

# Gregory Nazianzen's Poems on Scripture: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary

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**Gregory Nazianzen's Poems on Scripture  
Introduction, Translation, and Commentary**

**Thesis  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the S.T.L. Degree  
of the Weston Jesuit Faculty of the  
Boston College School of Theology and Ministry**

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## Introduction

Gregory of Nazianzus (c.326-389), preacher, poet, ecclesiastic, and saint, was born and spent much of his life on the country estate of Karbala, near the center of the Roman province of Cappadocia, in modern-day Turkey.<sup>1</sup> Renowned as the “Theologian” – a title he shares with John the Evangelist in the Orthodox Church – Gregory has had a profound and lasting influence on the history of Christian doctrine and spirituality.<sup>2</sup> His preaching, a model of rhetorical skill and theological subtlety, treats themes central to the articulation of pro-Nicene orthodoxy in the late fourth century; in particular, his Five Theological orations, which he delivered while Bishop of Constantinople, clarified Christian thought on the divinity of the Holy Spirit and the relations within the Triune Godhead. His letters, which detail the political and ecclesiastical background to the theological disputes of his time, have likewise drawn steady interest from scholars looking to understand the era’s social dynamics.

His poems, by contrast, are less widely known, although they have recently become the subject of closer study.<sup>3</sup> More than 17,000 lines of Gregory’s verse survive,

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<sup>1</sup> John McGuckin, *St. Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Press, 2001), is the definitive English biography; also valuable are Paul Gallay, *La vie de Saint Grégoire de Nazianze* (Paris: E. Vitte, 1943); Jean Bernardi, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze: le Théologien et son temps, 330-390. Initiations aux Pères de l’Eglise* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1995) and Francesco Trisoglio, *Gregorio di Nazianzo il Teologo*, *Studia patristica Mediolanensia* 20 (Milano: Vita e pensiero, 1996); with special attention to Gregory’s poetry, see Francis Gautier, *La Retraite et le Sacerdoce chez Grégoire de Nazianze* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002). The year of his birth is disputed; see Brian Daley, SJ, *Gregory of Nazianzus, The Early Church Fathers* (London: Routledge, 2006), 190 n.5; Daley also offers an excellent and brief introduction to the Theologian’s life.

<sup>2</sup> For John Damascene, to speak “theologically” was to cite Gregory’s writings; e.g. *On the Divine Images*, Treatise 1.8.

<sup>3</sup> Including a number of doctoral dissertations: Christos Simelidis (DPhil, Oxford, published as a monograph) *Selected Poems of Gregory of Nazianzus: I.2.17; II.1.10, 19, 32: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009); Susan Abrams Rebillard, “Speaking for Salvation: Gregory of Nazianzus as Poet and Priest in his Autobiographical Poems” (PhD Diss. Brown University, 2003); and Preston Edwards “Ἐπισταμένοις ἀγορεύσω: On the Christian Alexandrianism of Gregory of Nazianzus” (PhD Diss. Brown University, 2003); J. Prudhomme, “L’oeuvre

including poems that summarize and explain his theology, as well as verse epistles, laments, numerous epitaphs, and personal reflections, which are some of the earliest examples of autobiography.<sup>4</sup>

Gregory's poetic corpus also includes the few instances where Gregory explicitly presents a reading of the biblical narrative. These seventeen scriptural poems, numbered I.1.12 to I.1.28 in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, constitute the subject of this thesis.<sup>5</sup> They have otherwise hardly been noted in the scholarship, except to be dismissed as "tedious" and "mnemonic verse."<sup>6</sup> To my knowledge, no modern translation of the set exists in publication. After a brief overview of Gregory's family background and formation in pagan and Christian culture, I introduce the poems, focusing on their major themes, their catechetical motives, and their literary and theological merit. Then follows the heart of the thesis, an English translation of the poems along with a commentary.

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poétique de Grégoire de Nazianze: héritage et renouveau littéraires" (PhD Diss. Université Lumière Lyon, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Indeed, very few examples of Greek Christian poetry and hymnography antedate Gregory; for a list, see Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 29.

<sup>5</sup> In 1842 the Maurist Dom Caillau organized Gregory's poems in vol. 37 and vol. 38 of the *PG* in two books: I. The *theologica*, comprising the *dogmatica* and the *moralia* and II. The *historica*, comprising the *poemata de seipso* (the poems "on himself") and the *poemata quae spectant ad alios* (those that "look to others"). In addition, he includes the epigrams and the *Christus patiens*, a drama in cento form whose authenticity is disputed; see H. Werhahn "Dubia und Spuria bei Gregor von Nazianz," *Studia Patristica* 7 (Berlin, 1966). Caillau's ordering only very loosely corresponds to any presentation found in the manuscript tradition; for a recent discussion, see Guillaume Bady, "Ordre et desordre des *poemes* de Grégoire le Theologien," in *Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana. Motivi e forme della poesia cristiana antica tra scrittura e tradizione classica: XXXVI Incontro Di Studiosi dell'antichità cristiana, Roma, 3-5 Maggio 2007* (Studia ephemeridis "Augustinianum" 108; Roma: Institutum patristicum Augustinianum, 2008), 337-348.

<sup>6</sup> Donald Sykes *St. Gregory of Nazianzus: Poemata Arcana, Introduction, translation and commentary* ed. by Claudio Moreschini (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 58.

## CHAPTER I. Gregory's Life and Formation

### Gregory's family and background

Some familiarity with Gregory's family background is needed before examining his theological project, both because Gregory frequently wrote about his upbringing, including paeans to his parents and siblings, and because family affairs otherwise dominated much of his career.<sup>7</sup> Gregory was born into a thoroughly Christian household.<sup>8</sup> His mother Nonna descended from a noble Christian lineage and distinguished herself by her piety and good works. His father, Gregory the Elder, converted to Christianity from the sect of the Hypsistarians, that is, those devoted to the *hypsistos*, the "Most High One," before Gregory's birth, and later became a prominent politician and bishop.<sup>9</sup> Through their influence, Gregory, his sister Gorgonia, and his younger brother Caesarius received a Christian formation from childhood.<sup>10</sup>

Gregory's father was instrumental in most of the major decisions of his life, including his ordination as a priest and then as a bishop (of Sasima in Asia Minor, a seat in which he was never formally installed), and his appointment to the see of Constantinople in 380.<sup>11</sup> Although Gregory seems to have clashed with his father on certain theological and political decisions, including his own ordination, he expresses a

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<sup>7</sup> Gregory includes autobiographical details in many of his writings; two poems in particular are lengthy presentations of his personal history: II.1.1 "On his own affairs," and II.1.11 "On his own life."

<sup>8</sup> On the cultural background, see McGuckin, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, 1-84; Gautier, *Le Retraite et le Sacerdoce*, 257-267.

<sup>9</sup> Gregory gives an account of his father's religious background in his funeral oration (*Or.* 18), delivered in 374.

<sup>10</sup> Gregory presents his childhood formation in certain poems and letters; scholars today only use the material with caution; see Abrams Rebillard, "Speaking for Salvation," 1-15 and Neil McLynn, "A Self-Made Holy Man: the Case of Gregory Nazianzen," *JECS* 6 (1997): 463-483. On Gregory's childhood education, Bernhard Wyß, "Gregor von Nazianz," *RAC* vol.12, 797-798.

<sup>11</sup> McGuckin offers an extensive, if occasionally psychologizing, treatment of Gregory's relationship with his father in his biography; *St. Gregory of Nazianzus*, 1-34.

warm fondness for his parents, even dedicating thirty-six epitaphs to his mother.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, his frequent attempts to break family ties in order to embrace monastic life never took him very far; he secluded himself in a region not far from his family estate, where he was easily, perhaps intentionally, located by Church officials.<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, familiarity with Gregory's background helps one understand the particularly personal nature of his theological project. Because of the many autobiographical references in his writings, Gregory's work is frequently the subject of psychological readings, which find him a sensitive, even self-obsessive, case.<sup>14</sup> Much of his thought has a degree of introspection that goes beyond the standard self-reflection characteristic of his age, presenting him, in the words of Bernardi, as "une âme tourmentée."<sup>15</sup> Especially in his poems, Gregory investigates his struggles and accomplishments in light of his relationship to Christ and the Church. While recent scholarship has questioned the sincerity and accuracy of Gregory's self-presentation, most agree that Gregory distinguishes himself from his contemporaries in his level of introspection and reflection on the symbolic meaning of his struggles and accomplishments. At the same time, he often offers his life as a model for his readers to imitate.

### **Gregory's Education**

By all accounts, Gregory received a thorough classical formation, first during his childhood near Nazianzus and then during his stays at Palestinian Caesarea, Alexandria,

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<sup>12</sup> Among them, *carmina* II.1.11, 68-92.

<sup>13</sup> See Brooks Otis, "The Throne and the Mountain," *Classical Journal* 56 (1961): 146-165.

<sup>14</sup> See Abrams Rebillard's evaluation of such approaches, "Speaking for Salvation," 1-15.

<sup>15</sup> Bernardi, *Grégoire*, 314; the author also wonders whether Gregory was "le premier des romantiques," 326.

and, most extensively, Athens.<sup>16</sup> During his stay in Greece Gregory studied letters with leading figures in the Empire, perhaps among them Julian, who would become the famous “Apostate” emperor in 361. Prominent grammar teachers, sophists, prepared their students in the *enkyklios paideia*, the comprehensive formation that comprised grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and, often, music.<sup>17</sup>

Various studies have revealed the extent of Gregory’s knowledge of classical literature.<sup>18</sup> He was intimately familiar with Homer and the ancient poets, including Pindar, Aeschylus, and Sophocles. He also knew the classical orators, especially Demosthenes, enough to imitate and adapt their language and rhetorical periods in his own speeches.

At Athens Gregory’s passion for composing literature also matured. In the autobiographical poem “On his own life” (II.1.11), he records his initial infatuation with writing:

While my cheek was still beardless, a passionate love of letters  
possessed me. Indeed I sought to make bastard letters  
serve as assistants to the genuine ones.<sup>19</sup>

Words, both written and spoken, became Gregory’s main preoccupation. More importantly, the quest to employ classical learning in order to articulate Christian thought would occupy the rest of his career.<sup>20</sup> In his letters, poems, and speeches, Gregory sought to put his classical training at the service of Christian revelation.

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<sup>16</sup> For a succinct account of his formation see Wyß, “Gregor von Nazianz,” 794-798.

<sup>17</sup> Wyß, “Gregor von Nazianz,” 797.

<sup>18</sup> Wyß, “Gregor von Nazianz”; Kristoffel Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla in Gregory Nazianzen: A Study in Rhetoric and Hermeneutics*, Corpus Christianorum 2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996).

<sup>19</sup> II.1.11, 1.112-114, trans. Carolinne White, *Gregory of Nazianzus, Autobiographical Poems*. Cambridge medieval classics 6. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

<sup>20</sup> For more on Gregory’s pursuit of the reconciliation, see Gautier, *Le Retraite et le Sacerdoce*, 169-175 and 268-280.

During his studies, Gregory not only mastered the content of classical learning, but he also acquired classical ways of reading. Gregory learned to engage literature by interpreting it through close attention to the language of the author within the unity of his corpus. A well-trained student deciphered any problematic word, phrase, or passage by locating parallels in the text. Once the student could establish what the author meant in a broader context, he would be better equipped to resolve the ambiguity in the puzzling portion. Gregory's fastidious attention to words emerges from this early training.

