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**THEOLOGICAL DISPUTATION ON THE DESCENT OF CHRIST TO HELL**

Which,

by the favor of Divine Grace,

with the AUTHORITY & CONSENT

of the Most Reverend

THEOLOGICAL FACULTY

in the ALMA VIADRINA,

under the PRESIDENCY of

BARTH. Holtzfuss, Doctor of Sacred Theology

& Ordinary Public Professor,

HIS EVER-TO-BE-REVERED PATRON AND TEACHER,

on the 16th day of September, in the year of our Lord 1699,

in the Great Auditorium,

is submitted

to the Public Inquiry of the Learned

by

ALEXANDER ANDERSON,

of Lauenburg in Pomerania.

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FRANKFURT an der ODER,

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## A. Ω.

### "Without preamble or passions"

**Wherein it is taught that this Article was wanting in some Creeds, and the summary of the Dissertation is proposed.**

#### I.

The Article of the Descent of Christ to hell was not formerly read in most of the Creeds of Councils and other Symbols of Faith: the Nicene, the second of Antioch, the Sardican, the Sirmian, the Illyrian, the third Roman against the Apollinarists, the Constantinopolitan, the first of Toledo, the Ephesian, the Chalcedonian. Nor does it exist in the Creed which is referred to in the Edict of the Emperor Constantine, nor in that which is proposed in the Edicts of the Emperor Justinian, in the Code *de Summa Trinitate*, L. 5 & 6, nor in the Creed of the Synod of Milan, nor in that which is recited in Book 1 of the Capitularies of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, nor in the Creed of Agatho, nor of Sophronius, nor in the profession of faith of the second Council of Seville, nor of Agapetus, nor in the Exposition of faith of the Lateran Council, nor of the eighth, nor the eleventh, nor the thirteenth, nor the sixteenth Council of Toledo, nor the third of Braga, nor in the Profession of faith of the Old Alemannic Church, nor of Gregory, Bishop of Neocæsarea, nor of the second Council of Nicæa, nor of Maxentius John, nor of Basil and Epiphanius, nor in the Creed of the Council of Frankfurt, Paris, or Worms. Rufinus, a presbyter of the Church of Aquileia, in his Exposition of the Creed, thus comments on the Creeds of his time: *It should indeed be known that in the Creed of the Roman Church this is not added: He descended into hell. But neither is this phrase found in the Churches of the East. Yet the force of the word seems to be the same in that which is said, He was buried.*

#### II.

Many Fathers also make no mention of this Article in the recitation of the Creed, such as Clement, Irenæus, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Origen, Cyril, Augustine, Pope Leo I, Gregory the Great, Damasus, which Bellarmine himself frankly admits in Tom. I. Controvers. lib. 4. de Christi Anima cap. 6. pag. 169. We believe, however, that this was not because this Article was not believed or was denied by the first Christian Doctors. For the same Doctors who omit it in the recitation of the Creed, propose and explain it elsewhere, but because at that time it had not come into dispute, and no controversy had been raised concerning it. For as heresies arose, the Catholic Doctors were compelled to add certain things to the Primeval Creed, by which the Doctrine of the Church could be distinguished from the heretical, and the true children of the Church from the spurious, that is, from heretics and their followers.

#### III.

It was read, however, in the Aquileian Creed, as Rufinus testifies. It is also found in the Creed which is commonly called the Athanasian, but with the mention of the Burial omitted, a clear indication that these two articles were considered either the same or not very different. And some gather that the Monks, whenever they transcribed the Nicene Creed, to the words of this Creed: *He was buried*; added in the margin the words of the Athanasian Creed: *He descended into hell*; and whenever they repeated the Athanasian Creed, they also added in the margin the words of the Nicene Creed: *He was buried*. This addition or explanation, in the course of time, especially in the Western Churches, crept from the margin into the text of the Nicene Creed itself and finally also of the Apostolic Creed, and thus from one, two articles resulted. As the basis for this conjecture, they cite a very ancient copy of the Bible, which Charlemagne donated to the Collegiate Church of Zurich, and which is said to be still preserved by them, in the beginning of which the Nicene Creed is narrated in the same words, in which, next to the words of the Nicene Creed, marked with a comma: *He was buried*; these words of Athanasius are read annotated in the margin: *He descended into hell*.

#### IV.

Although, therefore, that particle concerning the Descent of Christ to hell was formerly wanting in certain Creeds of the Councils, it is nevertheless rightly retained today by all Christians, and is asserted to be of the same Authority as the other Articles, since it has its foundation in the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, Psalm 16 and Acts 2.

#### V.

Nor is there controversy on this matter; but what the genuine sense of this Article is, is rightly inquired. We shall bring forward various opinions on this Article, we shall modestly examine those that deviate from the mind and scope of Holy Scripture, and finally we shall prove the true and intended opinion of the Holy Spirit with solid reasons and with the consensus and votes of the Fathers and learned men.

## CHAPTER II.

### Wherein the opinion of Marcion, the Greeks, the Armenians, the Abyssinians, Durandus, and the Roman Catholics is proposed and refuted.

#### I.

Therefore, as regards the opinions of others concerning the Descent of Christ to hell; Marcion believed, or rather raved, that Christ descended to hell for the purpose of liberating the souls of all, even the most impious, from hell; but he did not liberate the souls of the just. Irenæus reports his opinion in book 1, chapter 29, in these words: *To the blasphemy which is against GOD, he added this also, truly receiving the mouth of the Devil and saying all things contrary to the truth. For he says that Cain and those who are like him, and the Sodomites and the Egyptians and those like them, and all the nations in general that walked in all manner of wickedness, were saved by the Lord when he descended to hell, and that they ran to him and he took them into his kingdom. But that Abel, Enoch, and Noah, and the other just men, and those who were patriarchs with Abraham, with all the prophets, and those who pleased GOD, did not partake of salvation; which the serpent that was in Marcion will proclaim. To have stated this opinion is to have refuted it.* Not far from this opinion were those who, with the Origenists, maintained that not only damned men, but also the Devils themselves, by virtue of the Passion, Death, and Descent of Christ to hell, would at some time be liberated and saved from hell; for which reason they are called Liberators.

#### II.

The Greeks, indeed, have preserved the Doctrine of the ancient Greek Fathers concerning the Descent to hell; yet some of them, having progressed further than is right, have extended the effect of Christ's descent to hell to the Redemption and Liberation of the impious as well. It is thought that Damascenus gave occasion for this excess in his Sermon on the Deceased, in which he spoke not assertively, but probabilistically. In particular, the Armenians, who arose around the year of Christ 460, denied that the torments of hell would be perpetual, because Christ, by His Descent to hell, had extracted all souls from there, as reported by Guido the Carmelite of Perpignan, in his *Summa de Hæresibus*, title on the Armenians, Chapters 3, 8, 10; Prateolus in his *Elenchus Hæreticorum*, title Armeni n. 18; and Alexander de Castro. In a certain Synaxarium, however, as Leo Allatius recounts in his *Dissertatio 2. de libris Ecclesiasticis Græcis*, p. 237, these words are read: *Descending to hell, He did not restore all to life, but those who were willing to believe in Him. But the souls of the saints who had existed since the beginning of the world, violently held in custody by the lord of hell, He liberated, and gave to all the faculty to return to the heavens.* In the Euchologion edited by Jacob Goar, f. 308, we find these words: *When death engaged with the human body, it is thrown down and crushed by the power of the Godhead, and from thence the souls of the just, bound from the beginning of time, are led forth.* Metrophanes Critobulus has more to the same effect

in his Confession, chapter 3, p. 59, seq. What the Abyssinians or Ethiopians believe concerning this Article is not obscure from Matthaeus Dresser's Oration on the Ethiopian Church, book 1 of his Orations, p. 15, and from the Confession of Christopher Licanatus, that is, Zagazabo, legate of King David to John III, King of Portugal, in which he speaks thus: *And with the Baptism of His blood, which Baptism was His Death, He baptized the Patriarchs and Prophets, He descended to hell, where was the soul of Adam and of his sons, and the soul of Christ Himself, which soul of Adam Christ Himself received from the Holy Virgin Mary, and in the splendor and power of His Divinity, by the strength of the Cross, He broke the brazen and fiery gates of hell, and bound Satan with iron chains, and redeemed Adam and his sons, that is, all of us.* It is especially memorable what Athanasius Kircher adduces in chapter 2 of his *China Illustrata*, that the Christians in China, about a thousand years ago, erected a monument, which was finally discovered in the twenty-fifth year of our century, the words of which on p. 23 sound thus: *He opened up life, He extinguished death, being hung on a bright day, that He might destroy the cities of the dark Hell, and the Region; when He had totally destroyed the wiles of the Devil with this, by the direct ship of piety, that the spiritual souls might ascend to the most illustrious mansions, having already at that time succored them; when He had here consummated the works of power, being lifted up at midday, He ascended into Heaven.* That is, as the same Kircher paraphrastically interprets on p. 30: *In His own person He descended to hell, and confounded all the Demons, with the ship of His piety He led the good to Heaven, and vindicated the souls of the just unto salvation. And when these things were finished, by His own power, around noon, He ascended into Heaven.*

### III.

Durandus de S. Porciano, as he departs from the other Scholastics in some other matters, defends his own opinion, for example, in the Doctrine of the Providence of God, where he denies that God concurs immediately in every action elicited from secondary causes, and contends that secondary causes produce effects by themselves and alone without the Concourse of God; so also he explains the Descent of Christ to hell differently, namely that by the descent to hell, through Metonymy or metalepsis, is noted the virtue and efficacy of the Passion and Death of Christ, by which He effected and merited that the souls of the deceased be liberated and redeemed from hell. Thus, Christ descended to hell not by the real and substantial presence of His soul, but only through certain effects, that is, by virtue and efficacy, just as a King is said to be in that place of a Province where by the authority of his power and by his command he effectively operates something. Picus Mirandulanus defends this opinion at length. But even if such a virtual virtue and efficacy of the Passion and Death of Christ on the souls of the deceased is not contrary to the analogy of faith, and to this extent it can be judged consonant with the truth; yet because that virtue is common to all the actions of Christ, to his Conception, Nativity, Passion, and Death, and even to his Resurrection and Ascension, the words of Christ, *You will not abandon my soul in hell*, do not even bear that sense; and besides, if the Descent of Christ to hell were to be explained by the force

and efficacy of his Death, that descent would still be continuing today, since the efficacy of Christ's Death does not cease; from this it is clearly apparent that this opinion of Durandus cannot and should not be received as an exposition of the Creed. Rightly, therefore, Durandus' exposition is disapproved not only by Bellarmine, Tom. 1. Controv. lib. 4. de Christi Anima cap. 15. p. m. 179. 180, but also by Busæus, Tract de Desc ad inf quaest. 1. th. 43. pag. 17. ed. Col. 1586.

#### IV.

The Pontifical Theologians rightly state with the Fathers that Christ descended to hell according to the soul only, and not also with the Body. The Roman Catechism proposes their opinion in these words: *When Christ died, his soul descended to hell, and remained there as long as his body was in the Sepulchre.* We cannot, however, subscribe to their opinion, because they explain hell far differently than we do, and by hell they understand a certain Subterranean Place around the Center of the Earth, in which, as in a Prison, the souls of the deceased are held captive, and indeed either Gehenna, a place of eternal punishment of Sense, where those are punished who have died with mortal sin without having obtained remission of their sins; or Purgatory, a place of punishment of Sense, but temporary, in which the souls of those who have departed from this world with venial sins are tormented and purged, until, being purged, they are received into Heaven; or Limbo, a place of punishment of loss, the Metaphor being drawn from the Limbo of a garment, because the extremity of a garment, or the band which surrounds the outermost part of a garment, is called a Limbus, whence they call the upper part or extremity of hell the Limbo of hell and distinguish it into the Limbo of infants and the Limbo of the Fathers, so that the inner Limbo, surrounding Purgatory, according to their mind, eternally retains the souls of infants dying without Baptism; while the outer Limbo, now empty, preserved the souls of the faithful Fathers of the Old Testament until the Death and Resurrection of Christ, where they lived in quiet indeed and tranquility and without any sense of pain, except that which the delay of the promised Beatitude and glory would cause, and by the undoubted hope of which they were sustained, yet excluded from Heaven.

