrate how this association sets the stage for the specific moral and spiritual lessons he draws out from Scripture for his audience throughout the nine homilies.

Origen's treatment of Isaiah's vision is driven by his consistent desire to present Christ as the second Seraph. In the vision, Isaiah sees two Seraphim standing around the throne of the Lord (Is 6.2a). Each has six wings; with two they cover the Lord's face, with two the Lord's feet, and with two they fly, as they cry out the Trisagion, "Holy, holy, holy Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory" (Is 6.2b–3). At that time, the foundations shake and smoke fills the house, and Isaiah cries out humbly that he is "stung," has "unclean lips," and lives among "people of unclean lips" (Is 6.4–5).<sup>79</sup> After this confession, one Seraph flies to Isaiah and cleanses his lips with "a burning coal . . . from the altar" (Is 6.6). This Seraph declares that, since the coal has touched Isaiah's lips, his "guilt is taken away, and [his] sin forgiven" (Is 6.7).

78. Dively Lauro, "History and Context of Origen's Relation of the Two Seraphim to the Son and Holy Spirit" (2019), *passim*; eadem, "The Inadequacy of the Term 'Subordination' for Origen's Theology and Ministry: A Study of Origen's Homilies on Psalm 15" (for the proceedings of the Origen Colloquium at The Catholic University of America in May 2017, forthcoming).

79. The translation of "stung" here for Is 6.5 reflects the translation in the following homilies and follows more closely the LXX than the RSV, the latter of which uses "lost."

Then, the Lord asks, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" to which Isaiah replies, "Here am I! Send me" (Is 6.8). The Lord instructs Isaiah to go to the people and tell them that they will "hear, but ... not understand; ... see, but ... not perceive, ... for the heart of this people has grown fat" (Is 6.9–10).<sup>80</sup> Origen's identification of Christ as the second Seraph, who flies to Isaiah and cleanses his lips, drives his moral and spiritual emphases throughout the nine homilies.

In *Hom in Is* 1, Origen states that the message of the Trisagion is "the coming of my Lord Jesus Christ,"<sup>81</sup> his Incarnation, mission, and Resurrection, which together mark the beginning of salvation. By singing the Trisagion, Christ and the Holy Spirit, in the role of Seraphim, deliver this message of salvation.<sup>82</sup> The Seraph who brings the coal from the altar of the Lord to the lips of Isaiah is "Jesus Christ, who was sent by the Father to take away our sins."<sup>83</sup> This Seraph, Christ, cleanses the prophet's lips<sup>84</sup> so that he will heed the call to be sent to the unclean people with the Lord's message.<sup>85</sup> Origen understands the Lord's message, partly, to warn the people that they do not hear, understand, or see the Lord and, partly, to exhort them to do what is necessary to hear, understand, and see the Lord and the Lord's message, so that they too can be cleansed and saved.<sup>86</sup> The homilies all relate to the following major theme, which Origen draws from the vision: the believer is to seek the cleansing and understanding that is needed to heed the Lord's call to lead others to the same

80. This quotation reflects the translation of Is 6.9–10 as seen in *Hom in Is* 6 and 9, which follows more closely the LXX than the RSV, since the RSV (translated from Hebrew) presents the verbs as imperatives.

81. *Hom in Is* 1.2, quoting Is 6.3; *Origenes* 10:200 (*Et dicunt: "Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Sabaoth, plena est omnis terra gloria eius." Domini mei Iesu Christi nuntiatur adventus*).

82. *Hom in Is* 1.2; *Origenes* 10:200, 202.

83. *Hom in Is* 1.4, referring to Is 6.7; *Origenes* 10:202 (*Unus autem ex Seraphim Dominus meus Iesus Christus est, qui ad auferenda peccata nostra a patre missus est*).

84. *Hom in Is* 1.4 and 4.5–6 and 5.2; *Origenes* 10:202, 204, and 238, 240, and 244–48.

85. *Hom in Is* 6.1–2 and 9, referring to Is 6.8–10; *Origenes* 10:254–60 and 300–304.

86. *Hom in Is* 6.3; *Origenes* 10:262–68.

cleansing and understanding, which, in turn, lead to salvation.<sup>87</sup> Origen presents the Holy Spirit within the homilies as the virtues breathed forth from the words of Scripture to propel the believer toward these ends. *The constant thread through the homilies, however, is that Christ, the second Seraph, is both the agent of cleansing and understanding as well as the resulting salvation.*

### Cleansing through Scripture

A person is unclean when she “let[s] . . . sin reign in [her] mortal body”<sup>88</sup> and lets sin be “a ruler of the soul.”<sup>89</sup> Evidence of this unhelpful internal leader is that the person is a “lover of pleasure” rather than “a lover of God.”<sup>90</sup> As a result, she is outside the Church and cannot see God.<sup>91</sup> To become clean, a person must feed on the “honey . . . found in the Scriptures.”<sup>92</sup> Christ is the “honey” in the “honeycomb” of Scripture.<sup>93</sup> When this honey, the “Word, reigns in us,” we can see God.<sup>94</sup> Then, the “wisdom of Christ” will dwell within us, for upon those whose lips are cleansed, the virtues come to rest:<sup>95</sup> “the Spirit of wis-

87. Even the homilies that treat verses in Isaiah other than those regarding the vision in Is 6 stem out of and feed into this major theme. The homilies treating directly verses other than those regarding the vision in Is 6 are *Hom in Is 2* (on Is 7), *Hom in Is 3* (on Is 4, and, secondarily, on Is 11), *Hom in Is 5* (secondarily, on Is 41), *Hom in Is 7* (on Is 8), and *Hom in Is 8* (on Is 10).

88. *Hom in Is 1.1*, quoting Rom 6.12; *Origenes 10:194* (*Apostolus ita sciens ait: Non ergo regnet peccatum in mortali vestro corpore*).

89. *Hom in Is 1.1*; *Origenes 10:194* (*principem animae*). For an explanation of Origen’s tripartite anthropology, see Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture*, 86–93; and eadem, “The Anthropological Context of Origen’s Two Higher Senses of Scriptural Meaning,” *Origeniana Octava* 1, ed. L. Perrone (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 613–24.

90. *Hom in Is 1.1*; *Origenes 10:194, 196* (*voluptatis amator non est amator Dei*). Note that Origen often refers to the Epicureans as a dangerous, false school for his audience to avoid.

91. *Hom in Is 1.1*; *Origenes 10:194–98*. For the role of the Church in the salvation process, see also *Hom in Is 2.1*; *Origenes 10:212*.

92. *Hom in Is 2.2*; *Origenes 10:214* (“Comede, fili, mel . . . Bonum est enim,” *quia bonum est hoc mel, quod in scripturis invenitur*).

93. *Hom in Is 2.2*; *Origenes 10:214, 216* (*Iesus Christus . . . mel vero est, qui in his est intellectus*).

94. *Hom in Is 1.1*; *Origenes 10:194* (*ut regnet in nobis sermo*).

95. *Hom in Is 3.1–2*, referring to Is 6.5; *Origenes 10:218–24*, esp. 220 (*sapientiam Christi mei*).



dom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and fortitude, the Spirit of knowledge and piety, and the Spirit of the fear of the Lord."<sup>96</sup> These virtues of the Spirit are Christ himself,<sup>97</sup> and, when we receive them as "food,"<sup>98</sup> we "adorn our soul in Christ Jesus."<sup>99</sup> "[U]nclean eyes, ears, and mouth" all point to an "unclean heart,"<sup>100</sup> and only the second Seraph, Christ, can cleanse the heart.<sup>101</sup> Therefore, Origen "prays" that the Father send the second Seraph to him with coal from the altar's heavenly fire to cleanse his lips, or cleanse him from sin, and he urges his audience to do the same.<sup>102</sup>

### Cyclical Growth in Understanding and Cleansing

When we are cleansed by Scripture and filled with the virtues of the Holy Spirit, Christ, and so Christ's virtue and wisdom, dwell within us, and we then can begin to understand the "middle things"<sup>103</sup> of God. Origen draws on the statement in the vision that the Seraphim cover the Lord's face and feet, stressing that these represent, respectively, the "beginning" of creation and the "last things" or "consummation at the judgment," which "have been hidden from us."<sup>104</sup> In contrast, "the middle things

96. These are the seven virtues or gifts of the Holy Spirit listed in Is 11.2–3a and relayed in Origen's *Hom in Is* 3.2; *Origenes* 10:224 ("Requievit ergo super eum spiritus Dei, spiritus sapientiae et intellectus, spiritus consilii et virtutis, spiritus scientiae et pietatis, et implevit eum spiritus timoris Dei").

97. For Origen's identification of each virtue and all of the virtues with Christ, see *Comm Cant* 1.5 and an analysis of it in Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture*, 230–31.

98. *Hom in Is* 3.3; *Origenes* 10:226 (*cibus*).

99. *Hom in Is* 3.3; *Origenes* 10:226 (*adsumentes eas fiamus sapientes et intelligentes in Deo ceteraeque virtutes exornant animam nostram in Christo Iesu*).

100. *Hom in Is* 5.2; *Origenes* 10:244 (*metuo, ne immundum cor habeam, immundos oculos, immundas aures, immundum os*).

101. *Hom in Is* 5.2, referring to Is 6.1–3, *passim*.

102. For this expression of humility by Origen, see *Hom in Is* 5.2, referring to Is 6.6; *Origenes* 10:244 and 246 (*Precor, ut mittatur etiam ad me Seraphim et apprehenso de fornice carbone purget labia mea . . . [O]rate Deum omnipotentem, ut veniat ad nos sermo eius*). See also *Hom in Is* 1.4 and 3.2.

103. *Hom in Is* 4.1; *Origenes* 10:228 (*media*).

104. *Hom in Is* 4.1, referring to Is 6.2; *Origenes* 10:228–32 (*Quae ante mundum fuerint, ignoramus; fuerunt porro quaedam ante mundum. Quae post mundum secutura sint, ad certum non apprehendimus; erunt autem alia post mundum. . . . Velantur enim*

have been opened for contemplation.”<sup>105</sup> The elements of salvation history are these “middle things,” that is, the Incarnation, the Resurrection, and the Church, which together facilitate our salvation. By contemplating these middle things, we come to understand that God has made possible our salvation despite our sinning and that the center and summation of these middle things is Christ.

Understanding does not strictly follow the completion of cleansing. Rather, cleansing and understanding feed each other and build proportionately. Origen stresses that the one who is “stung” understands God’s saving truth *and* asks for God’s correction.<sup>106</sup> So Origen calls on his audience to “be stung,” admitting, with some knowledge of God’s salvific plan, their own sins before God, as did Isaiah. If you are stung, you recognize that you are a sinner and are remorseful for it. Then, the second Seraph, Christ, will come to cleanse the unclean “lips of our mind and soul” with “the reproving word” of Scripture.<sup>107</sup> Origen calls for “the Divine Word” to “bite into us” and “set our souls on fire, . . . so that our iniquities and sins are taken away, and [we] are made clean.”<sup>108</sup> We are to be cleansed spiritually by the Word in all our parts: mouth, ears, eyes, and, ultimately, heart.<sup>109</sup> Origen is self-consciously preparing both himself and

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*a Seraphim priora operum Dei, id est facies Dei; similiter autem et pedes. Ea, quae post extremum saeculum in saecula saeculorum futura sunt, quis potest exponere? Garrulorum est hominum horum notitiam polliceri nescientium, quia homo ea tantum potest capere, quae media sunt. Et ea, quae post mundum usque ad consummationem in iudicio sunt futura, de poenis, de retributione, et horum quoque multa absconsa sunt nobis).*

105. *Hom in Is* 4.1; Origenes 10:232 (*Aperta sunt media ad contemplandum*).

106. *Hom in Is* 4.3, referring to *Is* 6.5 and 2 *Cor* 7.10; Origenes 10:236 (*Si quis sine sensu est iuxta interiorem hominem, cum peccator sit, non compungitur; sed quasi in exteriora membra licet adhibeas stimulum, non sentit mortuum corpus, eodem modo etiam si adhibeas peccatori verba divina mortificato per peccatum et non agenti paenitentiam, neque maestus est neque paenitet neque habet tristitiam operantem confessionem, tristitiam, quae secundum Deum est*).

107. *Hom in Is* 4.4–5, referring to *Is* 6.6–7; Origenes 10:238 (*Tangat ergo labia mentis et animae nostrae sermo corripuens*).

108. *Hom in Is* 4.6; Origenes, 10:238, 240 (*Mordeat nos sermo divinus, exurat animas nostras, . . . ut auferantur iniquitates nostrae atque peccata et mundi effecti mundo ore mundoque corde et munda tota conscientia*).

109. *Hom in Is* 5.2, referring to *Is* 6.5–7; Origenes 10:244 ([*M*]etuo, ne immundum cor habeam, immundos oculos, immundas aures, immundum os. Quamdiu

his audience to understand “the greater mysteries” so that the second Seraph, Christ, will come and cleanse Origen and them, until ultimately they will be cleansed wholly.<sup>110</sup> Origen warns us that our abilities to hear, or understand, God’s truths must grow as our cleansing increases, for “all persons are children ... compare[d] ... to the perfection of the Word,”<sup>111</sup> and we “mak[e] progress according to the progress of children.”<sup>112</sup> Yet, if we “believe” in the Word, we may be called “disciples of Jesus Christ.”<sup>113</sup>

Origen also warns us to avoid “empty talkers,” or, from the Scriptures, “ventriloquists,” whom he identifies as “daemons,” “pagans” (outside the Church), and “heretics” (from within the Church).<sup>114</sup> Only the words of the “Savior” are as a “fountain springing up into eternal life.”<sup>115</sup> In order to be strong against Satan, who “feeds upon the ... strength” of persons by leading them into sin,<sup>116</sup> it is necessary to build one’s life “on the rock, Jesus Christ.”<sup>117</sup> Then the believer may grow more deeply in cleansing and understanding and defeat sin and Satan.

### The Calling

If the believer receives cleansing and begins to “understand,” “see,” and “hear,” he will receive a divine calling to go out and teach others to receive the cleansing and growth in understanding necessary for salvation. The believer ready to hear the call-

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*in omnibus istis pecco, totus immundus sum*). See also *Hom in Is* 4.6 and previous note.

110. *Hom in Is* 5.2; *Origenes* 10:244–48 (*Praeparo et me et audientes ad maiora mysteria, si tamen veniat, si descendat ad nos sermo Dei*).

111. *Hom in Is* 7.1; *Origenes* 10:280 (*Parvuli autem omnes homines sunt, si eos compares ad perfectionem verbi*).

112. *Hom in Is* 7.1; *Origenes* 10:282 (*etiamsi proficerent, puerorum proficerent profectu*).

113. *Hom in Is* 7.2; *Origenes* 10:286 (*Iesu Christi discipulos et credimus in eo*).

114. *Hom in Is* 7.3, quoting *Is* 8.19; *Origenes* 10:286 (*Vani loquos ... ventriloquos ... daemonum ... gentiles ... haeretici*).

115. *Hom in Is* 7.3, quoting *Jn* 7.38 and 4.14; *Origenes* 10:288 (*[Salvator] ... fons aquae salientis in vitam aeternam*). See also *Hom in Is* 7.4.

116. *Hom in Is* 8.2, quoting *Is* 10.13; *Origenes* 10:298 (*vires eorum depascant*).

117. *Hom in Is* 8.2, quoting *Lk* 6.48; *Origenes* 10:298 (*super petram Iesum Christum*).

ing will either at first humbly decline, like Moses, or eagerly await instructions, like Jonah and Isaiah.<sup>118</sup> While Origen praises the humility of Moses (who at first asks God to “provide another”) and criticizes the blind surrender of Jonah and Isaiah (who, he points out, consent before first asking what God would command), Origen stresses that believers, and especially church leaders, must be humble servants of the people, both as Moses, Jonah, and Isaiah ultimately were to God and as Christ was to his disciples by washing their feet at the Last Supper.<sup>119</sup> Origen calls his audience, once sufficiently humbled, to “surrender ... to the Word of God” as did Isaiah, who said, “Here I am, send me.”<sup>120</sup>

In the vision, God commands Isaiah to tell the people to recognize their sin and be cleansed and understand God’s truth so that they too can find salvation in Christ.<sup>121</sup> Isaiah is to tell the people that they will “hear” and “not understand” and “see” and “not perceive,” because their “heart has grown fat” and “they have heard heavily and have shut their eyes.”<sup>122</sup> Origen explains that just as the cleansing of the lips is a spiritual cleansing of the heart and soul from sin, so, too, are “seeing” and “understanding” meant to refer to the recognition of spiritual, divine truths.<sup>123</sup> The people’s “heart has grown fat,” in the sense that it is thickened with sin.<sup>124</sup> “Sin” not only makes one “fat” but also “suffocates” the person.<sup>125</sup> If “the heart grows fat” with “worldly concerns,” then it “is not able to receive the ideas of the thin-

118. See *Hom in Is* 6.1.

119. See *ibid.*; also *Hom in Is* 6.2 and 6.3.

120. See *Hom in Is* 6.1, quoting Is 6.8; *Origenes* 10:258, 260 (*trade te sermoni Dei; dices postea: “Os meum aperui et attraxi spiritum”*). See treatment of Moses’s and Isaiah’s responses in *Hom in Is* 9 as well.

121. See *Hom in Is* 6 generally.

122. Is 6.9–10. See *Hom in Is* 6.3; *Origenes* 10:262 (*Vade, et dic populo: Aure audietis et non intelligetis, et videntes cernitis et non videbitis. Incrassatum est enim cor populi huius, et auribus graviter audierunt et oculis clausuerunt*).

123. See *Hom in Is* 6.4, referring to Is 6.9; *Origenes* 10:268 (*videntes ... scietis*).

124. See *Hom in Is* 6.5, referring to Is 6.10; *Origenes* 10:270 (*incrassatum est ... attenuetur*).

125. *Hom in Is* 6.5; *Origenes* 10:272 (*incrassatum autem a malitia et praefocatum eius, qui peccat*).

ner Spirit."<sup>126</sup> What will thin the heart are "spiritual responsibilities"<sup>127</sup> as well as "holy thoughts and divine understandings and a pure mind."<sup>128</sup> Then, the believer will be holy, as the Holy Spirit is described in Scripture to be "thin,"<sup>129</sup> as represented by the dove whose wings and feathers are light enough for flying.<sup>130</sup> If the person "becomes thin," then he can "receive the words of God" and "see the mystery of salvation."<sup>131</sup>

In like manner, there is a spiritual way of "hearing." The sinner "hears heavily" in a spiritual sense, for he is heavy with sin.<sup>132</sup> For, Origen points out, "sin is heavy," but "righteousness" is "light."<sup>133</sup> The sinner hears heavily, or with difficulty, but the one who surrenders to God hears lightly, or acutely, and so "becomes an understanding hearer."<sup>134</sup>

There is also a spiritual way of "seeing." Sinners who cannot see, and therefore cannot understand the ways of God, have *chosen* to "close their eyes," as opposed to people who are naturally blind or "are in darkness."<sup>135</sup> Sin is a result of our *free will*, and, as a result of surrendering our will to sin, we cannot then see "the light of truth."<sup>136</sup>

The calling, then, is to tell a sinful people to hear with their "interior ears"<sup>137</sup> and to "open [their] eyes and see straight

126. *Hom in Is* 9; *Origenes* 10:302 (*Idcirco pinguescit cor et non potest tenuioris spiritus suscipere notiones*) and *Hom in Is* 6.5; *Origenes* 10:272 (*ex saecularibus curis*).

127. *Hom in Is* 6.5; *Origenes* 10:272 (*attenuari ex sollicitudine spiritali*).

128. *Hom in Is* 6.5; *Origenes* 10:272 (*cogitationes sanctae et intellectus divini et mens pura*).

129. *Hom in Is* 6.5, quoting *Wis* 7.22b; *Origenes* 10:272 (*tenuis*).

130. See *Hom in Is* 6.6.

131. *Hom in Is* 6.5; *Origenes* 10:272 (*attenuari . . . accipiat sermones Dei . . . videat salutis sacramentum*). For the idea of seeing and therefore being able to understand after one has become thin, heard lightly, and opened his eyes, see also the end of *Hom in Is* 9.

132. *Hom in Is* 6.6, referring to *Is* 6.10; *Origenes* 10:276 (*graviter auditur*).

133. *Hom in Is* 6.6; *Origenes* 10:274 (*Gravitudō ergo aurium a peccato fit et levitas a iustitia*).

134. *Hom in Is* 6.6; *Origenes* 10:276 (*unde et fit intelligens quis auditor*).

135. *Hom in Is* 6.7; *Origenes* 10:276 (*Eorum, qui non vident, quidam caeci sunt et propter caecitatem non vident, quidam in tenebris sunt et propterea non vident, alii autem neque in tenebris sunt neque caeci sunt, sed quia claudunt oculos, non vident*).

136. *Hom in Is* 6.7; *Origenes* 10:276 (*lumen veritatis*).

137. *Hom in Is* 9; *Origenes* 10:302 (*interiores eorum aures*).

ahead.”<sup>138</sup> As a result, they will “turn” to God, or “be converted,” and God will “heal” them “by sending the Word, who restores to health those who want to be healed in Christ Jesus.”<sup>139</sup> By heeding the call, the believer, like Isaiah, becomes a vehicle of Christ’s message and a tool by which Christ will bring others to the cleansing and understanding that lead to salvation.

### The Resulting Salvation

Christ paved the way for our ascent to heaven by his “descen[t] from heaven to us,”<sup>140</sup> for Christ is “the Way.”<sup>141</sup> He is the “righteousness” that God the Father “has summoned,”<sup>142</sup> so that he came down, became incarnate, “heals us,”<sup>143</sup> and so effects our salvation. In Homily 5, Origen points out that there are crowds at church due to the fact that it is “the Day of Preparation” for “the commemoration of Christ’s passion,” and he reminds his audience that “the resurrection of the Lord is not celebrated once a year.”<sup>144</sup> Whether it is Eastertime or he is simply emphasizing the great fervor on the day each week that leads up to the celebration of Christ’s passion and the resurrection in the Eucharist, he exhorts his audience, in anticipation of the imminence of Christ’s coming, to pray for Christ to bring the coal from the heavenly fire to cleanse their spiritual lips, eyes, and ears, and, ultimately, their hearts, so that they may become righteous, thereby partaking of Christ, who is righteousness, and

138. *Hom in Is* 6.7, quoting *Prv* 4.25; *Origenes* 10:276 (*Aperi oculos tuos et recta vide*).

139. *Hom in Is* 6.7; *Origenes* 10:278 (*Quando videnda sunt eloquia Dei, et convertimur et sanat nos Deus mittens verbum, quod sanat eos, qui volunt curari in Christo Iesu*). For the significance of the term *convertimur*, or *converto* here, see *Hom in Is* 6.7, n. 232.

140. *Hom in Is* 5.1, referring to *Jn* 3.13; *Origenes* 10:242 (*descenderat de caelo ad nos*).

141. See *Hom in Is* 6.3, quoting *Jn* 14.6; *Origenes* 10:264 (*Ego sum via*).

142. *Hom in Is* 5.1, quoting *Is* 41.2; *Origenes* 10:242 (*iustitiam . . . vocavit eam*).

143. *Hom in Is* 6.7; *Origenes* 10:278 (*sanat nos*).

144. *Hom in Is* 5.2; *Origenes* 10:246 (*Et quia nunc populi multitudo est propter parasceuen et maxime in dominica die, quae passionis Christi commemoratrix est—neque enim resurrectio Domini semel in anno et non semper post octo dies celebratur—orate Deum omnipotentem, ut veniat ad nos sermo eius*).

so be summoned to the heavenly feast of the Father that will mark eternal union with the Trinity.<sup>145</sup>

### Conclusion

These themes are interlaced throughout Origen's nine homilies on Isaiah, building, buttressing, and fortifying his audience's incentive to let the Holy Spirit wash over them through the words of Scripture so that they will grow in the virtues and wisdom necessary to become like Christ, then will heed the call to bring others to this same Christ-likeness, and ultimately will reach eternal union with the Trinity. Throughout these homilies, Origen's identification of Christ with the second Seraph in Isaiah's vision, who cleanses the lips of the prophet, drives these interlaced psychic and pneumatic readings of Scripture, all designed to help the believer to play his rightful role in salvation history to the fullest.

### *Manuscript History, Editions, Guidelines for this Translation*

The oldest known manuscript containing Origen's homilies on Isaiah is a ninth-century handwritten copy of the homilies in a Latin translation grouped together with Jerome's translations of Origen's homilies on Ezekiel and Jeremiah.<sup>146</sup> The next landmark edition was in 1512 by J. Merlin in Lyon.<sup>147</sup> While other manuscript editions followed Merlin, the edition in J.-P. Migne's *Patrologiae Cursus Completus* in the second half of the 1800s<sup>148</sup>

145. *Hom in Is* 2.2 ("because it is a blessed thing to receive the Savior, by having opened the doors of the principal part of our heart, let us prepare for him honey and his whole dinner, so that he may lead us himself to the great dinner of the Father in the kingdom of heaven, [the dinner] which is in Christ Jesus . . ."); *Origenes* 10:216 (*Propter[e] a quia beatum est suscipere Salvatorem, apertis ostiis principalis cordis nostri praeparemus ei mella et omnem cenam eius, ut ipse nos ducat ad magnam cenam patris in regno caelorum, quae est in Christo Iesu*).

146. Lambert, *Bibliotheca* 2:93–98, 9th cent. (Kassel, Germany: Landesbibliothek, Codex Kasselerensis Theol. Fol.2a.49, Nr. 209), and Laon (Codex Laudunensis 299) and Salzburg (Codex Salzburgerensis monasterii s. Petri 16).

147. *Origenesausgabe*, ed. Jacques Merlin, in Lyon, Band I.2 (1512).

148. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 25:937–972 (1844–1855) and *Patrologia Graeca* 13:217–254 (1857–1866).

became the most frequently consulted until the edition by W.A. Baehrens in 1925.<sup>149</sup> The current definitive Latin edition for Origen's homilies on Isaiah is based on Baehrens and appears in Walter de Gruyter, 2009.<sup>150</sup> The translation in this volume is based on the de Gruyter edition. A full manuscript history for Origen's homilies in general and his homilies on Isaiah in particular can be found in Baehrens, TU 42, and de Gruyter, *Origenes* 10.<sup>151</sup>

The present translation follows the Latin as literally as possible, but with consideration for the most adequate words in English, given the context. This translation generally follows the section, paragraph, and sentence breaks and the punctuation of the de Gruyter edition, but it diverges as needed for the sake of readability in English. All Biblical texts are translated literally from the Latin. All Old Testament citations correspond to the standard numerations of the LXX, but the corresponding RSV numeration is added when the LXX differs from it. All New Testament citations correspond to the RSV numeration. In a few instances, within footnotes, references are made to the English translation of the LXX by Pietersma and Wright.<sup>152</sup> References to Latin dictionary meanings are made to editions by Lewis and Short as well as Cassell's. References to Greek dictionary meanings are made to the various editions of Liddell and Scott. Editions used for the *Septuaginta* (LXX) and *Vulgata* are those by Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft of Stuttgart.

149. W.A. Baehrens, GCS 33, *Origenes Werke* 8 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1925), 242–89.

150. *Origenes: Die Homilien zum Buch Jesaja*, Werke mit deutscher Übersetzung, Band 10, trans. Alfons Füst and Christian Hengstermann (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter; Freiburg, Basel, and Vienna: Herder, 2009).

151. W.A. Baehrens, *Überlieferung und Textgeschichte der lateinischen erhaltenen Origeneshomilien zum Alten Testament*, TU 42, 1 (1916), 186–99. See also W.A. Baehrens, *Origeneshomilien* 207–31, GCS Origenes 8, 28–35. For manuscript history, see also *Origenes*, published by de Gruyter, 10:188–91.


152. For English translations of the LXX, see *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under that Title*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).



# HOMILIES ON ISAIAH

## HOMILY ONE

*The First Vision: "And it happened, in the year in which King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a high throne."<sup>1</sup>*

S LONG AS King Uzziah lived, the prophet Isaiah was not able to see a vision.<sup>2</sup> For Uzziah was a sinner, both doing evil in the sight of the Lord and acting against the will of the divine law.<sup>3</sup> He entered the Temple and the Holy of Holies, and, for that reason, he was covered with leprosy on his forehead, so that, when going outside the city, he was counted among the unclean.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, it is necessary for such a ruler of the soul to die so that we may be able to see a vision of God.<sup>5</sup> For it was not written in vain: "And it happened, in the year in which King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord."<sup>6</sup>

Uzziah, or the Pharaoh,<sup>7</sup> lives in each one of us, and we do not draw a breath<sup>8</sup> while doing Egyptian deeds. Yet, if he dies,

1. Is 6.1. This homily treats Is 6.1–6. The themes of this homily appear again in *Hom in Is* 5.3, as well as *Hom in Is* 4, 6, and 9. Also, they are similar to the themes in *Hom in Jgs* 1. All Scriptural texts are translated directly from the Latin translation of Origen's text. All references to the Hebrew Scriptures reflect chapter and verse in the Septuagint (LXX), and, where different, the RSV chapters and verses are set forth in parentheses. All Biblical names of persons and places are consistent with the RSV. All references to the New Testament reflect the chapter and verse of the RSV.

2. See *Hom In Jgs* 1.

3. See 4 Kingdoms (Kaige) 13.2 LXX (2 Kgs 13.2).

4. 2 Chr 26.16–21.

5. See *Hom in Jgs* 1.1.

6. Is 6.1. See *Hom in Jgs* 1.1.

7. Again, see *Hom in Jgs* 1.1.

8. "we do not draw a breath": *non suspiramus*. *Suspiro* means "draw a deep breath," "heave a sigh," "sigh," or "breathe out," "exhale," or "exclaim with a

then we draw a breath, as it is written in Exodus.<sup>9</sup> If Uzziah lives, we do not see the glory of God.<sup>10</sup> Yet, if he dies, then, immediately after Uzziah dies, we see the glory of God, so that anger may not reign, but rather the Word<sup>11</sup> may reign in us, which says, "But I have been appointed king by him."<sup>12</sup> Indeed, he [Uzziah] also is the king of sin. The Apostle [Paul],<sup>13</sup> knowing thus, says: "Therefore, let not sin reign in your mortal body."<sup>14</sup> That wretched<sup>15</sup> man, in whom sin reigns, who surrenders himself to such a ruler, despises the reign of God and submits himself to pleasure. On that account, a lover of pleasure is not a lover of God, and, according to the Apostle, concerning some persons, it is said, "They love pleasure more than they love God."<sup>16</sup> And indeed this very thing has not been said about those who are entirely infidels,<sup>17</sup> but about those who remain within [the Church]:<sup>18</sup> "They love pleasure more than they love God, who have the appearance of piety<sup>19</sup> but deny its power."<sup>20</sup>

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sigh," or "long for." Here the connotation seems to be "pause." In other words, we do not pause to do evil, or Egyptian, deeds. See *Hom in Is* 5.3.

9. Referring to Ex 2.23.

10. See Ex 16.7 and Jn 11.40.

11. "the Word": *sermo*. Not capitalized in the Latin text; see note 33 below.

12. Ps 2.6.

13. When Origen refers to "the Apostle" without name, he is referring to Paul.

14. Rom 6.12. See *Hom in Lk* 30.1.

15. "wretched": *miserabilis*.

16. 2 Tm 3.4. See *Hom in Lk* 30.1. Origen frequently, as here, refers to the followers of the Greek philosopher Epicurus (341–270 BCE), who argued that one should strive for a state of pleasure, *ataraxia*, which can be achieved only by seeking prudence as the highest virtue. See *Hom in Jgs* 1.1. See Henri Crouzel, *Origène et la philosophie* (Paris: Aubier, 1962), 27–31; A. J. Festugière, *Épicure et ses dieux* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1946; 2d ed., 1968, Eng. trans. C. W. Chilton (Oxford: Blackwell, 1955); and Norman Wentworth DeWitt, *Epicurus and His Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954).

17. That is, outside the Church. Latin: *infideles*.

18. *Intrinscusc*, or "within," here refers to those within the Church or among the faithful.

19. Referring to 2 Tm 3.4–5. The term *pietas* signified for the ancient Romans a dutiful conduct toward the gods so as to ensure the gods' protection of the empire and its inhabitants. It suggests religion or devotion, but with a strongly patriotic or duty-bound meaning. See Robert L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 54–60.

20. 2 Tm 3.4–5.

These things [are said] on account of the death of King Uzziah, after whose destruction the prophet says he saw a vision.<sup>21</sup>

But what is the vision? “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up.”<sup>22</sup> Not everyone who sees the Lord sees him sitting upon a throne high and lifted up. I know another prophet saw the Lord and saw him sitting upon a throne, but [it was] neither high nor lifted up. Examining Scripture, [we find that] Daniel says: “Thrones were placed,”<sup>23</sup> and that throne was not high.<sup>24</sup> And, “I will come, that I may sit in order to judge the people in the valley of Jehoshaphat.”<sup>25</sup> Accordingly, here in the valley he sits, and, in the valley, as he is going to judge, so he is going to condemn.<sup>26</sup> Yet it is another thing to see him sitting upon a throne high and lifted up. And, in Micah, God comes out and descends.<sup>27</sup> And when he sees Sodom, he descends: “Descending,” he says, “I will see whether they have completed [evil deeds] in accordance with their outcry that is coming to me.”<sup>28</sup> Therefore, God, sometimes on high, sometimes below, is seen in accordance with the dignity of [his] labors.<sup>29</sup> Then, Isaiah says, “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up.”<sup>30</sup> If I see God reigning over those who are here,<sup>31</sup> I do not see him upon a throne high and lifted up; if I see him reigning over the heavenly powers, [then] I see him upon a throne high and lifted up. What is that which I have said about “the heavenly powers”? Thrones, dominions, principalities, [spiritual] authorities<sup>32</sup> are the heavenly powers. And if I see him, even as

21. Referring to Is 6.1. See Is 1.1. See *Hom in Is* 4.3 and 5.3.

22. Referring to Is 6.1.

23. Dn 7.9.

24. Dn 7.9–10 describes many thousands standing around the throne serving the “ancient of days.”

25. Jl 3.12.

26. See *Hom in Nm* 12.2.2 and *Comm in Rom* 9.41.4.

27. Mi 1.3.

28. Gn 18.21. See *Hom in Gn* 4.5.

29. See *Hom in Gn* 4.5.

30. Is 6.1.

31. Origen seems to be referring to earth or the world here, suggesting that God reigns on a throne that is high and lifted up only in heaven but not here below—not yet, anyway.

32. “spiritual authorities”: *potestates*, or angels. Col 1.16.

he reigns over them in the Word,<sup>33</sup> I have seen the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up.

"And the house [was] full of his glory."<sup>34</sup> On high is where his throne is lifted up, and the house is full of his glory. I do not believe that this house, which is on earth, is full of glory. "The earth and its fullness are the Lord's."<sup>35</sup> Yet you will not find the fullness of God's glory in the present age. But if someone has built a temple to God, the glory of God will be seen. And if he observes this which has been said, the house will *appear* to be full of the glory of God. Yet I do not know whether the house is filled with glory in this way. And, in Leviticus, as much as it does not yet pertain to the present age, still, because God grants it, what follows will be read in the assembly, that the Lord commanded certain things to happen so that the glory of the Lord may be seen.<sup>36</sup> Nor will the glory of God ever appear if these things do not happen. But we will understand these things when they have been read aloud [to us].

2. "And the Seraphim were standing around him, six wings belonging to the one and six wings belonging to the other."<sup>37</sup> I see two Seraphim, each one of them in himself having six wings. Next [is] the arrangement of the wings. "And indeed with two wings they were covering the face"—not their own, but the face of God—"moreover, with two wings they were covering the feet"—not their own, but the feet of God—"moreover, with two wings they were flying."<sup>38</sup> What is written here just before seems to be a self-contradiction: If they were standing, they could not be flying. But it is written: "They were standing around him, six wings belonging to the one and six wings belonging to the other; and, indeed, with two they were covering the face, and with two they were covering the feet, and with two they were

33. The Latin edition does not capitalize *verbo* here. This translation, like the German and Italian translations, capitalizes *verbo* here to signify Origen's reference to the second person of the Trinity, the Word of God.

34. Is 6.1b (LXX; RSV does not directly correspond). See also *Hom in Is* 4.2.

35. Ps 23(24).1.

36. Referring to Lv 9.6. See *Hom in Lv* 9.9 and *Comm in Mt* 11.18.

37. Is 6.2.

38. Ibid.

flying; and they were crying out to one another.”<sup>39</sup> But yet these Seraphim, who surround God, who say by pure<sup>40</sup> knowledge,<sup>41</sup> “Holy, holy, holy!”<sup>42</sup> observe in this way<sup>43</sup> the mystery of the Trinity,<sup>44</sup> because they themselves also are holy. Indeed, in all these things that exist,<sup>45</sup> nothing is more holy. And they speak not softly to one another: “Holy, holy, holy!” but, by crying out, they announce the salvific confession<sup>46</sup> to everyone. Who<sup>47</sup> are these two Seraphim? My Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit.<sup>48</sup> You should not suppose the nature of the Trinity to be divided, if duty-bound observances<sup>49</sup> of the names are to be kept.<sup>50</sup>

They were covering<sup>51</sup> the face of God; for the beginning of God is unknown.<sup>52</sup> And indeed also the feet;<sup>53</sup> for what end is

39. Is 6.2–3a.

40. *Solum* can be translated as “singular” or “pure.”

41. *Cognitio* can also be translated as “recognition.”

42. Is 6.3.

43. *Propter hoc* usually means “on that account” or “for which reason” but can mean “through or by means of this.” I translate it here “in this way,” to signify that here, by saying “Holy, holy, holy!” the Seraphim (themselves the Trinity) observe the mystery of the Trinity.

44. This statement may be an interpolation by Jerome to clarify post-Nicene Trinitarian orthodoxy for his Latin audience. “Trinity” is not capitalized in the Latin edition, but this translation capitalizes Trinity throughout to signify Origen’s reference to Divinity.

45. *Sunt* can be translated as “exist” or “are.”

46. *Confessionem* can also be translated as “acknowledgment.”

47. *Quae* is neuter plural modifying Seraphim, but, because Origen now links them to two persons of the Trinity, I translate *quae* here as “who” rather than “which.”

48. For places other than the Isaiah homilies where Origen refers to the two Seraphim in the Isaiah vision as the Son and the Holy Spirit, see *De princ* 1.3.4 and 4.3.14.

49. *Officia* here refers to a respect for the names of the Trinity.

50. See Phil 2.9. This may be an interpolation by Jerome to clarify post-Nicene Trinitarian orthodoxy for his Latin audience. Note that Rufinus’s *Apology* 2.27 and 2.46 (NPNF 2d 3, 472 and 481) arguably quotes this sentence in the context of attributing the Latin translation of Origen’s homilies on Isaiah to Jerome. See J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000; originally 1975), 76–77.

51. *Operio* can be translated “to cover” or “to conceal.”

52. See *Hom in Is* 4.1.

53. See Is 6.2.

comprehended in our God? Only the middle things alone are seen. What things were before those things, I do not know. From these things that are, I comprehend God. What things are going to be after those things, consequently, because they are going to be [but are not yet], I do not know. "Who has told him?" said Ecclesiastes.<sup>54</sup> "Announce to me the former (or first) things and the last things, which will be, and I will say that you are gods," said Isaiah,<sup>55</sup> since if someone has told of things gone by and has been able to tell of the last things, he is God. Therefore, who can tell except the Seraphim? Who can say "Holy, holy, holy!" except the Seraphim?<sup>56</sup> Indeed, they have left uncovered some part of God, as so I may say, his middle [part]; and they were crying out to one another, standing before God and saying: "Holy, holy, holy!"<sup>57</sup> So, they stand and move themselves; they stand in the company of God; they move themselves, pointing to God. For understand that they cover the face [and] they cover the feet; they do not move those [parts] that have been covered; they do not cover those [parts] that fly.

And they say: "Holy, holy, holy Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory."<sup>58</sup> The coming of my Lord Jesus Christ is announced, and, for that reason, now the whole earth is full of his glory. Or at least it is not yet full, but it is going to be, so that it may be full when the prayer will have been fulfilled that the Lord himself has commanded us to pray to the Father,<sup>59</sup> saying, "Whenever you pray," "say: Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be your name! May your kingdom come! May your will be done on earth even as it is in heaven."<sup>60</sup> Even now the will of the Father is in heaven, [but] his will is not yet fulfilled on earth. And Jesus himself, according to the economy<sup>61</sup> of the

54. Referring to Eccl 6.12.

55. Is 41.22–23. "Former things" can also be translated as "first things"; Latin: *priora*.

56. Is 6.3.

57. Ibid.

58. Is 6.3b.

59. *Patrem* is not capitalized here in the Latin edition. This translation capitalizes this word to signify that Origen is referring to one of the persons of the Trinity.

60. Mt 6.9–10.

61. *Dispensatio* here signifies the theological concept of *economy*, which refers

flesh, which he had put on, says, "He has given to me universal authority<sup>62</sup> both in heaven and on earth,"<sup>63</sup> not because he did not have authority on earth, who had [it] in heaven, and not because he did not receive something from the world, who had come to his own home,<sup>64</sup> but, so that God would be believed on earth even as<sup>65</sup> he was believed in heaven. Therefore, the man Christ<sup>66</sup> received authority that he did not have before, and all the way to the present age he does not yet have authority on earth over everyone. Indeed, over those who sin, he does not yet reign, but when authority over them has also been given to him, when all things have been made subject to him, then the authority will be made full, and he will go through subjecting all things to himself.<sup>67</sup> Still, some persons do not yet want to be subjected to him, yet even now they are subjected to his enemies. In turn, let us say, "Will not my soul be subjected to God?"<sup>68</sup> For my salvation is in him."<sup>69</sup>

3. "And with two [wings] they were flying, and they were saying to one another: 'Holy, holy, holy Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.' And the threshold<sup>70</sup> was lifted up by a voice, by which they were crying out,"<sup>71</sup> by the voice of Jesus Christ and by the voice of the Holy Spirit. If someone from among us, while we are crying out, has heard the voice of Jesus Christ and the voice of the Holy Spirit, the threshold is lifted up and it is made higher than at that time when it was lifted

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to the divine plan to create and manage the world, especially the playing out of salvation history through the redemption provided mankind by means of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the culmination of which will take place through the Church.

62. "Universal authority": *universam potestatem*.

63. Mt 28.18.

64. Referring to Jn 1.11.

65. *Quomodo* also means "in the same manner as."

66. "The man Christ": *homo Christus*.

67. Referring to Phil 3.21 as well as 1 Cor 15.24–28. Also, see *Hom in Lv* 7.2.4–5.

68. *Nonne* here signifies a rhetorical question expecting a positive answer.

69. Ps 61.2 (62.1). *Apud* + accusative (*eum*) can designate the author of a work, and so here arguably emphasizes that God is the author of salvation.

70. *Superliminare* means "lintel" or "architrave," translated here as "threshold." This word is found in Ex 12.7, and the plural form is found in Am 9.1.

71. Is 6.2–4. See *Hom in Is* 4.2.



up whenever it was said, "Raise up the city-gates, Your Rulers, and be lifted up, Eternal Gates, and the King of glory will enter in."<sup>72</sup>

4. "And the house was filled with smoke."<sup>73</sup> The whole house was filled immediately after the abatement of the fire. Now, smoke is the vapor of fire. "And I said: 'O, wretched am I,<sup>74</sup> since now I have been stung,<sup>75</sup> because, since I am a man, I also have unclean lips.'<sup>76</sup> I cannot understand why Isaiah humbled himself; even so, Scripture says and gives witness that his lips are cleansed by one of the Seraphim who was sent to take away his sins.<sup>77</sup> Now, one of the Seraphim is my Lord Jesus Christ, who was sent by the Father to take away our sins, and he says, "Behold, I have taken away your iniquities and completely cleansed you from your sins."<sup>78</sup> And you should not consider [it] an affront against nature, if the Son is sent by the Father.<sup>79</sup> In short, as you become acquainted with<sup>80</sup> the oneness<sup>81</sup> of the Divine Nature in the Trinity,<sup>82</sup> in the present reading, Christ alone now forgives sins, and yet it is certain that sins are forgiven by the Trinity. For he who has believed in one, believes in all [three].<sup>83</sup>

72. Ps 23 (24).7.

73. Is 6.4b. See *Hom in Is* 4.3.

74. Latin: *O miser ego*.

75. "I have been stung": *Compunctus sum*, which in Late Latin means "goaded by the stings of conscience," "remorseful." See also *Hom in Is* 4.3 and 6.4.

76. Is 6.5a. Also, see *Hom in Is* 4.6.

77. Is 6.6–7. See also *Hom in Lv* 9.7.2.

78. Is 6.7b. "iniquities": *iniquitates*, from *iniquitas* (and ultimately *iniquus*), which can mean "inequality" or "unevenness," "injustice" or "adverseness [as in being an enemy]." Possibly all these meanings are implied here. "I have ... completely cleansed": *circummundavi*. *Circumundo* most literally means "cleanse all around." For commentary on this term and the related term *iniquus*, see also *Hom in Is* 6.6, note 195, and for other occurrences of these terms within the text of these homilies see 4.6, note 83; 5.3, note 62; 6.2, note 55; and 8.1, note 17.

79. This may be an interpolation by Jerome to clarify post-Nicene Trinitarian orthodoxy for his Latin audience.

80. *Cognoscas* can also be translated as "you get to know."

81. *Unitatem* can be translated as "oneness" or "unity."

82. Again, this description of the Trinity may be an interpolation by Jerome.

83. Again, these statements may be an interpolation by Jerome to clarify post-Nicene Trinitarian orthodoxy for his Latin audience. Fürst, in "Jerome Keeping

Therefore, may shears<sup>84</sup> be brought down to me from the heavenly altar, so that they may touch<sup>85</sup> my lips.<sup>86</sup> If the shears of the Lord have touched my lips, they cleanse them.<sup>87</sup> And if they have cleansed them and cut them off<sup>88</sup> from the vices, as we said not long ago, I will open my mouth to the Word of God, and no further unclean word will go forth from<sup>89</sup> my mouth,<sup>90</sup> “because, since I am a man, I also have unclean lips, [and] I also dwell in the midst of a people who have unclean lips.”<sup>91</sup> The Seraph who was sent cleansed the lips of the prophet but did not cleanse the lips of the people. For he himself [the prophet] confessed “himself to have unclean lips and to dwell in the midst of a people having unclean lips.”<sup>92</sup> But this Seraph who was sent did not judge there to be worthy ones among the people such that he would also cleanse their lips. And, on that account, they still act impiously;<sup>93</sup> on that account, they still reject<sup>94</sup> my Lord Jesus Christ; with unclean lips they still speak ill<sup>95</sup> of him.<sup>96</sup>

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Silent,” 143 n. 15, supports the view that these statements are interpolations by Jerome.

84. *Forfex* means “a pair of shears or scissors,” but since here the usage refers to gripping the hot coal from the altar rather than “cutting” *per se*, the RSV and an English translation of the LXX (*A New Translation of the Septuagint*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright [Oxford University Press, 2007]), referring to Is 6.6, use the word “tongs” here. Since, however, Origen discusses the “cutting away of vices,” I have retained the lexical meaning of the term, using “shears” here.

85. “may touch”: *tangat*, a verb that can also be translated as “strike” or “hit.”

86. Referring to Is 6.6.

87. Is 6.6–7. For Origen, the Seraph here is Christ himself.

88. “cut them off”: The verb is *circumcido*, which can also be translated as “circumcise.”

89. *Exiet* is an irregular form of the future tense of *exeo*, *ii*, *itum*, *ire* (rather than the regular form *exibit*).

90. See *Hom in Gn* 3.5.

91. Is 6.5.

92. *Ibid.*

93. *Impie* can also be translated “wickedly.” Note that Romans of Origen’s time used the term *pietas* to mean a respect for the gods.

94. “reject”: *repudiant*.

95. “speak ill”: *maledicunt*. *Maledico* can also be translated by the verb “curse.”

96. *Ei* here is a dative of reference that is best translated “of him,” or “with reference to him.”

Yet, I pray that when the Seraph comes, he may cleanse my lips.<sup>97</sup>

5. "And I saw with my eyes the King, the Lord of Hosts."<sup>98</sup> Why do we not speak of a certain Jewish tradition in the present age, indeed likely [if] not yet real, and why do we not find its solution?<sup>99</sup> For which reason, they say that Isaiah was cut off<sup>100</sup> from the people just as if he were falsifying the law and making proclamations outside of<sup>101</sup> the Scriptures. For Scripture says, "No one will see my face and live,"<sup>102</sup> but that one [Isaiah] says: "I saw the Lord of Hosts."<sup>103</sup> Moses, they say, did not see, and yet you [Isaiah] have seen? And because of this, they cut him [Isaiah] off and condemned him as ungodly,<sup>104</sup> for they did not know that the Seraphim covered the face of God with two wings.<sup>105</sup> "I saw the Lord."<sup>106</sup> If Isaiah saw the face [of God], Moses also saw [it]. Moses saw the back [of God], as it has been written;<sup>107</sup> nevertheless, he saw the Lord, even if he did not see his face. Therefore, this one [Isaiah] also saw, even if he did not see [God's] face. Therefore, they condemned the prophet [Isaiah] wrongly.

"And I saw with my eyes the King, the Lord of Hosts; and one of the Seraphim was sent to me."<sup>108</sup> There is not one coming of my Lord Jesus Christ when<sup>109</sup> he descended to earth; he came

97. For the same expression of humility by Origen, see *Hom in Is* 4.3. See also *Hom in Lv* 9.7.2.

98. Is 6.5b. See *Hom in Is* 4.4.

99. This reference to the "Jewish tradition" may allude to a belief that Isaiah was condemned and executed. It may be found in the *Ascension of Isaiah* 5; see *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. 2, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 143–76, esp. 163–64, as well as in references by Origen in *Comm in Mt* 10.18 (ANF 9, 425–26) and *Letter to Africanus* 9 (ANF 4, 388–89).

100. *Esse sectum* is used here rather than the verb *circumcido*.

101. *Extra* here can also be translated "without." Here there is a notion of *speaking proclamations apart from and thereby in contradiction to the Scriptures*.

102. Ex 33.20.

103. Is 6.5b.

104. "ungodly": *impium*, which implies wickedness or irreverence.

105. Is 6.2.

106. Is 6.5b.

107. Ex 33.23.

108. Is 6.5b–6a. See *Hom in Is* 4.5.

109. *Quo* is here ablative (ablative of time when) and masculine, modifying *adventus* ("coming").

both to Isaiah and to Moses and to the people and to every one of the prophets. Nor should you be afraid: Even if he has already been received, he will come again. Yet, because he also came before the presence in the flesh,<sup>110</sup> accept his own witness announcing<sup>111</sup> and saying: "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! You who kill prophets and stone those who have been sent to you, how often I have wanted to gather your children together!"<sup>112</sup> "How often I have wanted ..." He does not say: "I did not see you except at that coming," but he says, "How often I have wanted ..." And turning [his attention] to each of the prophets, "I was Christ, who was speaking through the prophets," he said, "and be not afraid."<sup>113</sup> And now Jesus Christ is sent. He does not lie.<sup>114</sup> "I am with you," he says, "all the days always to the completion of the age."<sup>115</sup> He does not lie. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I also am in their midst."<sup>116</sup> Therefore, because Jesus Christ is present<sup>117</sup> and assists<sup>118</sup> and is ready and girded, as the highest priest, to offer to the Father our appeals,<sup>119</sup> rising up, let us offer sacrifices through him to

110. Note that, in addition to Christ appearing to faithful ones before the Incarnation, Origen possibly also refers in these sentences to Justin Martyr's famous *logos spermatikos* concept, the idea that the Son or Word of God planted seeds of Divine truth in persons of all races and times before the Incarnation, such that any glimmers of truth consistent with the full revelation of Christ are indeed truths but not the whole truth as only Christ wholly embodies truth and only to the Church has Christ wholly imparted himself.

111. "announcing": *denuntiantem*, which can be translated "denounce" or "threaten" and legally means to "give notice" or "serve a summons," here suggesting a reprimand in the address to Jerusalem that follows here.

112. Mt 23.37.

113. See Mt 28.10 and Jn 6.20.

114. "He does not lie": *Non mentitur*, which can also mean that he does not "deceive."

115. Mt 28.20.

116. Mt 18.20.

117. "is present": *praesto est*. Here *praesto* is an adverb that can mean not only "present" or "at hand," but also "helpful."