Gregory's particular reception of Hellenistic, especially Alexandrian, philological techniques has been the subject of recent study.<sup>21</sup> While earlier scholarship conjectured that Gregory most likely knew classical literature indirectly, through anthologies, recent studies show his first-hand familiarity with, among others, Callimachus, Apollonius, and Theocritus.<sup>22</sup> Gregory's poems are full of words and phrases culled from these authors, which he often reconfigures in inventive and suggestive ways. Gregory not only refers to important classical and Hellenistic writers, but he also retrieves and adapts their method of allusion and reference. In this way Gregory resembled many of his late antique contemporaries, who prized a finely wrought system that reworked this Hellenistic heritage.<sup>23</sup>

Even as he appropriated the classical Greek tradition into his writings, Gregory the Christian drew from the Bible as the ultimate source for his rhetoric. He was among the first generation to be formed in a Christian culture that was beginning to supplant the

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<sup>21</sup> So Edwards, "Christian Alexandrianism," 30-45; Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 30-46; Gennaro d'Ippolito, "Gregorio di Nazianzo: la poesia come tetrafarmaco," in *Incontro Augustinianum, Motivi e forme*, 393.

<sup>22</sup> Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 31, calls Gregory's engagement with Callimachus an "obsession"; for an inventory of references to these authors, see Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla*.

<sup>23</sup> Indeed, it is this culture of reference that led, in part, to Gregory's unpopularity in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, when an educated audience generally prized originality; see Edwards, "Christian Alexandrianism," 5-13.

dominant pagan worldview. As Frances Young has documented, despite real ambivalence toward classical authors, Christians did not simply reject Greek *paideia*, but rather transformed it in order to promote learning based on the Bible.<sup>24</sup> Christian readers applied and taught the same techniques to reading scripture that they had employed when reading Homer or Demosthenes; the Bible was seen as a unity, which could furnish the attentive reader with all the tools necessary for its own interpretation. Thus, even as he was alluding to Callimachus, Gregory could communicate Christian content in his writings.

It is surprising, then, that despite his thorough engagement with the Bible Gregory has left us virtually no extended scriptural exegesis or commentary.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, scholars, both ancient and modern, agree that Gregory made profound contributions to the history of biblical interpretation; Jerome, the Father of Western biblical exegesis, names Gregory “my master in the Sacred Scripture,” while Brian Daley, in a recent study on Gregory’s use of Scripture, affirms that the Theologian is “a quintessentially Biblical thinker and writer.”<sup>26</sup> Yet few have attempted to examine Gregory’s use of the Bible in real depth.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 49-118; see also her “*Paideia* and the Myth of Static Dogma,” in Sarah Coakley and David Palin, *The Making and Remaking of Christian Doctrine: Essays in Honour of Maurice Wiles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 265-283.

<sup>25</sup> The only extended treatment of a biblical passage appears in *Or.* 37 on Mt. 19:1-12, which is, in fact, more a reflection on Christian marriage than on scripture itself; see Frederick Norris, “Gregory Nazianzen: Constructing and Constructed by Scripture,” in *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity*, edited by Paul Blowers (Notre Dame: NDU Press, 1997) 149; Norris notes that the twelfth-century Elias of Crete attributes to Gregory a treatise called *The History of Ezechiel the Prophet*, which does not survive.

<sup>26</sup> Jerome in *In Isaiam* 3; see Paul Gallay, “La Bible dans l’oeuvre de Grégoire de Nazianze le Théologien,” in *Le monde grec ancien et la Bible*, edited by Claude Mondésert (Paris: Beauchesne, 1984), 316; Daley, “Walking through the Word of God: Gregory of Nazianzus as a Biblical Interpreter,” in *The Word Leaps the Gap* edited by J. Ross Wagner, A. Katherine Grieb, and C. Kavin Rowe (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 530.

<sup>27</sup> The most extensive treatment is Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla*; also Gallay: “La Bible dans l’oeuvre de Grégoire de Nazianze,” 313-334; Norris “Constructing and Constructed by Scripture,” 149-162.

Such a study must engage Gregory's poems on Scripture. Although these verses lack any sustained, penetrating exegesis, they do reveal some of Gregory's basic assumptions in his approach to the sacred text. For their part, these attitudes are informed by Gregory's broader account of his reasons for composing verse in order to do theology. Thus, some background on Gregory the poet will help us understand the motives and techniques that guide his particular contribution to early Christian biblical theology.

## CHAPTER II. Gregory's Biblical Poems

### Gregory's poetry and fourth-century Christian culture

Gregory explains his decision to compose verse in his poem II.1.39, "On Matters of Measure."<sup>28</sup> After describing how his enemies often mock his versifying, Gregory claims that writing poetry brings him four distinct advantages: first, it allows him some relief from the pressures of daily life; second, it shows the pagans that Christians can compose verse that is as accomplished as the ancient classics; third, poetry makes complicated theology more accessible and attractive to young audiences; fourth, it offers Gregory a certain consolation in his old age.<sup>29</sup> To be sure, this list is not exhaustive and may be intentionally selective: scholars have detected a rather transparent apologetic motive for Gregory's verse and for this "programmatic" poem in particular.<sup>30</sup> Still, the third motive deserves special attention: Gregory uses verse in order to render abstract theology available and appealing to a broad, uneducated audience.

Here Gregory seems inspired by at least two models. The first is a standard trope in classical pedagogy. Pagan authors often defended didactic verse as a way to "sweeten" unpleasant ideas with entertaining and attractive literary ornament. Lucretius, for instance, defends his *De Rerum Natura*, a first-century BC exposition of Epicureanism, by appealing to the practice of sweetening medicine for a sick child: just as the child will not accept the pill unless it has been dipped in honey, so the unlettered

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<sup>28</sup> McGuckin, "Gregory: The Rhetorician as Poet," 195 suggests this title for poem II.1.39, which the *PG* editors, following the manuscripts, label *Εἰς τὰ ἔμμετρα* (*PG* 37.1330-1338). The poem is thoroughly treated in the scholarship; see Cecilia Milovanovic-Barham, "Gregory of Nazianzus: *Ars Poetica* (*In suos versus*, *carm.* 2.1.39)," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5 (1997): 497-510, for bibliography and introduction.

<sup>29</sup> McGuckin, "Gregory: The Rhetorician as Poet," 210 includes a fifth reason, based on ll.58-59: an invitation to the wise to enter Gregory's mind.

<sup>30</sup> See, e.g., Federico Fatti, "Il cane e il poeta: Gregorio Nazianzeno e Massimo il Cinico (su Greg. Naz. *carm.* II, 1, 39 e II, 1, 41)," in *Incontro Augustinianum, Motivi e forme*, 310-317.

audience will not embrace a philosophy that seems “bitter” unless it has first been sweetened by pleasant language and verse.<sup>31</sup> The poetic form, then, offered clear rhetorical advantages in the transmission of Christian doctrine.

Second, Gregory’s poetic project resides in a wider Christian cultural program that emphasized the catechetical end of all literature. By the second half of the fourth century, Christian authors show a pressing concern to compile and communicate a coherent body of teaching both to their children, who were to be raised in a Christian milieu, and to catechumens, who were encountering the faith for the first time.<sup>32</sup> The great mystagogies mark one attempt to create this corpus for large groups of initiates into the Christian faith, when eminent preachers such as Ambrose and Theodore of Mopsuestia introduced catechumens to the mysteries of the liturgy.<sup>33</sup>

Theologians were thus offering more systematic and unified accounts of Christian doctrine, including simple versions and summaries, often in verse, of the Church consensus on Christ’s divinity and belief in the Trinity. Such summaries were necessary not only for mass dissemination, but also to respond to rival teachings promoted by heretics. Ephrem the Syrian, for instance, saw his liturgical hymns as an orthodox alternative to the heretical doctrines of Bardaisan, the Marcionites, the Manicheans, and his contemporaries, the Arians.<sup>34</sup> Gregory, then, was composing his verse just as the Church was generating a coherent body of *paideia* that was intended to supplement, if not

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<sup>31</sup> *De Rerum Natura*, 1.933 ff.; some form of the trope dates at least to Plato, *Laws*, 2.659e.

<sup>32</sup> For an overview, see Antonio Quacquarelli, *Reazione pagana e trasformazione della cultura (fine IV secolo. d.C.)* (Bari: Edipuglia, 1986), esp. 125-142.

<sup>33</sup> For an introduction, see Edward Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation: The Origins of the RCIA*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1994), 1-54.

<sup>34</sup> Indeed, the heretic Bardaisan, in order to promote his own doctrines, composed hymns, which appear to have been popular among those living in Mesopotamia and help account for the rapid spread of his peculiar brand of Christianity in the region during the third and fourth century.

replace, classical Greek learning and to render orthodox teaching in accessible form, in response to heretical threats.<sup>35</sup>

Some of these efforts, including Gregory's didactic poems, may have also had a more proximate inspiration. In 362 Emperor Julian ("the Apostate") issued his famous "School Law," which forbade Christian educators to teach the pagan classics. According to contemporary sources, Julian passed the edict with the claim that Christians could not honestly teach pagan learning if they did not believe that it was true; since they rejected the pagan divinities, they would fail to communicate the central "faith" of pagan literature.<sup>36</sup> In theory, at least, the law threatened Christians who were intent on political advancement and who were living in a culture where fluency in the classics was still essential social capital.<sup>37</sup>

While the legislation was soon overturned after Julian's early death in 363, the move seems to have aroused a Christian response that persisted for decades.<sup>38</sup> The fifth-century historians Sozomen and Socrates report that Christian authors began to compose literature that rivaled classical texts in technique and artistry, while eliminating the pagan philosophy and mythology that those texts communicated. The most famous attempt came from a father and son, both named Apollinaris.<sup>39</sup> The two, it seems, translated the

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<sup>35</sup> Franz Xaver Portmann, *Die göttliche paidagogia bei Gregor von Nazianz* (St. Ottilien: Eos verlag der Erzabtei, 1954), 17-33, presents Gregory's broader pedagogical project, especially as presented in *Or.* 2; on Gregory creating a body of Christian *paideia*, see John McGuckin, "Gregory: The Rhetorician as Poet," in *Gregory of Nazianzus: Images and Reflections*, ed. by Jostein Børtnes and Tomas Hägg, eds. (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2006), 200-201.

<sup>36</sup> Julian's law is recorded in *Cod. Theod.* 13.3.5; cf. Ammianus Marcellinus *Res Gestae*, 22.10.

<sup>37</sup> See Henri Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 309-311.

<sup>38</sup> See Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla*, 23 on Gregory's response to Julian in *Or.* 4

<sup>39</sup> It was the younger of the two would later gain notoriety for the eponymous heresy that denied the existence of a human soul in the Incarnate Christ.

entire Bible into the standard classical literary genres.<sup>40</sup> Thus, they paraphrased the Old Testament according to the model of Homer and the tragedians, and made the New Testament into a Platonic dialogue.<sup>41</sup> While the final product does not survive – perhaps because its authors were later linked to a Christological heresy – their effort provides an intriguing parallel with Gregory’s theological and scriptural poetry.<sup>42</sup>

Other authors before Gregory had attempted biblical verse and paraphrases. The Latin author Juvencus had already composed a gospel paraphrase early in the fourth century, but most biblical Christian verse appears after Julian’s School Law was overturned. For instance, the Latin cento of Proba, composed around 370, reworked phrases from Virgil’s *Aeneid* to compose a Christian poem on the transcendence of God.<sup>43</sup> Paulinus may have likewise intended his psalm paraphrases to respond to the threat and the indirect insult posed by Julian’s edict.<sup>44</sup> Christians began to recognize that a common, aesthetically accomplished body of literature could communicate their faith to future generations while remaining unspoiled by pagan influence.