#### V.

Therefore, when they say that the soul of Christ descended to hell, they mean to indicate that the soul of Christ, at the very moment it was separated from the body by death, visited those lowest places and those subterranean abodes of separated souls, and remained there for the whole three days of death. They do indeed disagree among themselves as to whether the soul of Christ visited each of those places of hell through the real presence of its soul and penetrated even to Gehenna itself, the place of the Damned. Bellarmine, Tom. 1. Lib. 4. cap. 16, affirms this question, saying: *It is indeed probable that the soul of Christ descended to all the places of hell on account of that passage in Ecclesiasticus 24: I will penetrate to all the lower parts of the Earth, I will behold all who sleep.* But Bellarmine later retracted this opinion in the Revisions of his work. The

more common opinion is that of Thomas Aquinas, who states that Christ descended by the real presence of His Soul only to the Limbo of the Fathers, but by effect to all the other places of hell: *It must be said*, he says, 3rd part, S. Th. quæst. 52, *that something is said to be somewhere in two ways; in one way by its effect, and in this way Christ descended into every part of hell, yet in different ways. For the descent into the hell of the Damned had this effect, that by descending to hell He confuted them for their unbelief and malice. To those, however, who were detained in Purgatory, He gave hope of attaining glory. But to the Holy Fathers, who were detained in Hell for Original Sin alone, He infused the Light of eternal glory. In another way, something is said to be somewhere by its essence, and in this way the soul of Christ descended only to the place of hell where the just were detained, so that those whom He visited inwardly by grace according to His divinity, He might also visit in place according to His soul. Thus, existing in one part of hell, He extended His effect in some way to all parts of hell, just as by suffering in one place of the Earth He liberated the whole World by His passion.*

## **VI.**

Nor do all feel the same about the Purpose and effect of this real and local Descent. For, as we have just indicated, those who, with Thomas, whom the greater part of the School follows in this matter, deny that Christ's soul, according to its substance, reached Gehenna or the place of the Damned, and that it penetrated there only by certain effects; they hold that He only terrified the Devils by the declaration of His glory, accused the damned of unbelief and contumacy, and compelled both to acknowledge Him as Lord. Others, however, among whom is Busaeus, a Jesuit of Mainz, think the opinion of some of the ancient Fathers more probable, and contend that Christ's soul was truly in its essence in the hell of the damned, that it broke the iron bars and shattered the brazen gates, not to liberate any from eternal punishments, but to bind the strong one, i.e., Satan, to plunder his goods, and to declare Himself the lord of all the lower regions. Indeed, there were not wanting, though very few, who conceded that one or another could be liberated from the punishments of the Damned by a singular Privilege, and that the philosopher Plato was rescued from hell by the Descent of Christ to hell: see Busaeus' Tract. de Desc. ad inf. Quæst. 6. & 7. p. 34. & 65 seqq.

## **VII.**

Regarding the souls detained in Purgatory, some Scholastics have opined that all the souls who, at the time of Christ's Descent to hell, were detained in it, were rescued from there by a most full indulgence of Christ: which is the opinion of Dominic Soto and Ambrose Catharinus, as reported by Estius, in his commentary on the third book of the Sentences, distinction 22, §. 4, who himself also leans toward this opinion. To most, however, it seems more probable that Christ did not liberate all the souls from Purgatory who were then being tormented in it, but only those who had either completed the time of their purgation, or had merited by some singular devotion to Christ's passion to be

liberated when Christ descended to hell, yet bringing some refreshment to the rest, by raising them to a hope of a future state and a better life therein.

#### VIII.

Regarding the Limbo of the Fathers, the Doctors of the Roman School teach with common consent that Christ's soul descended there in reality and brought them two great benefits; First, essential Beatitude; Second, deliverance from that Prison and conveyance into Heaven, the first of which He bestowed upon them continuously, but the second not long after: as Bellarmine says in Tom. 1. Controv. lib. 4. de Christi anima cap. 16. Tertio Dubio. With whom Becanus agrees in his *Manuale Controversiarum*. lib. 3. cap. 2. Quæst. 3. §. 2.

#### IX.

If this opinion taught nothing other than that the soul of Christ, separated from the Body, was in that place and in that state where the souls of the faithful of the Old Testament were, that Christ was gathered to the Fathers (Num. 20:24; 2 Chron. 34:28), that Christ went to the Council and Assembly of souls (Heb. 12:22-23), that His soul was bound in the bundle of the living (1 Sam. 25:29), it would not be rejected by us, but would be approved as conformable to the judgment of Holy Scripture and the Catholic Church; but because it contradicts the History of Christ's Death and, besides and against Scripture, it invents more than two receptacles for souls, and adds to this not-yet-proven dogma other no less uncertain ones, it is rightly refuted by the Evangelical Doctors. For the History of Christ's Death most evidently testifies that the soul of Christ, after its separation from the Body, migrated to Paradise, according to the promise made to the thief in Luke 23:43: *Today you will be with me in Paradise*. And the same history reports that Christ, just about to die, entrusted His soul into the hands of the Father in Luke 23:46, with these words: *Father, into your hands I commend my Spirit*.

#### X.

If Christ had truly and locally descended to hell, to the abode of the damned or Tartarus, it would have been done either that He might suffer something there, or that He might preach to the dead, or that He might display His victory to the devils, or that He might liberate the souls of the faithful Fathers from there. But the first cannot be said, because Christ on the Cross consummated all things; whence, expiring, He said: *It is finished* (John 19:30). The Apostle also says that Christ, by a single offering, has perfected for ever those who are sanctified (Heb. 10:14). Nor the second, because evangelization pertains not to the dead, but to the living, according to Ps. 6:5: *In hell who will confess to you?* Ps. 95:7-8: *Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*. Eccles. 11:3: *If the tree falls toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falls, there it will be*. Rom. 2:12: *For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law*. Nor is what Peter says in 1 Epist. 4:6, that the gospel was preached to the dead, to be

understood as if it were preached to men actually dead; but in a divided sense, to those who were once living, when it was preached to them, and were now dead. Nor can the third be said; because the descent of Christ to hell pertains not to the state of Exaltation, but to the state of Exinanition, as will be proved in chapter 3, thesis XI. Nor the fourth; because it has not yet been proven that the Fathers of the Old Testament were in Limbo. The contrary, rather, is established from Holy Scripture.

## **XI.**

For Solomon, a witness beyond all exception, describes the death of the faithful of the Old Testament in this way: Eccl. 12:7. *The dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to GOD who gave it.* It is justly doubted whether these things agree with Limbo. The Book of Wisdom, canonical for the Pontificals, says that the souls of the just are in the hand of God, so that torment shall not touch them. Wis. 3:1. Isaiah, chapter 57:2, teaches that the just who die enter into Peace, and rest in their beds: In the same way as it is said of the Faithful of the New Testament in Apoc. 14:13: *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors.* The Apostle in Heb. 11:10, seqq., writes that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the other faithful of the Old Testament looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God; that they migrated to the Country which they were seeking; that they were received into a better, that is, a heavenly country, which they desired, into the city which God had prepared for them. The Patriarch Jacob, when he was dying, waited for the salvation of Jehovah, Gen. 49:18. David placed his Spirit in the hand of God, Psal. 31:6. These things can scarcely be reconciled with the opinion of Limbo. The examples also of the pious of the Old Testament received into Heaven, Enoch, Gen. 5:24, who walked with God and was translated, that he should not see death, for GOD had taken him; and of Elijah, who in express words is said to have been carried up by a whirlwind into Heaven, 2 Kings 2, overturn the opinion of the Limbo of the Fathers. Whence the faithful of the Old Testament are said to be brought into glory, Heb. 2:10, and the faithful of the New Testament to have come to the spirits of just men made perfect, Heb. 12:23, and many are said to come from the East and West and to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Matth. 8:11. Lazarus also was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom, Luke 16:22-23, not into a pit without water, nor into a Prison or the Margin of Gehenna, such as they are accustomed to depict the Limbo of the Fathers to us, but into the very embraces of Abraham; a similitude taken either from little children, who are most dear to their parents, whom they cherish in their bosom, in which they also sometimes sleep and rest sweetly, or from the rite and custom of the ancients reclining at table, who in their Banquets were accustomed to recline in such a way that one would recline his head in another's bosom, and the most beloved and honored would recline in the bosom of him who was the chief of the feast.

## **XII.**

Indeed, Bellarmine in Tom. 1. Controvers. Lib. 4. Cap. XI, not far from the beginning, from this very passage in Luke 16, attempts to prove his opinion, namely, that Abraham's Bosom is the Limbo of the Fathers. For he reasons thus: *The rich man, being in hell, saw afar off the soul of Lazarus in Abraham's Bosom and heard that there was a great gulf between their places*, for that is what χάσμα signifies, from which it appears that there was nothing solid interposed between the place of the Damned and Abraham's Bosom, but that both souls were in the same chasm, though far distant from each other.

### **XIII.**

But in reply: 1. Even if we grant that both the pious Lazarus and the impious Rich Man were, after death, in the common state of the dead, Bellarmine has not yet proven what is in question, namely, that Lazarus was in the Limbo of the Fathers, but the rich feaster in Gehenna itself, and yet both were in the same chasm. Thus Tertullian in his book *De Idololatria*, C. 13, writes: *So also Lazarus in hell obtained refreshment in Abraham's bosom, whereas the rich man was placed in the torment of fire*. Chrysostom in his Homily on the Rich Man: *We have heard what both suffered on earth; let us see what both of them suffer in hell*. Jerome in Ep. 25: *And Abraham, although in a place of refreshment, is nevertheless described as being in hell*. And Theophilus of Antioch in Book 4 of his *Allegories on John* says: *In this, that he sees Abraham in hell, some think this reason underlies it, that all the Saints before the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ are read to have descended to hell, though to a place of refreshment*. Who, however, did not yet know of Limbo. (2.) From the inner substance of that text many things can be drawn which prove that Abraham's Bosom is not Limbo, or a part of hell itself; such as (1.) because ᾗδης, or hell, and κόλπος Ἀβραάμ, or the Bosom of Abraham, are opposed to each other in verses 22 and 23, which could not be if the Bosom of Abraham were a part of Gehenna. (2.) The deceased Lazarus was carried by rejoicing Angels into the Bosom of Abraham, which can scarcely be said of Limbo, for it is not probable that the Angels, who always see the face of God, carry the souls of men to a place where they do not see the face of GOD. (3.) The Bosom of Abraham was seen by the Rich Man from afar, ἀπὸ μακρόθεν, verse 23, namely from hell; therefore, it is not Limbo, which is near Gehenna and part of hell. (4.) The Bosom of Abraham is a place of Consolation, rest, refreshment, and salvation, where good things are received; but Limbo is a place of the pain of loss, according to the Pontificals. Whence Bellarmine himself in chapter 16, the second doubt, asks whether it was any pain for Christ to be in hell? And he answers: *Blessed Thomas, 3rd part, question 52, articles 1 & 3, seems to say that it was some pain for Christ to be in hell according to the soul and in the sepulcher according to the flesh. For he says that he willed to be there with them to take upon himself our pains*. He reports that Cajetan taught the same things in his commentary on Acts 2. But Bellarmine himself approves Bonaventure's opinion: that Christ's soul, while it was in hell, was in a place of punishment, but without punishment. Although he confesses that Christ was in Limbo without punishment, he nevertheless calls Limbo a place of punishment in express words. This appears even more clearly from the words he adds: *Those souls draw their punishment from hell, who are there as in*

a prison, and cannot leave when they wish; but Christ was in hell free and the liberator of others, as all the Fathers proclaim. It is not, however, called a punishment if a King visits prisons to liberate some, but it is called a condescension and humility. From which it is clearer than daylight that the Bosom of Abraham is not the Limbo of hell, for although for Christ it was not a place of punishment, for Abraham and others it would have been a place of punishment, at least of loss. (5.) Between the Bosom of Abraham and Gehenna there is a great gulf fixed, χάσμα μέγα ἐστηριγμένον, V. 26, a great distance, so that no passage can be given from one to the other; but between the Limbo of the Fathers and Gehenna there is not a very great distance: for both, according to the opinion of the Pontificals, are in the heart and bowels of the earth. (6.) Finally, the Roman Ritual itself, in the chapter on Funerals, favors our opinion; for among other things, when the funeral procession is first led into the church, it directs the Clergy to sing: *May Christ receive you, who has called you, and may the Angels lead you into the Bosom of Abraham.*