118. "assists": *adistit*, which can be translated as "defend," "assist," "aid," "stand by" in a legal sense, suggesting here that Jesus is our advocate.

119. "our appeals": *interpellationes nostras*. *Interpellatio* means "interruption" or "hindrance" but here is used in the legal sense to mean "an appeal" or "a suit," again suggesting here that Jesus is our advocate. The allusion is to Rom 8.27, 34,

the Father. For “he himself is the atonement (*propitiatio*) for<sup>120</sup> our sins,”<sup>121</sup> “to whom are glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen!”<sup>122</sup>

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and Heb 4.14–16 and all of Heb 7, especially Heb 7.25 (pointing to Jesus Christ as the “high priest” who intercedes for us). Also, see *Hom in Lv* 9.5 and 9.8.5.


120. *Pro* can be translated as “for” or “in place of.”

121. 1 Jn 2.1–2. See *Hom in Is* 3.3.

122. 1 Pt 4.11b.

## HOMILY TWO

*“Behold, the virgin will conceive.”*<sup>1</sup>

O FAR AS it is in keeping with this [Divine] promise, Ahaz acted modestly, when he was ordered to ask for himself a sign in the depth or in the height;<sup>2</sup> and he reported the reason why he was not willing to ask, for indeed he says: “I will not ask, nor will I put the Lord to the test.”<sup>3</sup> And yet for this modesty he is reproved, and it is said to him: “Hear now, House of David: Is it a small thing for you to wrestle with men? And how is it that you wrestle with the Lord?”<sup>4</sup> Then this counter-promise is pronounced, “Therefore, the Lord himself will give to you a sign: Behold, a virgin will conceive and bear a son, and you will call his name Emmanuel.”<sup>5</sup> Let these things be explained, and, with respect to the remaining things, we who are in need will see by the grace of God that they also are made clear in those things.

It is commanded that he [Ahaz] ask for a sign, not simply to ask, but to ask for himself; indeed, the Word<sup>6</sup> says, “Ask *for yourself* a sign from the Lord your God in the depth or in the

1. Is 7.14b; lit., “receive in the womb” (*in utero accipiet*).

2. Is 7.11. LXX: “in the depth or in the height,” referring to Sheol and Heaven, respectively.

3. Is 7.12.

4. Is 7.13; “to wrestle with men”: *praestare certamen hominibus*; and “you wrestle with the Lord”: *Domino praestatis certamen*. An English translation of the LXX uses the phrase “to provoke a fight” in this verse (Pietersma and Wright, 830). Here “to wrestle” is used for *praestare certamen*, because it suggests both a struggle and that the subject is initiating the struggle.

5. Is 7.14b.

6. Here “Word,” *sermo*, is not capitalized in Latin though referring to Scripture.

height.”<sup>7</sup> The intended sign is my Lord Jesus Christ. For this is the sign that is commanded, which he should ask for himself in the depth or in the height. “In the depth” indeed, because he himself [Christ] is the very one who descended. Yet “in the height,” because he himself [Christ] is the very one who ascended above all the heavens.<sup>8</sup> Yet this intended sign, my Lord Jesus Christ in the depth and in the height, is of no benefit to me unless the mystery of his depth and height happens to me. For when I will have received the mystery of Jesus Christ, of the depth and the height, then I will receive the sign according to the command of the Lord, and it will be said to me, just as to the one possessing in himself [this sign] “in the depth” and “in the height”: “Do not say in your heart: ‘Who ascends into heaven?’ (this is to bring Christ down), or ‘Who descends into the abyss?’ (this is to bring Christ back from the dead). Your powerful word is near, in your mouth and in your heart.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, it is commanded to us all, that we ask this sign for ourselves, that the sign which the Lord God gives in the depth and in the height may be made useful for us. Yet if there is someone who knows by way of rational contemplation, he understands [that] this which has been said, “in the depth and in the height,” has not been said disjunctively,<sup>10</sup> for it signifies this: that [to be in] both places is possible. “Ask for yourself a sign from the Lord in the depth *and* in the height.”<sup>11</sup> And yet the Apostle said by way of promising, “That we may understand what [are] the depth and height and breadth and length [of Christ’s love].”<sup>12</sup> “And Ahaz says, I will not ask.”<sup>13</sup> He was without faith; for he said, “Ask for yourself.”<sup>14</sup> Yet all the way up to today, the people do not ask for a sign, and for that reason people who do not receive my Lord

7. Is 7.11. Emphasis added. For a possibly related discussion of “signs,” see *Hom in Is* 7.2.

8. Referring to Eph 4.10.

9. Rom 10.6–8. See Dt 30.12–14.

10. In opposition.

11. Is 7.11. Origen seems to be suggesting that unlike Ahaz we should ask God for a sign. Not to ask is to be without faith like Ahaz.

12. Eph 3.18.

13. Is 7.12a.

14. Is 7.11a.

Jesus Christ<sup>15</sup> do not have the sign and they wrestle<sup>16</sup> with the Lord.

Then another question follows. For by this very saying, "I will not ask nor will I put the Lord to the test,"<sup>17</sup> and by determining it to be a test if he were to ask for a sign, he says, "Hear now, House of David: Is it too little a thing for you to wrestle with men, and how do you wrestle with the Lord?"<sup>18</sup> Yet one does not wrestle with the Lord, but neither do I think he wrestles with men, who asks for a sign in the depth or in the height.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, God's contest is how he [God] may save mankind.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, he who hastens toward salvation does not wrestle with the Lord; but he who, struggling with the Lord as [the Lord] saves mankind, flees from salvation and retreats far from the Lord, he wrestles with the Lord.

"Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will conceive and bear a son, and you will call his name Emmanuel."<sup>21</sup> The integrity of the original [manuscripts] of this prophet says, "You will call." In Matthew we know [the thing] to be read next: "And they will call his name Emmanuel."<sup>22</sup> We cannot say that it is reasonable to make something less of the prophet. But how does the Gospel render this writing? Did [it come from] someone not understanding and running to easier things, as this happens also in many other instances, or would someone say perhaps that the Gospel was published in this way from the beginning? Anyone who wants, should consider [what the right answer is]. Indeed, the prophet clearly pronounces:

15. Origen is suggesting that people today do not ask for a sign because they do not receive Jesus Christ.

16. Here, instead of *praestare certamen*, which is used above, the Latin is *praeberere certamen*. Since, similarly to *praesto*, *praebeo* means "offer," "make," "cause," as with *praestare* above, *praeberere certamen* is translated as "to wrestle," to stress that the subject is the potential initiator of a struggle with another, here the Lord God. See note 4 above.

17. Is 7.12.

18. Is 7.13.

19. Referring to Is 7.11.

20. The singular of *homo* can mean "the human race," "mankind."

21. Is 7.14. Note that Origen stresses here that Jesus is the sign.

22. Mt 1.23b. Note that Matthew shows the 3rd person plural form, *vocabunt*, and Isaiah above the 2nd person singular form, *vocabis*.



“And you will call his name Emmanuel.”<sup>23</sup> I know someone who, reading in the beginning of the Gospel writings, “And you will call his name Emmanuel,” said within himself, “What is ‘you will call’?” Who will call? Ahaz? And how can Ahaz hear about the Savior, who came after many generations: “You will call his name Emmanuel”? And so, in place of this which is [here], “you will call,” it was written, “they will call.” But see that it is not said to Ahaz, “And you will call his name Emmanuel,” but to the house of David; see it clearly said, “Now hear, House of David: Is it too little a thing for you to wrestle with men, and how do you wrestle with the Lord? Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will conceive and bear a son, and you will call his name Emmanuel.”<sup>24</sup> And so, if ever we do not understand this which has been said, we should make nothing less out of this, nor should we run to easier things, but let us wait expectantly so that the grace of God may suggest to us by the illumination of knowledge the explanation of the question, or, at least, on the other hand, may the grace of God illuminate us through whom he wills, so that we may search no more, but our question may be explained. Indeed, if we merit understanding from the Lord, he will more readily give us a reason for these things.

What, then, is the house of David? If David is Christ, as I have demonstrated often, we, the Church of God, are the house of David; and it is said to us, who are the Church, that we should not wrestle with the Lord, as said above, but when the Lord gives a sign, we should receive it. To us these things are said, not to the house of David. And it is prophesied that, if someone is the house of David, he will call his name Emmanuel; for at the coming of Christ our Church alone says of Christ: “God with us.”<sup>25</sup> With these things explained, as the grace of the Lord has granted, let us now seek out other mysteries.

2. “He shall eat butter and honey.”<sup>26</sup> How is Christ prophesied as one who is going to eat butter and honey? And if this

23. Is 7.14b.

24. Is 7.13–14.

25. Mt 1.23b.

26. Is 7.15a (*Vulgata* 7.22).

were explained by the Lord granting [it], again these things that follow would present to us other questions. And if only we all were doing this which has been written: "Examine thoroughly the Scriptures."<sup>27</sup> In the Scriptures many things are named from bodily foods<sup>28</sup> to indicate spiritual foods.<sup>29</sup> [For example,] "Just as newborns, desire the pure milk of reason."<sup>30</sup> Therefore, without doubt, there is a milk of reason, and it is necessary for us to search for milk of that kind.

Again, in Proverbs, about honey it has been written: "When you find honey, eat what satisfies [and no more], lest perhaps, being full, you vomit."<sup>31</sup> And was the Holy Spirit troubled about that very honey which is known, lest perhaps we eat too much? But undoubtedly the Holy Spirit intentionally speaks of spiritual honey: "When you find honey, eat what satisfies [and no more]."<sup>32</sup> Yet why did the discerning Holy Spirit warn us that if we were to find honey—if indeed honey can be found—we should eat [only] what is sufficient?

"Go," he says, 'to the bee, and learn how productive she is.'"<sup>33</sup> And the prophets are found to be bees, since indeed they fashion artfully the wax cells of the hives and make honey and, if, being bold, it is useful for me to say, their honeycombs are the Scriptures, which they have left behind.<sup>34</sup> And so, come willingly to the Scriptures and you will find honey. But also, "Eat the

27. Jn 5:39.

28. "bodily foods": *corporalibus cibis*.

29. "spiritual foods": *escis spiritualibus*.

30. 1 Pt 2:2. *Rationabile sine dubio lac* is an idiomatic phrase translated as "the pure milk of reason."

31. Prv 25:16.

32. Prv 25:16a.

33. Prv 6.8a LXX (Prv 6.6a RSV). Note that literally it says "how she is a worker." LXX refers not to a "bee" but to an "ant." In Jerome's translation of Origen here, *apis*, or bee, is used, not *formica*, or ant. The LXX uses μέμικτα—or "ant" in Proverbs. *Vulgata* uses *ad formicam*, or "to the ant." Here in this translation Jerome must have followed Origen's Greek saying "bee." It is unclear why Origen did not follow LXX with "ant." Perhaps Origen was looking at Aquila, Symmachus, or Theodotion.

34. Note that Origen draws similar analogies in *Hom in Jgs* 5:2, referring to Deborah as a prophet who is therefore a "bee . . . produc[ing] the sweet honeycombs of heavenly teaching and the sweet honey of the Divine Word." *Hom in Jgs* 5:2, trans. Elizabeth Ann Dively Lauro, FOTC 119, 77.

honey,”<sup>35</sup> and in Proverbs again it is said, “For the honeycomb is good, that your throats may be sweetened.”<sup>36</sup> Do you think the Holy Spirit says this, “Eat the honey,” in the usual sense, “for it is good”? I do not dare to say that the Holy Spirit instructs me about bodily honey [when saying], “Eat the honey.”<sup>37</sup> Behold, I do not have [honey], or yet indeed I am of such a nature that I cannot eat honey. For what reason does he say to me, “Eat the honey,”<sup>38</sup> and do not eat meat, but, “Son, eat the honey, for it is good”?<sup>39</sup> If you consider the bees to be the prophets and their work to be the honey or the honeycombs, then you will see how, in accordance with the dignity of the Holy Spirit, you may understand “Son, eat the honey, for it is good.”<sup>40</sup> If someone meditates on the divine words<sup>41</sup> and is nourished by the words of the Scriptures,<sup>42</sup> he will fulfill the command, ordering, “Son, eat the honey,” and, doing what is ordered, he obtains [the essence of] the word that follows, “For it is good,” because this honey that is found in the Scriptures is good.<sup>43</sup>

Now, that which is said, “Go to the bee,” is of that kind. There is, so I may say, a certain bee above bees. And even as among bees a certain one is king, who has been named king, so the prince of the bees is my Lord Jesus Christ, to whom the Holy Spirit sends me, so that I may eat honey, for it is good, and his honeycombs, so that my throat may be sweetened.<sup>44</sup> And perhaps the more simple<sup>45</sup> letters are the honeycombs; but indeed he [Christ] is the honey, who in these [honeycombs] is understood.<sup>46</sup>

35. Referring to Prv 25.16 and Prv 24.13.

36. Referring to Prv 24.13. See also Ps 118(119).103.

37. Referring to Prv 25.16 and Prv 24.13.

38. Again, referring to Prv 25.16 and Prv 24.13.

39. Referring to Prv 24.13.

40. Prv 24.13.

41. “the divine words”: *eloquia divina*.

42. “the words of the Scriptures”: *sermonibus scripturarum*.

43. Note that Origen is suggesting that Scripture is the honeycomb, the prophets are the bees, and the words of Scripture are the honey that nourishes. And immediately following, Origen points to Christ as the king or prince of the bees, but also as the honeycomb and the honey as well.

44. Referring to Prv 24.13.

45. “more simple”: *subtiliores*.

46. Note that here Origen is reading “honeycomb” as the literal (somatic)

On the other hand, that very one, Emmanuel, who was born of the virgin, eats butter and honey<sup>47</sup> and searches for butter to eat from every single one of us. How he seeks butter and honey from each one of us, the Word<sup>48</sup> will teach. Our sweet works, our most pleasant and suitable words,<sup>49</sup> are the honey that Emmanuel eats, which he himself, who was born of a virgin, eats.<sup>50</sup> But indeed, if our words are full of bitterness, anger, enmity, melancholy, obscenity, corruptions, contention,<sup>51</sup> this has allowed bile into my mouth, and the Savior does not eat from these words. Yet the Savior will eat from the words that are among men, if their words are honey. Let us confirm this from the Scriptures: "Behold, I have stood before the door, and I knock; if anyone opens the door to me, I will enter in to him, and I will dine with him, and he with me."<sup>52</sup> Therefore, he himself promises that he is going to eat with us from our [words, thoughts, and actions]. Yet it is certain that we also eat with him, if we eat him.<sup>53</sup> To be sure, by eating from our good words, works, and understand-

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meaning of Scriptural text, and the honey represents the deeper, soul's and spiritual (psychic and pneumatic) meanings. See the introduction to this volume, pp. 23–24, for a fuller explanation of these senses of meaning.

47. Referring to Is 7.14–15.

48. "the Word": *sermo*.

49. "our most pleasant and suitable words": *sermone nostri suavissimi et utiles*.

50. Note that Origen suggests here that as we eat of Christ, as the honey is the Scripture's words, so Christ eats of us, that is, our good words, thoughts, and actions.

51. Compare to the lists of "the works of the flesh" and, by contrast, "the fruits of the Spirit" at Gal 5.19–21a and 22–23.

52. Rv 3.20.

53. Note that there is no preposition here in the Latin in the second part of the sentence: "... we also eat with him, if we eat him [Christ]" (... *nos cum illo cenamus, si cenemus illum*). For analysis of places in Origen's work where he stresses that humans eat with Christ, humans feed on Christ, and Christ feeds on humans, here and at the heavenly feast in eternity, see Dively Lauro, "The Eschatological Significance of Scripture's Sacramental Character According to Origen," SP 56:83–102 (Leuven: Peeters, 2013); and for a treatment of Origen's teaching that there is human consumption of Christ in the Eucharist and when taking in Scripture, see Dively Lauro, "The Meaning and Significance of Scripture's Sacramental Nature within Origen's Thought," SP 94:153–85, esp. 178–85 (Leuven: Peeters, 2017).

ing,<sup>54</sup> he again nourishes us<sup>55</sup> with his own spiritual and divine and better foods. For that reason, because it is a blessed thing to receive the Savior, by having opened the doors of the principal part of our heart, let us prepare for him honey and his whole dinner, so that he may lead us himself to the great dinner of the Father in the kingdom of heaven,<sup>56</sup> [the dinner] which is in Christ Jesus,<sup>57</sup> “to whom are glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”<sup>58</sup>

54. “from our good words, works, and understanding”: *de nostris bonis sermonibus, operibus et intellectu*. Note that throughout this homily (in Latin translation), *sermo* refers to our words *and* to the Word of God, or Scripture. Assuming Jerome is reflecting a single word in Origen’s Greek for both instances, perhaps Origen is building on the idea that we are in the image of God, such that there is a fundamental relationship between our word and the Word.

55. “he again nourishes us”: *repascit nos*.

56. Origen likely has in mind Jesus’s parable about the wedding feast at Mt 22.1–14 and Lk 14.7–24, and is reading it through a pneumatic lens to discuss the heavenly feast that awaits us. See note 53 above for my fuller discussion of this image in Origen’s works.

57. Note the preposition “in Christ Jesus,” emphasizing that the kingdom of heaven is “in” Christ Jesus.

58. 1 Pt 4.11b.

## HOMILY THREE

*Concerning the seven women.*<sup>1</sup>



EVEN WOMEN suffer reproach and go around seeking to receive the one who can take away their reproach. These seven women promise in return to eat their own bread and put on their own clothes.<sup>2</sup> It is not necessary that they have the bread of him who takes away their reproach, nor do they need the clothes of the man whom they receive. They have better clothes than a man can offer to them; they have more sumptuous foods than the human condition can bountifully impart. Therefore, it is worthwhile to consider closely to whom the seven women belong and what their reproach is. The seven women are one,<sup>3</sup> for they are the Spirit of God. And those seven are one; for the Spirit of God is “the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and virtue,<sup>4</sup> the Spirit of knowledge and piety,<sup>5</sup> the Spirit of the fear of the Lord.”<sup>6</sup> That Wisdom suffers reproach from the many wisdoms rising up against it;<sup>7</sup> that true understanding withstands reproach from false un-

1. Referring to Is 4.1.

2. Again, referring to Is 4.1.

3. “are one”: *una sunt*.

4. “virtue”: *virtus*, which can carry a connotation of strength or bravery as well as of moral excellence.

5. “piety”: *pietas*. Note that in the time of the early Church, Romans had a specialized understanding of *pietas* as meaning principally “dutiful conduct towards the gods,” equivalent at that time to “patriotism.” It could also refer to a “sense of duty” toward one’s “parents” and the like.

6. Is 11.2–3a.

7. Note that *se* can be translated as ablative to mean “within it” or as accusative to mean “against it.” “Against it” better parallels the similar meanings in the following treatments of the other gifts of the Holy Spirit from Is 11.2–3a.

derstandings; that great counsel is reproached by many counsels that are not good; that virtue is spoken of badly by a certain one, which, while it is not virtue, promises that it is itself virtue; that knowledge suffers reproach from a certain knowledge falsely named by stealing its name;<sup>8</sup> that piety is reproached by that which, while it says it is itself piety, is impiety<sup>9</sup> and instructs the impious ones;<sup>10</sup> that fear suffers reproach from that which is considered to be fear; for many promise divine fear, but they do not fear with knowledge.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, let us consider how these seven suffer reproach.

Observe the wisdom of this age, observe the wisdom of the rulers of this world,<sup>12</sup> how they reproach the wisdom of my Christ, how they reproach the wisdom of the true Judaism, according to which we are circumcised spiritually,<sup>13</sup> but indeed they are cut up.<sup>14</sup> And so, understand how the wisdom of this age and the wisdom of the rulers of this world speak ill of Wisdom. And indeed, for this reason, a man is sought who may be with those seven spiritual women in order to take away their reproach.<sup>15</sup>

Properly speaking, there is only one man who may take away their reproach. Who is that man? Jesus, who according to the

8. Origen may have in mind here 1 Tm 6.20, which speaks of professors of falsehoods who call themselves bearers of true knowledge. Origen likely has in mind Gnostic groups of his time.

9. "impiety": *impietas*. *Impietas* means "irreverence" and "disloyalty."

10. "impious ones": *impios*. This adjective, as well as the noun *impietas* (see note 9 above), can connote various negative personal qualities in regard to attitudes toward God, to family, and to homeland.

11. Referring to Rom 10.2–3.

12. Referring to 1 Cor 2.6.

13. In Jos 5.2, the Lord commands Joshua to circumcise the Israelites a second time. For Origen's interpretation of this as a request for a spiritual circumcision of the heart, see *Hom in Jos* 1.7 and 5.5–6. For another treatment of circumcision by Origen, see *C Cels* 5.48, as well as *Comm in Rom* 6.7, esp. 6.7.6–7 and 6.7.16–19. For the notion of spiritual circumcision, see also *Hom in Gn* 3.4–7, *Comm in Rom* 2.9–13, and *Comm in Rom* 10.8.

14. Referring to Rom 2.25–29 and Phil 3.2–11. Origen suggests that the rulers of this world have a circumcision that is not true, not spiritual, and so is literally or figuratively the physical circumcision of the first people of Israel.

15. Referring to Is 4.1.

flesh rose out from the root of Jesse,<sup>16</sup> “made from the seed of David according to the flesh, predestined Son of God in power according to the spirit of justification.”<sup>17</sup> Indeed, “a rod rose out from the root of Jesse.”<sup>18</sup> This rod is not the “firstborn of all creation.”<sup>19</sup> This rod is not he who “in the beginning was with God, God the Word,”<sup>20</sup> but [it is] the rod from the root of Jesse who was born according to the flesh. Therefore, “a rod rose out from the root of Jesse, and a flower came up out of his root.”<sup>21</sup> Who is the flower, and what is the root? For both are one in the very [same] subject. The difference, however, is of labors.<sup>22</sup> For if you are a sinner, the flower is not for you, nor will you see the flower, who is from the root of Jesse; for the rod will come also to you in the same way as the disciple speaks of the rod and the flower.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, about the rod he says: “What do you wish? Should I come to you with a rod?” But indeed, about the flower: “Or in the love of God and in the spirit of gentleness?”<sup>24</sup> Therefore, a rod rose out from the root of Jesse for the one who is beaten with punishments, a rod for the one who is in need of rebuke, a rod for the one who has a need to be reprovved. But indeed, a flower [rose] for the one who has already been instructed and is not in need of stern correction or certainly is not in need

16. Referring to Is 11.1.

17. Rom 1.3–4.

18. Is 11.1, where “rod” = *virga*. Note that *virga* means “a slender green branch, or twig,” such as a young branch or virgin branch.

19. Col 1.15.

20. Jn 1.1.

21. Referring to Is 11.1.

22. Origen seems to be suggesting here that the Father (presumably the root) and the Son (presumably the flower) share one nature but possess different functions (or “labors”). See *Hom in Nm* 9.9. While one might argue that this is an interpolation by Jerome, for an argument, instead, that this is consistent with Origen’s larger ontology, see Dively Lauro, “The Meaning and Significance of Scripture’s Sacramental Nature within Origen’s Thought,” SP 94:153–85. See note 62 below.

23. For the idea of Christ as the one who rose out from the root of Jesse, see also *Comm in Rom* 10.8.5. For discussion of Christ as the rod and of the faithful as the flowers, see *Hom in Nm* 9.9.1–2.

24. 1 Cor 4.21.



of punishments but has the strength now to begin to flower<sup>25</sup> toward a perfect fruit. For first a flower is shown; then, after the flower, a rod is made into a fruit. "A rod rose out from the root of Jesse, and a flower arose out of his root." And the seven women will rest; "the Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding will rest upon him."<sup>26</sup> For the Spirit of wisdom did not rest on Moses; the Spirit of wisdom did not rest on Joshua son of Nun; the Spirit of wisdom did not rest on a single one of the prophets, on Isaiah, [or] on Jeremiah.<sup>27</sup>

2. But you should not throw stones at me as if I were blaspheming, so long as I wish to give glory to my Lord Jesus Christ; but, while holding back, consider what is said, and you will see that the Spirit would rest on none of them, not that [the Spirit] would not *come to* anyone, but that [the Spirit] would not *rest on* anyone. [The Spirit] comes upon Moses, and, after the Spirit of wisdom who comes to him, Moses does not believe. For he says, "Listen, You Obstinate People! Shall I draw out water for you from that rock?"<sup>28</sup> He [the Spirit] comes upon all the righteous ones;<sup>29</sup> he also comes upon Isaiah.

But what does he [Isaiah] say? "Having unclean lips, I also live in the midst of a people having unclean lips."<sup>30</sup> The Spirit of wisdom came after those shears and that fire;<sup>31</sup> he came to the one having unclean lips, but he did not rest. Indeed, he made use of that helper;<sup>32</sup> but he did not rest. Every one of the men to whom he would come is afflicted. For every man sins. "There is not a righteous one on earth who does good and does not sin."<sup>33</sup> "No one [is] clean from filth, not even if his life is one day, even his months numbered."<sup>34</sup> Therefore, [the Spirit] *rests* upon no one.

25. "to flower": *florere*.

26. Is 11.2.

27. See *Hom in Nm* 6.3.

28. Nm 20.10.

29. "all the righteous ones": *omnes iustos*.

30. Is 6.5. See also *Hom in Is* 1.4.

31. Referring to Is 6.6. For the reason why *forfex* is translated as "shears" rather than "tongs," see *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 84.

32. "helper": *minister*, which also means "agent" or "instrument."