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<sup>40</sup> On the background, see Gianfranco Agosti, “L’epica biblica nella tarda antichità greca: autori e lettori nel IV e V secolo,” 67-101, in Francesco Stella, *La Scrittura infinita: Bibbia e poesia in età medievale e umanistica* (Firenze: SISMEL, Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2001); P. Sneek, “A More Charitable Verdict: Review of N. G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*,” in id. *Understanding Byzantium* (London: Ashgate, 2003), 163-178, argues that the account of the Apollinaris project is legendary.

<sup>41</sup> Socrates *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.16.1-5.

<sup>42</sup> Their paraphrases do not even seem to have survived into the fifth-century; later historians claim to have no first-hand experience of their verse. Indeed, John Zonaras in the twelfth century linked the Gregorian and Apollonarian efforts together; *Epitome Historion* (61.13-62.4); see Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 26-27, who maintains that Gregory’s attempt comes in response to Apollonaris’ effort, as is stated by Gregory’s 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>-century biographer, Gregory the Presbyter.

<sup>43</sup> For a recent study, see David Meconi, S.J., “The Christian Cento and the Evangelization of Classical Culture,” *Logos* 7:4 (2004): 109-131; Agosti, “L’epica biblica,” 74-77.

<sup>44</sup> See Roger Green, *Latin epics of the New Testament: Juvencus, Sedulius, Arator* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 143-148.

## The poems on Scripture

Gregory's poems on Scripture should be seen as part of this broader cultural project. To introduce neophytes and children to Christian culture, Church educators needed to present the basics of the scriptural narrative. Thus, while Gregory has left us very few examples of sophisticated exegesis and commentary – the kind of sophisticated engagement with Scripture that generally attracts scholarly attention – his scriptural poems show that he was concerned with the elementary steps in this pedagogical program.<sup>45</sup>

Scholars have long dismissed these poems not only because they seem elementary and easy, but also because Gregory's scriptural verse, often little more than biblical paraphrase for quick memorization, can be dull. As Sykes puts it, they “show how tedious mnemonic verse can be.”<sup>46</sup> Indeed, the metrical Latin translation of Gregory in the *PG* ends abruptly while Gregory is merely rendering the Matthaean and Lucan genealogies – name by name – in verse form; Billius, the sixteenth-century translator, decides to stop, “Because anyone can look for [these names] in the Gospels, and because they consist entirely of Hebrew names, from which you can hardly say how far the Latin Muses recoil.”<sup>47</sup> The bland and monotonous verse utterly fails to match Gregory's rhetorical skill in his greatest orations and letters.

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<sup>45</sup> The poems are among those numbered I.1.20-27, with I.1.12, “On the Genuine Books of Scripture,” perhaps serving as a preface *PG* 37; a rare study of this group is Roberto Palla, “Ordinamento e polimetria delle poesie bibliche di Gregorio Nazianzeno,” *Wiener Studien* 102 (1989): 169-185. Donald Sykes has published a series of articles on the didactic elements in Gregory's poems; for a sample, see “Gregory Nazianzen as Didactic Poet,” *Studia Patristica* 16.2 (1985): 433-437.

<sup>46</sup> Sykes, *Poemata Arcana*, 58.

<sup>47</sup> *Nobis eandem, carminibus exprimere minime placuit, tum qui cuivis ab evangelistis petere licet, tum quia tota Hebraicis nominibus constat, a quibus vix dici potest, quantum Latinae musae abhorreant* [my translation]; *PG* 37.485, n.60.

Yet they deserve closer attention. While the final version may seem disappointing, the process of composition must have been rigorous and demanding. This rigor is precisely one of the reasons that Gregory gives for writing verse in the first place, as he notes in his programmatic poem “On Matters of Measure”: choosing his words carefully helps him control his language in general (II.1.39, 35-37). These scriptural poems, like much of his verse, are models of verbal asceticism.<sup>48</sup>

### A “helpful plaything for children”

Moreover, Gregory’s precision and control aim at a simplicity that fosters memorization and understanding.<sup>49</sup> Lengthy gospel pericopes are rendered in one or two lines of hexameter or elegiacs so that they might be retained more easily as discrete moments in a catalogue.<sup>50</sup> Gregory often repeats vocabulary, including simple words and phrases such as *μέγας* and *Χριστός ἄναξ*, poetic *formulae* that would help a student commit the verse to memory. He will place similar phrases in the same metrical position, which thus become easy for the student to organize in parallel with identical patterns.

There is some hint that Gregory’s meter itself is more easily memorized. Gregory’s hexameters are especially dactylic, that is, each foot is very often resolved into dactyls, rather than left as long spondees.<sup>51</sup> Homer’s verse, for instance, usually pairs two dactyls with every spondee, while in Gregory the ratio is more like 5 to 1.<sup>52</sup> In the poems on Scripture, the ratio is even higher, around 6 resolved dactyls for every

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<sup>48</sup> Gautier, *La Retraite et le Sacerdoce*, 172-189.

<sup>49</sup> Basil (*Greater Rule* 15.2; *PG* 31.953) and Jerome (ep. 107.4) both encourage committing the miracles and genealogies to memory; see Palla, “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 175.

<sup>50</sup> On “concision” as the main feature of Gregory’s poetry, see Trisoglio, *Gregorio il Teologo*, 185.

<sup>51</sup> Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 56, gives some statistics on the patterns and frequencies of dactyls in the corpus.

<sup>52</sup> Sykes, *Poemata Arcana*, 62.

spondee.<sup>53</sup> Gregory's preference for resolved dactyls in these poems appears at least to help students recite or even sing the verses more readily.

Gregory is not simply content to make his didactic verse easily accessible and committed to memory. Following the established method of didactic verse, these poems incorporate certain ornaments to make them more pleasant. In this way, Gregory sprinkles his verse with delicate linguistic markers that encourage some familiarity with classical learning, so central to Gregory's own formation. He introduces his audience not only to the outlines of Scripture, but also to certain arcane elements of classical literature. Although they may not suit every grown-up's taste, his poems are, as he puts it, "a helpful plaything for children."<sup>54</sup>

### **The pedagogical order of the poems on Scripture**

Further evidence for this pedagogical end appears in the probable original order of these poems. Borrowing from a suggestion of Roberto Palla, I present them in my translation organized as a sequence that would help a student memorize the central scriptural narrative. This order, I propose, would teach the student that exegesis should end in a personal engagement with the word of God as the source of salvation.

Moreover, this strategy appears elsewhere in Gregory's poetry, revealing something of Gregory's approach to Scripture in general: God's self-revelation must not remain

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<sup>53</sup> To be sure, the recitation of ancient quantitative verse cannot be immediately conflated with modern experience of poetry, with its stress accents that tend to have an effect of impression through repetition. See Milovanovic-Barham, "Gregory of Nazianzus: *Ars Poetica*," 497-510.

<sup>54</sup> ἐσθλὸν ἄθυρμα νέοις, 1.2.31. Cf. 2.1.39, 39 ff.: Gregory also says that poetry is a *τερπνὸν* . . . φάρμακον ("a pleasant medicine") for himself.

propositional, historical, and remote, but must be appropriated personally by each believer.<sup>55</sup>

Manuscript and stylistic evidence suggests that the scriptural poems were originally intended as a set for students.<sup>56</sup> All but three of the poems are preserved together, as a set known by consensus as Group III.<sup>57</sup> To this Group, a paraphrase important for understanding the manuscript history, Paraphrase A, has been transmitted. The addition of the paraphrase suggests that while later generations valued this set of poems, they could not always understand vocabulary that was obsolete by the eighth or ninth century. As further evidence for this catechetical motivation for the manuscript transmission, the Antiochos manuscript at Keio University contains paraphrases of four poems of this Group, suggesting that they were seen as a unit by later generations.<sup>58</sup>

*Lexica* were often appended to these paraphrases, apparently to help the student grasp the sophisticated language of the scriptural poems, while he used the paraphrase to follow its outlines.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> This parallels his well-known autobiographical style and tendency to apply scriptural morals to himself, especially in his biblical interpretation; see Daley, "Walking through the Word," 519-520; for a somewhat skeptical view of that persona, see McLynn, "A Self-Made Holy Man," 463-483.

<sup>56</sup> The bulk of the evidence is listed as Gedichtgruppe III in H. M. Werhahn, *Übersichtstabellen zur handschriftlichen Überlieferung der Gedichte Gregors von Nazianz* (Studien z. Geschichte u. Kultur d. Altertums, N. F. 2,3: Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der Gedichte Gregors von Nazianz, 1: Die Gedichtgruppen XX und XI von W. Höllger, Paderborn 1985), 15-34; a more recent treatment of the manuscript evidence appears in the Belles Lettres edition, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze: Oeuvres Poétiques t.1, Poèmes personnels 2.1.1-11*, edited by André Tuilier and Guillaume Bady (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2004); but see the critical review of Simelidis, *Antiquité Tardive* 12 (2004): 445-450.

<sup>57</sup> According to the system developed by H. Werhahn, who gives the standard manuscript reconstruction in preparation for the critical edition. Werhahn organized the manuscript Groups in preparation for the critical edition, which has yet to be completed; doctoral students under his direction have periodically published their editions of individual poems as dissertations.

<sup>58</sup> I.1.12, I.1.13, I.1.19, I.1.14; see Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 78; their pedagogical use is supported by the claim of Demetrios Chalcondyles (1423-1511) that Gregory's poems replaced Greek erotic poetry; see Simelidis, *Select Poems*, 78, on the veracity of this Renaissance account.

<sup>59</sup> That is, the *Lexicon Casinense*, in D. Kalamakis, *Λεξικά τῶν ἐπῶν Γρηγορίου τοῦ Θεολόγου μετὰ γενικῆς θεωρήσεως τῆς πατερικῆς λεξικογραφίας* (Athens: Papadakis, 1992) and *In sancti Gregorii Nazianzeni carmina lexicon Casinense*, in *Athena* 81 (1990-6), 256-299; Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 79.

The manuscripts that transmit the poems of Group III, then, probably indicate an older order of the poems, which does not match that found in the *PG*. Palla shows that in the earliest manuscripts, both Greek and Syriac, a unit of thirteen biblical poems appears in a consistent sequence that differs from three other biblical poems printed with them in the *PG*.<sup>60</sup> According to Palla's reconstruction, we have the poem on the genuine books of Scripture, followed by three poems listing major moments of the Pentateuch, that is, the Ten Commandments, the ten plagues of Egypt, and the twelve patriarchs. Next we find a lengthier treatment of the events of the New Testament, beginning with two poems on the genealogy of Christ. Then follows a poem on the miracles in Matthew (I.1.20) and the parables in Matthew (I.1.24), the miracles in Mark (I.1.21, 1-16) and the parables in Mark (I.1.25, 1/2.4), the miracles in Luke (I.1.25, 5/6 + I.1.22, 3-20) and the parables in Luke (I.1.26), and the miracles in John (I.1.23).<sup>61</sup> No poem on the parables in John survives, and instead, in eighth place, we have a longer, more sophisticated poem on the parables of all four Gospels. This last poem, discussed below, departs in style and content from the paraphrases of the first seven. Moreover, the New Testament poems take distinct forms: the poems on miracles are introduced with a couplet, while those on parables are introduced with a single line, suggesting a sequential pairing of the poems in the set.

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<sup>60</sup> Palla, "Ordinamento e polimetria," 176, assures us that the details of his research were in the course of publication as monograph when his article on the biblical poems was written; I can find no record of the published volume.