#### **XIV.**

Nor do other places of Holy Scripture produced by Bellarmine prove the Limbo of the Fathers, for instance Zach. 9, v. 11. *Thou also, by the blood of thy testament, hast sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.* For besides the fact that Bellarmine himself, forgetful of himself, adduces this place to prove Purgatory in Tom. 2. Controv. lib. 1. de Purgator. cap. 3. p. m. 232. *Although they commonly adduce this place for the liberation of the Fathers from Limbo, yet it better suits the liberation of souls from Purgatory (1) because they are more properly called prisoners (2) because in Purgatory there is no water of consolation, which is in Limbo, Luke 16. Here he is comforted.* It should also be noted that, according to the Hebrew truth, which is thus: גַּם־אַתָּה בְּדָם בְּרִיתְךָ שְׁלַחְתִּי יְגֹמֵם אֶתְּךָ מִבּוֹר אֵין מַיִם בּוֹ, the words of the Prophet should be translated thus: *Also you (or as it pertains to you) in the Blood (or through the Blood) of your covenant, I have sent out (not you have sent out) your prisoners from the Cistern (or pit) in which there is no water.* And thus translated and more deeply inspected, they cannot be understood of the Limbo of the Fathers. For (1) the pronoun *You*, being feminine in this place, cannot refer to Christ, but must refer either to the posterity of Abraham, or to the daughter of Zion, the Church, which is mentioned in verse 9 preceding. (2) Nor can this waterless pit be understood of the Limbo of the Fathers or the Bosom of Abraham. For this pit is a squalid, foul, and horrid place, which it is absurd to think of the Bosom of Abraham. Whence Bailus, Cottonus, and Bellarmine himself argue for Purgatory against Limbo from this place: *Zechariah speaks of a pit in which there is no water of consolation. In Limbo there is water of consolation. Therefore, he is not speaking of Limbo.* (3) The genuine sense of this passage is indicated by the context of the text itself: for the same God who in v. 10 had promised, *I will cut off the chariot*, here continues the discourse: *I have sent or I will send and I will deliver by or on account of the Blood of your Covenant, O Daughter of Zion, the Church, in whose favor the covenant is made, and in whose bosom is deposited the covenant, which was initiated with Abraham, and sealed with the Blood of circumcision, and which was afterwards renewed in a solemn manner on Mount Sinai,*

*and confirmed with the blood of sacrifices (Exod. 24:8), by which the Sacrifice of Christ, by which alone this covenant between God and his people is ratified, was prefigured: I, I say, will deliver and send forth your prisoners, that is, your captives, from the Babylonian Prison, devoid of all solace and refreshment, and moreover, I will deliver by the Blood of the Messiah, by which the covenant of grace is sanctioned and confirmed, those who are weary and burdened with sin, and bound by the snares of Satan, from the abyss of death, as from a deep gulf. Whence Augustine in book 18 of The City of God, chapter 35, says of this place: It seems to me that nothing is better signified by it than the dry depth of human misery, where there are no streams of justice, but the mud of iniquity. Much less can the Descent of Christ to the Limbo of the Fathers be carved out from the words of Psalm 107:16: He has broken the gates of bronze and shattered the bars of iron. For Bellarmine himself, conquered by the force of truth, confesses that this passage is not convincing, but only probably persuasive, since it is certain that, literally, it treats of the liberation from Egypt (or from any Prison, danger, and Tyranny). The Fathers who cite this saying here, draw it hither by way of Accommodation. The passage from Ecclesiasticus 24, where the Wisdom of God speaks thus: I will penetrate all the lower parts of the Earth and I will look upon all who sleep and I will enlighten all who hope in the Lord, Bellarmine judged equally invalid: whence he very rightly conjectures that this passage also does not convince the Evangelicals, whom he traduces with the infamous denomination of Heretics, both because they do not receive this book as Canonical, but hold it as Apocryphal, and also because these words are absent from the Greek text. And indeed, the Evangelicals rightly urge the Greek text. For when the Adversaries resort to the Apocryphal Scriptures, it is fair that they argue from the sources themselves, not from the errors of the Latin Version.*

The passage in Matthew 12:40, *As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth*, does not speak of Christ's descent into hell, but of his burial. For *the heart of the earth*, in the Hebrew idiom, signifies that which is within the earth, whether it be closer to the surface or more remote from it, and Christ alludes to the words of Jonah who in Jonah 2:3 said he was cast into the heart of the sea. But just as Jonah, when cast into the sea, was not precisely in the middle of the sea, so it is not precisely required that Christ was in the middle of the earth, but it is sufficient for the truth of this expression that he was in a cave, hidden within the earth. Thus Tyre in Ezekiel 27:4 is said to be in the heart of the sea, not precisely because it was in the middle of the sea, but because it was situated in the sea, although it was not far from the continent. In the same way, in Deuteronomy 4:11, the mountain is said to burn to the heart of heaven, because the fire was seen to reach to about the middle region of the air. Thus in Exodus 15:8, the waters are said to have congealed in the heart of the sea. Profane authors also imitate this phrase; for the Arabs call the meridian, the heart of heaven; Theophrastus, the pith of trees, the heart; and Aristotle, the inner part of a water-clock, the heart. Nor was Christ's sepulchre above the earth, as it seems to Bellarmine, but rather within the earth, so that Peter and

another disciple of Christ, *stooping down* (παρακύψαντες), bending their bodies and stooping over, had to look into it, Luke 24:12; John 20:5.

## XVII.

Bellarminus also objects to the passage in Romans 10, v. 7: *Do not say in your heart: Who will descend into the Abyss, that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.* And from this he concludes that Christ after death was in the abyss. And he indeed warns that by the name Abyss the state of the damned cannot be understood; for according to Calvin, Christ was still living in that state; but here it speaks of the place where he was dead. Nor can the sepulcher be understood: for Abyss signifies a very deep chasm, which a sepulcher is not. Resp. But before we respond directly, it will be useful to note what Abyss properly signifies. Ἄβυσσος, therefore, is the same as without a bottom, or lacking a bottom; from the privative α and βυθός, bottom, deep: for the Ionians say βυσσόν instead of βυθός. Abyssus, therefore, will be a chasm of immense depth. Thus Aristophanes in the *Frogs* uses it adjectivally, λίμνην ἄβυσσον, a bottomless marsh; in *Lysistrata* metaphorically, ἀργύριον ἄβυσσον, immense or very deep silver; and Euripides in the *Phoenissae*: *For would that Cithaeron had gone down into the bottomless chasms of Tartarus.* Thus, the substantive Ἄβυσσος signifies an immense and vast cavity; then, the vast mass and infinite magnitude of a thing: in which way in Scripture it denotes an infinite multitude of waters, which the Hebrews call עוֹמֵק, an immense force and multitude of waters. These things being premised, we respond to Bellarmine's argument by denying the Major Proposition, which is: *Whoever descends into the Abyss, descends into the Limbo of the Fathers; for by Abyss could be understood either the sepulcher, into which Christ descended in body, or Tartarus itself, into which he descended by virtue and efficacy.* Or, even if Bellarmine had proved that the sepulcher is not meant here by Abyss, the enumeration of parts would be insufficient. The State of the Dead can still be so called; just as not only the Greeks, but also the Romans spoke, as we shall prove below with examples, whose style, being commonly received, the Apostles also used: for it is not probable that they invented or formed a new language. The scope of the Apostle confirms this exposition most evidently. The Apostle wants to show in chapter 10 the ease of Evangelical Justification compared to legal Justification, and so he concludes in vv. 5, 6, 7, 8. If the Law of Moses had such evidence that the Israelites did not need to cross the sea and ascend to heaven to seek the Laws and knowledge of them from inaccessible places. Much more will it be permissible to affirm this of the Gospel, the Ministry of the Spirit. Legal justice requires many and great things: If you do these things, you will live; meanwhile, it supplies no strength by which they can be performed, nor does it teach any way how we can ascend to heaven, and when we descend into the abyss, how we can return from there and obtain eternal life; But he affirms that this has been invincibly demonstrated by the Death of Christ, by his Resurrection from Death, and by his Ascension into heaven, so much so that if anyone should wish to deny it or call it into doubt, he would be doing as if he wished to bring Christ down from heaven and to deny either that he died, or that he rose from the dead, and therefore that he

returned from the abyss. Wherefore, since these things are so evident, it follows most plainly that the Condition of the New Covenant, to the performance of which strengths have been acquired and given to us through the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ, is most easy.

### **XVIII.**

When Christ in Ephesians 4:9 is said to have descended into the lower parts of the earth, τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς, his Local descent to Tartarus is certainly not meant. For even if Paul, using a common and widely accepted phrase, were to say that the soul of the dying Christ properly descended εἰς τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς or to the lower parts of the earth, as some Fathers understand this passage, and as Greek writers commonly said that the soul descends εἰς ἄδου οἶκον, and the Romans, to the underworld; nevertheless, the Limbo of the Fathers, much less the place of the Damned, would not yet have been proven, as will become clearer from the last chapter. 2. If it were to be referred at all to the state of Christ which immediately followed his death, it can be appropriately understood of the Sepulchre. For here there would not be a comparison between the parts of the Earth among themselves, some of which are closer to the surface, others more remote from it, and thus closer to the center; but there would be an opposition between Heaven and earth, of which the former is rightly held as the supreme part of the world, and the latter as the lowest. 3. It can be best understood of the Descent of Christ from Heaven to earth, and thus of his Humiliation and Manifestation in the Flesh. Of which Descent Christ himself speaks in John 6:38: *I have come down from Heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.* Thus David, concerning his formation, certainly not in the Center of the Earth, but in its upper part, in his mother's womb, says in Psalm 139:15: *My body was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the Earth.* And Isaiah 44:23, the Heavens and the lower parts of the Earth are bidden to rejoice, not indeed the lowest parts of the Earth, nearest the Center, but the whole earth which is lower than Heaven; so that it is not the parts of the Earth that are compared among themselves, but the parts of the world, Heaven and Earth, that are compared with each other. This was observed among the Pontificals by Cajetan, who understands the lower parts of the Earth to be the Earth itself.

The chief passage upon which they build the dogma of the Limbo of the Fathers is 1 Peter 3:18-20, where Christ is said to have been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit, in which (or by which) He also went and preached to the spirits who are in prison, who were once disobedient, when the patience of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. But indeed, 1. this passage, as Bellarmine confesses, is very obscure and therefore subject to various explanations, and a dogma of faith cannot be built upon it alone. Many doctors of the primitive Church (Hermes lib. 3 simil. 9, Irenaeus lib. 4, cap. 45, Clement of Alexandria Strom. lib. 6, Origen Hom. 53 in Matth., Athanasius lib. de Incarn. & Epist. ad Epict., Epiphanius haeres. 77, Cyril de recta fide ad Theodos. I. 12. in Johan. Orat. Pasch., Rufinus in explicat. Symboli) understand by "Spirit" the soul of

Christ, and by "spirits in prison" the souls in ᾠδης, and they hold that the soul of Christ went there when His soul was separated from His body on the Cross. Reverend John Pearson reports in his *Exposition of the Apostolic Creed*, Art. 5, p. 406, that the Anglican Church once asserted this to prove and illustrate this article. Among our Doctors, Peter Martyr defends it in his *Loci Communes*, Class 2, p. m. 783, where among other things these words occur: *The soul, as soon as it departed from the body, did not remain idle, but descended to hell. And indeed, the presence of Christ's soul was felt by the company of both the pious spirits and those who were damned. For the spirits of the faithful who were resting in a place of tranquility, which is aptly called Abraham's Bosom, were exhilarated with great consolation and gave thanks to God the Best and Greatest, who had liberated them by the hand of that Mediator, and had executed what He had promised so long before. The spirits also addicted to eternal damnation felt the advent of Christ's Soul. For it is found in Peter, 1 Epist. 3, that Christ preached to those spirits, which can be understood in this sense, namely, that He reproached them for the obstinacy and unbelief with which they had been hardened against the word of God, and the holy admonitions which were frequently proposed to them while they were living; or that even then He announced to them that word of Salvation, the same and most true, which, since they, always like themselves, stubbornly rejected it, and retained the same unbelief dead as they had when living, they gave a most open testimony of their own most just condemnation in themselves, especially since they could no longer pretend any ignorance. Not far from this is the Common Preceptor of Germany, Philip Melancthon, who in chapter 16 of John, at the end of Part 3 of his Works, fol. 866, says: Here also it is asked concerning the Article of the Descent into hell, what that descent is. Some understand the descent into hell before death, the humiliation itself, by which Christ endured the horrible sense of God's wrath against our sins; some understand death itself and the burial, but we simply feel that Christ truly raised the Fathers, as Peter says, He preached to the spirits who were in prison. I understand this encounter with the Fathers, according to Peter's saying, to be the Descent into hell, and I do not wish to dispute this curiously, but that the pious may modestly think of certain secrets concerning the wonderful death and resurrection of Christ, which the resurrected Fathers also witnessed, being signified in Peter's saying, which have not been more plainly recited. Closer still to Martyr in the interpretation of this passage comes John Calvin (except that he understands by "Spirit" not the soul, but the power of the Spirit of Christ), a most solid theologian, in his *Institutes*, lib. 2, cap. 16, §.9, where he speaks notably in this manner: I willingly confess that Christ shone upon the souls of the dead by the virtue of his spirit, so that they might acknowledge the grace, which they had only tasted in hope, to have been then exhibited to the world. And the passage of Peter can be aptly applied here, where he says that Christ came and preached to the spirits who were in the watchtower (they commonly translate it as prison), for the context also leads us to this, that the faithful who had died before that time were partakers of the same grace with us: because he amplifies the power of death from this, that it penetrated even to the dead, while the pious souls were possessed by the present sight of his visitation, which they had anxiously awaited; on the contrary, it became clearer to the reprobate that they were excluded from all salvation. But that Peter does not speak so distinctly is not to be taken as*