33. Eccl 7.20.

34. Jb 14.5a.

We can also prove from the Gospel that the Spirit came upon many and did not remain in them. A very short while before, it was read: "My spirit will not remain in those men forever."<sup>35</sup> He does not say, "[My spirit] will *not be*," but, "[my spirit] will *not remain*." John saw only one in whom [his spirit] remained, and this was the sign: "He upon whom you saw the Spirit descending and in whom you saw the Spirit remaining, that one is the Son of God."<sup>36</sup> Someone served the Word of God when the Spirit was descending; after a short time he sins, after a short time he speaks an idle word.<sup>37</sup> Yet, I do not know whether he also remains without sin; do you [really] think one gives in to sinning in the presence of the Spirit? Therefore, the Spirit of God rested upon no one, according to what has been written: "A rod has risen out from the root of Jesse, and a flower has ascended from his root, and upon him will rest the Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and virtue."<sup>38</sup>

For this reason, he [Christ] is the angel of great counsel;<sup>39</sup> for this reason, he grew strong, and, becoming strong,<sup>40</sup> he ascended, and the virtues<sup>41</sup> admired him while he was ascending, and they say about him: That one is "the Lord strong and powerful in battle."<sup>42</sup> Therefore, in regard to this one ascending into heaven, or to his strength,<sup>43</sup> I will say that "the Spirit of counsel and strength has rested upon him";<sup>44</sup> "the Lord is my strength and my praise, and he has become for me salvation."<sup>45</sup> Therefore, "the Spirit of God has rested upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and virtue,"<sup>46</sup>

35. Gn 6.3.

36. Referring to Jn 1.33–34.

37. Referring to Mt 12.36.

38. Is 11.1–3a. Note term: "of ... virtue" is *virtutis*.

39. Referring loosely to Is 9.5 LXX (9.6 RSV).

40. "he grew strong, and, becoming strong": *invaluit et invalescens*.

41. "the virtues": *virtutes*.

42. Ps 23(24).8; "strong and powerful": *fortis et potens*.

43. "to his strength": *ad fortitudinem eius*.

44. Referring to Is 11.2. Again, the Latin noun for "strength" is *fortitudo*.

45. Is 12.2. Again, *fortitudo* = "strength."

46. "of ... virtue": *virtutis*.

the Spirit of knowledge and piety, and the Spirit of the fear of God" have [all] filled him.<sup>47</sup>

3. Therefore, "seven women," searching for one whom they may "receive,"<sup>48</sup> will take hold of only one man."<sup>49</sup> And this depends on those things coming before, and it is necessary to know first when the seven women receive<sup>50</sup> the one man. When the strong ones of Jerusalem will have been made low, when the cases for the jewels of the daughters of Zion will have been uncovered, when that woman will have been left alone, when she will have been dashed to the ground,<sup>51</sup> then the seven women will take hold of<sup>52</sup> one man, saying: "We will eat our bread, and we will put on our clothes; yet let your name be invoked upon us."<sup>53</sup> Then the seven women have taken hold of and truly kept in their grip the one man, our Lord Jesus Christ, according to which he is understood as a man, as born, as having assumed a body.<sup>54</sup> "The seven women will take hold of one man, saying: 'We will eat our bread.'"<sup>55</sup> Many men walk about,<sup>56</sup> and the women take hold of none, [since] no man pleases them; for they take hold of only one man, not for want of men, but on account of the rarity of the man [who is] of the kind they wanted, of the kind for which they searched. They found only one man whom they took hold of, so that they might say to him, "We will eat our bread and put on our clothes."<sup>57</sup>

There is a certain food of wisdom; similarly there is a certain food of both understanding and the rest of the spirits. Who is that food? I am not afraid to say [that] there is another food be-

47. Is 11.2–3a.

48. "they may receive": *adsumant*.

49. Is 4.1.

50. "receive": *recipiant*.

51. Referring to Is. 3.16–17, and generally to 3.16–26, esp. 25–26.

52. "will take hold of": *apprehendent*.

53. Is 4.1.

54. Note *assumo* or *adsumo* here most basically means "accept" or "receive" or "take to oneself," but in addition to "assume" it can also mean "adopt," which, if translated that way, might sound like the Christology of Paul of Samosata.

55. Is 4.1.

56. *Ambulo* here has the connotation "to walk about with a certain gravity or importance."

57. Is 4.1.

yond these; perhaps, as my food is the Word of God,<sup>58</sup> who says, "I am the living bread, who descended from heaven,"<sup>59</sup> and "I give life to the world,"<sup>60</sup> so the food of wisdom is the Father himself for this reason: "My food is that I do the will of him who sent me and complete his work."<sup>61</sup> Nor must it be thought that wisdom and understanding and the rest of the spirits are in want of anything, because they have other food, since the only food for the entire dispensation is the nature of God.<sup>62</sup> "We will eat our bread and put on our clothes."<sup>63</sup>

There is a certain adornment of wisdom with which it is decorated; wisdom is adorned by the Word.<sup>64</sup> Every single one of these women has adornments. "Nevertheless, let your name be invoked upon us; take away our reproach."<sup>65</sup> What is the name of wisdom? Jesus. What does this mean: "Let your name be invoked upon us"? I am wisdom. I want to be called by your name, so that I may be called the wisdom of Jesus, so that understanding and great counsel and strength and knowledge and piety and fear of God may be named Jesus, so that your name may become all in all.<sup>66</sup> "Let your name be invoked upon us; take

58. "the Word of God": *sermo Dei*.

59. Jn 6.51.

60. Jn 6.33.

61. Jn 4.34; "that I . . . complete his work": *ut . . . consummem opus eius*. Note that *consummo* can mean "complete," "finish," or "perfect," among other possible meanings.

62. "dispensation": *dispensatio*. Here this noun refers to what God manages and oversees, that is, creation itself. Note that Origen here points to the Father as the food of the Son as well as the ultimate food of all that exists. It is worth considering how this might reflect Origen's understanding of the Trinity, namely, the relationship of the Father and the Son within the Trinity. For a full discussion of Origen's view of the Trinity as involving an activity of eternal begetting and consumption to which created beings are salvifically invited to participate, see my prior work: Dively Lauro, "The Meaning and Significance of Scripture's Sacramental Nature within Origen's Thought," SP 94:153-85. While Fürst, in "Jerome Keeping Silent," 143 n. 15, suggests that this is an interpolation by Jerome, it is arguable that this statement belongs to Origen and is consistent with the statement of this entire passage and with Origen's other works, as explored in my aforementioned work. See note 22 above.

63. Is 4.1.

64. "the Word": *sermone*.

65. Is 4.1.

66. Referring to 1 Cor 15.28.

away our reproach.”<sup>67</sup> In truth, Jesus has taken away reproach. For that reason, rising up, let us pray to God, who sent this man upon<sup>68</sup> whom the Spirit of the seven women has rested, so that this man might grant to us communion with these women and, taking them into ourselves, we may become wise and understanding in God, and the rest of the virtues may adorn our soul in Christ Jesus, “to whom are glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen!”<sup>69</sup>

67. Is 4.1.

68. In Latin, here *in* with ablative (*eo*) can mean “in” or “on, upon.” Origen could mean both connotations here: the Spirit of the seven women (i.e., virtues), or the Holy Spirit, rests *upon* as well as *in* the man Jesus, who has taken away reproach.

69. 1 Pt 4.11b.

## HOMILY FOUR

**I**T IS IMPOSSIBLE to find the beginning of God. You never comprehend the beginning of the movement of God,<sup>1</sup> I do not say “you” [in particular], but [rather] not anyone nor any other beings that subsist. Only the Savior and the Holy Spirit, who have always been with God,<sup>2</sup> see his face; perhaps the angels, too, who perpetually see the face of the Father who is in heaven,<sup>3</sup> also see the beginnings of [God’s] works.<sup>4</sup> And so also the Seraphim hide the feet before human beings,<sup>5</sup> for the last things, as they are, cannot be explained in detail. “Who has announced the last things?”<sup>6</sup> says Scripture. What we see—as nevertheless it may be conceded that we see something—are the middle things.<sup>7</sup> What things were before the world, we have no knowledge of; [yet indeed] certain things were long ago before the world. What things are going to follow after the world, we do not comprehend with certainty; but there

1. “movement of God”: *motus Dei*, which can also be translated “operation of God.”

2. Significantly, here Origen states that the Son and the Holy Spirit have always been with the Father without beginning. While one could argue that this phrase is an interpolation of Jerome in his effort to ensure an orthodox, post-Nicene Trinitarian reading for his Latin audience, my prior work demonstrates that this communion of the three persons without beginning is consistent with Origen’s views of their relationships with each other and with creation. See note 15 below. See Dively Lauro, “The Meaning and Significance of Scripture’s Sacramental Nature within Origen’s Thought,” SP 94:153–85.

3. Referring to Mt 18.10.

4. “works”: *negotium*. For Origen on the “beginning” and the Word, see *Comm in Jn* 1.90–124. See also *De princ* 1.3.3 and 2.1.4.

5. Referring to Is 6.2. See also *Hom in Is* 1.2.

6. See Is 41.26; LXX says it differently: “For who shall declare the things that were from the beginning . . .”

7. See also *Hom in Is* 1.2.

will be other things after the world. Therefore, these things which have been written are comprehended: "In the beginning God made heaven and earth. Yet the earth was invisible and without order, and there was darkness over the abyss; and the Spirit of God was being carried over the waters."<sup>8</sup> These waters, on which the Spirit of God was brooding,<sup>9</sup> were of the world. Yet also, the darkness, which was over the abyss, was not ungenerated;<sup>10</sup> for each was created<sup>11</sup> out of nothing.<sup>12</sup> Hear in Isaiah God saying: "I am God, who constructed light and made darkness."<sup>13</sup> Hear in Proverbs Wisdom proclaiming: "I was begotten<sup>14</sup> before all the abysses."<sup>15</sup> These things were not ungenerated,<sup>16</sup> but when or how they were begotten,<sup>17</sup> I do not know. For the former things of God's works, that is, the face of God, are covered up by the Seraphim; but also similarly the feet.<sup>18</sup> Who can explain those things that are going to be after the last age in the ages of ages? It is for babbling men to promise knowledge of these things, not knowing that man can grasp only those things that are the middle things. Both those things that are going to be after the world all the way up to<sup>19</sup> the consummation at the

8. Gn 1.1–2.

9. "was brooding": *incubabat*, a verb that can also refer to sitting upon eggs. This word gives the impression that the Spirit of God is hovering over life forms preparing for their birth within this world.

10. "ungenerated": *ingenitae*.

11. "was created": *creatum est*.

12. "out of nothing": *ex nihilo*.

13. Is 45.7.

14. "I was begotten": *nata sum*.

15. Prv 8.22–30a, esp. 24. Note that the prose so far suggests an eternal begetting of Wisdom, or the Son. Perhaps Jerome drove this reading for Trinitarian purposes, but, again, this reading is consistent with Origen's view elsewhere regarding the Trinity and the relationship of the three persons to creation, as a prior work of mine demonstrates. See note 2 above.

16. "ungenerated": *ingenita*. Origen may refer here to different types of "generation," for, while darkness came into being *ex nihilo*, the Wisdom speaking in Prv 8 is arguably the Son of God, so again suggesting Origen's view of the Son's eternal generation from the Father. See notes 2 and 15 above.

17. "they were begotten": *nata sint*.

18. Referring to Is 6.2.

19. *Usque* means "up to" or "all the way to" with the significance that it is "without stopping" or is "continuous."

Judgment, concerning punishments, retribution, and many of these [former] things also, have been hidden from us. These things are the reason this has been written: "With two they covered the face."<sup>20</sup> Yet they were not only covering but also concealing; that is, they were covering so that not a small bit of the first things, indeed, I say, of the face, would be seen, [and] neither any small bit of the last things, that is, of his feet, would be known. "And with two they flew."<sup>21</sup> The middle things have been opened for contemplation.<sup>22</sup>

"And they cried out, one to the other,"<sup>23</sup> not one to many, but one to the other. For according to the greatness<sup>24</sup> of the matter, no one except the Holy Spirit can hear the purity<sup>25</sup> of God, which is announced by the Savior; in the same way again, no one except the Savior alone can dwell in the virtuousness<sup>26</sup> of God, which is announced by the Holy Spirit.<sup>27</sup> For this rea-

20. Is 6.2.

21. Ibid.

22. *Ad contemplandum* ("for contemplation") is a phrase consisting of a gerund with the preposition *ad*, expressing purpose. Note Origen here saying that these middle things of salvation history are not covered by the Seraphim's wings, because they are made available for humankind to see and contemplate now and so are related not to the wings that cover but to the wings that fly.

23. Is 6.3.

24. "greatness": *dignitas*.

25. "purity": *sanctitudo*.

26. "virtuousness": *sanctimonia*. Note that Origen uses different terms for the Holy Spirit and the Savior in their intimate relationship with God, or the Father. Both words in Latin (*sanctitudo* and *sanctimonia*) can mean "sacredness" or "sanctity." To honor the high probability, however, that Origen, and, in turn, Jerome, used different terms, I translate *sanctitudo* as "purity" for the Holy Spirit since that word signifies God's "uprightness," and then I translate *sanctimonia* as "virtuousness" for the Savior, since Origen discusses elsewhere (as in *Comm in Cant* 1.5) that the Son, or Christ, is equal to each of the virtues and to all of the virtues together. Therefore, Origen is stating that the Holy Spirit intimately hears, or witnesses, God's pure righteousness, and the Savior, or Son, shares in, indeed, dwells in, the virtues that are the fabric of God's purely righteous nature. See note 32 below for a discussion of the probability that Jerome's use of different nouns (*sanctitudo* and *sanctimonia*) reflects fidelity to Origen's own wording. For analysis of Christ's equality to the virtues in Origen's *Comm in Cant* 1.5, see Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture*, 230–31.

27. This sentence shows Origen's understanding of the deep intimacy between God, presumably the Father, and the Holy Spirit and the Savior, or



son, they cried out, one to the other, and said, “Holy, holy, holy!”<sup>28</sup> It is not sufficient for them to cry out “Holy!” once, nor twice, but they take up the perfect number of the Trinity so that they may show clearly the multitude<sup>29</sup> of God’s sanctity,<sup>30</sup> which is a repeated community of a threefold sanctity; to the sanctity of the Father is joined the sanctity of the Son and that of the Holy Spirit. “For indeed the one who sanctifies and the ones sanctified [are] all from one.”<sup>31</sup> He who sanctifies is the Savior according to this [truth]: that he is a man receiving sanctity from God the Father.<sup>32</sup> And so, they say: “Holy, holy, holy Lord

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Son. It is arguably not an interpolation or significant alteration by Jerome, while the sentences that follow are probably just that. See note 32 below at the end of the following three sentences for analysis of this entire passage and how it may impact an understanding of Origen’s Trinitarian theology. For a treatment of the insights about Origen’s Trinitarian theology that this passage arguably provides, see Dively Lauro, “Origen’s Relational Trinity: A Clarification of His *Fourth Homily on Isaiah*,” *Studia Patristica* (Peeters, forthcoming in 2021; presented at Oxford Patristics Conference, 2019).

28. Is 6.3.

29. *Multitudinem* means “the great number” of people, “multitude,” “crowd.” The word here is not suggesting the great amount or fullness of God’s sanctity, but the “multitude” of God’s sanctity. If Jerome was careful with his translation, Origen here is suggesting that God’s sanctity is more than one in number, multiplied, not just great in amount.

30. For the rest of this paragraph, the term translated “sanctity” is from *sanctitudo*, which Origen used above to explain that the Holy Spirit alone hears God’s “sanctity,” or “pure righteousness”—and not the term used by Origen in the same sentence above to describe God’s nature of “virtuousness” (*sanctimonia*), in which the Savior dwells. See note 26 above. For the likelihood that Jerome’s word choices reflect Origen’s, see note 32 below. We may proceed with understanding “sanctity,” as it refers to God (whose very nature arguably gives definition to this term—rather than vice versa), as “pure righteousness,” which characterizes and receives meaning from God’s nature.

31. Heb 2.11.

32. Starting with “It is not sufficient,” these sentences on the Trinity being three in one are likely interpolations by Jerome to present the translation in a post-Nicene orthodox way for his Latin audience. Arguable interpolations by Jerome in these homilies on Isaiah tend to include the word “Trinity” while the surrounding discussions by Origen do not tend to use this term. In light of this observation, it is probable that the sentences just preceding, which describe the Holy Spirit as the only one hearing God’s purity, and the Savior as the only one dwelling in God’s virtuousness, are not interpolations by Jerome but are representative of Origen’s thought. See notes 26, 27, and 30 above. As discussed

of Hosts!”<sup>33</sup> For “Sabaoth,” as Aquila handed down, means the Lord of Hosts.

2. “All the earth [is] full of his glory.”<sup>34</sup> Formerly once the house was full of glory,<sup>35</sup> but indeed now, to those who are upon the earth, it is prophesied by the Seraphim, that it will come to pass that Christ fill the whole earth with the glory of God. Indeed, his glory is in all who glorify God by their way of life, and so the whole earth is full of the glory of God. Formerly once the whole earth was not full of the glory of God, but one corner of the earth [was full of God’s glory] when it was being said, “God [is] known in Judaea; in Israel his name is great.”<sup>36</sup> Glory to God, who sent his own Son,<sup>37</sup> so that the whole earth would become full of his glory.<sup>38</sup>

But what benefit is it to you if the earth is full of God’s glory because of the churches of the holy ones,<sup>39</sup> who are everywhere, yet you are not a participant in the glory of God’s fullness?<sup>40</sup> Therefore, you also must work and make an effort in all things, searching for the glory of God, where it may dwell and find a place also within you so that you also may become full of his glory, along with the whole earth, in which there is the glory of God. How may the fullness of the glory of God occur through

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in the introduction to this volume, Jerome, when explaining and defending his own method of interpretation, stated that he would make additions or omissions in order to secure orthodoxy but not completely recraft the sentences there. Here we see a likely example, then, of Origen’s own thoughts followed by Jerome’s addition of statements about the Trinity, markedly different in tone and focus from the prior ones he is attempting to clarify. Therefore, studying the preceding sentences as uninterpolated and thus representative of Origen’s own thought may deepen our understanding of Origen’s view of the Trinity. Note that Fürst in “Jerome Keeping Silent,” 143 n. 15, states that he views at least this portion of this passage to be interpolated by Jerome: “... which is a repeated community of a threefold sanctity; to the sanctity of the Father is joined the sanctity of the Son and that of the Holy Spirit.”

33. Is 6.3.

34. Is 63b. See also *Hom in Is* 1.1.

35. Is 6.1 (the wording here is more similar to that of LXX than RSV).

36. Ps 75 (76).1.

37. Rom 8.3.

38. Alluding to Is 6.3b.

39. *Beatorum* can also be translated “blessed ones.”

40. Referring to Ps 23 (24).1 and Eph 3.19.

each of us? If the things I do, [and] the things I speak, are done to the glory of God, my word and deed become full of the glory of God. If both my coming and going [are] to the glory of God, if [my] food, my drink, if all things that I do are done to the glory of God, [then] I also am a participant of that saying, "The earth is full of his glory."<sup>41</sup> Therefore, when I will have done all these things, "the lintel was raised up by a voice with which they were crying out."<sup>42</sup> And so, it is blessed for each of us to work in such a way that he may become a participant of the door<sup>43</sup> and of the lintel of the door, which is near to Christ's understanding of God.<sup>44</sup> For, I suppose, it is not improper by way of reference for the flesh to be called "the door" and the Word<sup>45</sup> "the lintel."

3. "The lintel was raised up by a voice with which they were crying out, and the house was filled with smoke,"<sup>46</sup> with that good smoke of the glory of God. "And I said, 'O, wretched am I, because I have been stung!'"<sup>47</sup> Before you may see a vision, do you not confess to be wretched, O Isaiah? He does not say: As long as Uzziah lived, it did not come to my mind<sup>48</sup> that I was wretched; for I begin to know that I am wretched when I see a vision about the leprous king Uzziah in me dying,<sup>49</sup> and I say: "O, wretched am I!"

Now I [Origen] begin also to confess to the Lord and say this about myself, "O, wretched am I!" even as Isaiah says: "O, wretched am I!" Yet close to this the Apostle also says, "I am a wretched man; who will free me from the body of this death?"<sup>50</sup>

41. Is 6.3b.

42. Is 6.4; "lintel": *superliminare*. This Latin word is found in the *Vulgata* in three places: Ex 12.7 and 23 and Am 9.1.

43. *Ostium* can be translated "door" or "entrance."

44. "near to Christ's understanding of God": *iuxta intellectum Christi Dei*. Recall how Origen above refers to the Savior as sharing the virtuousness of God. Here Origen is suggesting that through Christ we can come to understand God better.

45. "the Word": *verbum*.

46. Is 6.4. See also *Hom in Is* 1.4.

47. Is 6.5a. "O, wretched am I, because I have been stung": *O miser ego, quoniam compunctus sum*. See *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 75, and 6.4, note 147.

48. "mind": *sensum*.

49. Is 6.1, 2 Chr 26.16–21. See also *Hom in Is* 1.1.

50. Rom 7.24.

Therefore, it is a blessing that I myself confess that I am wretched. If I humble myself and weep tears repenting over my sins, God will hear me and give to me a deliverer. And I say, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"<sup>51</sup> Let us speak the truth from the heart: "Wretched am I." Let each one [of us] call to mind the reasons for his wretchedness and transgressions, and let us, rising up, say prayerfully, indeed remembering, just as those confessing, yet having forgotten, just as those no longer doing [these things], and let us say, "Wretched am I, because I have been stung!"<sup>52</sup>

He [Isaiah] was not stung before he saw a vision, before Uzziah died.<sup>53</sup> When he begins to do penance, straightaway he says, "Because I have been stung."<sup>54</sup> If someone is without understanding<sup>55</sup> according to the interior man,<sup>56</sup> although he be a sinner, he is not stung. But just as a dead body does not feel although you bring a stimulus<sup>57</sup> into the extremities, in the same way also if you bring divine words<sup>58</sup> to the sinner dead because of sin and not doing penance, neither is he sorrowful nor does he repent nor does he have the sadness that effects confession, [that is,] the sadness that is according to God.<sup>59</sup> Yet if someone wants to be saved and has heard the words<sup>60</sup> of one accusing and reproving him, straightaway he says, "O, wretched am I." It is not sufficient to say, "Wretched am I"; one must add to this: "Because I have been stung." If only he would be stung more strongly! *For the more we are stung, by that much more are the bonds of*

51. Rom 7.25a.

52. Is 6.5a. Note that Origen displays humility, praying that his own lips be cleansed by the second Seraph, Christ, and he also exhorts his audience to do the same, here in *Hom in Is* 4.3–6 as well as in *Hom in Is* 1.4 and 5.2. Likewise, Origen asks to be "stung" with remorse and exhorts his audience to do the same, here in *Hom in Is* 4.3. See also *Hom in Lv* 9.8.5–6.

53. Referring to Is 6.1.

54. Is 6.5a.

55. "understanding": *sensu*.

56. Referring to Rom 7.22–25.

57. "stimulus": *stimulus*, a Latin noun that can connote pain.

58. "divine words": *verba divina*.

59. Referring to 2 Cor 7.10, stressing the difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow, the former leading to salvation and the latter to death.

60. "the words": *sermones*.

*sins loosened in us.*<sup>61</sup> For this reason, Ahab did not obtain much of a benefit, because he was not stung much, but indeed he was stung, but [only] once. Therefore, it was said, "You have seen how Ahab has been stung!"<sup>62</sup> Indeed, if someone were of such a kind that he does not withdraw from being stung, just like the Apostle [Paul], he says, "I am not worthy to be called 'Apostle' for this reason: that I have persecuted the Church of God,"<sup>63</sup> and, "To me, the least of all the saints, this grace was given,"<sup>64</sup> and "God [is] faithful, because Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners, among whom I am the first."<sup>65</sup> Do you not see that he was stung often, not once, but continuously? While writing and speaking and acting, he was stung. In the same way this is true for Isaiah in the present passage, who says: "O, wretched am I, because I have been stung, because, although I am a man and I have unclean lips, I live in the midst of a people also having unclean lips."<sup>66</sup> Note also something else: that the sins of Isaiah were not also in deeds, but they were only in words;<sup>67</sup> for which reason he says, "Because, although I am a man and I have unclean lips." Yet there was also a people having unclean lips. It was not proper<sup>68</sup> for him to accuse the people and say that there were more sins among them than unclean lips.

4. "And with my eyes I have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts."<sup>69</sup> If ever we have thought about God, although we are still sinners, let us also say what the prophet now says: "And one of the Seraphim was sent to me."<sup>70</sup> How good [is] God! Because, he says, I hear Isaiah confessing—for he said: "O, wretched am I!"—because I hear him repenting—for he says, "I have been stung"—because he proclaimed his own transgressions, saying,

61. Emphasis added.

62. 3 Kingdoms 20.29 (1 Kgs 21.29).

63. 1 Cor 15.9.

64. Eph 3.8.

65. 1 Tm 1.15.

66. Is 6.5.

67. "words": *sermonibus*.

68. *Decuit* is perfect tense of *deceat*, meaning "it is proper or fitting" physically or morally—morally here.

69. Is 6.5b. *Sabaoth* is the Hebrew word for "the heavenly hosts."

70. Is 6.6a.

“Although I am a man and I have unclean lips, [and] I live in the midst of a people also having unclean lips,”<sup>71</sup> while he is still speaking, I also say: “Behold, I am present and ready.”<sup>72</sup> “And one of the Seraphim was sent to me, and he had in his hand a burning coal.”<sup>73</sup> The burning coal is brought to the prophet, so that his lips, which at some time or another had sinned, may be cleansed by the burning of a fire. Who is this “one of the Seraphim”? My Lord Jesus Christ: This one, according to the dispensation<sup>74</sup> of the flesh, was sent, having in his hand the burning coal and saying: “I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and if only it were already ablaze!”<sup>75</sup>

5. “And one of the Seraphim was sent to me, and he had in his hand a burning coal, which he had taken from the altar with shears.”<sup>76</sup> The prophet is not cleansed by [just] any available fire simply and by chance, but by that [fire] which is from the altar of God.<sup>77</sup> If you were not cleansed by the fire of the altar, that [other fire] remains for you about which it has been said, “Go from me into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for Satan and his angels.”<sup>78</sup> Such a fire is not from the altar. All must be handed over to fire, but not all to one fire. The fire from the altar awaits some; [but] for others, that [fire] prepared for Satan and his angels.

Therefore, may the reproving word<sup>79</sup> touch the lips of our

71. Is 6.5.

72. Is 58.9; “I am present and ready”: *adsum*. While *adsum* can be translated simply, “Here I am,” note that *adsum* implies a supportive, helpful presence. This response emphasizes that Isaiah is ready to assist God; he is standing by to do as God wills.

73. Is 6.6.

74. “dispensation”: *dispensatio*, which can imply management, superintendence, or stewardship.

75. Lk 12.49. See also *Hom in Lv* 9.7.2.

76. Is 6.6. For the reason why *forfex* is translated as “shears” rather than “tongs,” see *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 84.