<sup>61</sup> Palla, "Ordinamento e polimetria," 182 remains uncertain whether Mark preceded Luke in this ordering, but concludes that it is not especially pertinent to the basic claim.

## Style and themes of the poems on Scripture

The carefully chosen language of these poems would prepare students not only to remember the outlines of Scripture, but also to introduce them to vocabulary and constructions that would help them grasp classical learning, namely, the Hellenistic *paideia* in which Gregory himself was formed.<sup>62</sup> Employing Homeric and Callimachean words, even when metrically equivalent, biblical alternatives were available, Gregory was preparing his students to engage the pagan classics, but from a Christian point of view. Indeed, in literature, especially in late antiquity, where a single word could signal a myriad of allusions, Gregory was introducing his audience to the very strategies of textual reference. Drawing especially from searches in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, I note such references and allusions in the commentary.

While I offer closer analysis in the commentary of all the scriptural poems, in this introduction I present the longest in the series on miracles, which treats the material from Matthew (I.1.20), as an adequate sample of the sort of verse that appears throughout the first seven in the series. In I.1.20 Gregory systematically lists each miracle that appears in the text. While he sometimes misses passages that report miracles and elsewhere seems to conflate the Matthaean accounts with those of Luke and Mark, he is otherwise thorough in organizing the material.

The opening five lines reveal Gregory's approach:

The marvels of the book of Matthew, just so many as  
Christ the king performed, mixed, in a mortal body.  
First he relieved the piercing sickness of the leper (Mt 8:1-4).  
Next he bound the limbs of the centurion's slave (Mt 8:5-13).  
Then third he quenched the fever of Peter's mother-in-law by hand (Mt 8:14-15).

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<sup>62</sup> On Gregory's language in general, see Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 47-54.

Gregory presents a concise summary of the miracles following the order they take in Matthew. He leads us through until the twentieth miracle, when he moves to the cursing of the fig tree (Mt 21:18-20) and the Passion and Resurrection. In thirty-eight highly wrought verses, Gregory gives us the gospel, or, at least, its greatest hits, in its simplest form.

Like the other poems in this collection, the poem on the miracles in Matthew could be easily memorized. Gregory compresses the biblical account of each event by selecting only the most essential details and the most resonant vocabulary. The reading remains entirely literal; Gregory uses no allegories and finds no typologies in the passages. He employs precise language that communicates the scriptural referent in metrical form. One instance from many: the eighth miracle in his list is the healing of the leader's daughter ("Jairus" in Mark): "Eight, the ruler's daughter found the light" (l.10; cf. Mt 9:25). The six-line Gospel account is rendered in four words, as the pentameter in an elegiac couplet. Gregory subtly alludes to the peculiar context of the miracle by referring to the daughter "finding the light," rather than, perhaps, "being raised from the dead." The ruler's daughter, we remember, was not accounted dead by Jesus, but merely sleeping. Scriptural vocabulary likewise fixes the citation. Thus he cites a form of the verb *σεληνιάζεται* directly from Matthew 17:15 to refer to epilepsy (or, more literally, "lunacy"), a word that only occurs in Matthew.<sup>63</sup> The unusual word will signal an entire passage for more sophisticated listeners.

As in all the poems on Scripture, Gregory's careful use of meter would help a student retain the verses. In citing Matthew's account of the epileptic, Gregory knows

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<sup>63</sup> Also at Mt 4:24.

that the original form of the word for the disease will never fit the hexameter; Gregory changes the verb “being a lunatic” to the adjectival “having the lunatic sickness” and can thereby use the adjectival form *σεληναίης*. His shifts in meter – from dactylic hexameter to elegiac couplets to iambic trimeter, sometimes in the same poem – again foster the memorization of these outlines of the Gospels.<sup>64</sup>

At the same time, even in this rather dull, didactic verse, Gregory exposes his audience to classical vocabulary. Gregory intentionally archaizes his verse, employing epic language when he has adequate contemporary equivalents at hand. Rather than the standard late Greek verbs for creating or doing, Gregory often employs the Homeric *πόρω*.<sup>65</sup> He likewise uses epic spellings; the second word of the poem, *βιβλοίο*, is a variant genitive for the standard *βιβλου*.<sup>66</sup> To be sure, his choice may respond to metrical exigencies, but the approach also allows the verse to teach the young reader classical forms.

We find the same approach in the other six poems on the gospels miracles and parables. Like the poem on the miracles in Matthew, these poems reveal the basics of Gregory’s catechetical strategy.

### **“The Parables of Christ According to All the Evangelists” (I.1.27)**

The final poem in the gospel series departs from the previous seven. Here Gregory no longer paraphrases Scripture, but rather presents a personal encounter with the Gospel parables. Writing in the first person, Gregory rereads twenty-nine of the

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<sup>64</sup> To be sure, Gregory’s writings include many “false quantities,” especially by treating accented short syllables as long and unaccented longs as short; see Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 54-57; Carmelo Crimi, “Il problema delle ‘false quantities’ de Gregorio Nazianzeno alla luce della tradizione manoscritta di un carmen I, 2, 10 De Virtute,” *Sicilorum Gymnasium* 25 (1972) 1-26.

<sup>65</sup> E.g. I.1.20, l.11.

<sup>66</sup> I.1.20, l.1; spellings throughout the poems show frequent poetic variations.

parables that he has just presented in the previous scriptural verses.<sup>67</sup> By concluding the collection with this “final prayer,” as Palla calls it, Gregory offers a clue to his approach to Scripture in general:<sup>68</sup> he teaches his audience that Scripture must be personally appropriated to be learned at all.

In I.1.27, Gregory offers a series of petitions, praises, and laments that relate himself immediately to the Gospel parables. He opens the poem by using the language of parables to ask God for support: he worries that his foundation might be placed on sand (Mt 7:24-27); he could be the seed sown among the thorns or under the direct heat of the sun (Mt 13:3-6). He then praises the mustard seed for the marvelous symbolism it contains (Mt 13:31-32). He adds another petition for help, to be fished from the sea of troubles, and not to be thrown overboard with the useless catch (Mt 13:47-50). He includes some exegesis, such as his own clarification of the parable of the two sons who were asked to work in the vineyard (Mt 21:28-32): the one who works in the garden after saying he would not is obviously greater than the one who says he would and does not do so. “But,” Gregory adds, “greater in my eyes, and more pleasing than both to the father is the one who receives the command, and carries out the wish” (ll. 36-41).<sup>69</sup> He places himself at the heart of the wedding feast (Mt 22:1-14), repeating the phrase, “May I take part in this!”<sup>70</sup> He adds for his readers: “As well as whoever is my friend!”<sup>71</sup> Gregory’s passion for God’s word draws him to the heart of the Scripture, where he invites the audience to join him. The parables recorded by the evangelists are not mere accounts of

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<sup>67</sup> With a section reprised in another poem (“Exhortation to virgins,” I.2.2); see Demoen, *Biblical and Pagan Exempla*, 188, who argues that the reprised portion is original to I.1.27.

<sup>68</sup> Palla, “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 184.

<sup>69</sup> Κρείσσων μὲν ἐμοὶ, γλυκίων δὲ τοκῆϊ Ἀμφοτέρων, ὃς ἔδεκτο, καὶ ἐξετέλεσεν ἐέλδωρ (ll.40-42; PG 37.501).

<sup>70</sup> τοῦδ’ ἀντιάσαμι ἔγωγε (1.44; PG 37.501).

<sup>71</sup> καὶ ὃς φίλος ἐστὶν ἔμοιγε! (1.45; PG 37.502).

Christ's teaching on earth. They are "about" Gregory and those who read Scripture as Gregory does.

Moreover, the very structure of the poem introduces the reader to the project of personalizing Scripture. There is a regular, reliable pattern: the first half of each unit summarizes the argument of the parable, including any salient details and vocabulary; the second half applies the moral to the author of the poem and, by implication, to the reader.

For instance, Gregory presents the parable of the fishermen and the catch:

I know as well the world that falls within the net,  
which, on command from Christ the king, while sailing,  
the fishers of men surround by casting out the net,  
so as to drag them from ocean depths, and then to bid those  
swimming on the bitter waves of this life to come to Christ.  
But when you judge the catch, dividing it in half  
may you not cast me far away, as though I were a useless fish,  
but place me safe in baskets, guarded by the king. (ll. 24-31)

Gregory shifts from presenting the literal or historical reading of the passage to the moral interpretation. His student, arriving at poem I.1.27 after the series of poems on Scripture, would be prepared to receive this method of reading Scripture as he received the content of the Gospels. Not only would the student learn a catalogue of stories, but he would also absorb a way of reading them.

The pedagogy of this concluding poem corresponds to the exhortation that probably served as a preface to the collection, Gregory's poem on the genuine books on Scripture. Gregory opens the poem by reminding his audience to devote their lives to Scripture:

Let your mind and your tongue always dwell among  
the divine words. For God has given this prize for your struggles,  
a little light to see even some hidden thing, or what is best,  
to be spurred on by the pure God's great commands,

or third, by these concerns you draw your heart from earthly things.<sup>72</sup>

God's words are not abstract laws or norms of conduct, but rather they "spur on" Gregory and the Christian who reads them rightly.

### **Personal reading of Scripture in other poems**

This practice appears throughout Gregory's poetic corpus, whenever he encourages a robust and personal appropriation of Scripture.<sup>73</sup> Examples abound, some more sophisticated than others. Often Gregory merely applies biblical exempla to himself. In his poem on the Silence during Lent (II.1.34), for instance, Gregory refers to the sons of Aaron and Uzzah, who were punished for impurity in offering sacrifice; Gregory prays, "I tremble dreadfully at these things and fear that I will suffer/ for not being pure when touching upon the pure Trinity" (ll. 103-104).<sup>74</sup> Here Gregory takes the Old Testament exempla as a warning against allowing the impure to approach anything holy, thereby extending the rules for ritual purity to the object of theology itself, that is, the divine Trinity. Moreover, the object of the warning is not "priests" in general, but Gregory in particular.

In other cases, Gregory actually identifies with a personality in Scripture, making himself the object of the narrative. Writing on the soul, Gregory refers to the Word's creation of the human being in Genesis 2, yet applies the story to the creation of his own soul: "Then he took up a portion of new-formed earth/ and with immortal hands set up

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<sup>72</sup> I.1.14, l.1-4

<sup>73</sup> Daley, "Walking through the Word of God," 519-520; see Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 248 who discusses the "characteristic of the Antiochene" to expect that every tale had a moral ordered to the improvement of the reader; also Ackermann, *Die didaktische poesie*, 66-82.

<sup>74</sup> Trans. White, *Autobiographical Poems*, 173.

my shape,/ to which he then imparted his own life.”<sup>75</sup> God not only created Adam in Genesis; He made Gregory, and, by extension, the reader reciting the poem who identifies with the first person. In concluding his poem on the Two Covenants (I.1.9), he refers the theological reason for the double covenant to his own condition: if he were capable of fulfilling the Old Law, he would have had no need for the New;

But now, since God did not make me a god,  
but fashioned me inclinable both ways, and slanted,  
he therefore supports me, along with many others,  
who possess one grace of the baptism given to men.<sup>76</sup>

The New Law is more than an abstract instruction; God sent the Church and sacraments to help sinners, and to help Gregory above all.<sup>77</sup>

Recognizing the presence of this exegetical strategy elsewhere in Gregory’s verse helps us better understand his poetry as a whole. The pervasive interiority of the poems can occasionally suggest a certain self-absorption and narcissism. As Gregory himself puts it in *Oration 26*: “I have a habit of relating everything to my own situation.”<sup>78</sup>

Scholars have argued convincingly that Gregory deployed this strategy in his autobiographical verse to impress potential allies with his personal sanctity and thereby to defend his theological positions against his rivals’ attacks; by emphasizing his spiritual and saintly credentials, Gregory indirectly justifies the doctrine he champions.<sup>79</sup> Gregory makes a point of presenting his own life in terms of the life of Christ in the Gospels: like

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<sup>75</sup> I.1.8, ll. 70-72; “Ὡς ἄρ’ ἔφη, καὶ μοῖραν ἐλὼν νεοπηγέος αἴης, Χείρεσιν ἀθανάτησιν ἐμὴν ἐστήσατο μορφὴν, Τῇ δ’ ἄρ’ ἐῆς ζωῆς μοιρήσατο; trans. Gilbert, *On God and Man*, 65.