if he mixes the pious and the impious together without any distinction: but he only means to teach that the sense of Christ's death was common to both. He hands down similar things in his Commentary on 1 Peter 3, v. 19, p. m. 36, 37. Nor does Huldrych Zwingli teach otherwise in his first Sermon delivered at Bern, where he explains this passage about the Descent of Christ to hell [F.2. Operum f. 527] in this way: *We therefore accept that article in this sense, that Christ did not, of course, lay waste that sad place of eternal damnation and liberate all who were acting therein, but that He came as Redeemer and Liberator only to those who, having died in true faith, had committed themselves wholly to the promised Savior. Whom, however, God detained in certain places (which His wisdom had destined for this purpose) without any pain or sorrow, except perhaps that which the absence of the Divine countenance and the long delay of expectation caused them. These, I say, He exhilarated with the most joyful message of His coming, and having raised some of them from the dead, He took up with Him into Heaven all who were considered worthy of the joys of eternal life.* Nor are there wanting passages of Scripture by which this could be proved. See Luke 16 and 1 Peter 3:19 & 4 chap. v. 6. Therefore, although we do not disapprove of this interpretation of the Fathers and Reformed Theologians, we are nevertheless by no means persuaded that the dogma of the Limbo of the Fathers can be derived from it. Even the Fathers who refer this passage to the descent to ᾗδης, at least not all of them, speak of a local or real descent to Gehenna or Limbo, but of the common state of the dead, as will be clear below in Chapter IV.

## **XX.**

II. Others, however, following Augustine, Bede, and Theodore Beza, with no small verisimilitude, deny that Peter is speaking here of Christ's descent to hell (1) because there is no mention here of Christ's soul, but of the Spirit by which He was quickened, by which, of course, the soul cannot be understood. For it can neither actively or effectively quicken, because quickening is an action of infinite power, nor can it be subjectively or passively quickened or said to be quickened, unless one would wish to say either that Christ's soul was mortal, or indeed truly dead; or that Christ was recalled to life by His soul. But although no one is restored to life otherwise than by the soul being united to the body again; yet the soul itself no more conjoins itself to its body than it at first either produced itself or was conjoined to the body. Nor does Bellarmine's exception help: that in Scripture what is not killed but is kept alive is said to be quickened, as in 1 Sam. 27:9, 2 Sam. 8:2, Acts 7:19. For this is only said of things that can be killed, but by no means of the soul, which is immortal. It remains, therefore, that by Spirit is indicated not the Soul, but the eternal Spirit of Christ, i.e., His Deity or divine Nature, by which He was recalled to life. Thus we see in Rom. 1:4, Christ is said to be the Son of David according to the flesh, i.e., according to the human nature which was propagated from David through his ancestors to Him; but He was declared to be the Son of God according to the spirit of holiness, i.e., according to that which He did not derive from David, which is nothing other than His Divine Nature, which was personally united to the human Nature, so that He could perform the Office of Mediator. (2) The opinion of the Pontificals can have no

place here: because according to their opinion, the Fathers or pious and obedient men are imagined to have been in Limbo or the edge of hell, to whom Christ is said to have preached. But it is so far from Peter speaking of the spirits or souls of the pious, that on the contrary he speaks only of those who were disobedient, i.e., who did not repent at the preaching of Noah, and therefore now suffer for their disobedience in prison, i.e., in hell. If it were about the Limbo of the Fathers, according to the hypothesis of the Pontificals, Noah himself with his family would have to be numbered among those Spirits to whom it was preached; who, however, in this place is diametrically opposed to these Spirits. (3) The opinion of the Pontificals seems to be repudiated, because Christ is not said to have liberated those spirits, but only to have preached to them: nor is it mentioned that these spirits obeyed this divine preaching, but rather that they did not obey. It may be added that no preaching has a place in hell, because there is no place there for conversion. (4) Nor does Peter assert that those spirits were then ἐν Φυλακῇ, when it was preached to them, namely, in the time of Noah, through whom the Spirit of Christ preached Repentance to them so unceasingly for a whole hundred and twenty years; but Peter seems to refer to that very time when he was writing these things, when the bodies of those disobedient ones had indeed long since rotted away, but their Souls, enclosed in Prison, were awaiting the final Sentence of the Celestial Judge with weeping and gnashing of teeth, held in outer darkness, where they are also now held. (5) The opinion of the Pontificals is to be rejected for this reason, that they have not yet proved by any suitable testimony that by the name of Φυλακή, Prison or Custody, a place of this kind is signified in which the Blessed Spirits were enclosed. That Augustine referred the present saying to the times preceding the flood, and to the preaching done by Noah, is confirmed by the words of his Epistle 99 to Evodius: *Consider, lest perhaps that whole matter, which the Apostle Peter says concerning the spirits concluded in prison, who in the days of Noah did not believe, does not pertain at all to hell, but rather to those times, the form of which he transferred to these times. For that past event was a figure of things to come, so that those who now do not believe the Gospel, while the Church is being built up in all nations, are understood to be like those who then did not believe, when the ark was being prepared. But those who have believed and are saved by Baptism are compared to those who were then saved in the same ark through water. Whence he says, so also Baptism in a like form saves you. Therefore, let us also compare the other things concerning the unbelievers to this form of similitude, and let us not suspect that the Gospel was preached, or is still being preached, in hell to make believers and to liberate them, as if a church has been established there also. From all of which we think it is clearer than daylight that Christ did not descend to the Limbo of the Fathers.*

## CHAPTER III.

**The diverse opinions of the Lutheran Theologians on this article are reviewed, and the current opinion of most is modestly examined.**

### I.

Having refuted the opinion of the Pontificals, it follows that we should consider the diverse opinions of the Evangelicals on this Article. And first, we will propose the explanations of the Lutherans, then those of the Reformed, and we will point out, without bitterness or party spirit, and with the candor that is proper to theology, what may be wanting in either. Therefore, as regards the Lutherans, they do not all agree on this point, but hold diverse opinions on this Article. The blessed Luther himself expressed his mind on this matter at different times and in different places. In Tom. 2. of the Latin Wittenberg edition, fol. 279, fac. 1, and in Tom. 1. of the Latin Jena edition, fol. 181, on the words of Psalm 16, *You will not abandon my soul in hell*, he writes thus: *The sense, therefore, is most clear, explained by the Apostles with such abundance and diligence. But here too, men, presuming everything from their own intellects, began to dispute whether Christ was in hell according to his soul or substance. And what it means that he was in hell. A great part dared to contradict the Spirit, that the soul of Christ was not in hell, except by effect, that is, the excellent glossators of the Word of God: my soul, that is, the effect of my soul, you will not abandon in hell. He descended to hell, that is, he produced an effect in hell. But despising these frivolous and impious trifles, let us understand the words of the Prophet, simply spoken, simply, and if we cannot understand them, let us faithfully believe them. The Authority of this Scripture is greater than the capacity of the whole human intellect, says Augustine. For truly the soul of Christ descended to hell according to substance. But what that descent was or is, I believe has not yet been sufficiently revealed, at least to all. In the following, he continues: We see, however, that Scripture assigns two places to the dead, the pit for the body, and hell for the soul. But Peter here does not say that only hell, that is, death, was loosed in Christ, but the pains of hell, that is, of death, because although many Saints are believed to have been in the Sepulcher and in hell without pain, because they also died in peace, yet just as he died with the greatest pain, so it seems that he also sustained pains after death in hell, that he might overcome all things for us. So for now I cling to the words of Peter, until I am taught better things, so that I believe that Christ, above all others, felt not only death, but also the pains of death and hell, that his flesh indeed rested in hope, but his soul tasted hell. And this is what he says here, you will not abandon my soul in hell, nor will you give...*

### II.

The Blessed Luther wrote these things in the year 1528. But later, namely in the year 1533, in a sermon delivered at Torgau, Tom. 6. of the German Jena edition, fol. 76, Col. 2, he spoke of this article in this way: *Before He rose and ascended to heaven, and while He still lay in the grave, He also descended to hell, so that He might also deliver us, who were*

to lie captive there, from it, just as He also for that reason came into death, and was laid in the grave, that He might bring His own out of it. But I will not treat this article loftily and sharply, how it happened, or what it means to descend to hell, but will remain with the simple understanding, as these words sound, as one must present it to children and simple people. For there have been many who have wanted to grasp this with reason and the five senses, but have thereby hit upon nothing and achieved nothing, but have only departed further from the faith and been led astray. Therefore, this is the most certain way for anyone who wants to proceed rightly and not run into error, that he only remain with the words, and simply picture them to himself as best he can. He continues: And it pleases me well that one thus paints, plays, sings, or says it for the simple, and should also leave it at that, that one does not trouble oneself with high, pointed thoughts about how it might have happened. For it certainly did not happen bodily, since He remained in the grave for the three days. And on fol. 77, Col. 2, he has this: So here, when it (the world) hears that CHRIST descended to hell, it immediately starts to speculate on how it happened. And it makes many lengthy, useless questions, whether the soul alone descended, or whether the Godhead was with it? Also, what did he do there? And how did he deal with the devils, and many such things, of which it can know nothing. But we should let such unnecessary questions go, and simply and plainly fix and bind our heart and thoughts to the words of the faith, which says: I believe in the Lord CHRIST, the Son of GOD, died, buried, and descended into hell, that is, in the whole Person, GOD and man, with body and soul undivided, born of the Virgin, suffered, died, and was buried, so I should not divide it here either, but believe and say, that the same Christ, GOD and man in one Person, descended to hell, but did not remain there, as Psalm 16 says of Him: You will not leave my soul in hell, nor will you suffer Your Holy One to see corruption. But He calls soul according to the language of Scripture, not as we do, a separate being from the body, but the whole man, as He calls Himself the Holy One of God. But how this could have happened, that the man lies there in the grave, and yet descends to hell, that we should and must leave unprobed and ununderstood, for it certainly did not happen bodily or tangibly.

### III.

From these words, we think it is clearly established that the Great Man in the former words expressly teaches more than once that Christ, according to the soul, during death, descended to hell and felt the pains of hell, from which, being raised from the dead, he was loosed. In the latter words, he also expressly warns that Christ, before the Resurrection, while His Body was resting in the Sepulchre, descended to hell; and he proves the Descent of Christ to hell by the words of Peter in 1 Ep. 3:19, as well as by those of David in Ps. 16 and Peter in Acts 2. Therefore, Luther's meaning is: the subject *Quod* or of denomination, as the Schools say, of this Descent, is the God-man Christ; but whether the subject *Quo* is the Soul alone, or the Soul with the Divinity, he did not wish to determine. Meanwhile, he does not assert that Christ descended to hell according to the Body, or with the Body united to the Soul, adding this reason, because the Body remained in the sepulchre for those three days. Whence it is easy to gather that it is at

least not so certain that the Blessed Man referred the Article of the Descent to hell to the State of Exaltation, because, in his mind, it happened while the inanimate Body lay in the Sepulchre, but rather to the state of Humiliation. Concerning which matter, however, we move no dispute with anyone.

#### IV.

What Dr. Johannes Bugenhagen and Philip Melanchthon, after the death of Luther in the year 1559, when a controversy arose concerning this Article, especially concerning the torments of the Soul of Christ after its separation, wrote to the Senate of Hamburg, can be read in the *Consilia Philippi Melanchthonis*, Part 2, pp. 129, 130, 131. The authors of the Formula of Concord appeal to Luther's sermon delivered at Torgau, and teach that the whole Christ, God and Man, descended to hell, conquered Satan, overthrew the power of hell, and stripped the Devil of all his force and power. For the rest, they do not wish to inquire curiously or subtly into the manner of this Descent, what it was like, as is evident from these words of theirs: *But since this article of our faith, like the preceding one [on the person of Christ], cannot be comprehended either by our senses or by our reason, but must be accepted by faith alone: we unanimously advise that there should be no disputing about this matter, but that this article should be believed and taught as simply as possible. And in this matter let us follow the pious doctrine of Dr. Luther, who explained this article very piously in the sermon delivered at Torgau (in the year 33), cut off all useless and curious questions, and exhorted all Christians to the pure simplicity of faith. For it should be enough for us to know that Christ descended to hell, destroyed hell for all believers, and that we through him have been snatched from the power of Death and of Satan, from eternal damnation, and thus from the jaws of hell. But how these things were effected, let us not curiously scrutinize, but reserve the thought of this matter for the other life: where not only this mystery, but also many others, which in this life are simply believed by us, will be revealed; which exceed the grasp of our blind reason.* Urbanus Rhegius in his Catechism on the Apostles' Creed, from Ps. 16:10, teaches that Christ according to the Soul descended to hell to the pious Souls of Adam, Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David, and other faithful of Christ, resting in Abraham's bosom and awaiting full redemption, that he might console them: and that he not only liberated the Fathers from hell, but also all believers from the foundation of the world until the consummation of the age, into which we were all damned, in which we were then, as also in death, by divine sentence, where eternal fire awaited all the sons of Adam.