77. See also *Hom in Lv* 9.8.1.

78. Mt 25.41. Note that the term for “Satan” here is from *Zabulus*, which can also be translated “the Devil.” This translation, however, employs “Satan” for *Zabulus*, and “devil” or “devils” for the lesser powers designated by the Latin term *diabolus*.

79. “the reproving word”: *sermo corripiens*.

mind and soul,<sup>80</sup> so that we also may say, “And he touched my mouth.”<sup>81</sup> If I cleanse my mouth so that I say nothing idle, nothing foolish, nothing shameful, nothing offensive, [or] to name all things at once, nothing of those things that have been forbidden, then I can say, “He touched my mouth.” On the other hand, as long as I have unclean lips and I put forth unclean things, because of the words of sin,<sup>82</sup> fire from the altar does not touch me, nor is “one of the Seraphim” sent to me.

6. “And he said: Behold, this one has touched your lips and taken away your iniquities,<sup>83</sup> and has cleansed your sins.”<sup>84</sup> May the Divine Word<sup>85</sup> bite into us,<sup>86</sup> [and] may it set our souls on fire,<sup>87</sup> so that we, while hearing [it], may say,<sup>88</sup> “Was not our heart burning within us?”<sup>89</sup> so that our iniquities and sins may be taken away. And, made clean with a clean mouth and a clean heart and a wholly clean conscience, let us give thanks to the All-Powerful God in Christ Jesus, “to whom are glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen!”<sup>90</sup>

80. “the lips of our mind and soul”: *labia mentis et animae nostrae*.

81. Is 6.7a.

82. “the words of sin”: *verba peccati*.

83. The occurrences of “iniquities” in this paragraph are from the term *iniquitates*. On this Latin noun, see *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 78, and uses of this term and the related term *iniquus* in the text of these homilies at 5.3, note 62; 6.2, note 55; 6.6, note 195; and 8.1, note 17.

84. Is 6.7.

85. “the Divine Word”: *sermo divinus*.

86. “May . . . bite”: *mordeat*. The verb *mordeo* is normally translated as “bite” or “eat,” but it can also imply “sting.” Note that this latter meaning can be related to Origen’s idea that we are to let our hearts be stung with remorse so that the Seraph will cleanse our lips and make us ready for God’s calling. See *Hom in Is* 4.3.

87. “souls”: *animas*.

88. “we . . . may say,” *dicamus*; the question is rhetorical, expecting a “yes” answer, as indicated by the placement of *nonne* at the beginning of this quotation.

89. Lk 24.32.

90. 1 Pt 4.11b.

## HOMILY FIVE

*Concerning this which is written: “Who has raised up righteousness from the east?”<sup>1</sup> and again, in another way, about the vision.<sup>2</sup>*



THE PROPHET says that there is also a living righteousness, and we thought it was said only by the Apostle [Paul] that Christ is righteousness and sanctification and redemption and wisdom.<sup>3</sup> Yet perhaps also the Apostle, instructed by the prophets, came to know that there is a righteousness, animate and living.<sup>4</sup> Who is that righteousness? The Only-begotten God.<sup>5</sup> Yet it is established from the chapter in which the reading has now paused that [the idea of] Christ being righteousness, both living and subsisting righteousness,<sup>6</sup> did not originate from the Apostle, but, discovering this mystery from the prophetic words, he has presented it to us.<sup>7</sup> For he says, “Who has made righteousness rise up from the east, [and]

1. Is 41.2; “righteousness”: *iustitiam*. Since in this homily Origen will stress that God has raised up a living *iustitia* and will analyze the significance of identifying it with Christ, I have chosen to translate this term “righteousness” rather than “justice” because “righteousness” better captures Origen’s focus on God’s good character, or holiness, than on God’s strict judgment. *Sanctitas* and related terms, such as *sanctus*, will be translated “holiness” or “sacredness” or “sanctity” for the noun and “holy” for the adjective.

2. Referring to the vision in Is 6 and already treated in *Hom in Is* 1 and *Hom in Is* 4.

3. Referring to 1 Cor 1.30. For Origen’s identification of Christ as righteousness, see also *De princ* 2.9.4.

4. “there is a righteousness, animate and living”: *animalem esse iustitiam et viventem*.

5. Referring to Jn 1.18 and Jn 3.18.

6. “subsisting”: *subsistentem*, which suggests constancy: Christ is consistently and continually righteousness.

7. “mystery”: *mysterium*.



has summoned it to its feet?"<sup>8</sup> He has "summoned" righteousness. It has been shown to be a living being,<sup>9</sup> if it walks when summoned. Indeed, the Father has summoned Christ, because for our salvation he had made a pathway to us and had descended from heaven to us: "For no one has ascended into heaven, but he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man."<sup>10</sup> He [the Father] has summoned him [the Son of Man] from the east, not from this sensible [world], but from the east of the true light. For this reason, it is written: "Who has made righteousness rise up from the east, summoned it to its feet?"<sup>11</sup> The Father has summoned the Son, nay, rather, as we may truly say, God has summoned the man, righteousness, to his feet, that is, [the Father has summoned] the Incarnation of his own Son. For that reason, we also worship his footstool, according to that which has been written, "Worship his footstool, because it is holy,"<sup>12</sup> since, indeed, the flesh of the Lord receives the dignity<sup>13</sup> of the Divine Nature.<sup>14</sup> Yet, because the beginning of the reading requires a loftier explanation, let us pray to the Most High King, that the Word,<sup>15</sup> who had gone away, when summoned may be returned to us again and we may explain a few things according to our ability.

2. "And it happened in the year in which King Uzziah died,

8. Is 41.2; "has made . . . rise": *surgere fecit*; "has summoned": *vocavit*. The corresponding Greek word in LXX for the phrase *surgere fecit* is ἐξήγειρεν, a form of the verb ἐξεγείρω, which means "awaken" (Sophocles), "arouse" (Euripedes), "raise from the dead" (Aeschylus). *Voco* means "summon" or "call," and the corresponding Greek word in LXX is ἐκάλεσεν from καλέω, meaning "call, summon, invoke, name."

9. "a living being": *animalem*. This adjective means "animate" or "living," and, substantively, "a living being." See note 4 above.

10. Jn 3.13. Note that with the phrase *ob nostrum salute ad nos iter fecerat*, *ad* + accusative can mean "to" or "for." So this phrase can also be interpreted as "for our salvation he had made a way for us." "To us" is consistent with RSV, suggesting the Son of Man (Jesus) made a journey down from heaven in order to give us salvation. But "for us" would also suggest that the path of descent made by the Son of Man (Jesus) is also the path by which we are to rise up to heaven. Perhaps Origen and/or translator Jerome perceived this double meaning.

11. Is 41.2.

12. Ps 98 (99).5. The term for "holy" here is *sanctum*.

13. *Honor* means "honor" or "dignity."

14. "of the Divine Nature": *Deitatis*.

15. "the Word": *sermo*.

I saw the Lord sitting upon a high throne; and the house [was] full of his glory. And the Seraphim were standing around him, six wings belonging to the one and six wings belonging to the other; and indeed, with two they were covering his face, and with two they were covering [his] feet, and with two they were flying. And they were crying out, one to the other, and saying: 'Holy, holy, holy Lord of Hosts, the earth is full of his glory!'"<sup>16</sup> and the rest. Truly, so that we ourselves may also see the vision that Isaiah saw, let us call out to Jesus, who has given sight abundantly to those who do not see. For even now he can come and make it so that we may gaze<sup>17</sup> with open eyes upon those things that have been mentioned in the reading of the mystery;<sup>18</sup> let us now promise him in return not to make the body of Christ the body of a harlot any longer,<sup>19</sup> not to do works worthy of mourning. Let each of us speak about these things from the heart to God and pray that his coming happens even now; for if Jesus does not come, we cannot see these things.

I pray that the Seraph may be sent even to me and that, with a burning coal seized with shears,<sup>20</sup> he may cleanse my lips;<sup>21</sup> and why do I say "lips"? Isaiah was holy, and for that reason, only his lips were cleansed, because only by the lips, that is, by a word,<sup>22</sup> had he transgressed. I truly am not such a one who can say, "I have unclean lips";<sup>23</sup> [for] I fear that I have [also] an unclean heart, unclean eyes, unclean ears, an unclean mouth.<sup>24</sup> As long as I sin in all these ways, I am totally unclean. If I have looked at a woman with the intention of lusting after her,<sup>25</sup> I have commit-

16. Is 6.1–3. *Sabaoth* is Hebrew for "the heavenly hosts." This passage is treated in *Hom in Is* 1 and 4 as well.

17. "so that we may gaze": *intueamur*. *Intueor* means "to look at, gaze upon," as well as "contemplate, consider" and "regard with admiration, wonder at, admire." All these meanings can be perceived in the text here.

18. "of the mystery": *sacramenti*. See Mt 20.32–34.

19. Referring to 1 Cor 6.13–15.

20. For the reason why *forfex* is translated "shears" rather than "tongs," see *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 84.

21. Is 6.6–7. For this display of humility by Origen, see also *Hom in Is* 1.4.

22. "a word": *sermone*.

23. Is 6.5. See also *Hom in Is* 4.3.

24. See *Hom in Is* 7.3.

25. "lusting after": *concupiscendum*.

ted adultery with her in my heart.<sup>26</sup> Behold the unclean eyes. If wicked thoughts issue out from my heart,<sup>27</sup> adulteries, fornications, false testimonies,<sup>28</sup> behold the unclean heart.

"How beautiful the feet of the ones proclaiming peace, bringing good tidings!"<sup>29</sup> Truly I fear that I have unclean feet running toward evil things. I stretch out my hands toward God, and perhaps, turning away his face, he says: "If you have stretched out [your] hands, I will turn my face away from you."<sup>30</sup> Therefore, who cleanses me? Who washes my feet? Jesus, come; I have dirty feet; on account of me become a servant; put your water in your basin; come, wash my feet!<sup>31</sup> I know that what I say is audacious, but I fear the threat of him saying, "If I do not wash your feet, you will not have a part with me."<sup>32</sup> For that reason, wash my feet, so that I may have a part with you! But why do I say: Wash my feet? Peter can say this, who had no need, except only that his feet be washed; for indeed, he was all clean. But indeed, since I have been washed once, I need that baptism about which the Lord says: "I have another baptism to be baptized with."<sup>33</sup>

Why have we said these things? I am preparing both myself and [my] audience for the greater mysteries, if yet he comes, if the Word of God<sup>34</sup> descends to us; for I fear, lest he flee from me, lest he also disdain my blessing. At one time the Word<sup>35</sup> fled from the people because of one sinner, Achar; the Word,<sup>36</sup> I say, fled

26. Referring to Mt 5.28.

27. "heart": *pectore*.

28. Referring to Mt 15.19.

29. "of the ones . . . bringing good tidings": *evangelizantium*, referring to Is 52.7. See also Rom 10.15.

30. Is 1.15.

31. Referring to Jn 13.5. See *Hom in Jgs* 8.5, wherein Origen considers how the preacher washes the feet of his audience, that is, their souls, with Scripture. Also, see *Hom in Is* 6.3, where Origen relates this same scenario to the bishops of the Church.

32. Jn 13.8. *Tecum* can mean "in me" as well as "with me." RSV uses "in me."

33. Lk 12.50.

34. "the Word of God": *sermo Dei*.

35. "the Word": *sermo*.

36. "the Word": *sermo*.

from the people because of one sinner, Achar, son of Zambri, son of Zara, from the tribe of Judah,<sup>37</sup> who was disobedient to God and for that reason was anathematized.<sup>38</sup> And now, because there is a multitude of people on account of the Day of Preparation,<sup>39</sup> and especially on the Lord's Day, which is the commemoration of Christ's Passion—for the Resurrection of the Lord is not celebrated once a year and not always [only] after eight days—let us pray to the All-powerful God, that his Word<sup>40</sup> may come to us.<sup>41</sup> Although you are sinners, pray; [for] God listens to sinners.<sup>42</sup> But if you are afraid of that which is said in the Gospel, "We know that God does not listen to sinners,"<sup>43</sup> do not be greatly afraid, do not believe [it]. He who said this was blind.<sup>44</sup> Yet give credence rather to him who speaks and does not lie: "Even if your sins have become as crimson,<sup>45</sup> I will make them white as wool; and if you are willing and listen to me, you will eat the good things of the land."<sup>46</sup> If you are willing even now to listen, let us pray in community to the Lord that at least now, with the Word<sup>47</sup> com-

37. Jos 7.1, 7.18 The names in this text reflect the LXX. In the RSV, they are Achan, Zabdi, and Zerah.

38. See Jos 7.24–26; "anathematized": *anathematizatus*.

39. The noun *Parasceve*, is from the Greek noun παρασκευή. See Mk 15.42, Mt 27.62, and Lk 23.54. It means "the day of preparation," i.e., the day before the Sabbath. See also *Hom in Ex* 7.5.

40. "Word": *sermo*.

41. This reference to celebrating the Lord's Resurrection with a larger than usual crowd at the worship service either suggests that Origen delivered this homily near Easter (pointing to the season of Lent and Easter as the timeframe for this set of homilies on Isaiah by Origen) or shows Origen stressing that each week the Eucharist on the first day of the week is the commemoration of Christ's Passion and also the celebration of his Resurrection. See also *C Cels* 8.22–23.

42. "listens to": *exaudit*.

43. Jn 9.31a.

44. Referring to Jn 9.24.

45. *Foenicium* or *feniculum* or *faeniculum* derives from the Greek word for the people of Phoenicia, or the Phoenicians. Because they were known for dying cloth purple, the word for Phoenician became synonymous with the word "purple." Also, the word means "fennel," the inside parts of which have a dark-brown color. In either case, the emphasis here for Origen is on a dark color, such as purple or crimson or scarlet, which in this context connotes blood.

46. Is 1.18–19.

47. "the Word": *verbo*.

ing, we may be able<sup>48</sup> to give attention<sup>49</sup> to the prophetic words.

3. "It happened," he says, "in the year in which King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord of Hosts sitting upon a high throne."<sup>50</sup> "A vision" has been included;<sup>51</sup> [so] why [is] the time of the king indicated? Pay attention to when the vision appeared: When King Uzziah died, Isaiah saw the Lord of Hosts sitting upon a high throne.<sup>52</sup> If anyone from among us knows who Uzziah was and what he did, he can know what the prophet taught through the Spirit, what the Divine Word<sup>53</sup> may show to us. I will go to the life of King Uzziah and inquire after the story<sup>54</sup> of Uzziah from the books of the Kingdoms and from Chronicles, and there I see that it is necessary that for me King Uzziah die if it is going to happen that I see the Lord of Hosts sitting upon a high throne. This Uzziah, descending from the seed of David and reigning over the people of Judah, indeed as long as Zechariah<sup>55</sup> lived—who understood [the fear of the Lord], for so it is written in the second book of Chronicles—he [Uzziah] did what is right<sup>56</sup> in the sight of the Lord.<sup>57</sup> That not being sufficient to him, he made great lamps for the Lord and put the Temple of God in order, and many were his virtues in reverence for God. Yet, when the understanding Zechariah died, then he did evil. Do you want to know this evil that he did? He was a king, not a priest (the one a royal rank, the other a priestly rank). He wanted to enter into the Temple and perform the office of a priest and do the work that had not been permitted to him. He entered in, preceding the priests, and took<sup>58</sup> the vessel of libation.<sup>59</sup> Yet

48. "we may be able": *valeamus*, which means "be able" as well as "be worthy." Note the possibly layered meaning here for Origen that one must be worthy in order to be able to hear the prophetic sayings.

49. "to give attention": *advertere*.

50. Is 6.1. See also *Hom in Is* 1.1.

51. For the vision at hand, see Is 1.1.

52. Referring to Is 6.1.

53. "the Divine Word": *sermo divinus*.

54. "the story": *historia*.

55. LXX uses "Zacharias."

56. "what is right": *rectum*.

57. 2 Chr 26.3–5.

58. "took": *adsumpsit*, which can simply mean "take" but can also mean "usurp."

59. Referring to 2 Chr 26.16–21.

he who was at that time the chief priest also entered, and eighty priests with him. The chief priest said to him: Are you not Uzziah, and not a priest? He [Uzziah] persisted impetuously, and leprosy sprang up on his forehead. He was cast out as dead. He went out from the Temple; the Lord led him out. Therefore, he became leprous on account of [his] transgression<sup>60</sup> of the law.<sup>61</sup>

Everyone is under the rule of either sin or righteousness. If sin reigns in me, I am one of the kings of Israel who has entered into the Temple impetuously; if I am righteous according to the measure of my progress and I do right and persevere in the sight of God, righteousness reigns in me. Indeed, as long as the leprous one was alive, Isaiah had unclean lips; as long as the unjust one<sup>62</sup> was alive, Isaiah could not see the Lord of Hosts and had unclean lips.<sup>63</sup> For indeed he was under an unjust king.<sup>64</sup> Yet, when does he begin to see the vision of God? "In the year in which Uzziah died."<sup>65</sup>

By God's granting, you will be able to learn things similar to these also from many passages of Scripture. In Exodus something of that kind has been written: "And it happened after a period of time, the king of Egypt died, and the sons of Israel heaved a sigh,<sup>66</sup> and their outcry<sup>67</sup> rose up to God."<sup>68</sup> As long as the Pharaoh lived, the sons of Israel did not heave a sigh,<sup>69</sup> and, placed in punishments,<sup>70</sup> neither did they even have the

60. "transgression": *praevaricatio*.

61. Referring to 2 Chr 26.16–21.

62. "unjust": *iniquus*. *Iniquus* initially means "unequal" or "uneven" and can also be translated as "unfair, unjust." For further commentary on this and the related term *iniquitas*, see *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 78, and 6.6, note 195, as well as other uses of this term in the text of these homilies at 4.6, note 83; 6.2, note 55; and 8.1, note 17. For the significance of the words *aequus* and *iniquus* to Origen's understanding of virtue and sin, see Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit*, 224–37.

63. Is 6.1 and 6.5.

64. "an unjust king": *iniquo . . . rege*.

65. Is 6.1.

66. "heaved a sigh": *suspiraverunt*. See *Hom in Is* 1.1.

67. *Clamor* ("outcry") can also mean "shout."

68. Ex 2.23.

69. "did not heave a sigh": *non suspiraverunt*.

70. "punishments": *poenis*.

unrestrained opportunity for groaning;<sup>71</sup> for a king was alive who was commanding them to make both bricks and straw.<sup>72</sup> As long as Pharaoh lived, they did not heave a sigh<sup>73</sup> toward God. When Pharaoh died, then they had the strength to lift up [their] mouths drenched with tears.

An evil king lives in our heart<sup>74</sup> as long as the Pharaoh Zabulus [Satan] lives.<sup>75</sup> Then we produce bricks and straw, then we swallow tears in silence, and we do the first works of iniquity.<sup>76</sup> But when, by the Lord God visiting us, he [Pharaoh] has died, then we heave a sigh<sup>77</sup> toward the Lord. For that reason, let us pray that the reign of sin, which is in our mortal body,<sup>78</sup> dies. For he [the Apostle] says, "Sin [is] dead, yet I have revived," and again, "Sin has revived, yet I am dead."<sup>79</sup> When Uzziah, who is master of the reign of sin, dies, Pharaoh [Zabulus or Satan] also dies. When the most wicked king dies, I raise up my eyes to heaven, and God hears my voice, in the same way as Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. And I see the Lord of Hosts sitting and reigning upon a high throne,<sup>80</sup> whom the people did not see, for Uzziah had not yet died.

I want to introduce a certain comparison to a good thing which is opposite to this. As long as the understanding Zechariah [who understood the fear of the Lord] lived, that very Uzziah did not commit sin in the sight of God;<sup>81</sup> with Zechariah dying, he turned away from the Lord when he commanded the people and ruled the city. And while [we] read these things day and night and hear the Lord saying, "It was needful for you to

71. *Gemendi* is used here for "groaning," while above and below, *suspiraverunt* is used for "heav[ing] a sigh." Both can mean "sigh, draw a deep breath," but *gemo* specifically means "groan" or "bewail."

72. Referring to Ex 5.7. In other words, they were ordered to gather the straw and then use it to make bricks.

73. "heave a sigh": *suspiraverunt*.

74. "heart": *pectore*.

75. *Zabulus* means "Satan" or "the Devil," from the Greek word *Ζάβουλος*.

76. "we do the first works of iniquity": *iniquitatis opera prima facimus*.

77. "we heave a sigh": *suspiramus*.

78. Referring to Rom 6.12.

79. Referring to Rom 7.8–11.

80. Is 6.1.

81. Referring to 2 Chr 26.4–5, as discussed above.

put the money in the bank,<sup>82</sup> and, when coming, I would have demanded it back with interest,”<sup>83</sup> let us neither tie up the entrusted coin in a handkerchief nor put the money in the bank,<sup>84</sup> but let us lend it with interest to the people. And when we have entrusted the Lord’s account<sup>85</sup> to you, it will be necessary to see how you may pay back the entrusted money with interest. Amen!<sup>86</sup>

82. “bank”: *mensa*, which can refer to a money-changer’s table.

83. Mt 25.27 and Lk 19.23.

84. Referring to Lk 19.20 and 23, as well as Mt 25.27.


85. “the Lord’s account”: *dominicam rationem*.

86. This homily does not end with a quotation from 1 Pt 4.11b, as do Origen’s other homilies. But note that it ends with “Amen!” suggesting that this, indeed, is the end of the homily. Perhaps this was not the end of the homily, but Jerome added “Amen!” Or perhaps Origen had run out of time during liturgy and finished abruptly, adding “Amen!” himself.



## HOMILY SIX

*Concerning that which is written: “Whom do I send, and who is going?”<sup>1</sup> up to this passage, in which he says: “And let them be converted,<sup>2</sup> and I will heal them.”<sup>3</sup>*

HEN ISAIAH sees the Lord of Hosts sitting upon a throne high and lifted up,<sup>4</sup> yet also sees the Seraphim standing around him [the Lord]<sup>5</sup> and receives the remission of sins through that fire, which, brought forth from the altar, has cleansed his lips by contact,<sup>6</sup> he says that he heard the voice of the Lord, not commanding, but calling upon him and saying: “Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people?”<sup>7</sup> Then he says that he responded to the Lord: “Here I am, send me.”<sup>8</sup> Now, committed to this passage and examining carefully these things that are written, I find Moses did one thing, Isaiah another. For Moses, when chosen to lead the people out from the land of Egypt, says, “Provide another whom you may send,”<sup>9</sup> and he seems to plead his cause against God. But Isaiah, not chosen, but hearing: “Whom shall I send, and who will go?” says, “Here I am, send me.”<sup>10</sup> Therefore, it is worthwhile, in comparing spir-

1. Is 6.8.

2. “let them be converted”: *convertantur*; the verb *convertere* means “to turn toward.”

3. Is 6.10b.

4. Is 6.1.

5. Is 6.2.

6. Is 6.6–7.

7. Is 6.8a.

8. Is 6.8b. See also *Hom in Is* 9.

9. Ex 4.13.

10. Is 6.8b. Origen also compares the responses of Moses and Isaiah in *Hom in Is* 9.

itual meanings with spiritual meanings,<sup>11</sup> to ask who of the two did better: Moses, who, after he was chosen, refused,<sup>12</sup> or Isaiah, who, not even chosen, offered himself up so that he would be sent to the people. For I do not know if someone, directing attention to this contrariness of approaches which is seen in both [men], can say that Moses did that very thing that Isaiah did. Therefore, I boldly make comparisons between two holy and blessed men, judging both and saying that Moses acted more modestly than Isaiah. To be sure, Moses considered carefully the magnitude of having charge over the people with the purpose of leading them out of the land of Egypt, to resist<sup>13</sup> the enchantments and evil deeds of the Egyptians;<sup>14</sup> for this reason, he [Moses] says, "Provide another whom you may send."<sup>15</sup> Yet that one [Isaiah], not waiting to hear what he might be commanded to say [or] whether he had even been chosen, says, "Here I am, send me."<sup>16</sup> For this reason, because he [Isaiah], not knowing what was being commanded of him, says, "Here I am, send me," he is commanded to say these things that were undesirable<sup>17</sup> to say. Or was it not undesirable for one newly commanded to prophesy to begin speaking by way of reviling: "You will hear by ear and not understand, and, seeing, you will perceive and not see;<sup>18</sup> for the heart of this people has grown fat,"<sup>19</sup> and the

11. Literally, "for one comparing spiritual matters with spiritual matters": *spiritalibus spiritalia comparantem*. Referring to 1 Cor 2.13. For this exegetical approach in Origen's works, see also *Hom in Gn* 2.6 and *Hom in Gn* 6.3.

12. "refused": *recusavit*, which can also mean "was reluctant, unwilling."

13. "to resist": *repugnare*, which can imply active opposition.

14. Referring to Ex 7.22, specifically to the Pharaoh's magicians who performed acts to counter the miracles God had Moses accomplish before the Pharaoh.

15. Ex 4.13b.

16. Is 6.8b.

17. "undesirable": *inoptata*; and in the following sentence, *inoptabile*. Both of these adjectives carry the additional meaning of "unpleasant."

18. Note the different phrasing for this portion of Is 6.9 between this homily (in an early passage, *videntes cernitis et non videbitis*, "seeing you will perceive and not see"; then afterwards throughout the rest of the homily, *videntes videbitis et non sciitis*, "seeing you will see and not know"), on the one hand, and, on the other, *Hom in Is* 9 (*cernentes adspicietis et non videbitis*, "seeing you will look and not see")—see *Hom in Is* 9, note 17.

19. Is 6.9-10; "has grown fat": *incrassatum est*.

rest? Perhaps therefore—if yet it is helpful to speak boldly—he [Isaiah] obtained a reward for hastiness<sup>20</sup> and audacity, since he is commanded to say those things that he did not want to prophesy.<sup>21</sup> Yet, since we have compared Isaiah and Moses, let us also make another most closely related comparison, Isaiah and Jonah. He [Jonah] is sent to announce the destruction<sup>22</sup> of Nineveh after three days,<sup>23</sup> and he is reluctant to set out, not wanting [to be] the cause of calamities to the city.<sup>24</sup> But that one [Isaiah], not waiting for what he would be commanded to tell, says: “Here I am, send me.”<sup>25</sup>

It is good not to hasten toward those posts that are from God, offices of honor and chief positions and ministerial<sup>26</sup> posts in the Church.<sup>27</sup> If only we would imitate Moses and say with him: “Provide another whom you may send.”<sup>28</sup> For he who wants to be saved does not come in order to rule over the Church, even if he has charge, but he comes in order to serve, if it is proper to speak also from the Gospel: “Indeed, the leaders of the people rule over them, and those who have power over them are called the magistrates, yet it will not be like this for you.”<sup>29</sup> “For the leaders [of the Church] do not have absolute rule over you, but whoever from among you wants to be greater, he will be the least of all; whoever wants to be first, he will be the last of all.”<sup>30</sup>

20. “for [*lit.*, of] hastiness”: *temeritatis*, which also means “rashness.”