<sup>76</sup> I.1.9, ll. 85-88; Νῦν δ’, οὐ γάρ με θεὸν τεύξεν Θεός, ἀλλὰ μ’ ἔπηξεν Ἀμφιρεπῆ, κλιπὸν τε, τὸ καὶ πλεόνεσσιν ἐρείδει, Ὡν ἐν καὶ λωετροῖο βροτοῖς χάρις; trans. Gilbert, *On God and Man*, 74.

<sup>77</sup> This approach, I believe, informs the orations as well, where series of biblical exempla are readily organized to apply to Gregory’s particular audience. It would be helpful to examine the effect that the shift from the first-person emphasis of the poems to the second person in the orations and letters has on Gregory’s technique. All this is beyond the present thesis.

<sup>78</sup> Cited by Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla*, 289.

<sup>79</sup> E.g. Abrams Rebillard, “Speaking for Salvation,” 79-129.

Jesus, Gregory suffers persecution; like Jesus, Gregory sails on a turbulent sea; like Jesus, he goes into the desert; the list of parallels is extensive. Gregory may well contrive to present himself as a holy man, that is, an unimpeachable authority in matters of the faith and, indeed, in matters of politics as well.

Yet we should not go on to assume that Gregory is somehow in bad faith when he speaks of his own life in terms of the life of Christ. The personal appropriation of Scripture in his poems (and, likewise, in his orations and letters) is not necessarily some disingenuous construction aimed to shore up his personal power. The presence of this strategy in the scriptural verse, aimed at educating children, shows the extent of his commitment to this sort of exegesis. Close study of the structure of corpus presented in my study suggests that Gregory believed everyone, from the youngest child to his learned audiences to Gregory himself, the advanced Christian, should read the Gospels in this personal way. The culmination of individual study of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ must be the personal embrace of that life.

### **Date and Place of Composition**

Scholars generally date the bulk of Gregory's didactic poetry to the later portion of his career, after his departure from Constantinople and his return to his native Arianus in 382.<sup>80</sup> This general consensus emerges from consideration both of Gregory's references to his advanced age in some of the poems and of the historical circumstances that would have allowed Gregory the leisure to compose verse; in other words, Gregory had to be away from public life for an extended period of time to accomplish this task. While some of the theological verse probably dates from earlier periods and even

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<sup>80</sup> Sykes, *Poemata Arcana*, 60 ff., argues convincingly for this date and setting.

immediately following Julian's School Edict in 362, Gregory seems to have engaged the pursuit more intentionally only in his later career.

Little internal evidence appears in the scriptural poems to help us fix the date of their composition. As noted earlier, they may have been partly inspired by Julian's School Edict, but Christians continued to respond directly or indirectly to that infamous legislation well into the fifth century. One clue may help fix the place of composition of at least one of the poems. In poem I.1.27, the summarizing poem on all the miracles, Gregory writes of himself "walking from Christopolis." This reference (literally, "the city of Christ") may render the name for Gregory's home estate, Karbala, where he retired after returning from Constantinople.<sup>81</sup> If we may presume that he wrote this poem around the time he composed the others that survive in Group III, it seems safe to place Gregory in the region for the composition of this verse.

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<sup>81</sup> *Orbis Latinus* online, <http://www.columbia.edu/acis/ets/Graesse/orblatc.html>, accessed 9 September 2009. However, the name may also refer more generically to his monastery.

### CHAPTER III. Conclusion

Close study of these biblical poems shows Gregory at his most deliberate and elementary. As such, they witness to what Gregory viewed as most essential to his broader cultural project. These are the ABCs of his theology, or, at least, of his approach to teaching scripture. At the same time, they are, to some extent, the ABCs of his poetry as well. When viewed within Gregory's broader theological project, the poems on Scripture are not simply occasional or frivolous entertainments. Linguistic and metrical markers show that they were meant to be accessible and easily put to memory, with some light stylistic touches enlivening the project for young learners. Yet a more serious hermeneutical claim undergirds Gregory's efforts: meditation on the Scriptures applies the teachings of revelation to the individual's condition. Amidst the debates over Gregory's preference for Alexandrian allegory or Antiochene "plain" reading,<sup>82</sup> close attention to these poems reveals that, irrespective of his exegetical preference, Gregory the Theologian was trained to turn the words of Scripture on himself, and looked to share his training with a new students of the Bible.

Of course, one may dismiss didactic verse out of hand as somehow substandard, vulgarizing propaganda. Yet Gregory's poems were remarkably effective, both pedagogically and aesthetically. For the Byzantines their value in the classroom was never questioned. Since their composition, these poems were recognized as a ready source for instructive and edifying material, and used to teach Christian students. Not only were they transmitted continuously among the Byzantines and appeared frequently in the schools, they were extremely popular among the Renaissance humanists, edited

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<sup>82</sup> For some background to this debate, see Demoen, *The Bible and Greek Classics*, 237-267.

and translated even more thoroughly than the pagan classics.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, Aldus, the first editor of the poems, esteems them for their capacity for educating young people in Christian virtue and theological discourse, “useful for living blessedly and well.”<sup>84</sup>

At a time when theological literacy and familiarity with Scripture is at an unprecedented low, we might do well to retrieve some of Gregory’s zeal for composing a program of Christian formation that transmits the essentials of the faith while incorporating elements of our Western cultural heritage, just as Gregory incorporated Homer and Callimachus into his scriptural poems. We might look to fashion a method of communicating the truths of the faith that is somehow “a sweet plaything,” yet which does not however compromise theological rigor.<sup>85</sup>

Alternatively, Gregory’s approach shows the importance of a holistic approach to scripture. In an age when biblical scholarship tends to fragment the sacred text into sources and forms, we do well to follow the Theologian’s model. Reading the Bible as a broad and coherent narrative, we come closer to the attitude that the ancients maintained, the Bible as a unified book.<sup>86</sup>

## **Text and commentary**

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<sup>83</sup> The first edition of Gregory’s poems was from Aldus Manutius in 1504; see Edwards, “Christian Alexandrianism,” 24-27.

<sup>84</sup> Edwards, “Christian Alexandrianism,” 25

<sup>85</sup> The Internet provides one venue for such a project; various “rhyming Bible” projects have emerged. See, for instance, <http://www.kyleholt.com/the-bible-in-rhyme> (accessed 13 November 2009).

<sup>86</sup> Robert Louis Wilken, *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 61-66.

Producing the critical edition of Gregory's poems has proven a very slow and cumbersome project, first begun in Poland in 1905.<sup>87</sup> Since 1981, a group of scholars at the University of Münster under the direction of Dr. Martin Sicherl has been laboring to produce the stemmata of the various Groups of the poems in preparation for publishing a comprehensive edition. While some of their conclusions have been published, much work remains. By a certain irony, especially concerning the lack of attention to Gregory's poems in the past century, much of the difficulty in producing the critical edition arises from Gregory's unparalleled popularity in the Byzantine era: so many manuscripts exist and appear to have mutually influenced subsequent copies that it is difficult to establish priority in order to generate an accurate and comprehensive stemma of the poems' manuscripts.<sup>88</sup>

For this reason, I must rely on Migne's text from the *Patrologia Graeca*, based on the edition of the Maurists under the direction of Dom Caillau. I print this below my English translation. In a few instances I mention alternative readings in order to suggest changes in the translation. Still, the essential element of this project is the translation; closer manuscript study is impossible.

Except for I.1.12, "On the genuine books of Scripture," none of these poems, to my knowledge, has been translated into any modern language. The *PG*, however, prints two Latin translations below the Greek. The first is a line-by-line literal rendering of the original, made by the Maurist editors. I occasionally refer to their suggestions where the Greek is ambiguous or inscrutable. The second version is a verse translation from Billius

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<sup>87</sup> For the story of the Krakow Edition, see Edwards, "Christian Alexandrianism," 13-16.

<sup>88</sup> For a summary of the history of research on the editions, including the relevance of Syriac translations, see Simelidis, *Select Poems*, 88-99; for the stemma for Group, see Höllger, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung*, vol. 2, 180.

(Jacques de Billy), an aristocrat, humanist, and monk (1535-1581), who translated Gregory within the broader cultural project of the Counter-Reformation.<sup>89</sup> This text is both learned and loose, and therefore less useful to me as I attempt a literal and accurate rendition.

The translations here will be the poems from Group III, along with the three additional biblical poems that the *PG* inserts. From the *PG* these are poems I.1.12-15 and I.1.18-27. I follow the general order of the Group, beginning the series with I.1.12, “On the Genuinely Inspired Books of Scripture,” and then printing I.1.14 (the plagues of Egypt), I.1.15 (the Decalogue), I.1.13 (the twelve Patriarchs), followed by the poems of the NT, that is, I.1.19 (the twelve Apostles), I.1.18 (on the genealogies of Christ), and then the poems on the miracles and the parables, which I print in gospel order, that is Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.<sup>90</sup> One poem in this group has been previously translated into English and received special scholarly attention for its value as a witness to the canon of scripture in the late fourth century.<sup>91</sup>

In most of the poems, I have attempted to be as faithful to the Greek as possible.<sup>92</sup> This of course results in an English version that is not especially poetic and even, at times, stilted. Still, I decided that close attention to the specifics of Gregory’s vocabulary would be more helpful for scholars interested in his influences and theological intentions. At the same time, I have kept the meter loosely iambic to communicate something of the

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<sup>89</sup> On Billius, see Edwards, “Christian Alexandrianism,” 33-43.

<sup>90</sup> The order in the most reliable manuscripts (e.g. *Laurentianus pluteus* VII), see Bady “Ordre et desordre,” 343.

<sup>91</sup> In Gilbert, *On God and Man*, 85-86.

<sup>92</sup> I follow some of the recommendations for translating Gregory offered by Nonna Verna Harrison, “Book Reviews: On Translating Gregory of Nazianzus,” *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (2007): 123-131.

flow of the verses that Gregory suggests by his rather “bouncy” hexameters. I am rather free in translating certain particles and conjunctions. In particular, I will ignore *καί* for my own metrical reasons when Gregory seems to use the conjunction *metri causa*. In one instance, the miracles of Mark, I have offered a version that rhymes, in an attempt to evoke the didactic effect that Gregory intended for these verses. Whether the poetry is appealing or even bearable I leave for the reader to decide. It would be beyond the scope of this thesis to match Gregory’s literary competence in English verse.