#### V.

Dr. Johannes Aepinus, the first Lutheran Superintendent of Hamburg, was also devoted to this opinion, as Dr. Martin Sylvester Grabe proves with his quoted words in the *Coronide* to Urbanus Rhegius's *Formulæ caute loquendi*, p. 244, seqq. What Johannes Brentius's opinion was is clear from his Homily 10 on chapter 2 of Acts, Tom. 7, fol. 52, where he says: *Although my Body was subjected to death, yet it will not perish by death, but will rest in good hope. Why? because you will not abandon my Soul in hell (you hear*

again one of the Articles of our faith, which is about the Descent of Christ to hell). I will indeed descend into hell, I will feel the pains of hell, and I will seem to have utterly perished, yet you will not abandon me in the pains of hell, nor will you forsake me with your help in my perdition. I will also be given over to burial, so that, according to the condition of other men, I may become food for worms and may decay, but yet you will never permit your Holy One, your Son, to be subject to decay. Dr. Nicolaus Selneccerus, Part 2 of his *Pædagogia de Descensu Christi ad inferos*, p. 265, explains the biblical sayings of Ps. 16:10, Ps. 86:13 (You have delivered my soul from the lowest hell), and Ps. 30:4 (O Lord, you have brought up my soul from hell), concerning the Descent of Christ to hell, and wishes them to be taken simply, as they sound. He adduces besides the words of Jacob in Gen. 37:35: I will go down to my son mourning into Sheol, which he thinks are wrongly understood of the Sepulchre, and then adds these words: *These things being indicated, it is now secondly asked, how Christ descended to hell, whether in Body, whether in Soul, whether only in Divinity? For since the Body of Christ lay in the Sepulchre, and he himself commended his Soul to his Father, it can be asked, how he was in hell? But if it pleases some that the Soul of Christ descended to hell, let it indeed please them. For it is not of great importance to know how he descended to hell, provided it is established concerning him that he has delivered us from the power of hell.*

## VI.

Dr. Aegidius Hunnius in his Catechism, F. 368, 369, does not urge a descent to hell, but acquiesces in a metaphorical descent, concerning the anguish and infernal torments of Christ's soul, which Christ endured before his death, and he denies in express words that the descent was corporeal and external. He also admits that the same can be understood of the burial in the place cited. David Mederus is also cited for a metaphorical descent in *Concion. 3. de Christo*. Mamphrasius in *Praxi Theol. F. 274*. Erasmus Sarcerius, in the 2nd Art. of the Catech. Dr. Cunradus Dietericus, *Instit. Catechet. p. m. 476. seqq.* states that Christ, God and Man, having overcome the pains of Death and Hell, truly and really descended to the abode of the damned, to show himself to the infernal beings as the victor over the Devil, Hell, and all infernal enemies, and to triumph most powerfully over them; he refers, however, the article of Christ's descent to hell to a certain intermediate state. Some, like Dr. Christianus Dreierus in his *Erörterung etlicher schweren Theologischen Fragen*, pp. 445 to 472, and p. 717, and Dr. Martinus Sylvester Grabe in his *Appendice Apologetica ad Urbani Rhegii Tractatum de formulis quibusdam caute loquendi*, p. 156, Johannes Eberhardus Busmannus, and others, explain the descent to hell as a descent of the soul to the state of the dead. Dr. Frischmuth, formerly Professor of Oriental Languages at the University of Jena, is also not alien to this opinion in his Disputation *de Messia in Sepulchro non relinquendo & nulli corruptioni obnoxio*, held in the year 1668. We will prove this opinion, concerning the state of the dead, more fully below.

## VII.

Most of the modern Lutheran theologians teach that Christ the God-man, with soul and body, locally and substantially, at the first moment of his quickening from the dead, or of his vivification, in that great earthquake which occurred early in the morning before sunrise on the very day of the Resurrection, descended to hell or the abode of the damned, as a most august Triumpher over the Devil, Death, Hell, and eternal damnation; whence they also refer this descent to hell not to the state of humiliation, but to the state of exaltation and triumph.

#### VIII.

We heartily approve in this opinion that they say the whole Christ, the God-man, truly descended to hell: for just as in the Apostles' Creed we profess that we believe the whole Christ, and him the God-man, was conceived, born, suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried, and this without sophistry as truly as he is truly the God-man; so also it is to be heartily believed that the whole Christ descended to hell. Whence Augustine rightly says: *The whole Son was with the Father, the whole in the virgin's womb, the whole in Heaven, the whole on Earth, the whole on the Cross, and the whole in Hell.* For it would be absurd, and we say so too, that while the object of all the other articles is the whole Christ, to this article alone should be assigned only a part of Christ; but just as the subject *Quod* of Conception, Nativity, Passion, Death, and Burial is the whole Christ, so that their subject *Quo* is the human nature, and either soul and body together, or soul or body separately: so also is the case here; for as the subject *Quo* of Death and Burial is the Body alone: so here the subject *Quo* of the Descent of Christ to hell is the Soul of Christ alone, according to Holy Scripture and the common opinion of the Fathers. That the Soul of Christ was not abandoned in hell, both Scripture (Ps. 16:10 and Acts 2:27, 31) and the Doctors of the Church proclaim with one voice.

#### IX.

No less do we also most sacredly believe that Christ by His Death, and therefore also by His Descent εἰς ᾅδης, which is nothing other than the most complete state of Death, abolished him who has the power of Death, that is, the Devil (Heb. 2:14), and by His Cross He despoiled principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by it (Col. 2:15), and thus He most fully conquered, overthrew, despoiled, disarmed, and made a mockery of the Devil and his Kingdom, Death, and the Gates of hell. Yet we think it cannot be proved from this that the Death and Descent of Christ to hell pertain to the state of Exaltation. For the following reasons prevent us from acceding to this opinion: (1) because Christ descended to hell while His Soul was separated from His Body, and His Body lay lifeless in the sepulcher (as the Blessed Luther himself teaches in the words cited above), and therefore as long as He was held under the dominion of Death. Therefore, He could not be a victor and display His victory to the devils as long as He was held under another's dominion, that is, of Death, and before He triumphed over Death by the Resurrection. (2) The words of Psalm 16, verse 10, from which the Blessed Luther also proves the Descent of Christ to hell, cannot be

understood of the state of Exaltation, but must be understood of the state of Humiliation. For those words, *You will not abandon my soul in hell*, are not of one who has conquered hell, but of one who trusts that he will conquer; not of one who has escaped from calamity and danger, but of one who is certainly persuaded that he will escape; not of one triumphing and displaying his victory and insulting his vanquished enemies, but of one struggling, contending, and about to come or be brought into the power of Death and Sheol. For the sense here would be absurd, as the incomparable Prelate, the Englishman John Pearson, skillfully notes in his *Exposition of the Creed*, p. 444: *If you introduce Christ speaking thus: My soul, separated from my body and translated to the abode of the damned spirits, you will not abandon there among the principalities and powers of Hell. No, I say, you will not suffer that I should remain there continually, crushing the power of Hell, redeeming the captives, leading captivity captive, and gloriously triumphing over death, hell, and Satan.* In short: the words of the Prophet do not allow an exposition of a glorious and triumphant state, since such a state is incapable of dereliction. For just as the hope He conceived concerning His body, that it would not see corruption, presupposed that it would be placed in the Sepulchre: so the hope concerning His soul not being abandoned in Hell presupposes that it would not be in such a state which by its nature is repugnant to dereliction. (3) The words of Peter in Acts 2:24 also oppose the state of Exaltation: *Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains or bonds of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it; and also verse 31: Foreseeing this, he spoke of the Resurrection of Christ, that neither did His flesh see corruption.* (4) The words in Ephesians 4:9 are also contrary to the state of Exaltation: *Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth.* Which passage they themselves interpret of the Descent of Christ to hell. For whether you take those words with Dr. George Calixtus and most of the Reformed Theologians to mean the Incarnation, that is, that inclination by which the Divine Majesty of the Son of God condescended to the infirmity of our flesh, which condescension of the Son of God is called in many passages of Holy Scripture a descent from Heaven to earth (see John 3:13; John 6:33, 38, 41, 42, 50, 51, 58), in which sense *κάτω* is also taken for the Earth in John 8:23 and Acts 2:19; or whether with Feurborn, Zanchi, and Sohn you understand by this descent the most profound Humiliation and Submission of Christ to the most ignominious and bitter death of the Cross, so that, just as by the word Ascending all things that pertain to the Glorification and Exaltation of Christ are comprehended, so also by the word Descending, all things that pertain to His Humiliation are contained; or whether you understand the Burial, or in the style of the Greeks and Romans, the most complete state of death; that passage must always be explained of the state of Humiliation, and not, except most absurdly, of the state of Exaltation of Christ, since Ascension and Descent are opposed to each other. Nor does Holy Scripture describe the first degree of Exaltation as a descent to what is below and downward, but upward, which, as soon as He received life, He raised Himself *ἐκ ζῶν κάτω* to *τὰ ἄνω*, from the sepulchre to the upper parts of the earth. To which may be added that this opinion can with great difficulty be reconciled with the History of the Death of Christ. For they themselves do not deny that Christ did not properly and locally descend

according to His Divinity: for this, since it is everywhere present, does not change place; nor according to His human Nature: for His Body rested for three days in the sepulchre, as the Savior Himself testifies: *as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish*, etc., Matt. 12:40. But the soul or Spirit of Christ was in the hands of the celestial Father, into which He had placed it, Luke 23:46. Wherefore He had also said to the converted thief: *Today you will be with me in Paradise*, *ibid.* v. 46. I pass over the fact that from this opinion two things follow which Lutheran Theologians will scarcely admit: (1) for if Christ, Soul and Body, truly, Substantially, and locally descended to hell, the abode of the damned, to the lowest parts of the earth, it follows that Hell is a truly and properly so-called Subterranean place: which, however, they deny elsewhere, or at least teach that it is not established. (2) If Christ the God-man, Soul and Body, descended to the Abodes of the Damned, then He was not there before. With which assertion, the Dogma of the Omnipresence of the human nature of Christ even in the state of Exaltation is overthrown. (3) From the opinion of those who interpret the words of Psalm 16:10, *You will not abandon my soul in hell*, so as to take Soul for the whole Christ, it follows that the Articles of Faith have been handed down by interpreting sayings improperly and tropically, which again overthrows their received hypothesis.

In vain is the passage of 1 Peter 3, v. 19 adduced for the state of Exaltation and the Substantial descent of Christ, God-man, Soul and Body, where Christ, put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, is said to have gone and preached to the spirits in prison. For (1) Christ is said there to have gone and preached by the Spirit, which not a few Fathers, all the Pontificals, and some Protestants also have understood of the Soul, as we noted above in Chapter 2, Th. 19. To whom we here only add David Chytræus, who explains the Spirit here of the Soul in his *Explication of the Articles of the Creed concerning the descent to hell*, p. 188, saying: "Although the obscurity of this saying seems inexplicable, yet the three principal explanations analogous to faith, and the words themselves as they sound, produce this simplest sense: Christ, by the Spirit or Soul, when He was dead according to the Flesh, going into the prison or hell of the damned, preached to the spirits who were formerly disobedient or unbelieving in the time of Noah (not to the holy fathers in Limbo), but to the souls of the disobedient and unbelieving, not liberating them from prison, since from hell there is no redemption; nor granting the faculty of doing penance, for which there is only a place in this life, since judgment immediately follows death, Heb. 9. But that He was the Messiah promised to the Fathers, whom they had so often heard would come and had proudly scorned, that He had certainly now come, and had crushed the head of the Serpent or the Kingdom and power of the Devil for those who believe in the Seed of the Woman, and had delivered them from the power of hell and Satan, He showed." But according to the opinion of modern Lutherans, Christ also descended with the body, to which, however, the Spirit is here opposed. (2) He is said to have gone by that Spirit by which He was quickened; but that this Spirit was his divine Spirit or Divine nature we have said above in Chapter 2, Th. 20, is most probable, by which He could not descend locally, since He was everywhere. Oecumenius favors this exposition: *ζωοποιηθείς*, that is, *rising from the*

*dead by the power of the Godhead (He rose from the dead not as a man, but as God), etc. (3)* By that Spirit of His, He preached Repentance to the spirits who were disobedient in the time of Noah, and indeed (as Dr. Cunradus Dietericus explains in his *Institutiones Catecheticæ*, p. m. 478) through Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and the longsuffering of God awaited their conversion, in the same way that after His Ascension He preached the Gospel to the whole world through the Apostles; but this opinion holds that Christ descended not to preach, but to triumph. And from what has been said thus far, we consider it to be manifest not only that the most learned Lutheran Theologians do not entirely agree on this Article, and therefore that they have no grounds on this part to object to the Reformed, but also what may be wanting in the opinion of some; which will become more lucidly apparent from the following Chapter.