21. Perhaps Origen is being sarcastic here, suggesting that his blind overzealousness was met with a very unpleasant task of reporting things to a people who did not want to hear them.

22. “destruction”: *eversionem*.

23. Referring to Jon 3.3.

24. Referring to Jon 1.1–3.

25. Is 6.8b.

26. “ministerial posts”: *ministeria*. *Ministerium* also means “the office of a preacher.”

27. Origen takes the opportunity to warn here that church leaders should approach their duties with humility. This is perhaps one instance that suggests the presence of church leaders and/or spiritually mature persons within Origen’s homiletic audience, or, at least, reveals that he had these leaders and teachers in mind when he preached the transcribed homilies, foreseeing that church leaders and teachers would study his words later in written form.

28. Ex 4.13.

29. Lk 22.25–26a.

30. Mk 9.34–35; Mt 19.30; Lk 22.26.

Accordingly, he who is called to the office of the bishop is not called to rulership but to service to the whole Church.

If you want to believe from the Scriptures that in the Church he who leads is the servant to all,<sup>31</sup> may the Savior and Lord himself persuade you: to such a degree did he make himself behave in this way among the disciples, not as one reclining at table but as one serving.<sup>32</sup> For after he laid aside his garments, taking a linen cloth, he girded himself, and, putting water in a basin, he began to wash the feet of the disciples and to wipe them clean with the linen cloth with which he was girded.<sup>33</sup> And teaching that it is necessary for such leaders to be as servants, he says, "You call me Master<sup>34</sup> and Lord, and you speak well, for I am. Therefore, if I, Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet."<sup>35</sup> Therefore, the leader of the Church is called to service,<sup>36</sup> so that, on account of that service, he may be able to go to the heavenly throne, just as it is written: "You will be seated upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."<sup>37</sup> Indeed, hear also Paul, a man so celebrated,<sup>38</sup> saying that he was the servant of all those believing: "For I am the least of the apostles, who is not worthy to be called 'Apostle,' since I persecuted<sup>39</sup> the Church of God."<sup>40</sup> Again, if this does not seem to prove his servitude, but only his humility, hear him saying: "We have become infants in the midst of you, just as a nurse fosters her children, though we could be authoritative as apostles of Christ."<sup>41</sup>

31. Referring to Mk 9.35.

32. Lk 22.27.

33. Jn 13.4-5. See also *Hom in Is* 5.2, as well as *Hom in Jgs* 8.5.

34. "Master": *magister*, which connotes a position of authority and may also point to the office of a teacher.

35. Jn 13.13-14. See also *Hom in Jgs* 8.5.

36. Both occurrences of "service" in this sentence are forms of the noun *servitūs*, which carries the meaning of humble service.

37. Mt 19.28. The fuller verse: "Jesus said to them [the disciples], 'Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel'" (RSV).

38. "celebrated": *praeclarum*.

39. "I persecuted": *persecutus sum* (perfect tense of the verb *persequor*).

40. 1 Cor 15.9.

41. 1 Thes 2.6-7. Here "authoritative" renders *gravis*, which can also be

Therefore, it is useful for us to be imitators of the humble words and deeds of the Lord himself and of his apostles and to do what was done by Moses, so that, although someone is called to leadership, he may say: "Provide another whom you may send."<sup>42</sup> He [Moses] says to God: "I have not been worthy before yesterday and the day before yesterday; I am feeble<sup>43</sup> of voice and slow of tongue."<sup>44</sup> And since he humbly said to God: "I am feeble of voice and slow of tongue," he hears from God, "Who gave to man a mouth, and who made a man deaf and mute, seeing and blind? Is it not I, the Lord God?"<sup>45</sup> Believe in God and consecrate yourself to him. Even if you are of a thin<sup>46</sup> voice and slow tongue, surrender yourself to the Word<sup>47</sup> of God. Afterwards you will say, "I opened my mouth and drew breath."<sup>48</sup> Indeed, these things [have been considered] because of what Isaiah says: "Here I am, send me."<sup>49</sup>

2. Yet let us also act with him [Isaiah] in part. For although he had already received grace from God, he did not want to receive it in vain<sup>50</sup> but to use it for necessary things. Seeing the Seraphim, seeing the Lord of Hosts sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, he said, "O, wretched am I, since I have been stung,<sup>51</sup> because, although I am a man and I have unclean lips,

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translated "burdensome," "oppressive," "unpleasant," or "weighty." The suggestion seems to be that they could have been demanding because of their high status but were not, knowing that God appointed them to serve rather than to rule over the Church.

42. Ex 4.13.

43. "feeble": *exilis*. *Exilis* can also mean "small," "thin," "slender," "poor," "feeble," or "wretched."

44. Ex 4.10.

45. Ex 4.11.

46. "thin": *subtilis*. *Subtilis* can also mean "thin," "slender," "delicate," or "fine," as well as "plain," or "simple." Note the less negative connotation than with *exilis* used above (see note 43). For Origen's use of this concept of "thin," see also *Hom in Is* 9, note 28.

47. "Word": *sermoni*.

48. Ps 118 (119).131.

49. Is 6.8b.

50. Referring to 2 Cor 6.1.

51. "I have been stung": *compunctus sum*, which can also refer to the sting of conscience, remorse. *Compunctus sum* is a form of the verb *compungo*, which means "prick, puncture severely, sting," and more specifically, "to be goaded by

I live in the midst of people also having unclean lips, and I have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts, with my eyes."<sup>52</sup> By saying this and making himself wretched, he merits help by God accepting his humility. What is that help? He says, "One of the Seraphim was sent to me, and he had a burning coal in shears"<sup>53</sup> which he had brought from the altar, and he touched my lips and said: 'Behold, I have taken away your iniquities and cleansed<sup>54</sup> your sins all around.'<sup>55</sup> He obtained the benefit, having been made clean and receiving the remission of sins. When he had heard: "Whom shall I send to this people, and who will go for us?"<sup>56</sup> he dared to say, "Here I am, send me," not on account of a prior conscience, but because he had heard, "Behold, I have taken away your iniquities."<sup>57</sup> Therefore, because holy ones<sup>58</sup> are stung and the inquiry concerns [the comparison] between Moses and Isaiah, let us ask pardon for Moses and also for Isaiah, giving to both of them their share from the Scriptures. Moses did not receive remission of sins so that he would say, as if he were already conscious that he had been cleansed, "Send me." For he says, "Provide another whom you may send."<sup>59</sup> To be sure, he had on [his] conscience the slaying of the Egyptian.<sup>60</sup> Yet perhaps as a man he knew himself also to have certain other sins and so, on that account, refuses. Yet that one [Isaiah] re-

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the stings of conscience, to feel remorse." See also *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 75, and *Hom in Is* 4.3-4.

52. Is 6.5.

53. For the reason why *forfex* is translated as "shears" rather than "tongs," see *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 84.

54. "I have ... cleansed your sins all around": *peccata tua circumfurgavi*. The verb *circumpurgare* means "to cleanse or purify around," indicating a thorough cleaning.

55. Is 6.6-7. On *iniquitas*, see *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 78. Also see note 195 below.

56. Note that in Is 6.8, when the Lord speaks, "Who will go for us?" the "for us" (*nobis*) has no corresponding word in the Septuagint but is in the *Vulgata*. Did Jerome add the word *nobis* to the transcript of Origen's homily here (and perhaps to the *Vulgata* as well)? "For us" implies that the Lord on the throne in Is 6 speaks inclusively of himself and the two Seraphim, which could support a Nicene understanding of the Trinity.

57. Is 6.7b.

58. "holy ones": *sancti*.

59. Ex 4.13.

60. Referring to Ex 2.12.

quests [to perform] the functions of a minister, not as one who is righteous<sup>61</sup> by nature, but as one who has obtained grace. If Moses also had perceived a similar grace and had heard, "Behold, I have taken away your iniquities," and this, "I have purified your sins all around,"<sup>62</sup> perhaps he never would have said, "Provide another whom you may send."<sup>63</sup> Therefore, both Moses refusing and Isaiah saying, "Here I am, send me,"<sup>64</sup> possess something of reason.

3. But let us see also these things that the Lord commanded to be said to the people [by Isaiah]: "Go and say to the people: 'You will hear with your ear and not understand, and, seeing, you will perceive'<sup>65</sup> and will not see."<sup>66</sup> For the heart of this people has grown fat, and with ears they have heard heavily<sup>67</sup> and have shut their eyes, lest, when they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be changed,<sup>68</sup> I also may heal them."<sup>69</sup> Knowing the twofold way of hearing words<sup>70</sup> and recognizing the double nature of words, that is, some of them bodily<sup>71</sup> and some spiritual, he [Isaiah] says to the people, prophesying about these things that were going to happen at the coming of Christ, that there would be a time when they would hear and not understand these things, since, when they would hear my Lord Jesus Christ, they would hear only the sound<sup>72</sup> of the words,<sup>73</sup> not the meaning.<sup>74</sup> And this is shown from the fact that he [Jesus] was speaking to the peo-

61. "righteous": *iustus*.

62. Is 6.7. "I have purified . . . all around": *circummundavi*; see note 54 above.

63. Ex 4.13.

64. Is 6.8b.

65. "you will perceive": *cernetis*.

66. See note 18 above.

67. "heavily": *graviter*.

68. "they . . . be changed": *convertantur*. *Convertere* means "to turn, change direction." See note 2 above.

69. Is 6.9–10.

70. "words": *sermonum*.

71. "bodily": *corporale*.

72. "sound": *vocem*.

73. "words": *dictorum*.

74. "meaning": *sensum*. For comparison, see Origen's discussion of "empty words" in *Hom in Is* 7.3.

ple outside in parables, but he explained<sup>75</sup> these [parables] to the disciples in secret.<sup>76</sup> Yet he [Isaiah] prophesies what is coming to pass: “You will hear with your ear and not understand.”<sup>77</sup> In turn, because this was prophesied to the people [by Isaiah] about the coming of the Lord, the Savior himself says, “Isaiah has prophesied well about you, saying: ‘You will hear with your ear and not understand.’”<sup>78</sup> Therefore, let us concede that the people listening<sup>79</sup> to the words<sup>80</sup> of the Lord could not know what things were said.

Yet let us see what this is which follows: “And seeing, you will see and not know.”<sup>81</sup> If someone saw these things that the Savior was doing, he could not, upon seeing, understand immediately *why* they were done. Let us take as an example: he washed the feet of the disciples<sup>82</sup> and they saw well indeed how the master<sup>83</sup> washed the feet for the disciples, yet others who were present also saw, but only *what* was done, not also *why* it was done. To be sure, it was a likeness to the washing of the feet by which the Word of God<sup>84</sup> washed the feet of the disciples.<sup>85</sup> For that reason, the Savior speaks to Peter, who is refusing and saying, “You will not wash my feet”;<sup>86</sup> and what does he [Jesus] say [in response to Peter]? “What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand afterwards.”<sup>87</sup> “Then, what are you doing now?” Peter says; “I see you washing our feet, and, with the basin in place [and] a linen cloth girded about you, you are both serving

75. “he explained”: *dissolvebat*, from *dissolvo*, which suggests the meaning to “explain a difficulty.”

76. Referring to Mk 4.11–12 and Mt 13.10–15.

77. Is 6.9.

78. Mt 13.14, quoting Is 6.9–10. See also Mt 15.7, quoting Is 29.13.

79. “listening”: *auscultans*, a verb that connotes obedient listening.

80. “words”: *sermones*.

81. Is 6.9. See note 18 above.

82. Jn 13.5.

83. *Magister* again means “master” or “teacher.”

84. “Word of God”: *verbum Dei*.

85. As explained below, by this other washing, of which the physical washing is a likeness, Origen is referring to a spiritual washing of the feet with Scripture, a washing away of sins. See also *Hom in Jgs* 8.5.

86. Jn 13.8.

87. Jn 13.7.



us and wiping off our feet.”<sup>88</sup> Because, however, this was not the state of affairs—but in fact the Savior, uncovered, puts spiritual water in the basin according to the Scriptures and washes the feet of the disciples, so that, when they were clean, they might ascend to the one saying, “I am the way,”<sup>89</sup> and not be filled with the dust that he wanted to shake off over the unworthy ones and those not accepting peace and not worthy of those things that were being said<sup>90</sup>—and because this was what was being signified, for that reason he says, “What I am doing, you do not understand now, but you will understand afterwards.”<sup>91</sup> Yet this was what was said in the remainder of the passage: “You call me Master<sup>92</sup> and Lord, and you speak well; for I am. Therefore, if I, Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also should wash [one another’s] feet in turn.”<sup>93</sup> Therefore, is he saying this so that the bishop, putting water in a basin and stripped of his garments and girded with a linen cloth, may wash my feet, by my stretching them out, since he says, “You should wash your [one another’s] feet in turn”?<sup>94</sup> If this is what is said, no one among us will observe the command; for no one—deacon or presbyter or bishop—taking the linen cloth, has washed the feet for everyone<sup>95</sup> coming to him. But if you understand these things that are written, truly blessed are the bishops, who, serving the Church, put the water of the Scriptures into the basin of the soul,<sup>96</sup> which is according to the Scriptures, and they try to wash and remove and fling off the dirt from the feet of the disciples.

88. Referring to Jn 13.4–5.

89. Jn 14.6.

90. Referring to Mt 10.13–14.

91. Jn 13.7.

92. “Master”: *magistrum*.

93. Jn 13.13–14.

94. Referring to Jn 13.4–5 and 13–14.

95. *Quicumque* means “whoever” or “whatever” and “each,” “every,” “all,” but can also mean “any whatever.” While Origen could mean that the deacons, presbyters, and bishops never wash the feet of anyone, the Latin term here more often means “everyone,” suggesting, rather, that they do not always wash the feet of people who come to them, though they may do it sometimes, or, especially, some of the more humble leaders may do it some of the time. For the idea of a church leader washing the souls of his audience with the cleansing water of Scripture, see also *Hom in Jgs* 8.4–5.

96. “of the soul”: *animae*.

And so, the bishops observe<sup>97</sup> the command, imitating Jesus; so also the presbyters.

And, oh, that I might now take the water that can wash the feet of your<sup>98</sup> soul,<sup>99</sup> so that each one of you may say, when he has been washed, “I have washed my feet, how will I stain them?”<sup>100</sup> For the bride says this in the Song of Songs, not indicating bodily<sup>101</sup> feet washed, but non-stumbling feet, about which Solomon says, “Yet may your foot not stumble,”<sup>102</sup> [and] about which also it is written in the Psalms, “Yet my feet were almost shaken.”<sup>103</sup> But indeed even some widows are appointed in the churches; it says, “if she has washed the feet of the saints.”<sup>104</sup> Yet, if you want to hear more clearly how the widow washes the feet of the saints, listen to Paul in another passage appointing widows and saying, “They teach well so that they may form chaste<sup>105</sup> young maidens,”<sup>106</sup> washing away the dirt from the feet of the young girls. And those widows are worthy of ecclesiastical honor, whosoever wash the feet of the saints with the word of spiritual doctrine,<sup>107</sup> but indeed not the feet of male saints, but rather the feet of women saints, for [Paul states], “I do not permit a woman to teach or rule over a man.”<sup>108</sup> He [Paul] wants women to teach

97. “observe”: *custodiunt*. The use of this verb suggests that they take seriously their call to be stewards of Christ’s example here rather than simply obey an order.

98. *Vestrae* (“your”) is plural, indicating that Origen is addressing his audience specifically here.

99. “of . . . soul”: *animae*. Note that Origen treats Jesus’s washing of the disciples’ feet in a spiritual way in *Hom in Jgs* 8.5 as well.

100. Song 5.3b.

101. “bodily”: *corporeos*.

102. Prv 3.23.

103. Ps 72 (73).2.

104. 1 Tm 5.10b. Origen also addresses women washing the feet of saints in *Comm in Jn* 32.131–32. Note that the term *sanctorum* here is translated as “saints” while in the other homilies in this volume the same term is translated “holy ones.” “Saint” is used here to reflect the Scriptural passage at hand. Otherwise, it is the translator’s view that “holy ones” is a purer rendition of Origen’s meaning, without the connotations that “saints” holds in English.

105. “chaste”: *pudicus*. *Pudicus* means “virtuous” or “pure or undefiled.”

106. Ti 2.3–5.

107. “word of spiritual doctrine”: *sermone spiritalis doctrinae*.

108. Referring to 1 Tm 2.12. Note that Origen would have assumed Paul wrote the letters to Timothy and Titus and so is referring here to Paul.

well so that they may exhort not young men to chastity,<sup>109</sup> but young maidens—indeed, it is improper that a woman be made the teacher of a man—so that they may exhort young maidens to chastity and to love their husbands and children.<sup>110</sup>

Therefore, let us learn to wash the feet of the disciples.<sup>111</sup> For this reason, these things have been said: “Seeing, you will see and not understand.”<sup>112</sup> Since, if something was being done by the Savior, it was seen according to the body [and] not according to an idea by those indeed who did not understand, but it was seen indeed according to the eyes [and] yet also according to the intellect<sup>113</sup> by those who had understanding, so that this which was said, “Seeing, you will see and not understand,”<sup>114</sup> would not be fulfilled with respect to those blessedly seeing, but with respect to sinners. And yet, when seeing, let us pray to see how all things of the Gospels were done in a double way according to the body when our Savior descended to earth; for truly each thing that was done in the body was a likeness and type of future things.<sup>115</sup> Just as I do not know who, blind from birth, regained sight,<sup>116</sup> yet truly the people of the Gentiles were blind from birth,<sup>117</sup> to whom the Savior restored sight, smearing<sup>118</sup> their eyes with his saliva and sending [them] to Siloam, “which translates [as] ‘sent.’”<sup>119</sup> Indeed, he sent those ones, whom he anointed with the Spirit so that they would believe, to Siloam, that is, to the apostles and teachers, on account of which it is written of Siloam that “it translates [as] ‘sent.’” And howsoever

109. “chastity”: *castitas*, which can be a synonym of *pudicitia*. See note 105 above.

110. Referring to Ti 2.3–5.

111. Referring to Jn 13.5. See *Hom in Jgs* 8 for Origen’s explanation of the church leader’s spiritual washing of feet.

112. Is 6.9.

113. “according to the intellect”: *iuxta intellectum*.

114. Is 6.9.

115. “a likeness and type of future things”: *similitudo erat et typus futurorum*.

116. Referring to Jn 9.1–11.

117. Jn 9.1–7. Note that Origen is using the blind man in the passage as a type of the Gentile people, and so he proceeds to discuss the Gentile people rather than the individual man healed by Jesus.

118. “smearing”: *unguens*. *Ungo* or *unguo* also means “to anoint.”

119. Jn 9.7.

often we begin to be visited by Jesus so that we may receive the eyes of the soul, we are sent to Siloam, that is, “sent.” And, therefore, let each one of us, when he reads these things that have happened in the Gospels, pray, lest also in him it be fulfilled: “Seeing, you will see and not understand.”<sup>120</sup>

4. Yet, if, as the simpler ones estimate, those things that were done [were] not [done] for us<sup>121</sup> but merely happened and were not examples of another thing, let them explain how this which is said has meaning:<sup>122</sup> “Seeing, you will see and not understand.”<sup>123</sup> For if these things that were being seen did not have some sacred meaning<sup>124</sup> so that they would be looked at spiritually<sup>125</sup> even with fleshly eyes,<sup>126</sup> he never would have said, “Seeing, you will see and not understand.”<sup>127</sup> Yet, in order to demonstrate these things, we will mention the testimony of another writing from the Gospel, which is an untruth according to those who follow only the letter.<sup>128</sup> Our Savior and Lord says to the disciples in the Gospel according to John: “If you would believe, not only will you do what I do, but you will do even greater works than these.”<sup>129</sup> Therefore, let us see if the disciples did some greater works. What is greater than to raise<sup>130</sup> the dead?<sup>131</sup> Who (I do not say of us but of the apostles) raised<sup>132</sup> the dead? History reports that Paul raised Eutychus from the dead<sup>133</sup> and Peter [raised] Tabitha, which means Dorcas.<sup>134</sup> Now, you

120. Is 6.9.

121. Referring to 1 Cor 9.10.

122. “meaning”: *sensum*.

123. Is 6.9.

124. “sacred meaning”: *sensum sacratum*.

125. “they would be looked at spiritually”: *spiritaliter inspicerentur*. The verb *inspicio* can mean “look into” or “examine.” It is translated here as “look at” since the context of the passage indicates seeing spiritually with physical eyes.

126. “with fleshly eyes”: *cum carnalibus oculis*.

127. Is 6.9.

128. Origen is referring to the Jewish people here.

129. Jn 14.12. See also *C Cels* 2.48.

130. “to raise”: *resuscitare*.

131. Referring to Jn 5.21.

132. “raised”: *suscitavit*.

133. Referring to Acts 20.9–12.

134. Referring to Acts 9.36–41. Tabitha is Aramaic, and its Greek equivalent is Dorcas, which means “gazelle” or “antelope.”

can find these and other such works, but where are the greater works? The Savior also made the blind to see again,<sup>135</sup> and, what is greater, [he made] those [to see] who had been born in this way [blind].<sup>136</sup> Let them show what persons blind from the womb they saw cured at the hands of the apostles. And the one who searches can find from the Gospels countless other works, greater than these, that neither the apostles nor their successors did. Still, the word of Scripture<sup>137</sup> has told some such thing: You all will do greater [works] than these bodily [works]<sup>138</sup> that I have done. I have made people rise from the dead in a bodily way,<sup>139</sup> but you will make people rise from the dead in a spiritual way.<sup>140</sup> I have poured onto the blind this sensible light,<sup>141</sup> but you will give spiritual light<sup>142</sup> to those who do not see. Yet, continuously to this day, I see these signs being done by the most faithful disciples of Jesus that are greater than the signs that Jesus did in connection with bodily things.<sup>143</sup> Or do not the blind now see and the lame walk and the leprous become clean and the rest be done,<sup>144</sup> if the one who yesterday had been made blind when he approached an idol as if to God, today may call upon the living God, leaving behind former things? Or does not the one who yesterday was lame on account of sin, now, taught according to the doctrine of the disciples, walk with a steady foot along the true path? And does not the one who yesterday had a hand withered and useless for doing good,<sup>145</sup> today, receiving a hand, have one now living? If you saw someone unclean and having leprosy in his soul<sup>146</sup> suddenly repent, stung<sup>147</sup> by the word of

135. Referring to Mt 9.27–30.

136. Referring to Jn 9.1–7.

137. “word of Scripture”: *sermo Scripturae*.

138. “bodily [works]”: *corporalibus*.

139. “in a bodily way”: *corporaliter*.

140. “in a spiritual way”: *spiritualiter*.

141. “this sensible light”: *sensibile hoc lumen*.

142. “spiritual light”: *spiritalem lucem*.

143. “bodily things”: *corporalibus*.

144. Referring to Lk 7.22.

145. Referring to Lk 6.6–10.

146. “soul”: *anima*.

147. Referring to Is 6.5. For “stung” see also *Hom in Is* 1.4 and 4.3.

doctrine, let it not shame you to say that it is greater for this leprous one to have been cleansed spiritually<sup>148</sup> than for someone to have been cleansed in the flesh.<sup>149</sup> And indeed this discourse has stretched out at full length largely because I have been desiring to give understanding to what this is that has been said: "And seeing, you will see and not understand."<sup>150</sup>

5. Now, what is the reason for the one hearing not to understand and the one seeing not to see? It says, "The heart of this people has grown fat."<sup>151</sup> If indeed it is necessary to understand also this, from its source, bodily<sup>152</sup> and spiritual fatness are not the same, nor are bodily<sup>153</sup> and spiritual thinness the same. For indeed what has become fat in the body<sup>154</sup> is made so in the flesh,<sup>155</sup> and it does no harm to me if the heart of flesh<sup>156</sup> is made fat, nor is it a benefit if it [my heart of flesh] is made thin from inactivity<sup>157</sup> or from whatever cause. Yet I reckon that such a heart of flesh<sup>158</sup> occurs in those who are restrained by fear. For even as all people waste away from disease, so they say also that thickness and whatever fat is around their heart are diminished. Therefore, what harm is it to me if my bodily heart<sup>159</sup> becomes fat? Indeed, let my heart also be thinned; what benefit is there to me from that? But the chief part of our soul is named with the so-called designation "bodily heart,"<sup>160</sup> as is shown from this which is said in the Gospel, "Blessed are the clean in heart";<sup>161</sup> for they are not clean in heart who have neither blood nor any-

148. "spiritually": *spiritaliter*.

149. "in the flesh": *carnaliter*.

150. Is 6.9.

151. Is 6.10a. See also *Hom in Is* 9.

152. "bodily": *corporalis*.

153. "bodily": *corporalis*.

154. "in the body": *corporaliter*.

155. "in the flesh": *in carne*.

156. "heart of flesh": *cor carneum*.

157. "from inactivity": *a languore*.

158. "heart of flesh": *cor carneum*.

159. "bodily heart": *corporeale cor*.

160. "bodily heart": *corporeo corde*.

161. Mt 5.8; "clean": *mundo* (from *mundus*). English translations of Mt 5.8 use "pure," but here, and throughout the explanatory prose that follows, we employ "clean," as a truer translation of *mundus*, specifically within the context of Origen's explanation.

thing whatever of bodily material<sup>162</sup> on the inside. But it was said, “Blessed are the clean in heart” for the reason that it is the blessed who have a clean heart, referring to the chief part of the soul, [which is] named according to “heart.” Since, therefore, the chief part of our soul, which is said to be in the bodily heart,<sup>163</sup> is either clean or unclean, and our heart is indeed unclean when evil thoughts go out from it—murders, adulteries, thefts, false testimony, blasphemies<sup>164</sup>—yet clean, when holy thoughts<sup>165</sup> and divine understandings<sup>166</sup> and a pure mind<sup>167</sup> [go out from it], for this reason, it is necessary to observe that the one who is saved is indeed said to be thinned by his thin and holy Spirit,<sup>168</sup> yet the one who sins [is indeed said] to be fattened and suffocated by his ill will. For it is said of the Holy Spirit, who is according to Wisdom, that he is “only-begotten, manifold, thin, movable,”<sup>169</sup> and that the righteous<sup>170</sup> one may receive this subtle Spirit;<sup>171</sup> for this Spirit differs from “all understanding, pure, [and] subtle spirits.”<sup>172</sup> Therefore, the chief part of the heart is indeed thin<sup>173</sup> when spiritual, yet fat when it has grown thick from the vice of the bodily material,<sup>174</sup> full of bodily thoughts<sup>175</sup> that are blameworthy. Thus it is said, “The heart of this people has grown fat.”<sup>176</sup> Understand [that] the heart has

162. “bodily material”: *materiae corporalis*.