In the commentary that follows the translation, I pay special attention to the themes discussed in this introduction. After introducing each poem, I note Gregory’s classical and scriptural vocabulary, metrical oddities and their relationship to the pedagogical end of the poems, and distinctive interpretations that Gregory offers for the scriptural citation. In particular, I indicate the ways that Gregory: 1. uses biblical terms to signal the original text that he is paraphrasing or referring to; 2. employs classical, especially epic and Hellenistic, vocabulary to enliven his verse and to expose his students’ to new words; 3. modifies spellings and meter to achieve a further classicizing effect; 4. orders his poems to culminate in a personal reading. Biblical citations are inserted directly in the poems for ease of reference.

## CHAPTER IV. The Poems

### I.1.12. On the genuine books of divinely inspired Scripture (PG 37.472-474)

O let your mind and tongue dwell among divine  
phrases. For God has given this reward for the effort,  
a little light even to see some hidden thing, or, best,  
to be spurred on by the pure God's awesome commands,  
5 or third, by these concerns you draw your heart from earthly things.  
and that your mind might not be stolen by strange books  
(for they are all full of interpolated evils)  
receive, my friend, this list of mine of the approved number.  
For there are together twelve books of history  
10 that treat the more ancient Hebrew wisdom.  
The first is Genesis, then Exodus, then Leviticus,  
then Numbers, then Deuteronomy  
then Joshua, Judges, and Ruth is eighth,  
the ninth and tenth books are the acts of the Kings.  
15 And Chronicles. Then last you have Ezra.  
And then five books of verse of which the first is Job;  
then the book of David; then the three books of Solomon:  
Ecclesiastes, the Canticle, and Proverbs.  
Likewise there are five books of the prophetic spirit,  
20 twelve together are in a single text:  
Hosea, Amos, and Micah is third,

then Joel, then Jonah, then Obadiah,  
then Nahum, then Habakkuk, then Zephaniah,  
then Haggai, then Zachariah, then Malachi  
25 these are all one. The second is Isaiah.  
Jeremiah, then, called from the womb,  
then Ezekiel, and then the grace of Daniel.  
I have set down twenty-two Old books,  
equal in number to the Hebrews' alphabet,  
30 Come then and number [the books] of the new mystery,  
Matthew wrote the marvels of Jesus for the Jews.  
Mark for Italy, Luke for Greece,  
John, the great herald, heaven-haunting, wrote for all.  
Next the Acts of the wise apostles,  
35 and then the letters, fourteen of Paul,  
then seven catholic, with one from James,  
two from Peter, three from John again;  
Jude's is seventh. You have them all.  
If it's anything else, then it's not genuine.

**Περὶ τῶν γνησίων βιβλίων τῆς θεοπνεύστου Γραφῆς.**

Θείοις ἐν λογίοισιν αἰεὶ γλώσση τε νόῳ τε  
Στροφάσθ'· ἢ γὰρ ἔδωκε Θεὸς καμάτων τόδ' ἄεθλον,  
Καί τι κρυπτὸν ἰδεῖν ὀλίγον φάος, ἢ τόδ' ἄριστον,  
Νύττεσθαι καθαροῖο Θεοῦ μεγάλησιν ἐφετμαῖς·  
5. Ἡ τρίτατον, χθονίων ἀπάγειν φρένα ταῖσδε μερίμναις.  
Ὅφρα δὲ μὴ ξείνησι νόον κλέπτοιο βίβλοισι  
(Πολλὰ γὰρ τελέθουσι παρέγγραπτοι κακότητες),  
Δέχνησο τοῦτον ἐμεῖο τὸν ἔγκριτον, ὦ φίλ', ἀριθμόν.  
Ἱστορικαὶ μὲν ἔασι βίβλοι δυοκαίδεκα πᾶσαι  
10 Τῆς ἀρχαιότερης Ἑβραϊκῆς σοφίης.  
Πρώτη, Γένεσις, εἴτ' Ἐξοδος, Λευιτικόν.

Ἐπειτ' Ἀριθμοί. Εἶτα Δεύτερος Νόμος.  
Ἐπειτ' Ἰησοῦς, καὶ Κριταί. Ῥούθ ὀγδόη.  
Ἡ δ' ἐνάτη δεκάτη τε βίβλοι, Πράξεις βασιλῶν,  
15. Καὶ Παραλειπόμενα. Ἐσχατον Ἐσδραν ἔχεις.  
Αἱ δὲ στιχηραὶ πέντε, ὧν πρῶτός γ' Ἰώβ.  
Ἐπειτα Δαυίδ· εἶτα τρεῖς Σολομωντίαι·  
Ἐκκλησιαστής, Ἄσμα καὶ Παροιμίαι.  
Καὶ πένθ' ὁμοίως Πνεύματος προφητικῶν.  
20. Μίαν μὲν εἰσιν ἐς γραφὴν οἱ δώδεκα·  
ᾠσὴ κ' Ἀμώς, καὶ Μιχαίας ὁ τρίτος·  
Ἐπειτ' Ἰωὴλ, εἶτ' Ἰωνάς, Ἀβδίας,  
Ναούμ τε, Ἀββακούμ τε, καὶ Σοφονίας,  
Ἀγγαῖος, εἶτα Ζαχαρίας, Μαλαχίας.  
25 Μία μὲν οἶδε. Δευτέρα δ' Ἡσαίας.  
Ἐπειθ' ὁ κληθεὶς Ἰερεμίας ἐκ βρέφους.  
Εἶτ' Ἰεζεκιήλ, καὶ Δανιήλου χάρις.  
Ἀρχαίας μὲν ἔθηκα δύο καὶ εἴκοσι βίβλους,  
Τοῖς τῶν Ἑβραίων γράμμασιν ἀντιθέτους.  
30 Ἦδη δ' ἀρίθμει καὶ νέου μυστηρίου.  
Ματθαῖος μὲν ἔγραψεν Ἑβραίοις θαύματα Χριστοῦ·  
Μάρκος δ' Ἰταλίῃ, Λουκάς Ἀχαΐαδι·  
Πᾶσι δ' Ἰωάννης, κήρυξ μέγας, οὐρανοφοίτης.  
Ἐπειτα Πράξεις τῶν σοφῶν ἀποστόλων.  
35 Δέκα δὲ Παύλου τέσσαρες τ' ἐπιστολαί.  
Ἐπτὰ δὲ καθολικαί, ὧν, Ἰακώβου μία,  
Δύω δὲ Πέτρου, τρεῖς δ' Ἰωάννου πάλιν·  
Ἰούδα δ' ἐστὶν ἐβδόμη. Πάσας ἔχεις.  
Εἴ τι δὲ τούτων ἐκτός, οὐκ ἐν γνησίαις.

#### **I.1.14. The Plagues of Egypt. (PG 37.475-476)**

Always number the plagues of evil-hearted Egypt,

so that you might tremble before [God's] great might.

First the water of the land became red with blood (Ex 7:20).

Second [Egypt] poured forth ruinous frogs (Ex 8:6).

5 Then, third, the earth and the sky were hidden by gnats (Ex 8:16)

and fourth of a sudden the dog-fly appeared (Ex 8:24).

Fifth, a murderous plague struck four-legged creatures (Ex 9:5).

Boils on the bodies of men is the sixth distress (Ex 9:10).

The seventh, hail fell amidst the fire, an untempered downpour (Ex 9:23).

10 The eighth, everything green was killed by locusts (Ex 10:15).

Ninth, night veiled the Egyptian plain (Ex 10:22).

And the tenth trial was the death of the first-born (Ex 11:29-30).

**Μάστιγες Αιγύπτου.**

Μάστιγας Αιγύπτιοι κακόφρονος αἰὲν ἀρίθμει,  
Ὡς κεν ὑποτρομέης κάρτει τῷ μεγάλῳ.  
Αἵματι μὲν πρόπιστον ὕδωρ ἐρυθθαίνετο γαίης,  
Δεύτερον αὖ βατράχους ἐβρασεν οὐλομένους.  
5. Τὸ τρίτον αὖ, σκνίπεσσιν ἀήρ καὶ γαῖα καλύφθη.  
Καὶ κυνόμυια φάνη τέτρατον ἐξαπίνης.  
Πέμπτον, τετραπόδεσσι ἐπέχραε λυγρὸς ὄλεθρος.  
Φλυκτίδες ἀνθρώπων σώμασιν, ἕκτον ἄχος.  
Ἑβδομον, ὕσε χάλαζα μέση πυρὸς, ὄμβρος ἄμικτος.  
10. Ὅγδοον, ἐξ ἀκρίδος ὄλετο γλωρὸν ἅπαν.  
Εἴνατον, Αἰγύπτιοι πέδον κατὰ νύξ ἐκάλυψε  
Πρωτοτόκων δὲ μόρος ἡ δεκάτη βάσανος.

**I.1.15. The Decalogue of Moses (PG 37.476-477)**

God once inscribed these Ten Commandments in marble tablets

but You, write [them] on my heart.

You shall not know another God, since you honor only one (Ex 20:3; Dt 5:7).

You shall not erect a useless facade and a lifeless image (Ex 20:4-6; Dt 5:8-10)

5 You shall never recall the lofty God in vain (Ex 20:7; Dt 5:11).

Observe every Sabbath, it rises and then fades (Ex 20:8-11; Dt 5:12-15).

Blessed are you if you do homage to your parents, as is right (Ex 20:12; Dt:16).

To flee the guilt of a murderous hand (Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17), and of another's

marriage bed (Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18), evil-minded theft (Ex 20:15; Dt 5:19), and false

10 witness (Ex 20:16; Dt 5:20), and desire for what belongs to others (Ex 20:17; Dt 5:21)

is the spark of death.

**Ἡ τοῦ Μωϋσέως Δεκάλογος.**

Τοὺς δὲ νόμους ἐχάραξε Θεὸς δέκα ἐν ποτε πλαξί  
Λαϊνέαις· σὺ δέ μοι ἐγγράφε τῇ καρδίῃ.  
Οὐ γνώση Θεὸν ἄλλον, ἐπεὶ σέβας οἶον ἐνός γε.  
Οὐ στήσεις ἴνδαλμα κενὸν, καὶ ἄπνοον εἰκῶ.

5. Οὐ ποτε μαψιδίως μνήση μέγαλοιο Θεοῖο.  
Σάββατα πάντα φύλασσε μετάρσια καὶ σκιάοντα.  
Ἦν τοκέεσσι φέρης χάριν, ἦν ἐπέοικε.  
Φεύγειν ἀνδροφόνον παλάμης ἄγος, ἀλλοτρίης τε  
Εὐνῆς, κλεπποσύνην τε κακόφρονα, μαρτυρίαν τε  
10. Ψευδή, ἀλλοτρίων τε πόθον, σπινθήρα μόροιο.

### **I.1.13. The Patriarchs, the Sons of Jacob (PG 37.475)**

Twelve are the forefathers, born of Jacob, the great father:

Ruben and Simeon and Levi, and, in addition to them, Judas (Gn 29:31-35);

and then after them the bastards, Dan, Naphtali (Gn 30:4-8), Gad and Asher (Gn 30:9-12).

And, again, the noble ones born of the betrothed spouses, were Issachar,

Zaboulon (Gn 30:17-20), and Joseph (Gn 30:23) and last Benjamin (Gn 35:18).

#### **Πατριάρχαι υἱοὶ τοῦ Ἰακώβ.**

Δώδεκα δ' ἐξ Ἰακώβ πατρὸς μέγαλοιο πάτραρχοι·  
Ῥουβεῖμ, καὶ Συμεὼν, καὶ Λευὶ, τοῖς δ' ἔπ' Ἰούδας.  
Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα νόθοι, Δάν, Νεφθαλεῖμ, Γάδ τε Ἀσήρ τε·  
Αὐτῆς δ' εὐγενέες μνηστῶν ἄπο, Ἰσάχαρ ἦεν,  
Ζαβουλῶν, καὶ Ἰωσήφ, καὶ πύματος Βενιαμίν.