## CHAPTER IV.

**Wherein the Diverse Opinions of the Reformed concerning the Descent of Christ to Hell are proposed, and that which explains this Descent by the State of the Dead is proved and defended by Reasons and the Suffrages of the Ancients and Moderns.**

### I.

The Reformed, although they for the most part amicably agree that the Descent of Christ to Hell pertains to the State of Humiliation, yet they themselves also diverge into different opinions. Some metaphorically understand the Descent of Christ to hell as the supreme anguish and sorrows of the Soul, which He endured before His death in the garden and on the Cross, such as Calvin, Danaeus, Ursinus, Olevianus, the Palatinate Catechism, Polanus, Keckermannus, Wendelinus, Sibelius, Kuchlinus, Gomarus, Spanhemius the Elder, Carræus, and others. The Pontificals attack this opinion in a wondrous manner. Bellarmine, in Tom. I. Controverf. Lib. 4. de Anima Christi cap. 8, writes that it is a new and unheard-of Impiety to state that Christ in His passion endured infernal pains. Forerus in *Bello Ubiquistico*, page 293, says that these things are so blasphemous that not even the Devil could spew forth anything more horrible from his Cerberean jaws.

### II.

But this is nothing but a twisted explanation of another's dogma, made out of hatred. For it never came into the mind of the Evangelicals to assert that Christ endured infernal punishments properly so-called with all their adjuncts and according to all circumstances. He did not endure these sorrows in the place of the Damned or Tartarus where the devils and the damned suffer their due punishments. Nor did he feel those anguishes and torments eternally: for the death of the Cross was the terminus of all of Christ's sorrows and torments. Much less did Christ feel the adjuncts of infernal punishments, such adjuncts as the most bitter pangs and tearing of conscience, raging against God, and despair, as these were most alien to Christ, and could not be attributed to Christ without blasphemy. For these are not of the essence of infernal sorrows, nor are they inherent in them in themselves, as they are inflicted by God as a just Judge, and ought to be borne by the sponsor, but they happen and accompany them by accident and by the fault of the suffering subject, so that when the damned see that it is impossible for them to escape from the infernal punishments, they are turned to despair and raging against God.

### III.

But when they affirm that Christ endured infernal anguish and sorrows, they teach this: that Christ, as a piacular victim, suffered not only in His body and sensitive soul, but also in His most holy rational soul, the most bitter and ineffable torments, and therefore torments equivalent to the infernal punishments which we should have at some point

endured for our sins, and the curse for us. They prove this opinion with the firmest reasons drawn from Holy Scripture. And indeed (1) from the περιλυπία, ἐκθαμβήσει, καὶ ἄδημονία, that is, the most grievous sorrow, sadness, dread, and anguish, of which Matthew 26, verses 37, 38, and Mark 14, verse 34, speak: *He began to be greatly amazed and to be very heavy, ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν*, that is, to be almost overwhelmed in spirit with sorrow, helpless, and as if lifeless and beside himself, and he said: *My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.* (2) from the most vehement and instant deprecation of the proposed cup: of which Luke 22:41-42, not only says: *Then, kneeling down, he prayed, saying: Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done!* but also, *being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, ἐκτενέστερον προσήχετο.* (3) From the emission of bloody sweat, Luke 22, v. 44. (4) from the aid of an Angel, Luke 22:43. (5) from the lamentable cry of Christ forsaken on the Cross: Matthew 27, v. 46, Mark 15:34, from Psalm 22:1: *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?* And Psalm 18:6: *The sorrows or bonds and cords of hell surrounded me.* Which words Peter applies to Christ in Acts 2:24. (6) from the fact that Christ was made a curse for us, Gal 3:13. (7) from the fact that the Apostle in Hebrews 5:7, writes emphatically: *Christ, praying with strong crying and tears, was heard from his fear.*

#### IV.

Although we hold that opinion concerning the sorrows and anguish of Christ's soul to be most pious and consonant with the Analogy of Faith, we do not, however, think that the Article of Christ's Descent to hell should be explained by those anguishes and sorrows (1) because of the excessive impropriety and inexactness of language. For it is not probable that in the Creed, which ought to exhibit all things to be believed briefly, and indeed clearly and perspicuously, and does so in the other Articles, it should have admitted such impropriety in this Article. To which may be added that Scripture nowhere, not even in those places which are usually cited for this metaphorical signification, explains the words: *He descended into hell*, by, *He sustained in his soul infernal sorrows.* (2) The disturbance of order stands in the way of this opinion. For it is known that Christ suffered whatever he suffered before his death, partly in the garden, partly on the Cross, before he commended his Spirit into the hands of God. It is no less certain that the Descent to hell is placed after Death and Burial, and therefore it is necessary that it denote something done only after Death and distinct from the Burial. (3) Redundancy stands in the way of this opinion; for it would be superfluous to inculcate the passions again, since they have already been mentioned before the mention of Death and Burial and are already comprehended under the words: *He suffered under Pontius Pilate*, since the chief of those passions were the Sorrows and Anguishes of the Soul. Perceiving this, certain learned men, Bucer, Beza, Lavater, Piscator, Massonius, Burmannus, Braunius, and others, have explained the Article of the Descent of Christ to hell by the Burial. But that opinion also labors under difficulties. (1) because the mention of the Burial had already preceded, and therefore a very great tautology would be committed in a brief and succinct Creed, if one and the same article were put twice. (2) Nor can it be said that

the latter Article is an explanation of the former; for the latter, concerning the Descent to hell, is more obscure than the former, concerning the Burial. Whenever two locutions expressing the same thing are joined, so that one is an exegesis of the other, it is fitting that the latter be clearer than the former; but here the contrary would happen, as Zacharias Ursinus rightly judges in his *Explication of the Catechism* on Q. 44, and Franciscus Junius. Confer also Calvin, *Institutes*, Lib. 2, c. 16, §.8. (3) This opinion is also pressed by this difficulty, that the Soul of Christ is taken for his Body, and Sheol and Hades for the Sepulchre without necessity. For those who are devoted to this opinion are forced to interpret Soul for Person, and Person for Body, and indeed for a dead and lifeless Body, and hell for the Sepulchre. Luke in Acts 2:27, 31 is contrary to this interpretation, rendering the words of Psalm 16:10 thus: *οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς ᾄδου*. Although therefore *ψυχή* sometimes signifies Soul, Mind, Life, and also Concupiscent Soul; but also by Catachresis a lifeless Body and a Corpse; although also it never denotes the Sepulchre (which, however, Christianus Schotanus and others most skilled in the Hebrew language deny); and thus the words of Psalm 16:10 might not be badly rendered by Pagninus, Arius Montanus, Vatablus, Tremellius, Piscator, and the French: *You will not leave my Soul in the Sepulchre*; yet the words *ψυχή* and *ᾄδης*, which occur in Acts 2:27, 31, do not bear that signification. The other versions were composed by men, but this one has proceeded from God himself; and therefore there is no doubt that the version of Jerome and the Vulgate is to be preferred: *You will not abandon my soul in hell*. The soul is not thrust into the Sepulchre, nor does it rest abandoned there, nor is it brought forth from the sepulchre, but being loosed from the body it either flies to Heaven or is sent down to Tartarus, that it may either enjoy eternal rewards there, or suffer eternal punishments here. (4) This opinion is also repugnant to the Catholic Consensus of all the Doctors of the Primitive Church, who all to a man stated that Christ descended to hell according to the Soul.

## VI.

Having therefore considered most of the opinions, it remains for us to see what is the true and genuine opinion of this article, and to prove it with solid reasons and the authority of the Fathers and other Doctors. We say, therefore, that the Article of the Descent of Christ to hell is best explained of all by the most complete state of death, and by the condition of separated souls, indeterminately as to place. For just as Christ, as a true man, died, so also His lifeless Body was buried, and His Soul, by the same death loosed from the body, underwent the common state and condition of separated Souls, and thus most fully satisfied the law of death, while, being cut off by death from the land of the living and removed from the sight of men, He remained for three days under the dominion and power of death, His enemies in the meantime exulting as if He were completely cut off and oppressed. And hence it is that Christ is said to have risen, not from the sepulchre, but from the dead. Psalm 16:10 proves this opinion most evidently: for in different hemistichs, it says of the Soul that it is not to be left in Sheol; but of the Body, that it will not see corruption. Peter confirms the same in Acts 2:27, 31: *foreseeing*,

he spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. Where he emphatically teaches of the Soul, that it was not left in Hades, but of the flesh, that it did not feel corruption. If Hades here denoted the sepulchre, there would be a deep silence about the Soul in the whole verse, because both parts of the verse would be taken of the Body. But it would be absurd that neither David, nor Christ himself, whose Person David sustained, nor even Peter, should have made any mention of the Soul of Christ, but a repeated mention of the Body. Therefore, both the word לִיאֶשׁ and the word ψυχή should be taken in their proper signification for Soul, and Sheol and Hades for the common receptacle of souls, or rather for the state of separated souls.

## VII.

So that this may appear more clearly, it will be worthwhile to note whence לִיאֶשׁ is derived, and what is its genuine signification. It should be observed, therefore, that it comes from the root לִאֶשׁ, *He asked, he interrogated, he demanded, he sought, he required*, because it is never satisfied, Prov. 27, v. 20, and chap. 30, v. 16, but always desires more, seeks more, and with gaping mouth, as expanded in Is. 5:14 and Hab. 2, v. 5, it snatches all things to itself. To this corresponds the Greek word Ἄδης, just as the LXX interpreters also expressed לִיאֶשׁ as Ἄδην, derived either from ἡδω, *I please, I delight, I affect with pleasure*, by antiphrasis, as if *unpleasing, unpleasant*, in which there is nothing pleasant. Whence Augustine in Book 12 of *Genesis according to the letter*, c. 34, says: *In the Greek language, the origin of the name by which the lower regions are called is said to resonate from the fact that they have nothing pleasant*. Or rather, as Henry Stephanus and others wish, from the privative α and the verb ἰδεῖν, and it is said by synaeresis Ἄδης for ἀειδής or ἀϊδής, i.e., ἀόρατος, *inconspicuous, invisible, a house or place without light*. Virgil. This derivation is approved by Plato in the *Cratylus*, or *On the Correctness of Names*, f. 265 D. of the Greco-Latin edition of Lyons, 1590. Ἄδης, he writes, *many interpret as if it were τὸ ἀειδέες, and shrinking from this name, they call him Pluto*. Likewise Plutarch in his commentary *On Living in Obscurity*, c. 6, fol. 130, Tom. 1 of his morals; and Eustathius at the beginning of the *Iliad*, who also notes that Ἄδης is aspirated not in the common language, but only in Attic. Therefore, they are allusions rather than true origins of the word, when Socrates in Plato, loc. cit., wishes to derive it from τὸ πάντα τὰ καλὰ εἰδέναι, as if he knows all beautiful things. Or when the Sibyl in book 1 of the *Sibylline Oracles*, renewed by Johannes Opsopæus, p. 164, Paris edition of 1607, wishes it to be derived from Adam.

## VIII.

Whence it will not be difficult to divine what the genuine signification is. For these words signify an inconspicuous, obscure, hidden, deep place, remote from all human society. This is clear from Numbers 16:33, where it is read of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, that they descended alive into Sheol. The LXX rendered the passage: *and they went down, they and all that appertained to them, alive into Hades, and the earth closed upon*

them. Also from Psalm 139:8: *Where shall I go from your Spirit? And where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend into Heaven, you are there. If I descend into hell, or if I make my bed in Sheol, that is, in the lowest hiding places of the earth, and as it were in the very center of the Earth, for my own security, you are present.* And also from Job 11:8: *It is higher than Heaven (God or Divine Wisdom), what can you do? Deeper than hell (Sheol), what can you know?* In both places the LXX also use the name Hades. Cf. Is. 14:3 seq., c. 57:9, Amos 9:2-3, Jon. 2:2 seq. To which corresponds the passage in Matthew 11:23, where it is said of the city of Capernaum, which was exalted to Heaven, that it would be brought down to Hades, that is, to the lowest parts of the earth. For just as Heaven signifies not only the abode of GOD and the Blessed, but also all places that are above us, of the stars, clouds, birds: so also Hades signifies all places that are below us.