163. “bodily heart”: *corde corporeo*.

164. Referring to Mt 15.19. See also Gal 5.19–21.

165. “holy thoughts”: *cogitationes sanctae*.

166. “divine understandings”: *intellectus divini*.

167. “pure mind”: *mens pura*.

168. For the notion of the “thin” Holy Spirit see the following sentences in text relating to Wis 7.22–23.

169. Wis 7.21–24: “... *unigenitus, multifarius, tenuis, mobilis* ...” “Only-begotten” is *unigenitus*, which also means “only.” “Manifold” is *multifarius*, which also means “various,” “multifarious.” “Thin” is *tenuis*, which can imply weakness, delicacy, or inferiority. “Free-moving” is *mobilis*.

170. “righteous”: *iustus*.

171. Referring to Wis 7.23b. “Subtle Spirit”: *subtilem spiritum*, which can connote refinement.

172. Again, referring to Wis 7.23b.

173. “thin”: *tenuis*.

174. “from the vice of the bodily material”: *ex corporalis materiae vitio*.

175. “bodily thoughts”: *cogitationibus corporalibus*.

176. Is 6.10a.

grown fat for this reason, that there is nothing in it except human and fleshly cares;<sup>177</sup> for the way in which the material of the body<sup>178</sup> is fat, in the same way also are bodily understandings and thoughts.<sup>179</sup>

For this reason two things have been proposed: the heart grows fat from worldly cares, and it becomes thin from spiritual care. When someone thinks about these things that are of the Lord, he is casting out the fat from the heart, also knowing that if his heart were to grow fat, it would neither receive the words of God<sup>180</sup> nor see the mystery of salvation.<sup>181</sup> Let us get rid of the fat and receive that which is called thinness, so that we also may assert in the same manner as the prophet, "My soul thirsted for you, as in many ways my flesh<sup>182</sup> thirsted for you in a land deserted, trackless, and without water, and in this way I have appeared to you in the holy place,"<sup>183</sup> not as if I were naturally holy, but, if the prudence<sup>184</sup> of the flesh<sup>185</sup> decays and if the prudence of the flesh<sup>186</sup> has disappeared, then I will appear to you in the holy place. These things are in explanation of this which was said, "For the heart of this people has grown fat."<sup>187</sup>

6. Yet it follows, "And with their ears they have heard heavily."<sup>188</sup> There is no harm to me if I hear heavily in the bodily sense,<sup>189</sup> and that does not become a reason for me not to hear the words of God.<sup>190</sup> For just as bodily blindness<sup>191</sup> does no harm

177. "human and fleshly cares": *humanas et carneas sollicitudines*.

178. "material of the body": *materia corporis*.

179. "bodily understandings and thoughts": *corporei intellectus et cogitationes*.

180. "words of God": *sermones Dei*.

181. "mystery of salvation": *salutis sacramentum*.

182. "my flesh": *caro mea*.

183. Ps 62 (63).1–2.

184. "prudence": *prudencia*, which suggests intelligence or wisdom and can also mean "a foreseeing," "practical, good sense," or "discernment."

185. "flesh": *carnis*.

186. "flesh": *carnis*.

187. Is 6.10a. For the notion that sin makes the heart fat and that the Holy Spirit is thin, see also *Hom in Nm* 17.6.1–2.

188. Is 6.10a; "heavily": *graviter*. See also *Hom in Is* 9.

189. "in the bodily sense": *corporaliter*.

190. "words of God": *sermones Dei*.

191. "bodily blindness": *caecitas corporalis*.



to me if my soul has not been made blind, so in the same way neither lightness nor heaviness<sup>192</sup> of bodily hearing<sup>193</sup> hinders me. Yet there is a certain heaviness of hearing that may do harm to the soul of a man. What is that heaviness that is in the soul's hearing? According to the Scriptures, sin is heavy. For this reason, someone feeling his sins says, "Like a heavy burden they weighed down on me."<sup>194</sup> And because iniquity<sup>195</sup> is heavy, for this reason it sits on a talent<sup>196</sup> of lead, as it is written in Zechariah.<sup>197</sup> Yet the Egyptians "were submerged like lead in violent water,"<sup>198</sup> not because they possessed heavy bodies, but because their souls were made heavier by a talent of lead upon which iniquity<sup>199</sup> was sitting, and, for this reason, "they were submerged like lead in violent water."<sup>200</sup> Therefore, the heaviness of hearing occurs from sin, and the lightness occurs from righteousness.<sup>201</sup>

What is that which makes one hear the thing heard not heavily, but lightly? The wings<sup>202</sup> of the Word,<sup>203</sup> the wings<sup>204</sup> of virtue;

192. "heaviness": *gravitudo*, which specifically means "a cold in the head." Note that by using *gravitudo* rather than *gravitas* for "heaviness" here, Jerome is arguably trying to capture Origen's idea that the bodily hearing when heavy is muddled and unclear or disorienting as a head is with a cold.

193. "bodily hearing": *auditionis corporalis*.

194. Ps 37.5b (38.4b).

195. *Iniquitas* (from *iniquus*), which can also mean "unequalness" or "unevenness." For Origen's understanding that "evenness" is "equity of Spirit" and the same as the virtues, which are, in turn, Christ, see *Comm Cant* 1.5, quoting Song 1.4 ("equity has loved you"), and an analysis of it in Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture*, 224–31. See also *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 78, as well as other uses of this term within the text of these homilies at 4.6, note 83; 5.3, note 62; and 6.2, note 55, above (as well as 6.2, notes 57 and 62; and 6.6, note 199; and 6.7, note 230), and 8.1, note 17.

196. *Talentum* also means "weight" and refers to "a Grecian weight" as in "sum of money."

197. Referring to Zec 5.7–8. See also *Hom in Ex* 4.8 and 6.4 and *C Cels* 6.26.

198. Ex 15.10.

199. "iniquity": *iniquitas*.

200. See also *Hom in Ex* 6.4.

201. "righteousness": *iustitia*.

202. "wings": *pennae*. *Penna* means "wing," but also can mean "feather" or even "a flying" or "flight."

203. "of the Word": *verbi*.

204. "wings": *pennae*.

for indeed the wings<sup>205</sup> of the Word<sup>206</sup> add much of lightness.<sup>207</sup> “Who will give me wings<sup>208</sup> as of a dove, and I will find rest?”<sup>209</sup> The prophet says this, not praying that he receive the bodily wings<sup>210</sup> of a dove, but the wings<sup>211</sup> of the dove, [meaning] of the Holy Spirit.<sup>212</sup> Moreover, again, Solomon says of the rich man: “Yet he prepares for himself wings<sup>213</sup> like an eagle, and he has returned to the house of him who presides over him.”<sup>214</sup> Therefore, if we receive wings,<sup>215</sup> we will hear lightly; but if we sin and are careless with respect to the wings<sup>216</sup> and our feathers<sup>217</sup> fall off, we will become heavy and we will hear heavily. Therefore, the sinners have heard heavily with their ears. Indeed, all the Jews, who at that time heard the Savior, heard him heavily, and for that reason they did not believe. Yet, up to today, all hearing the Scriptures have not heard the spiritual word,<sup>218</sup> which is light, but the letter, which is heavy and kills;<sup>219</sup> hence, they hear heavily. And so, Scripture is heard in two ways. Regarding the one who does not understand what things are said, it is heard heavily, but, regarding the one who understands it [Scripture], not only is it not heard heavily, but rather [it is heard] sharply, and that is how someone becomes an understanding hearer.

7. And yet another thing is prophesied about the people of the Jews and about us all, if we have sinned. “And they have

205. “wings”: *pennae*.

206. “of the Word”: *verbi*.

207. Note that for Origen, the Word, or Christ, is each of the virtues and all of the virtues together. See *Comm Cant* 1.5 and Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture*, 230–31.

208. “wings”: *pennas*.

209. Ps 54.7 (55.6). LXX has for 7b: “and I shall fly away,” which is not here in Origen.

210. “wings”: *pennas*.

211. “wings”: *pennas*.

212. For Origen’s association of the dove to the Holy Spirit, see also *Hom in Cant* 2.12.

213. “wings”: *pennas*.

214. Prv 23.5.

215. “wings”: *pennas*.

216. “wings”: *alas*.

217. “wings”: *pennae*.

218. “spiritual word”: *sermonem spiritalem*.

219. Referring to 2 Cor 3.6. See also *Hom in Lv* 1.1.

closed their eyes, lest at any time they might see with [their] eyes and hear with [their] ears and understand with [their] heart.”<sup>220</sup> Of those who do not see, some are blind and on account of blindness do not see; some are in darkness and for that reason do not see; yet others are neither in darkness nor are they blind, but because they close [their] eyes, they do not see. And the Divine Scripture<sup>221</sup> knows these differences which concern the chief part of our heart; for the Savior says “to those who are in bonds, ‘Go forth!’ and to those who are in darkness, ‘Let it be revealed to them,’”<sup>222</sup> and “to those sitting in the region and shadow of death, ‘Light has risen over them.’”<sup>223</sup> Those ones did not see for the reason that they were in darkness, until the light rose over them. “O deaf ones, hear, and, O blind ones, see!”<sup>224</sup> For this reason, those ones did not see before, because they were naturally blind. But all those who are outside these categories are much worse when compared to those who are blind and those who are in darkness, for they are those who do not see because they have willingly closed their eyes. Now, this is so, as we have declared, for the Savior will be a witness for me, saying, “If you were blind, you would not have sin, yet now you say, ‘We see,’ so your sin remains.”<sup>225</sup> And he says rightly, “You say, ‘We see’”; for truly they say that they see and have the ability to see, but, by closing their eyes, they do not see. And if at any time you were to see a soul naturally gifted at understanding, and swift and eager, not meditating on the eloquent words of God,<sup>226</sup> know that that soul does not see these things that are contained in the Scriptures not because of blindness and not because he is in darkness but because he closes his eyes. Therefore, if you were to hear Scripture saying to these ones who close their eyes: “Open your eyes and see straight ahead,”<sup>227</sup> “open your eyes” in regard to that thing for which you had closed

220. Is 6.10.

221. “Divine Scripture”: *Scriptura divina*.

222. Is 49.9.

223. Is 9.2; Mt 4.16.

224. Is 42.18.

225. Jn 9.41.

226. “eloquent words of God”: *eloquia Dei*.

227. Prv 4.25, and also referring to Baruch 2.17. “See straight” is *recta vide*.

them; then you will be able to see straight ahead and to look closely at<sup>228</sup> the light of truth.

And indeed, he accuses them of whom it is asked why they close their eyes lest they see, yet he does not also say that it is not ever useful also to close the eyes of the soul. For it is useful, just as Isaiah makes clear, saying in these words that follow: "Who will make known to you the everlasting place? He who walks in righteousness<sup>229</sup> and speaks about the true and straight path, plugging his ears so that he may not hear the judgment of blood, and closing his eyes so that he may not see iniquity."<sup>230</sup> If it is going to happen that by opening the eyes of the soul I will hear and perceive obscene words, it is better to close the entrances than to hear and understand those things that do harm. When do I close them, then? When evil things are said, so that I may not understand them. When the eloquent words of God<sup>231</sup> need to be seen, we are both turned [toward God], and God heals us<sup>232</sup> by sending the Word,<sup>233</sup> which restores to health those who want to be healed in Christ Jesus,<sup>234</sup> "to whom are glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen!"<sup>235</sup>

228. "to look closely at": *considerare*.

229. "Righteousness" here is *iustitia*.

230. Is 33.14b-15; "iniquity" here is *iniquitatem*.

231. "eloquent words of God": *eloquia Dei*.

232. Referring to Is 6.10b. *Convertimur* ("we are ... turned") is a form of the verb *converto*, which means "turn" or "change direction," or "transform," and, more generally, "change." The Biblical passage discusses the heart changing from a lack of understanding to understanding, as in turning toward God.


233. "the Word": *verbum*.

234. For a discussion by Origen of Jesus Christ as doctor of the soul, see *Hom in Lv* 8.1.1-3, referring to Mt 9.12-13.

235. 1 Pt 4.11b.

## HOMILY SEVEN

Concerning that which is written: “Here I am, and my children whom God has given to me,”<sup>1</sup> and the rest.

“IVE AN opportunity to a wise person, and he will be wiser,”<sup>2</sup> the Divine Word<sup>3</sup> has said. Yet when we receive an opportunity from the most holy Apostle [Paul]<sup>4</sup> to understand the words of the prophets,<sup>5</sup> let us pray to God that we may receive wisdom and may be able to become wiser through this occasion of the apostles explaining the prophets. When the Apostle [Paul] remembers this verse which says: “Here I am, and the children whom God has given to me,”<sup>6</sup> then he concludes and explains: “Because, therefore, the children have shared in blood and flesh, he has made himself also nearly the same as those who are made to share in these things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has dominion<sup>7</sup> over death, that is, Satan,<sup>8</sup> and might rescue<sup>9</sup> all those who by

1. Is 8.18a.

2. Prv 9.9a.

3. “the Divine Word”: *sermo divinus*. By this phrase, Origen is referring here to Scripture.

4. Origen often refers without name to “the Apostle,” by which he means Paul.

5. “words of the prophets”: *propheticorum sermonum*.

6. Is 8.18a.

7. “dominion”: *imperium*, which indicates power or command. Note that Origen generally finishes a homily, including this homily, by quoting 1 Pt 4.11, describing Christ Jesus as the one “to whom are glory and dominion (*gloria et imperium*) forever and ever.”

8. Satan: *Zabulum*.

9. “might rescue”: *eruat* (in the sense of “draw out” or “bring out”).

fear of death wander from the truth<sup>10</sup> into a continuous life of the condition of slavery.”<sup>11</sup> Therefore, because the children were made sharers in blood and flesh, our Savior also has shared in blood and flesh. For it was foreign to his nature and Divinity<sup>12</sup> to assume blood and flesh; yet for us he assumed those things that were foreign to him so that he might make us family to himself, we who had been made foreign on account of sin. And indeed the Apostle has explained [it] in this way, saying: “Because, therefore, the children have shared in blood and flesh, he has made himself also nearly the same as those who are made to share in these things.”<sup>13</sup> Yet I will say that, even as “because the children have shared in blood and flesh” and “he has made himself also nearly the same as those who are made to share in these things,” so because the children cannot hear the more powerful words<sup>14</sup>—for they must hear the words of God<sup>15</sup> as children—for this reason, when he was made into blood for the sake of the children who have shared in flesh and blood, as if speaking to infants, he speaks not divine and ineffable words,<sup>16</sup> but whatever things infants are able to grasp.<sup>17</sup>

Yet all men are infants if you compare them to the perfection of the Word.<sup>18</sup> Although you might mention the name Moses, although you might have spoken of one of the prophets, although John,<sup>19</sup> than whom no one among those born of women was better,<sup>20</sup> although you may come to the apostles, either to Peter, against whom the gates of hell will not prevail,<sup>21</sup> or to Paul, who was carried up to the third heaven<sup>22</sup> and heard

10. “wander from the truth”: *errant*.

11. Heb 2.14–15; “slavery”: *servitutis*.

12. “Divinity”: *Divinitas*, which refers to the Godhead or Divinity itself, or to the qualities or nature of God.

13. Heb 2.14.

14. “more powerful words”: *fortiores sermones*.

15. “words of God”: *sermones Dei*.

16. “divine and ineffable words”: *divina et ineffabilia*.

17. See *Hom in Jer* 19.15.4–5.

18. “perfection of the Word”: *perfectionem verbi*.

19. Referring to John the Baptist.

20. Referring to Mt 11.11, regarding John the Baptist.

21. Referring to Mt 16.18.

22. “to the third heaven”: *ad tertium caelum*.

unspeakable words,<sup>23</sup> you do not lay aside their glory by saying that they also, in those things that they understood in comparison with those things that they did not understand, were educated in the instruction of infants, which is handed down to men. Therefore, the Savior is speaking not about those whom Paul calls infants in Christ and about whom he declares that they need to drink milk and not take in solid food,<sup>24</sup> but about all men together: "Here I am, and my small children [or infants] whom God has given to me."<sup>25</sup> But in truth, as among children some are more eager than others and obtain more swiftly those things that are handed over to them, so, I say, Moses and the prophets, and indeed also the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, became like intellectually gifted children. Therefore, perceiving these things in themselves, that although they were making progress, they were making progress according to the progress of children, they said, "We know in part and we prophesy in part."<sup>26</sup> For as yet they were not perceiving matters of truth but [only] the shadows of matters, [and] not the full light, but [only] an obscure image;<sup>27</sup> and, for that reason, they were repeating, saying, "For we see now through a mirror and obscurely,<sup>28</sup> but then [we will see] face to face."<sup>29</sup>

Therefore, who, reading and understanding these things, will be puffed up and haughty concerning [his] knowledge or concerning any of [his] gifts? For indeed since those things that have come to the children are greatly inferior to those things that have been reserved for grown men, they must not be elevated and haughty, those who among the children seem sharper by way of natural talent<sup>30</sup> and quicker. Yet he [Isaiah] refers to

23. Referring to 2 Cor 12.2–4. "Words" here is *verba*. Paul talks of a young man he knew, but Origen suggests he was talking about himself as if it were his own experience.

24. Referring to 1 Cor 3.2. See also 1 Pt 2.2 and Heb 5.12–14. See *Hom in Gn* 7.1 and *Hom in Lv* 1.4.4.

25. Is 8.18a.

26. 1 Cor 13.9.

27. "image": *imaginem*.

28. "obscurely": *in aenigmate*.

29. 1 Cor 13.12 and referring to Nm 12.8.

30. "natural talent": *ingenii* (genitive of *ingenium*).

all men as those children whom the Savior also was indicating, saying, "Here I am, and the children whom God has given to me."<sup>31</sup> And the Savior accepted the gift from God; for no one comes to him unless he who sent him has drawn him to come to the Savior, just as we have learned in the Gospel that is according to John.<sup>32</sup> And since he accepted as a gift from the Father those who believe, for that reason, he, prophesying about them, says: "Here I am, and the children whom God has given to me."<sup>33</sup> It must not be thought that he who received them has not possessed them just because he who gave them may still possess them.<sup>34</sup>

2. Thereafter, in the rest, the Savior prophesies, saying in the prophet that it is going to happen, that, when he has received the children, signs and portents<sup>35</sup> are done in Israel.<sup>36</sup> Yet it [the text] holds as follows: "And there will be signs and portents in Israel from the Lord of Hosts,<sup>37</sup> who dwells on Mount Zion."<sup>38</sup> For he, who dwells in a spy-boat<sup>39</sup> and can perceive the truth in every soul, makes signs and portents through the Savior, and, after the Savior, through the apostles. And wherever a soul is found

31. Is 8.18a.

32. Referring to Jn 6.44.

33. Is 8.18a.

34. Fürst, in "Jerome Keeping Silent," 143 n. 15, argues that this final statement of *Hom in Is* 7.1 may be an interpolation by Jerome, perhaps because it could be interpreted as arguing that the Father and Son share one nature. There is, however, nothing especially conspicuous about the terminology used in this sentence. Moreover, Origen arguably did hold the view of the Father and Son sharing the same nature, as my prior works suggest. See Dively Lauro, "The Meaning and Significance of Scripture's Sacramental Nature," SP 94:153–85; and "The Inadequacy of the Term 'Subordination' for Origen's Theology and Ministry: A Study of Origen's Homilies on Psalm 15" (prepared for a proceeding from the Origen colloquium on the recently recovered homilies on the Psalms, held at The Catholic University of America, in Washington, DC, in May 2017), forthcoming.

35. "portents": *prodigia*.

36. Referring to Is 8.18.

37. "from the Lord of Hosts": *a Domino Sabaoth*.

38. Is 8.18b. A possibly related discussion of "signs" is found in *Hom in Is* 2.1.

39. "spy-boat": *speculatorio*, a substantive from the adjective *speculatorius*, *a*, *um*, which refers to the secret "observation" of "spies or scouts."



fit for the ministry of the signs and portents<sup>40</sup> of God, whether in accordance with spiritual healing or by the [physical] senses, for the purpose of exhorting to faith those who see, God is not idle, who then made signs and portents,<sup>41</sup> [and] yet [even] now effects them. "And if they [the people] were to say to you: Seek the ventriloquists and those who cry out from the earth, who speak empty words, who cry out from the stomach,<sup>42</sup> do not the people desire their God? Why do they search diligently for the dead from among the living?"<sup>43</sup> Pay attention, since it has been said obscurely, and the meaning<sup>44</sup> must be closely connected to the words preceding since God himself<sup>45</sup> is granting and laying bare [this meaning]. Therefore, he<sup>46</sup> is teaching us that we should not be disciples of other words except heavenly and good ones. For there are some of those speaking and promising true doctrine who do not speak of heavenly things but of earthly things. "He who is from the earth speaks of the earth; he who comes from heaven is above all [and] he bears witness to what he has seen and heard."<sup>47</sup> He [the Savior through Isaiah] says: If someone were to speak to the children who believe in me, he would say, "Seek the ventriloquists and those who cry out from the earth, who speak empty words, who cry out from the stomach,"<sup>48</sup>—as for example, Seek daemons (for he has named all daemons τροπικῶς [tropologically] from one kind of daemon, ventriloquists)<sup>49</sup>—"if they were to say to you, 'Seek ventriloquists,'" that is, Seek from daemons either the gift of prophecy or truth or holy contemplation, reply to them these things that I am saying. What are the things that he is teaching them? He

40. "portents": *portentorum*.

41. "portents": *prodigia*.

42. "who shout from the stomach": *qui de ventre clamant*. Note that "ventriloquist," from *ventriloquus* (*venter* + *loquor*), means "one who speaks from his stomach."

43. Is 8.19. This quotation of Is 8.19 resembles more literally the wording in LXX than in RSV.

44. "meaning": *sensus*.

45. *Deo ipso* is treated as an ablative absolute here.

46. "he" = the Savior.

47. Jn 3.31–32a.

48. Is 8.19.

49. *Daemonium* designates a lower divinity or spirit, or an evil spirit or demon.

tells in the following passages. And there are certain ones who send you, yet more so catechumens, as much as it is in them, to ventriloquists. For those who want you to go to idols, about which it is written, "All the gods of the nations [are] daemons,"<sup>50</sup> they want you to go not only to ventriloquists, but to every kind of daemons.<sup>51</sup> But yet may our God, who does what he wills in heaven and on earth,<sup>52</sup> tear us away from the daemons; may he make [us] family members to himself through our Savior Jesus Christ. Therefore, take care lest the soul of anyone from among you should ever be deceived and still hesitate and doubt when he has heard this or that man [say]: A daemon has cured that feebleness in relation to that idol; he has divined<sup>53</sup> this and that. All those idols belong to daemons and to men who do not understand the truth.

Ascend in the mind<sup>54</sup> to him who is the Creator of all,<sup>55</sup> and compare that piety to everything that is proclaimed to be piety but is not piety, and see that you are blessed. For, "Who is like you, O people saved by the Lord?"<sup>56</sup> And, "Blessed is the nation whose Lord is its God, a people whom he has chosen for heirship to himself."<sup>57</sup> To be sure, the nation of the Jews was once blessed, but it lost blessedness and was cast out from its place, because they insidiously killed the one who was sent and bore witness of the Father not only through the law and prophets but also in signs and portents.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, the blessedness has transferred over to us, disciples of Jesus Christ, and we believe in him, unshakably and firmly, living according to what we have been taught.

50. Ps 95 (96).5a. (RSV translates this noun as "idols" rather than "daemons" or "demons.")

51. See *De princ* 3.3.5 and *Hom in Ex* 3.2.

52. Ps 113.11 (115.3).

53. "has divined": *divinavit*, from *divino*, which can indicate foreseeing or foretelling or prophesying.

54. "in the mind": *animo*. *Animus* can also mean "soul" or "spirit." For Origen it tends to refer to the part of the human soul that holds the will, or faculty of choice. See Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture*, 86–91.

55. Referring to Sir 24.8.

56. Dt 33.29a.

57. Ps 32 (33).12.

58. Referring to Is 8.18.

3. "And if they were to say to you: Seek ventriloquists and those who cry out from the earth, who speak empty words."<sup>59</sup> He has named the empty talkers.<sup>60</sup> Every word<sup>61</sup> that is said is either empty or filled with truth. Every word that is false is empty, but [the word] is full of truth that has the knowledge of the God of all things and teaches so that we may believe in the God who promises the kingdom of heaven to his holy ones.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, see what they say who were not empty talkers nor have ever appeared empty in the sight of the Lord God: "From his fullness we all have received."<sup>63</sup> Those who are empty talkers do not all possess from [his] fullness, but they are all empty of truth, they are empty of virtue, they are empty of Christ. "If they were to say to you: Seek those who cry out from the earth, who speak empty words, who cry out from the stomach."<sup>64</sup> I also want to tell the reason why the Word<sup>65</sup> has now taken up this most powerful of the daemons, [that is] of the ventriloquists, so that he may say: "If they were to say to you all: Seek ventriloquists."<sup>66</sup> You will find that all who promise truth and yet do not possess truth are serving their own stomach and in a certain measure doing all things for its pleasure and abundance, yet not only pagans,<sup>67</sup> but also those who, although they promise religious observance in Christ, are heretics. And not only [among] those, but even among us, who are of the Church, you will find someone doing all things for the satiety of the stomach, so that he may be honored and receive the gifts that are offered in the Church. That kind of person speaks from the stomach, and a fountain of his words<sup>68</sup> exists

59. Is 8.19.

60. "empty talkers": *vaniloquos*, a substantive adjective of *vaniloquus*, *a*, *um*, which can connote idle talk or lying or boasting.