### **I.1.19. The Disciples of Christ (PG 37.487)**

Twelve were the disciples of Christ the great God

Peter and Andrew and John and James.

Fifth was Philip. Sixth, Bartholomew,

Matthew, and Thomas. Then James son of Alphaeus.

And Jude, and Simon. Then the other Judas not to be mentioned.

#### **Μαθηταὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ**

Δώδεκα δ' αὐτῷ Χριστοῦ Θεοῦ μέγαλοιο μαθηταί.  
Πέτρος τ' Ἀνδρείας τε, Ἰωάννης τ', Ἰάκωβος  
Πέμπος δ' ἦε Φίλιππος· ὁ δ' ἕκτος, Βαρθολομαῖος,  
Ματθαῖος, Θωμᾶς τε, καὶ Ἀλφαίου Ἰάκωβος·  
Ἰούδας τε, Σίμων τε, καὶ οὐ φατὸς ἄλλος Ἰούδας.

**I.1.18. On the genealogy of Christ (PG 37.480-487)**

Tell me, how did the great Matthew insert one version of the lineage  
in the Scriptures and the noble Luke another,  
which trace Christ from a first parent's blood?

How did the former count in many ancestors, while the latter in few?

5 Until King David the lineage's flow in both cases

is unbroken. Afterwards its flow splits, but then comes together in the end,  
so that it leads to Christ, the boundless sea.

Thus take heed, and be convinced by my account:

the sons of David were Solomon and Nathan, the first who drew

10 the royal blood as though a stream from a great river,

the latter was one of the holy and most brilliant priests.

But Christ had both, a great king, and a high priest.

But therefore Matthew inspired by God the Spirit wrote of the sons of  
Solomon, while Luke rushed up to Nathan.

15 From the two lineages, the one a grander, the other

smaller, we come upon the flowing stream. No great wonder.

For it's not smaller; rather, unequal is the number of the generations.

Thus the first generations split, but then they are gathered into one.

But tell me this as well, how can Joseph be the son of two fathers?

20 There was a law of Moses that when a Hebrew died

sonless, some brother of the dead man or one

near to him in kinship, straightway taking his dear wife and his property,

begat a child for the dead and added to his house,  
so that his name might not perish among humanity.

25 Thus I uncovered this, hidden above, within the Mortal God.

Matthan coming from the lineage of Solomon, married Estha.

But when he died, a son of Nathan named Melchi did marry,  
she bore a son Jacob to Matthan, and a son Heli to Melchi.

But when Heli died, since he left no offspring,  
Jacob, even though of a different father

30 immediately took his home and begot a prized son Joseph for his brother.

In this way Joseph would be his [i.e., Jacob's], but the law would assign him to the other  
[i.e., Heli].

So of the evangelists Matthew spoke about nature  
but Luke spoke about the law.

35 Stop dissecting the lovely harmony.

How did God bring him to King David, since  
the immortal God appeared from the mortal mother? And from Joseph,  
how does this work? For he was the son of a virgin, from Mary,  
a Levite. For Mary was from the blood of Aaron.

40 An angel is a witness for us, when, proclaiming the birth of the Forerunner,  
at lofty light, to the Godlike mother (Lk 1:36),  
he traced both mothers back to great Aaron.

The kings' tribe might seem unmixed, so too the priests',  
but that's not true. For though the tribes divided, they often

45 mixed again. Once Nahshon, who was sixth in descent from Judah  
took the daughter of great Aaron into his lofty home.

But later when the sword of the Assyrians  
destroyed the city, and Babylon overturned all her laws,  
no blood distinction of the tribes was thence observed.

50 Thus indeed one went up to the kingship through the mother.

I bid you tell how this might lead from the apparent father.

Since when Augustus was king, the census inscribed all,  
but some were inscribed in others' paternal cities.

So they reached of a sudden the land dear to David,

55 Bethlehem, who received the great Christ in her bosom,

both the lovely wedded one and the cherished Joseph

were inscribed. But hers was the tribe. In this way a virgin mother  
bore in a crib the ruler of all the world.

Thus he also ascended to the kingship through his father.

[I.1.18B] 60 In reverse the great Luke traced the genealogy in his account

up to Adam from Christ; Adam came to me through Christ.

Adam was first created by the hand of God. And from Adam

Seth was born. His son was Enosh. His fourth son was Kenan.

His was Mahalelel. His was Jared, who begot that son

65 Enoch, who, while alive, went raised up into heaven.

He had Methuselah, who begot the son Lamech.

He was the father of Noah. Then Shem, the son of that Noah.  
Arphaxad was his, and Cainan, and Shelah. They say his son was Eber.  
Peleg was the son of Eber. But from Peleg, came Ragab [Reu].  
70 That one begot Serug, who begot Nahor.  
Again, Abraham came from these, the son Terah Nachorides.  
Isaac son of Abraham begot Jacob, who begot Judah.  
He then begot Perez from Thamares. And he begot Esrom.  
Esrom, Aram, who begot Amenadam. Who begot Naasson.  
75 Nasson again, Salmon, Salmon, Booz.  
From Booz, Obed. From Obed, Jesse. Of whom the great David was begotten.  
David begot Nathan, who begot a son Matthan.  
Who begot Mainan. Mainan begot Melean. Who begot Eliakeim.  
Who begot John. Who begot Joseph. Who begot  
80 Judah. From him, Symeon. From him, Levi. From him Matthan.  
From him Joreim. From him Eliezer. From him Josaph.  
From him Er. From him Elmod. In turn from him a son Cosam was begotten.  
Addi was from Kosam. From him Melchi. From him Neri.  
From him Shealtiel, Zerubbabel, Rhesa, Joanan,  
85 Joda, Josech, then Semein, Mattathias,  
And Maath, Naggai, and Esli. From him Nahum,  
Amos, Mattathias, and Joseph, and then Jannai.  
Melki, and Levi, and Matthat, Heli, Joseph.  
And so Luke. But how did great Matthew do it?

90 From Abraham until David, so he spoke.

While in Luke you find the priestly

strain, he established the genealogy of kings.

However many and who they were, will now be told:

Solomon son of David, Rehoboam, [the father of] Abijah. Asa.

95 was the father of Jehoshaphat. But the seventh was Jehoram.

Uzziah, then Jotham, then Ahaz, then Hezekiah,

then Mannaseh, then Amon, and Josiah. But then

Jeconiah, whom they led captive into Babylon.

Shealtiel, Zerubbabel, Abiud, and Eliakim.

100 Azor, whose was Zadok, whose was Akim, whose was Eliud

whose was Eleazar. Whose was Matthan. Whose was Jacob.

And last, the apparent father of Christ, Joseph.

**Περὶ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ γενεαλογίας.**

Ματθαῖος πόθεν, εἰπὲ, μέγας, Λουκᾶς τε φέριστος,  
Τὴν μὲν ὄγ', αὐτὰρ ὁ τήνδε βίβλοις ἐνέθηκε γενέθλην,  
Αἱ Χριστὸν κατάγουσιν ἀφ' αἵματος ἀρχεγόνιοιο;  
Πῶς δ' ὁ μὲν ἐν πλεόνεσσιν, ὄδ' ἐν παύροισιν ἔληξεν;  
5. Ἐς Δαυὶδ μὲν ἄνακτα γένους ῥόος ἀμφοτέροισιν  
Ἄτμητος· μετέπειτα ῥέει δίχα, ὑστάτιον δὲ  
Συμφέρεθ' ὡς ἐπὶ πόντον ἀπείρονα Χριστὸν ὀδεύων.  
Ἵδὲ κεν ἀθρήσειας, ἐμῶ δ' ἐπιπείθεο μύθῳ·  
Δαυίδα, Σολομών τε, Νάθαν τ' ἔσαν, ὧν ὁ μὲν εἶλκεν  
10. Ὡς τε ῥόον μεγάλου ποταμοῦ, βασιλῆϊον αἶμα·  
Αὐτὰρ ὄγ' εὐαγέων τε φαινοτάτων θ' ἱερῶν.  
Χριστὸς δ' ἀμφότερο' ἔσκεν, ἄναξ μέγας, ἀρχιερεὺς τε.  
Τοῦνεκα Ματθαῖος μὲν ἐγράψατο πνεύματι θεῷ  
Τοὺς Σολομωντιάδας, Λουκᾶς δ' ἐς Νάθαν ὄρουσεν.  
15. Ἐκ δὲ δύο γενεῶν, τῆς μὲν πλεον, ἐξ ἐτέρης δὲ  
Παυρότερον τὸ ῥέεθρον ἐπελθέμεν· οὐ μέγα θαῦμα.  
Οὐ μὲν παυρότερον· γενεῶν δ' οὐκ ἴσον ἀριθμόν.  
Ἵδε τὰ πρῶτα κέασθεν, ἔπειτα δὲ εἰς ἓν ἄγεσθεν.  
Φράζε δὲ καὶ τότε μοι, πατέρων δύο πῶς ποτ' Ἰωσήφ.  
20. Τέθμιον ἦν Μωσῆος, ἐπὶν ἄσπερμος ὄληται  
Ἑβραῖος, κάσιν ἢ τιν' ὀλωλότος, ἢ τινα πηῶν  
Ἑγγύθεν, αἶψα δάμαρτα φίλην καὶ κτήσιν ἔχοντα,  
Σπερμαίνειν φθιμένῳ τε γόνον καὶ οἶκον ἀέξειν,  
Ὅφρα κε μὴ νόνημος ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ὄληται.