## IX.

More frequently, however, these two words signify the state of the dead. This will first be proved concerning the word שְׁאוֹל and then concerning the word ἄδης. And indeed, as pertains to שְׁאוֹל, besides Psalm 16:10, which was treated in thesis 6 of this chapter, it is manifestly established that it denotes the state of the dead, from Gen. 37:35, where the Patriarch Jacob, having received the sad but false news that his son Joseph had been torn by a wild beast, broke out into this complaining voice: *I will go down to my son mourning into Sheol.* The LXX: *for I will go down to my son mourning into Hades.* Which the same Patriarch repeats in Gen. 42:38 and 44, in which places it signifies not the sepulchre, nor Tartarus, but the state of the dead, as the matter itself indicates; for Jacob did not believe that the body of his son had been laid in a sepulchre, but that it had been torn by a wild beast, much less is the most pious Patriarch to be considered to have believed that he would descend into hell, the place of the damned. He means, therefore, that his soul, out of sorrow, would be reduced to the same state in which the soul of his deceased son now is. This is confirmed by Raymundus Martini and Paulus Fagius, most skilled in the Hebrew language: the former in *Pugio Fidei*, Part 3, Distinction 2, Chapter 8, n. 1, n. 5, & n. 8, fol. 481, 483, where he proves that not only other men, but also the holy Patriarchs and the whole Church of Israel descended to hell, until Christ. The latter, in his *Annotations on the Targum, or Paraphrase of Onkelos the Chaldean*, Tom. 1, c. 37, Argentoratum edition of 1546, says: *Therefore Scheel in this place does not signify that hell, that is, the place of punishments and of the damned: for Jacob did not descend to this, but rather that common state of all the deceased, both of pious and impious men. This is manifest from many places of Holy Scripture.* Luther also observed this in his *Enarration on Gen. 42*, Tom. 6, Wittenberg, fol. 630. b. *It is necessary that the Sepulchre and Sheol be different things. For just as the Sepulchre (Keber) is common to both the pious and the impious, so also is Sheol. This is a certain matter, and drawn from the use of the Sacred letters, except that this is the difference. The Sepulchre, Keber, is properly the earth which is dug, and in which the body is laid; for many die who are not buried, as those who are torn by beasts, or are put on the Cross, or are cremated; to them burial is not granted, and yet all are said to descend to hell from this life. Rightly, therefore, these are distinguished,*

so that the Sepulchre is the place in which the body and bones of the dead are laid away, at a certain time, by a certain person, and in a certain place, but Sheol is a certain common receptacle, not only of bodies, but of souls, where all the dead are gathered. Augustine calls it the hidden receptacles of souls, in his *Enchiridion to Laurentius* (namely, c. 109). It is, therefore, that Chaos unknown to us, in which there is no difference of places, times, persons, to which also those descend who lack sepulchres. It is a common place, if indeed it should be called a place, not for the body, but for the soul. Properly, therefore, and definitively, Sheol is the place, or receptacle of souls. But what sort of place that is, has been disputed and sought with infinite questions by the ancients. This difference may suffice for us; that just as the body is preserved in the earth, so the soul, being dissolved, comes into its Sheol. Nor are different Sheols for the pious and the impious handed down. Others dispute quite acutely indeed, and there are various arguments on both sides, which move me little. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man is said to be buried in hell, not the sepulchre of the body, but of the soul: and yet we must think differently of the pious than of the impious existing in the same Sheol. Just as here (Gen. 42, last) Jacob says, and also above (Chap. 37, 35), I will go down mourning to my son into hell. Again (Chap. 44, 29), You will bring down my gray hairs to hell. All these things are manifest and certain from Holy Scripture, that the saints according to the body go into Keber, just as Abraham is buried in the field of Ephron, opposite Mamre: according to the soul they enter their chambers in Sheol, where they are gathered with their Fathers. And the pious indeed have a hell, into which they descend, but so that they may rest in it: and although they descend with sorrow, yet they pass over to rest and peace. And so this descent of the pious is nothing other than a change of this life into another state, where one no longer lives under the sun, and upon the earth, but having left this life they enter into their chamber, or their bed, in which they sleep and rest, until body and soul are again joined in the future and eternal life. Before Christ it was called the Bosom of Abraham, and he himself also uses the same appellation, having undoubtedly borrowed one from the sermons of the pious and the fathers, when he says that Lazarus was translated into the bosom of Abraham. But the Sheol of the rich man were flames, and that state and condition of the impious is known only to God, which cannot be comprehended by us. But the body of the rich man was laid in Keber. This is my opinion about these appellations. And so much we know about the receptacles of bodies and souls, that Keber is the place for the body: Sheol, however, for the sleeping soul, whether of the pious, or of the impious, but in a different condition, and what that rest is, we do not know. For the state of the dead, it is also taken in 1 Sam. 2:6, and also 1 Kings 2:6, 9, where David warns Solomon not to let the gray hairs of Joab and Shimei descend in peace into Sheol, i.e., the state of the dead; and Psalm 6:5: For in death there is no remembrance of you: in Sheol (in the state of the dead) who will give you thanks? Psalm 9:17: Let the wicked return to Sheol, all the nations that have forgotten God, i.e., let them be extinguished and die. Psalm 18:4-5: The sorrows or cords of death surrounded me, the sorrows or cords of Sheol encompassed me. The LXX: The pains of death compassed me, the pains of hell got hold upon me. To which passage Peter points in Acts 2:24. And it is to be noted concerning it, that the Hebrew word *חַבְלֵי* signifies both bonds and snares, as well as pains. And that the signification of cords or bonds is not to be neglected here, the

verb to surround in Psalm 18:5-6 and the verb to loose and to hold in Acts 2:24, which is used, indicates. And it will be a metaphor taken from lictors or butchers, who are accustomed to put bonds on captive men or on beasts or sheep. The word ὠδίνεις, however, properly signifies the pains of childbirth, but by synecdoche any sharp and intense pains. The pains of death, therefore, are the pains surrounding a man in the dissolution of soul and body, and which are accustomed to precede death, from which he proclaims himself to have been delivered, and gives thanks to God. Theodoret explains these pains as dangers that bring death: *For just as the pains of childbirth are near the birth itself, so the greatest crises approach death.* And Suidas says: *The pains of hell are called calamities, which cause us to approach death.* The word Sheol is also taken in this way in Psalm 31:17; Psalm 49:14-15; Psalm 55:15; Psalm 86:13; Psalm 88:3; Psalm 89:48; Psalm 116:3. Nor is it necessary to admit another signification in Psalm 141:7: *Our bones are scattered at the mouth of hell;* since it may not unsuitably be explained in this way: We have come into such dangers, and our strengths have been so broken and weakened, that nothing more remains than for the soul to desert the enervated body and to migrate into the state of the dead. It is also taken thus in Job 7:9; Job 14:14; c. 17:12; c. 21:13; chap. 24:19; chap. 26:6; Prov. 1:12; Prov. 5:5; Prov. 7:27; Prov. 9:18; Prov. 15:11, 24; Prov. 23:14; Prov. 27:20; & 30:16. Where Sheol, the state of the dead, is insatiable, in the same sense as the kingdom of Dis is called insatiable by the poets. For the state of the dead, confer also Eccl. 9:10; Cant. 8:6. Especially illustrious is the passage in Isaiah 5:14: *Therefore Sheol has enlarged its soul and stretched open its mouth without measure, and its strong one and its multitude and its tumult and the joyful shall descend into it.* On which Jerome thus comments: *Hell is said to have a soul, not because it is an animal, according to the error of some, but because by human words of custom we express the affect of insensible things, that it is insatiable, and is never filled with the multitude of the dead.* And Theodoret: *He declared the multitude of the dead by these words through personification, representing to us Death as a certain being, which has its mouth continuously open, and incessantly absorbs the dead who are sent across.* See also Isaiah 28:15, 18; Isaiah 38:10, 18; Ezekiel 31:15, 16, 17; c. 32:21, 27; Hosea 13:14; Habakkuk 2:5. And these are almost all the places in the Holy Scripture of the Old Testament in which the name Sheol occurs, the careful consideration of which will establish that the word denotes either an obscure, deep place, opposite to heaven, such as the belly of the great fish in the depth of the sea, or the depth of the sea, or an abyss, or some subterranean or sea chasm, or the lowest hiding places of the earth; or specifically, and indeed more usually, the common state of the dead. And in that signification, the masters of the Jews also use the word Sheol for the common place of those who have departed this life, and they divide it into two regions, namely Paradise and Gehenna, and they subdivide each of these into seven mansions, to which they attribute distinct degrees, on the one hand of felicity and joy, on the other of misery and sorrow. They fable that the six upper regions of Gehenna constitute the upper Gehenna, whence the purged souls can return to a happy state; but they imagine the seventh to be that lowest abyss, from which there is no return. We leave these things to their authors, and observe only this from them: that just as the Hades of the Greeks embraces both Elysium and Tartarus, so the Sheol of

the Hebrews contains both Paradise and Gehenna. Whence the Medrash Tillim interprets that passage of Solomon, about the two daughters of the leech, in this way: The mother of these daughters who persistently say, "Give, give," is Sheol itself, and its daughters are Gehenna and Paradise; of which *זו אומרת תנו לי רשעים* זו אומרת תנו לי צדיקים זו אומרת תנו לי רשעים, one says, "Give me the just," and the other says, "Give me the wicked." Solomon Jarchi alleges this opinion in his commentary on Proverbs 30:15. In the same sense, the author of the work ascribed to Josephus, which D. Hoeschelius edited in his notes to Photius, p. 9, says: *ἐν Ἅδη σὺνέχονται ψυχὰι δικαίων τε καὶ ἀδίκων*, *In Hades are contained the souls of both the just and the unjust.*

### **XVIII.**

And the word *ᾗδης* has this signification both among profane and sacred authors, which we will prove with a few examples brought forward: Phocylides in his *Admonitory Poem*, verse 105:

It is not possible to have wealth and carry money to Hades,  
all the dead are equal; God reigns over souls.

Common and eternal are the halls of the house, and Hades is our fatherland,  
a common space for all, for the poor and for kings.

Homer in the *Iliad*, seventh book, verse 131, writes:

The soul from the limbs descends into the house of Pluto or of the infernal regions.

Theognis, verse 244:

and when you go from the dark recesses of the earth  
to the much-lamented house of Hades  
never, not even when dead, will you lose your fame, nor will you be forgotten,  
having a name immortal among men.

And verse 1007:

How blessed, fortunate, and happy is he who, free from  
labors, has descended into the black house of Pluto.

The same, verse 1119:

Do not remind me of evils. I have suffered such things as Odysseus,  
who went to the great house of Hades and returned from it.

Diphilus the Comedian, quoted by Clement of Alexandria in the 5th book of his *Stromata*:

The eye of Justice, which sees all things,  
and we believe there are two paths in Hades,  
one for the just, and the other for the impious.

And if the earth covers them both.

And soon after:

Be not at all deceived,  
there is a judgment in Hades, which he will make,  
God, the lord of all, whose name  
is more fearful than I could name.

Euripides, the Prince of Tragedians, in *Hippolytus*, act 5: "I, the chaste and pious towards the Gods, who surpass all in continence, am surely going to hell, πρέπων ἐς ἄδην στείχω, having utterly lost my life." And soon after: "Would that the black night of hell and its dark necessity might put me to sleep, unfortunate as I am, αδε μέλαινα νύκτερός τ' ἀνάγκα."