61. "word": *sermo*.

62. "his holy ones": *sanctis suis*.

63. Jn 1.16. The verses (16–17) continue, explaining that we have all received "grace upon grace," meaning "the law . . . through Moses" and "grace and truth . . . through Jesus Christ" (RSV).

64. Is 8.19.

65. "the Word": *sermo*.

66. Is 8.19.

67. "pagans": *gentiles*.

68. "words": *sermonum*.

in [his] stomach; for the fountain of words<sup>69</sup> neither flows from the heart, nor from good thoughts, nor from the Holy Spirit. Therefore, if someone at any time promises that he himself will teach, observe whether or not his words<sup>70</sup> have [their] beginning from the stomach.

Yet I myself will put forward a proposition that can be set as an objection to me, lest perhaps one of you, hearing it from someone [else], determines either Scripture to be contrary to itself or that we have not considered how it is proper to prove the accusatory word<sup>71</sup> against those who cry out from the stomach. Therefore, what is the proposition? He [Jesus] says, "If anyone believes in me, out of his stomach will flow rivers, a fountain of water springing up into eternal life."<sup>72</sup> Accordingly, let anyone who reports about these things say: If the Savior promises a fountain of water springing up into eternal life from the stomach, it is coming forth from the righteous one, and the righteous one<sup>73</sup> cries out from [his] stomach, if indeed the fountain of water, which the Savior promises, is in his stomach. But lest perhaps we have two stomachs, it should be said also, one is bodily,<sup>74</sup> another spiritual,<sup>75</sup> in the same way as the remaining parts that are seen in the body are to be named,<sup>76</sup> as for example the eyes: truly some are of the body, others of the soul.<sup>77</sup> For if it is said about the eyes, "The commandment of the Lord [is] luminous, illuminating the eyes,"<sup>78</sup> I do not think this needs to be a reference to bodily eyes.<sup>79</sup> And if it is said, "He who has ears for hearing, let him hear,"<sup>80</sup> it is necessary not to think this is said about the ears

69. "words": *sermonum*.

70. "words": *sermones*.

71. "word": *sermonem*.

72. Referring to a combination of Jn 7.38 and 4.14.

73. *Iustus* is the term for both instances of "the righteous one" here.

74. "bodily": *corporalis*.

75. "spiritual": *spiritalis*.

76. See also *Hom in Is* 5.2.

77. "of the body ... of the soul": *corporis ... animae*. For the spiritual version of bodily parts, see also *De princ* 1.1.9.

78. Ps 18.9 (19.8); "luminous": *lucidum*; "illuminating": *illuminans*.

79. "bodily eyes": *oculos corporales*.

80. Mt 13.9.

of the body, but [it is said] about [the ears] of the soul,<sup>81</sup> which they possess who are clean in the hearing of the soul. But also if it is said as a promise, "Your foot will not stumble,"<sup>82</sup> it is necessary not to think that this is said about the foot of the body; for there is a certain foot of the heart that is entering onto him who said, "I am the way."<sup>83</sup> So then, similar to the stomach of the body is the stomach of the soul,<sup>84</sup> about which the righteous one<sup>85</sup> speaks: "Out of fear of you, Lord, we have conceived in the stomach<sup>86</sup> and labored and bore the spirit<sup>87</sup> of your salvation, which you have fashioned on the earth."<sup>88</sup> Yet all who have a stomach full of empty words,<sup>89</sup> who are from the earth, have a stomach subsisting from the earth, about which it is written, "Yet God will destroy both that one and this one."<sup>90</sup> Therefore, the holy ones have a stomach in which, out of fear of the Lord, they also have conceived,<sup>91</sup> and their stomach is filled from fountains of water springing up into eternal life.<sup>92</sup> About that stomach that one says: "And my stomach is like a bound wineskin full of new wine."<sup>93</sup> For he has spoken these things not about the bodily stomach;<sup>94</sup> for his bodily stomach was not full of divine things and of things close to these, like wine bound in a wineskin. These things [are] in explanation of the proposed question.

4. Now let us return to what we began: Therefore, "If they were to say to you: Seek ventriloquists and those who cry out from the earth, those who speak empty words, those who cry out

81. "about [the ears] of the soul": *de animae . . . auribus*.

82. Prv 3.23b.

83. Jn 14.6.

84. "stomach of the soul": *venter animae*.

85. "righteous one": *iustus*.

86. "in the stomach": *in ventre*. *Venter*, in addition to "stomach or belly," can also mean "womb." Also, *accipio* normally means "receive" or "accept" but here is translated "conceived" as in LXX.

87. "spirit": *spiritum*.

88. Is 26.17b–18. This wording of the verses is much closer to LXX than RSV.

89. "empty words": *vacuis sermonibus*.

90. 1 Cor 6.13.

91. Referring to Is 26.17b–18.

92. Referring to Jn 4.14.

93. Jb 32.19.

94. "bodily stomach": *corporali ventre*.

from the stomach”—answer these words to them, “Is not a nation for its God?” Yet this is said deficiently. Answer these words to them: “Does not a nation seek diligently for its God?”<sup>95</sup> Each nation, if it seeks, offers to its own God what it has sought—answer these words to them. Yet you, Israelites, having the true God, who is over all,<sup>96</sup> when you seek, be willing to seek neither ventriloquists nor those crying out from the earth nor empty talkers, but [seek your] own God. “Why do they seek the dead among the living?”<sup>97</sup> For the dead ones are the daemons deprived of True Life [Jesus], who says: “I am the life.”<sup>98</sup> Therefore, be unwilling to ask the dead about the affairs of the living, for you have received the law.<sup>99</sup> O you all, whom it was not possible to persuade to seek those things from the ventriloquists and from those crying out empty words<sup>100</sup> from the earth, pay attention to the Word of truth<sup>101</sup> and the law, receiving it as a help to your law.

In your law it is written: You may not follow idols;<sup>102</sup> acting according to the law, you may not give heed to ventriloquists nor to those who cry out from the earth. “For he gave the law for a help, so that they may speak not a word such as that one for which there are no gifts to give.”<sup>103</sup> For he who has received the law and has come to know that the law is for a help and principally spiritual,<sup>104</sup> which forbids [him] from ventriloquists and omens,<sup>105</sup> he, when he has understood the law, admiring it, he must speak no word<sup>106</sup> in the world near to the Greeks and Barbarians,<sup>107</sup> of the kind that is a word of the law;<sup>108</sup> for the law

95. Referring to Is 8.19.

96. Referring to Rom 9.5.

97. Is 8.19b.

98. Jn 14.6.

99. Referring to Is 8.20. This wording of the verse resembles LXX and not RSV.

100. “empty words”: *vanos sermones*.

101. “Word of truth”: *sermonem veritatis*.

102. Referring to Ex 20.4.

103. Is 8.20. Again, this wording resembles LXX and not RSV.

104. Referring to Rom 7.14.

105. “from ... omens”: *a auguriis*.

106. “no word”: *nullum verbum*.

107. The primary meaning of *barbarus* is “foreigner,” with special reference to someone alien to Greek or Roman culture.

108. “word of the law”: *verbum legis*.

that has been given to us by God differs from every word, [from] the collective teaching<sup>109</sup> that promises truth. "For he gave the law for a help, so that they may say, 'not as that word.'"<sup>110</sup> What is this [word] that is not as that word? There are many words, but not as that word. For [there is] no word after the word of Moses, after the word of the prophets, yet, much more, [there is no word] after the word of Jesus Christ and his apostles.<sup>111</sup> Observe whether the mind of God<sup>112</sup> did not cry out what has been said: For he gave the law for a help, so that those who received the law for a help may say: There is not such a word<sup>113</sup> as that one in the way Moses spoke in the law brought forward by angels at the hand of a mediator.<sup>114</sup> Yet the Church can say this much more fittingly: There is not such a word<sup>115</sup> as that one which was made flesh, which dwelt among us, whose glory we have seen, not as [we saw the glory of] Moses [which was] covered up with a veil,<sup>116</sup> but glory as of the Only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.<sup>117</sup> There is not such a word<sup>118</sup> as that one which the Church received, in which it believes, through which also it will be saved,<sup>119</sup> the Word,<sup>120</sup> which in the beginning was with God [and was] God,<sup>121</sup> the Word<sup>122</sup> "to whom are glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen!"<sup>123</sup>

109. "collective teaching": *universa doctrina*.

110. Is 8.20. Again, the wording resembles LXX and not RSV.

111. It is possible that Jerome added this sentence suggesting the completion of revelation after Jesus, but this is only a conjecture. It would be useful to verify where else in his works Origen may have held this principle.

112. "mind of God": *sensus Dei*.

113. "word": *verbum*.

114. Referring to Gal 3.19b.

115. "word": *verbum*.

116. Referring to 2 Cor 3.13.

117. Referring to Jn 1.14.

118. "word": *verbum*.

119. Referring to 1 Cor 15.2.

120. "the Word": *verbum*.

121. Referring to Jn 1.1.

122. "the Word": *verbum*.

123. 1 Pt 4.11b.

## HOMILY EIGHT

*Concerning that which is written: “Howl,<sup>1</sup> You Graven Images in Jerusalem and in Samaria,”<sup>2</sup> up to this passage in which it says: “And I will shake the cities that are inhabited.”<sup>3</sup>*

**I**NDEED, previously, when the former people sinned, Judah in Jerusalem and the people called Israel in Samaria fell away from<sup>4</sup> fearing God<sup>5</sup> and fashioned graven images. Yet even now if someone from the multitude of those sinners who are gathered together considers [this], he will not hesitate to say that each person making God whatever he holds to be good, and serving sin, is accursed for making a graven image and melting down the work of the hands of the artificer and putting it in a secret place.<sup>6</sup> To be sure, if we sin, we make many idols in the secret place of the heart.<sup>7</sup> For this reason, the Word<sup>8</sup> teaches us to do penance and to howl a mournful cry over the graven images and idols that are in Jerusalem and Samaria.<sup>9</sup> And if indeed we sin, we who desire to be [a part] of the Church, we make graven images in Jerusalem; if, in fact, those who have been placed outside the Church were to

1. “To howl”: *Uulare*, which indicates a mournful tone, synonymous with “wail” or “mournful cry.”

2. Is 10.10b. This wording is more similar to the LXX than the RSV.

3. Is 10.14a; “I will shake”: *commovebo*.

4. “fell away from”: *excidit a*; this phrase can indicate forgetting.

5. “fearing God”: *religione*, which can also mean “piety,” as, like *pietas*, it signifies the respect due to gods that the Romans so valued.

6. See Dt 27.15.

7. See also *Hom in Jgs* 2.3.

8. “the Word”: *sermo*.

9. Referring to Is 10.10. For a spiritual reading of the sins of Jerusalem, see *Hom in Jer* 13.



sin as heretics, they make idols in Samaria. Nevertheless, God calls forth all, according to his goodness, to repentance, saying: "Howl, You Graven Images in Jerusalem and in Samaria. For indeed, as I did to Samaria and its handmade things, so I will do to both Jerusalem and its idols."<sup>10</sup> He threatens [that] whatever things he did to the Samaritans, likewise [he will do] to those who are of the Church.

"Yet when the Lord has finished doing all the things on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, he will spread over<sup>11</sup> the great mind,<sup>12</sup> the ruler of the Assyrians, and over the loftiness of the glory of his eyes."<sup>13</sup> We are taught what is going to happen to our enemy, Satan,<sup>14</sup> whom the prophecy now has called a certain "great mind."<sup>15</sup> For in the same manner as the serpent was wiser than all the beasts that are upon the earth,<sup>16</sup> and the sons of this age [are] wiser than are the sons of light in their own generation, and the steward of iniquity<sup>17</sup> acted wisely according to the wisdom [that is] not good,<sup>18</sup> in the same way, that one who is called figuratively<sup>19</sup> the ruler of the Assyrians, his mind<sup>20</sup> is great and he is admired for the greatness of his mind,<sup>21</sup> [and] he used [this

10. Is 10.10b–11.

11. "he will spread over": *inducet super*, which can mean "cover," or "erase," "revoke or make invalid," suggesting that God is covering over the great mind of the Assyrian ruler and his loftiness so as to "erase" his power and influence. The English translation of the LXX by Pietersma and Wright for Is 10.12 uses "bring his wrath upon" rather than "spread over"; however, "his wrath" does not appear in the Greek of the LXX. The RSV uses the word "punish," which also does not appear in the LXX. "Spread over" gives an appropriately ominous connotation of God fully covering him with a judgment that makes him both invisible and irrelevant, the exact opposite of what a prideful leader seeks. Origen goes on to discuss how God will do this to Satan, of whom the Assyrian ruler is a type.

12. "the great mind": *sensum magnum*.

13. Is 10.12.

14. Satan: *Zabulo*.

15. "a certain 'great mind': *sensum quendam magnum*.

16. Referring to Gn 3.1.

17. "of iniquity": *iniquitatis*. For commentary on this term, see *Hom in Is* 1.4, note 78; and 6.6, note 195, as well as other mentions of this term within the text of these homilies at *Hom in Is* 4.6, note 83; 5.3, note 62; and 6.2, note 55.

18. Referring to Lk 16.8.

19. "figuratively": *figuraliter*.

20. "mind": *sensum*.

21. "mind": *sensus*.

admiration] improperly for the purpose of instructing the wise ones of this world, who, writing with all verisimilitude and all power, display the falsehood of their doctrines. Therefore, when God has done all his works on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and has rendered those things that were promised to the righteous ones,<sup>22</sup> then “he will spread over the great mind, the ruler of the Assyrians, and over the loftiness of the glory of his eyes.”<sup>23</sup> The Word<sup>24</sup> knew him to be wise about high things and the beginning of his downfall to have begun from pride.<sup>25</sup> For this reason, if we also were swollen with pride, we fall into the judgment of the devil,<sup>26</sup> into which Satan<sup>27</sup> himself fell.<sup>28</sup>

2. Yet let us see also his swollen pride, how great it is, so that we may be on guard against it and not permit him to speak truths about us. So what does he [the Assyrian ruler/Satan] say? “By [my] strength I will do [it], and by the wisdom of [my] understanding,<sup>29</sup> I will remove the boundaries of nations.”<sup>30</sup> He determines that he himself can carry out<sup>31</sup> in us what he wants by his strength. And in truth if we are conquered and after these words<sup>32</sup> we sin, if after church we return to the circus and to the horse races and to the assemblies<sup>33</sup> of pagans,<sup>34</sup> what else happens other than [that] he becomes master of us who have been conquered?<sup>35</sup> And what Satan<sup>36</sup> said: “By [my] strength I will do [it],” happens in us when we are committing sins; he has threatened this. But also, if, after chastity for a long time, after great moral purity, we commit fornication, what else happens other

22. “righteous ones”: *iustis*.

23. Is 10.12.

24. “the Word”: *sermo*.

25. Referring to Rom 12.16.

26. “the devil”: *diaboli*.

27. Satan: *Zabulus*.

28. Referring to 1 Tm 3.6.

29. “understanding”: *intellectus*.

30. Is 10.13.

31. “carry out”: *perficere*.

32. “words”: *verba*.

33. “assemblies”: *conventus*.

34. “of pagans”: *gentilium*.

35. See also *Hom in Lv* 9.7.

36. Satan: *Zabulus*.

than [that] it is proven [that] he who said, "By my strength I will do [it]," has spoken truths about us?<sup>37</sup>

Now, let us consider what else that big talker also promises. "And by the wisdom of [my] understanding, I will remove the boundaries of nations."<sup>38</sup> I do not know the wisdom that he promises, about which a prophet [Jeremiah] also speaks: "There is a certain foreign wisdom in them."<sup>39</sup> There is a certain wisdom foreign to truth, which God destroys. That one possessing this [wisdom] judges himself to be wise and says: "By the wisdom of [my] understanding, I will remove the boundaries of nations, and I will feed upon<sup>40</sup> their strength."<sup>41</sup> For his operation has reached to all the nations, but the Savior, sending his own words<sup>42</sup> to all the nations, has rescued those who were being held captive by Satan<sup>43</sup> among all the nations. "And I will feed upon their strength."<sup>44</sup> Having plundered our strength, he threatens to go and hand us over to those waging war against us. And it is a reality to see him doing this to certain persons. For when someone is conquered by Satan<sup>45</sup> and is handed over to the most evil daemon spirits, to hostile powers, what else has happened, except that he who had said: "And I will feed upon their strength,"<sup>46</sup> taking our strength, has fed upon us?

"And I will shake the cities that are inhabited."<sup>47</sup> Satan<sup>48</sup> also threatens this: he perceives that the cities, the churches of God built upon Christ the Lord, are inhabited, [and so] he cries out that he himself is going to shake these. And often, indeed, he

37. See also 1 Pt 5.8. See *De princ* 3.2, *C Cels* 1.1.

38. Is 10.13.

39. Referring loosely to Jer 8.9b.

40. "I will feed upon": *depascar*, with the emphatic meanings "remove" or "destroy."

41. Is 10.13.

42. "words": *sermones*.

43. Satan: *Zabulo*.

44. Is 10.13b.

45. Satan: *Zabulo*.

46. Is 10.13b.

47. Is 10.14a.

48. Satan: *Zabulus*.

has shaken the inhabited cities to their foundation<sup>49</sup> with persecutions; often he has shaken them to their foundation with stumbling blocks.<sup>50</sup> But let us try to become such ones having their foundation upon rock,<sup>51</sup> so that he who says, “I will shake the cities that are inhabited,”<sup>52</sup> may not have the power to shake *us* by his violent attacks or hostile spirits, but let us steadfast ones persevere against all that has happened, as those having [their] edifice on the rock, Jesus Christ, “to whom are glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen!”<sup>53</sup>

49. “he has shaken”: *concussit*, from *concutio*, which implies violence or shaking thoroughly from the roots or foundation.

50. “stumbling blocks”: *scandalis*, from *scandalum*, which can imply temptation or a source of offense.


51. Referring to Lk 6.48.

52. Is 10.14a.

53. 1 Pt 4.11b.

## HOMILY NINE

*Concerning that which is written: “And I heard the voice of the Lord saying: ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people?’”<sup>1</sup> And, passing all the way over small portions, one arrives at the passage in which it is written: “Ask for yourself a sign from the Lord your God in the depth or in the height.”<sup>2</sup>*

“ND I HEARD the voice of the Lord saying: ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people?’ And I said: ‘Here I am, send me.’ And he says: ‘Go and say to this people: You will hear with the ear and not understand,’” and the rest.<sup>3</sup> Let us pray to God about this word<sup>4</sup> of the prophet Isaiah which at present has been read, that he [God] may bestow grace upon us and, in turn, we may be able to explain things worthy of the prophetic spirit.<sup>5</sup> “And I heard the voice of the Lord saying: ‘Whom shall I send?’”<sup>6</sup> After his lips were cleansed, the prophet, prepared, received the ministry of God and said: “Here I am, send me.”<sup>7</sup> But so that he would be more prepared for this, he remembered the words<sup>8</sup> of Moses. For even he [Moses], using

1. Is 6.8. See also Origen’s extensive treatment of this verse in *Hom in Is* 6.

2. Is 7.11. This portion of the title is not treated in this homily, which ends abruptly. See a discussion of “a sign in the depth and in the height” in *Hom in Is* 2.1.

3. Is 6.8–9a. This passage is also treated in *Hom in Is* 6.

4. “word”: *sermo*.

5. See *Hom in Is* 2.2 for Origen’s treatment of the prophets of the Old Testament as vehicles through which Christ provides the honey of Scripture, or God’s wisdom, to believers.

6. Is 6.8.

7. Is 6.8b. See also *Hom in Is* 6.

8. “words”: *vocis*.

the same word,<sup>9</sup> “Send me,”<sup>10</sup> was made the ruler and judge of the people<sup>11</sup> and was called the servant of God.<sup>12</sup> Yet I heard a certain Hebrew explaining this passage<sup>13</sup> and saying that the prophet, indeed willing and prepared, received the prophecy for the people, not knowing what things needed to be said to them [the people]; then, hearing the harsh things that were necessary to announce to the people, that is, “You will hear with the ear and not understand,” and the rest,<sup>14</sup> in the following [passages] he becomes more reluctant. When the voice of God is speaking to him [Isaiah], [saying], “Cry out!” he [Isaiah] replies to him [God] and says, “What shall I cry out?”<sup>15</sup> Yet I think these things are prophesied about the Savior, that it was going to come about that those hearing would not hear and those seeing would not see.<sup>16</sup>

Next, what is said will become clearer if we reflect on the small passage: “Seeing, you will look and not see.”<sup>17</sup> It [the meaning] is of this kind: indeed, at that time the Jews were seeing, mindful of blind people, yet they were ignorant of the cause of the vision. They were hearing the parables that the Savior

9. “word”: *voce*.

10. Ex 4.13. Moses actually said, “Please, Lord, appoint another capable person, whom you will send” (according to Pietersma and Wright’s translation of LXX). Still, Moses did as the Lord said. See Ex 4.15–31. See also fuller discussion of the responses to God’s calling by Moses, Isaiah, and Jonah in *Hom in Is* 6.1.

11. Referring loosely to Ex 2.14.

12. Referring to Jos 1.13.

13. Origen elsewhere in his works refers to a Hebrew or Hebrew teacher whom he does not identify but does credit with certain views of text that Origen claims to have adopted from him. Two other examples are at *De princ* 1.3.4 and 4.3.14. For brief considerations of this unnamed Hebrew teacher in Origen, see Ronald E. Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 56–57, and John A. McGuckin, ed., *The Westminster Handbook to Origen* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 11.

14. Is 6.9. See also *Hom in Is* 6.

15. Is 40.6.

16. Referring to Mt 13.13.

17. Is 6.9. Note the different phrasing for this portion of Is 6.9 between here in *Hom in Is* 9 (*cernentes adspicietis et non videbitis*—“seeing, you will look and not see”) and in *Hom in Is* 6 (at first, *videntes cernetis et non videbitis*—“seeing, you will perceive and not see”; then afterwards throughout the homily, *videntes videbitis et non scietis*—“seeing, you will see and not know”). See also *Hom in Is* 6.1, note 18.

explained in secret to [his] disciples,<sup>18</sup> but, not knowing what was being said, they were not hearing. For this reason, testifying to them, he [the Savior] said: "He who has ears for hearing, let him hear!"<sup>19</sup> For they were not deprived of these ears so that they would not hear, but their interior ears were heavy<sup>20</sup> for hearing.<sup>21</sup> For this reason, he preaches to them and foretells future things through the prophet, saying: "You will hear with the ear and not understand, and seeing, you will look and not see. For the heart of this people has grown fat."<sup>22</sup> Let us examine what this is which is said: "For the heart of the people has grown fat." For everyone who occupies himself with the cares of the present life, the heart has grown fat.<sup>23</sup> It is not at all different for those who delight in worldly matters; the heart has grown fat, as if they are being completely killed off by thorns.<sup>24</sup> For that reason, the heart grows fat and is not able to receive the ideas of the thinner Spirit.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, let us flee from such cares so that our heart, made thin,<sup>26</sup> may become acceptable to God. Let us flee from earthly affairs; for those are the things by which the heart grows fat. For this reason, the word<sup>27</sup> of Moses was thin<sup>28</sup> (as it is written in Exodus about him),<sup>29</sup> which says: Whoever

18. Referring to Mk 4.34.

19. Mt 13.9.

20. "heavy": *gravatas*, which is the past participle of the verb *gravo* and can signify being "loaded" or already full.

21. For Origen's explanation of how sin is heavy and causes sinners to hear heavily, see also *Hom in Is* 6.6.

22. Is 6.9–10a. Note that Is 6.9–10a is quoted in Mt 13.13–15, Mk 4.12, and Lk 8.10, by Jesus to explain to his disciples why he speaks in parables to the crowd.

23. For Origen's explanation of how the heart grows fat from sin and the cares of the world, see also *Hom in Is* 6.5.

24. Referring to Mt 13.7 and 22.

25. For Origen's explanation of thinness as a characteristic of the Holy Spirit, see also *Hom in Is* 6.5.

26. For Origen's explanation of how leaving sin behind makes the heart thin, see also *Hom in Is* 6.5. Also, for another discussion of how sin makes the heart fat and how the Holy Spirit is thin, see *Hom in Nm* 17.6.1–2.

27. "word": *sermo*.

28. "thin": *subtilis*. On the adjective *subtilis*, see *Hom in Is* 6.1, note 46.

29. Referring to Ex 4.10.

had a clean heart, on account of thinness of this kind, they will see God.<sup>30</sup> For God is seen with such eyes.

There are three things that are being said: "For the heart of this people has grown fat" and "they have heard heavily with their ears"<sup>31</sup> and "they have closed their eyes."<sup>32</sup> Yet the things that are said in this passage can be understood even more clearly in another way. For many among men, examining creatures and contemplating this world, think that they see these things. And why do I say "among men"? Behold, the winged creatures and four-footed creatures see the sun and the moon and the whole sky<sup>33</sup> together with the chorus of stars, but they do not understand their reasons.<sup>34</sup> Truly only the righteous and the holy ones perceive these things through comprehending the reason<sup>35</sup> of God's wisdom. For that reason, in the Eighth Psalm David says: "Because I *will* see your heavens,"<sup>36</sup> the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have established."<sup>37</sup> For why does the prophet not now see the sky<sup>38</sup> and the moon? But this, which he says: "I will see," if we consider [this,] we will be able to understand [it].<sup>39</sup>

30. Referring to Mt 5.8.

31. "heavily": *graviter*.

32. Is 6.10a. For spiritual sight and reasons for not seeing, see *Hom in Is* 6.7.

33. "sky": *caelum*.

34. "reasons": *rationes*.

35. "reason": *rationem*.

36. *Caelos* is plural and so is translated "heavens" and not "sky."

37. Ps 8.4 (8.3). Emphasis added.

38. "sky": *caelum*, which, when singular as here, can be translated as "sky" or "heaven" or "the heavens."

39. The homily ends here as a break in the prose and not as a real ending, and notably without quoting 1 Pt 4.11b, which Origen customarily uses to end his homilies. Also, note that, while the title of this homily states that the passage discussing "a sign . . . in the depth or in the height" (Is 7.11) will be treated, this topic is not covered here (though it is treated in *Hom in Is* 2.1). Perhaps Origen was interrupted and prevented from completing his intended homily, or perhaps this additional, intended discussion was not transcribed because of some interruption, or its transcription was later lost.



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