## **XIX.**

The Philosophers agree, and among them Plato in the *Phaedo*, or the Dialogue on the Soul, f. 380. A. "Many," he says, "have willingly wished to go to hell, εἰς ἄδης, hoping to see there, and to converse with, those whom they had loved. But will a true lover of wisdom, strongly drawn to this very hope, not believing he will attain it worthily anywhere else than in hell, ἐν ἄδει, bear death with difficulty, and not migrate there willingly?" Ibid. f. F. "Whoever, unpurified and uninitiated, migrates to hell, εἰς ἄδε ἀφίκηται, will lie in the mud: but whoever, purified and initiated, arrives there, will dwell with the Gods." Fol. 381. B. "If you please, then, let us consider whether the souls of deceased men are in hell, ἐν ἄδει, or not." Ibid. G. "Therefore our souls are in hell, εἰσιν ἄρα αἱ ψυχαὶ ἡμῶν ἐν ἄδει." Also before the middle. F. 385. G. "You see, therefore, that after a man has died, that which is visible in him, the body, and is placed in a visible place (which we call a corpse, νεκρόν, to which it is proper to be dissolved, to fall apart, to flow away), suffers none of these things immediately. But the soul, which is something invisible, τὸ ἀειδὲς, migrating to a certain other similar place, excellent, pure, and invisible, to hell, εἰς ἀληθῆ καὶ ἀειδῆ τόπον εἰς ἄδε; truly to the good and wise God, whither, if God wills, my own soul is also to migrate

shortly." And fol. 398. A. "When the soul migrates to the shades, εἰς ἄδε, it transfers nothing else with it, except its learning and education," etc. In Diogenes Laertius, L. 2, p. 95, Anaxagoras replied to someone who was upset that he was dying in a foreign land: "Be of good cheer; for the descent to hell is the same from everywhere," πανταχόθεν ὁμοία ἐστὶν ἢ εἰς ἄδε (scil. δῶμα) κατάβασις (which Cicero in *Tusculan Disputations* 1, c. 104, expresses thus: "from everywhere there is the same length of way to the underworld"). In the same Laertius, L. 4, p. 287, Bion said that the way to hell was easy, εὐκόλον τὴν εἰς ἄδε ὁδόν; etc. Id. L. 6, p. 424, introduces Crates, about to die, speaking thus: "You are going to the houses of Hades," βαίνεις εἰς ἄδαο δόμους. Lucian, in a dialogue, introduces Diogenes addressing Alexander thus: "I cannot help laughing, Alexander, seeing you in hell, ἐν ἄδει, foolishly hoping that you will one day become either Anubis or Osiris. Why don't you abandon those hopes, most divine one, ὃ θεϊότατε, for it is not lawful for anyone to return who has once crossed the marsh and descended within the opening of the cave." Similar passages could be adduced from Plutarch and other authors.

And indeed, it is not surprising that the pagans indicated the state of the dead by this word: for since they could not investigate and attain by the guidance of natural light alone what sort of state awaited the soul after its separation from the body, they persuaded themselves that it descended to the lower parts of the earth, unknown to us. But that the sacred writers also used this word in the same sense as the profane used it will not seem so surprising to one who considers the matter rightly. For the Evangelists and Apostles neither formed new words and the power of words, nor a new language, but used common words, in a signification received among all who were skilled in the language, which they had received from the Gentile Greeks, and spoke and wrote in a commonly received style; otherwise their speech would have lacked understanding, and they would have failed in the purpose they had set for themselves. Therefore, just as the Gentiles indicated the common state of the dead, both of the pious and the impious, by the word "Hades": so also the sacred writers of the New Testament assumed the word which they had received from the Greeks, and the power of the word which had been received by use. And in that signification it occurs in *Wisdom 1:13-14: God did not make death, neither is the kingdom of hell upon the earth.* *Luke 16:23: And in Hades, he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.* On which see above, chapter 2, thesis 13. *Matthew 16:18: Christ promises his Church that the gates of Hades, πύλαι ἄδου, will not prevail against it, a phrase most common not only to profane but also to sacred writers. For it occurs in Homer, Il. 9: Hateful to me is that man as the gates of Hades.* In Euripides in *Hecuba*, *Hippolytus*, and *Alcestis*, in Plutarch, Lucian, and others. And in the sacred writings, *Isaiah 38:10; Job 38:17; Psalm 9:13; Psalm 107:18; Wisdom 16:13.* By which Christ teaches: Although Death will subject the faithful to its kingdom and power on account of the remnants of sin, so that they come to the consummated state of the dead; yet, just as Death could not dominate Christ the Head (*Acts 2:24; Rom. 6:9*), so also it will not have such power over the Body of Christ, the Church, or its members, the faithful, as to be able to detain them under its insatiable kingdom and under its right and power. The word "Hades" is taken in the same sense in 1

Cor. 15:55: *O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?* For the Apostle sings a triumph over Death and the state of the dead, and inculcates that Death, with its sting by which it used to pierce and kill men, can no longer harm, just as certain animals, having lost their sting, are accustomed to become torpid. For although it reduced the human race, deceived by the Devil, under its power and has thus far triumphed over it, now, however, by the Death and Resurrection of Christ, it is utterly defeated and conquered, so that there is not even a fear that it will ever regain its strength. In Revelation 6, v. 8, Hades is said to follow death: *And I looked, and behold a pale horse, and he who sat on it, his name was Death, and Hades followed with him.* Where it should be noted that the power of that rider, namely Death, and of Hades, was to take away the four parts of the earth with sword, famine, death, and the beasts of the earth. Therefore, the word Hades cannot here signify Erebus or the abode of the damned. For who would believe that all those consumed by these plagues were damned, since undoubtedly many pious people were involved in those plagues. Nor can it denote the sepulchre, for the sepulchre, a quiet thing, lays hands on no one, nor are all who are slain by the sword, by famine, and by beasts buried. In Revelation 20:13: *Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them. And Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.* Where again Hades and Death are not only distinguished, but Hades is also said to follow Death. But Hades cannot here indicate the sepulchre. For who would believe that the sepulchre would be cast into the lake of fire? Much less can the place of the damned be cast into the lake, i.e., into itself. It remains, therefore, that by Hades nothing else is to be understood than the state of the dead; and to descend to Hades is nothing else than to go into the state of the dead.

## **XX.**

This truth will now be confirmed by the testimonies of the Fathers. It should be known, therefore, that it was the common opinion of the Fathers that Christ descended to Hell according to the soul. Thus Irenaeus, book 5, c. 26: *For since the Lord went into the midst of the shadow of death, where the souls of the dead were, and afterwards rose again bodily: it is manifest that the souls of His disciples also, for whom the Lord performed these works, will go away into an invisible place defined for them by God.* Origen against Celsus, book 2: *A soul, having become naked of body, conversed with souls naked of bodies.* Cyprian, on the Passion of Christ, ed. Paris, p. 476, col. 2, thus addresses Christ: *It was impossible for that Holy Soul of yours to be held by the lower regions, concerning which you yourself say to the Father: Because you will not leave my soul in Hell, nor will you allow my flesh to see corruption in the Sepulchre.* Ambrose, on the Incarnation, c. 5: *The soul itself, although it was in the abyss, is now no longer there, because it is written: You will not leave my soul in hell.* Jerome, on Psalm XCIII, thus addresses Christ: *My soul would have been detained in the lower regions, if your soul had not risen from the lower regions.* And on Hosea, chapter 13: *The Lord delivered and redeemed in the passion of the cross and the shedding of His blood, when His soul descended into hell, and His flesh did not see corruption.* Athanasius agrees with these in *On the Incarnation of Christ*; and Epiphanius against Heresies, Book

1, Tom. 3, haer. 46. Indeed, Augustine himself, whom we heard teaching above: *The whole Christ was in hell, the whole in Heaven, makes the soul the subject Quo of Christ's descent to hell in epistle 57 to Dardanus: For on that very day the man Christ Jesus was not to be in Heaven, but in hell according to the soul, and in the Sepulchre according to the flesh. And indeed, that on that day he was placed in the Sepulchre according to the flesh, the Gospel is most manifest; but that that soul descended into hell, the Apostolic doctrine preaches. Since the blessed Peter adduces testimony from the Psalms on this matter, where he demonstrates that it was predicted of him: Because you will not leave my soul in hell, nor will you give your Holy One to see corruption. The former was said of the soul, because it was not left there, from whence it so quickly returned; the latter of the body, because it could not be corrupted in the Sepulchre by a swift resurrection. And after a few intervening words: The man Christ on that day was to be in the Sepulchre according to the flesh, and in hell according to the soul; but the same Christ, being God, is always everywhere. And after a few more: Just as, therefore, it could rightly be said that the Lord of glory was crucified, when that passion pertained to the flesh alone, so it could rightly be said: Today you will be with me in Paradise; when according to human humility he was to be in the sepulchre by the flesh, and in hell by the soul on that day, but according to divine immutability he had never departed from Paradise, because he is always everywhere. And in Ep. 99 to Evodius, already cited above, these words occur: That he was in the lower regions according to the soul, the Scripture clearly declares, both promised by prophecy and sufficiently explained by Apostolic understanding, where it is said, You will not leave my soul in hell. To these should also be numbered Vigilius, book 2 against Eutyches: The flesh on that day was not in paradise, nor in hell, but lay lifeless in the Sepulchre; the soul for those three days was in hell, not in the Sepulchre; and yet we rightly say that the Lord Jesus Christ lay in the Sepulchre, but only in the flesh; that the Lord Jesus Christ was not left in hell, but only in the soul. Fulgentius, book to King Thrasimund, chapter 31: In this the Divinity of Christ showed the power of its impassibility, which, being always and ineffably present everywhere, was both in hell according to its soul without sorrows, and lay in the Sepulchre according to its flesh without corruption; and chapter 34: The humanity of the Son of God was neither wholly in the Sepulchre, nor wholly in hell: but in the Sepulchre according to the true flesh Christ lay dead, but according to the soul Christ descended to hell: according to the same soul he returned from hell to the flesh: but according to his Divinity, which is neither held by place nor concluded by end, he was whole in the Sepulchre with the flesh, whole in hell with the soul, and thus the whole Christ was everywhere. The same is taught by Tertullian, book on the Soul, c. 31, 32; Lactantius, book 4, Institutes, c. 27; Eusebius, book 4, Demonstration of the Gospel, c. 12; Clement of Alexandria, Cyril, and others. This also appears from the fact that the Fathers argued from the Descent of Christ to hell against the Arians and Apollinarists, that Christ had assumed a human soul.*

**XXI.**

It is not to be denied, indeed, that some Fathers say that the soul of Christ descended to subterranean places, to the souls of the Fathers. But it must be altogether observed here that the Fathers who spoke thus used the word "place" improperly, and did not properly mean a space by which souls were circumscribed, nor do all of them make mention of subterranean places, but some express and explain their own and others' meaning well enough, as we think will become known from the following. Gregory of Nyssa, in his book *On the Soul and Resurrection*, T. 2. oper. F. 641: *Where is that name which is commonly and everywhere tossed about, τὸ πολυθρόλλητον τοῦ ᾄδου ὄνομα, which is much bandied about both in the custom of life and in writings, both external and our own? into which hell, as into a certain receptacle, πάντας ἐντεῦθεν οἴονται τὰς ψυχὰς μεθίστασθαι, all souls from here are thought to transmigrate. And on the following folio: When I said that the transmigration of the soul happens from what is seen to what is not seen, πρὸς τὸ ἀειδές, I thought I had omitted nothing that might be asked concerning hell, περὶ τοῦ ᾄδου, for nothing else seems to me to be signified by this name, both in the writings of outsiders and in the Divine Scripture, in which they say the soul is, than a transition into that which is obscure and not seen, εἰς τὸ ἐπιδές καὶ ἀφανές μετέρχεσθαι. Fol. 643: As long as, he says, by pressing and inflating the primary and principal doctrine, namely, that there are souls after the life which is lived in the flesh, he does not try to pervert and undermine it, our discourse will raise no controversy about place, which comprehends that the position in a place is proper only to bodies, but that the soul, which is incorporeal, is not detained in certain places by any necessity of nature. And F. 651: The hell just mentioned, we think, is not a place so named, but a certain incorporeal state of life, which cannot be seen, κατάστασις ζωῆς ἀσώματος καὶ ἀειδής, in which the Scripture teaches us that the soul lives. Thus Ambrose, book *On the Good of Death*, chap. 10, T. 4: It would have been enough, he says, to have said to them that the souls, liberated from their bodies, sought a hidden place, that is, a place which is not seen, which place in Latin we call *infernum*. Similarly Jerome, *Commentary on Hosea 13:14*: This is the difference between death and hell: Death is that by which the soul is separated from the Body; Hell is the place where souls are enclosed, whether in refreshment or in punishments, according to the quality of their merits. Likewise, from the Greeks, Theophylact on Luke 16:26: What is hell? Some say it is a subterranean, dark place; others, however, say that the transition of the soul from the luminous to the obscure and impure is hell. For as long as the soul is in the body, it is apparent because of its operations: but after it has migrated from the Body, it becomes invisible. This, therefore, they said is hell.*

## **XXII.**

Recent theologians also rise up for us, whose names we now only indicate: Peter Martyr, Fagius, the Leiden professors, Henricus Altingius, Johannes Bergius, Drusius, Ludovicus Crocius, Martinus, Christianus Schotanus, le Blanc, Hammond, Lightfoot, Bochart, Pearson, Barrow, Turretin, Spanheim the Younger, to whom we add our vote and give immortal thanks to Christ our Savior for our liberation from death and hell!