25. Τοῦνεκα κρυπτόν ὑπερθε Θεοῦ βροτέου τόδ' ἀνεύρον.  
 Ματθάν ἐκ Σολομώνος ἄγων γένος, ἠγάγετ' Ἐσθάν.  
 Τοῦ δ' ἄρ' ἀποφθιμένοιο, Ναθειδης οὔνομα Μελχί.  
 Καὶ τῷ μὲν Ἰακῶβ, τῷ δ' Ἥλει γείνατο παίδα.  
 Ἥλει δὲ φθιμένοιο, ἐπεὶ γόνον οὔτιν' ἔλειπεν,  
 30. Αἶψα δόμον τε λέχος τε Ἰακῶβ οὐχ ὁμόπατρος  
 Δέξατο, καὶ τέκεν υἱὸν ἀδελφεῷ ἐσθλὸν Ἰωσήφ.  
 Οὔτω τοῦ μὲν ἔην, τῷ δ' ἔγραφε θεσμὸς Ἰωσήφ.  
 Εὐαγγελιστῶν δ' ὅς μὲν εἶπε τὴν φύσιν,  
 Ματθαῖος, ὃς δ' ἔγραψε Λουκάς τὸν νόμον.  
 35. Παῦσαι διοχλῶν τὴν καλὴν συμφωνίαν.  
 Πῶς Δαυὶδ ἐς ἀνακτα φέρει Θεὸς, εὐτε φαάνθη  
 Μητέρος ἐκ βροτέης Θεὸς ἄμβροτος; ἐκ μὲν Ἰωσήφ,  
 Πῶς ὄγε; παρθενικῆς γὰρ ἔην πάϊς, ἐκ Μαρίης δὲ,  
 Λευίδης· Μαριάμ γὰρ ἀφ' αἵματος ἦεν Ἀαρῶν.  
 40. Μάρτυς δ' ἄγγελος ἄμμιν, ἐπεὶ Προδρομόιο γενέθλην  
 Ἀγγέλλων μεγάλιο φάους θεοειδέϊ μητρὶ,  
 Μητέρας ἀμφοτέρας ὄγ' ἀνήγαγεν ἐς μέγαν Ἀαρῶν.  
 Φρήτραι δ' αὐτῶν βασιλῆος ἀμγέες, ἡδ' ἱερῶν.  
 Οὐκ ἔτυμον. Φρήτραι μὲν ἔσαν δίχα, πολλάκι δ' αὐτε  
 45. Μίγνυντο. Πρόσθεν μὲν Ἀρῶν μεγάλιο θύγατρα  
 Ἠγάγετ' ἐς μέγα δῶμα Ναασσῶν, ὃς δ' ἀπ' Ἰούδα  
 Ἐκτος ἔην. Μετέπειτα δ' ἐπεὶ πόλιν ὤλεσεν αἰχμη  
 Ἀσσυρίων, Βαβυλῶν τε τὰ τέθμα πάντα τίναξεν,  
 Οὐδὲ φυλῶν τῆμόσδε διακριδὸν αἶμα φυλάχθη  
 50. Οὔτω μὲν διὰ μητρὸς ἀνέρχεται ἐς βασιλῆας.  
 Ἐκ δὲ πατρὸς δοκέοντος ὅπως, φράζεσθαι ἄνωγα.  
 Αὐγούστου βασιλῆος ἐπεὶ φόρος ἔγραφε πάντας  
 Ἄλλοι μὲν τ' ἄλλησιν ἐνὶ πολίεσσι γράφοντο  
 Πατρώαις, Δαυὶδ δὲ φίλον πέδον αἶψα κίχανον  
 55. Βηθλεέμ, ἢ κόλποισι μέγαν ὑπεδέξατο Χριστόν,  
 Ἀμφοτέροι, μνηστή τε φίλη, καὶ κεδνὸς Ἰωσήφ  
 Γραψόμενοι. Φρήτρης γὰρ ἱῆς ἔσαν. Ὡδ' ἐνὶ φάτνῃ  
 Μήτηρ παρθενικῆ, κόσμου τέκε παντὸς ἀνακτα.  
 Οὔτω καὶ διὰ πατρὸς ἀνέρχεται ἐς βασιλῆας.  
 60. Ἐμπαλι μὲν γενεὴν Λουκάς μέγας ἠγάγε μύθῳ  
 Εἰς Ἀδὰμ ἐκ Χριστοῖο. Ἐμοὶ δ' Ἀδὰμ ἦλθ' ἐπὶ Χριστόν  
 Χειρὶ Θεοῦ πρόπιτος Ἀδὰμ γένετ'. Ἐκ δ' Ἀδάμοι  
 Σῆθ πέλε. Τοῦ δ' ἄρ' Ἐνώς. Τοῦ, τέτρατος ἦε Καϊνάν.  
 Τοῦ δ' ἦν Μαλελεήλ. Τοῦ δ' Ἰαρεδ, ὃς τέκε παίδα  
 65. Κεῖνον Ἐνώχ, ὃς ζωὸς ἐς οὐρανὸν ἦλθεν ἀερεθίς.  
 Τοῦδε, Μαθουσάλα ἔσκεν, ὃς υἱέα γείνατο Λάμεχ.  
 Αὐτὰρ ὁ, Νῶε πατήρ. Σῆμ, Νώεος υἱὸς ἐκείνου.  
 Ἐκ τοῦ δ' Ἀρφαξὰδ, Καϊνάν, Σαλά· τοῦ δ' ἐνέπουσιν  
 Υἱὸν Ἐβερ. Ἐβερος δὲ Φάλεκ πάϊς. Ἐκ δ' ἄρα Φάλεκ  
 70. Ἔσκε Ῥαγάβ. Κεῖνος δὲ Σεροῦχ τέκεν, ὃς τέκε Ναχώρ.  
 Ἀβραάμ αὐτ' ἐπὶ τοῖσδε, πάϊς Θάρα Ναχορίδαο.  
 Ἀβραμίδης δ' Ἰσαὰκ Ἰακῶβ τέκεν, ὃς δ' ἄρ' Ἰούδαν  
 Αὐτὰρ ὁ ἐκ Θαμάρης Φαρες τέκεν. Αὐτὰρ ὁ, Ἐσρώμ.  
 Ἐσρώμ, τὸν Ἀράμ, ὃς τὸν Ἀμιναδάμ. Ὅς δὲ Ναασσῶν  
 75. Ναασσῶν δ' αὐτῶν, Σαλμών. Σαλμών, Βοόζ. Ἐκ Βοόζ, Ὡβήδ.  
 Ὡβήδ δ' Ἰεσσαί· τοῦ δ' ἐκ μέγας ἐπλετο Δαυίδ.  
 Δαυίδης δὲ, Νάθαν, ὃς Ματθάν υἱὸν ἔτικτεν,  
 Ὅς Μαϊνάν. Μαϊνάν, Μελεὰν τέκε. Ὅς δ' Ἐλιακείμ.  
 Ὅς τὸν Ἰωάναν. Ὅς τὸν Ἰωσήφ. Ὅς, τὸν Ἰούδαν  
 80. Γείνατο. Τοῦ, Συμεών. Τοῦ, Λευί. Τοῦ ἄπο, Ματθάν.

Τοῦδε, Ἰωρεὶμ. Τοῦ δ' Ἐλιέζερ. Τοῦδε, Ἰωσάφ.  
 Τοῦ δ' Ἦρ. Τοῦ δ' Ἐλμῶδ. Τοῦ δ' αὐ πᾶις ἔπλετο Κωσάμ.  
 Κωσάμ, ἔην Ἀδδί. Τοῦ, Μελχί. Τοῦ δ' ἄπο, Νηρί.  
 Τοῦ δ' ἄπο, Σαλαθιήλ, Ζοροβάβελ, Ῥησά, Ἰωνάν,  
 85. Ἰούδας, Ὡσώκ, Σεμεί τ' αὐ, Ματθίας τε,  
 Καὶ Μαάθ, Ναγγαί, καὶ Ἐσλείμ· τοῦ δ' ἄπο Ναοῦμ,  
 Ἀμῶς, Ματθαθίας, καὶ Ἰωσήφ, ἠδὲ Ἰανναί·  
 Μελχί, καὶ Λευί, καὶ Ματθάν, Ἥλει, Ἰωσήφ.  
 Λουκάς μὲν οὕτω. Πῶς δὲ Ματθαῖος μέγας;  
 90. Ἐξ Ἀβραάμ μὲν μέχρι Δαυίδ, ὡς ἔφην.  
 Ἐνθεν δὲ Λουκά τὴν ἱερατικὴν παρεῖς  
 Σποράν, τίθησι τοῦ γένους ἀνακτόρων.  
 Εἰσὶν δ' ὅσοι τε καὶ τίνες, λελέξεται.  
 Δαυίδης, Σολομών, Ῥοβοάμ, Ἀβίας τε, Ἀσά τε  
 95. Τοῦ δ' Ἰωσαφάτ ἔσκεν. Ὅδ' ἔβδομος ἦεν Ἰωράμ  
 Ὀζίας, ἠδ' Ἰωάθαμ, ἠδ' Ἀχαζ, Ἐζεκίας τε  
 Καὶ Μανασῆ, καὶ Ἀμῶς, Ἰωσίας. Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα  
 Ἰεχονίας, ἀλωτὸν ὃν ἤγαγον ἐς Βαβυλώνα·  
 Σαλαθιήλ, Ζοροβάβελ, Ἀβιουδ, ἠδ' Ἐλιακείμ,  
 100. Ἀζώρ. Τοῦδε, Σαδώκ. Τοῦ δ' Ἀχίν. Τοῦ δ' Ἐλιούδα.  
 Τοῦδ' Ἐλιέζερ ἔην. Τοῦ, Ματθάν. Τοῦ δὲ Ἰακώβ.  
 Ὑστατος, ὃς δοκέεσκε πατὴρ Χριστοῖο, Ἰωσήφ.

### **I.1.20 The miracles of Christ according to Matthew (PG 37.488-491)**

The marvels of the book of Matthew, just so many as

Christ the king performed, mixed, in a mortal body.

First he shook off the painful illness of the leper (8:1-4).

Next he bound the limbs of the centurion's slave (8:5-13).

5 Third, then, he quenched the fever of Peter's mother-in-law by hand (8:14-15).

Fourth he calmed the great swell and the winds (8:23-26).

Fifth he cast the demons into swine, in Gergesenes (8:28-34).

Sixth, the man with withered limbs took up his litter (9:1-8).

Seventh, he stopped the bleeding woman's flow when touched (9:20-22).

10 Eighth, the ruler's daughter found the light (9:23-26).

And ninth, he gave light to the blind (9:27-30). When his demon was driven out, a dumb man spoke a word, the tenth (9:32-33).

Eleven, on the Sabbath, he freed a dry hand from chains (12:9-13),  
Twelfth, he freed the eyes and ears of a man possessed (12:22).  
15 The thirteenth, he filled twelve baskets,  
as well as five thousand men, from five bits [of bread] (14:13-21).  
Fourteenth, he reached the ship by foot,  
the great and stormy sea withdrew from them (14:22-32).  
Fifteenth, he drove the spirit out of the Canaanite girl,  
20 pleasing her mother who begged him persistently (15:21-28).  
Sixteenth, four thousand men left seven baskets full  
from seven loaves, and they were satisfied (15:32-38).  
And seventeenth he transfigured in divine form,  
shining to friends more brightly than the sun (17:1-3).  
25 Eighteenth, just as a father was imploring,  
he freed his precious son from epilepsy (17:15-18).  
Nineteenth, headed from Jericho he gave light to  
the eyes of blind men traveling on the road (20:29-34).  
Twentieth he gave sunlight to eyes, he freed  
30 paralyzed knees (21:14), he drove all filth from the Temple (21:12).  
Leaving Bethany he did his greatest miracle,  
the fig tree suddenly is sterile when he found it fruitless (21:18-20).  
From the Cross a deep darkness flowed out, the light  
departing and the wide veil of the Temple was rent (27:45-51).  
35 And the earth quivered, and above the rocks of earth, it split (27:51)

and the dead, aroused, abandoned their own tombs (27:52-53).

But for himself he opened the tomb on the third day (28:1-7),

and then appeared to his friends in Galilee (28:16).

#### **Τὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ θαύματα κατὰ Ματθαῖον.**

Ματθεῖς βίβλοιο τὰ θαύματα, ὀππὸς' ἔρεξε  
Χριστὸς ἀναξ βροτέφ σώματι κινάμενος.  
Πρῶτον μὲν λεπροῖο πικρὴν ἀπεσεῖσατο νοῦσον,  
Εἶθ' ἑκατοντάρχου παιδὸς ἔπηξε μέλη.  
5. Τὸ τρίτον αὐτὸ Πέτρου ἐκυρῆς φλόγα ἔσβεσε χειρὶ.  
Τέτρατον, οἶδμα μέγα εὔνασε καὶ ἀνέμους.  
Δαίμονας ἦκε σύεσσι τὸ πέμπτον, ἐν Γεργεσσηνοῖς.  
Ἐκτον, ἐὴν κλίνην ἦρε βαρὺς μέλεσιν.  
Ἐβδομον, ἀψαμένης πηγὴν σχέθεν αἰμοροοσύσης.  
10. Ἄρχοντος θυγάτηρ ὄγδοον εὔρε φάος.  
Ἐννατον αὐτὸ, τυφλοῖσι πόρεν φάος. Ἐκ δ' ἔλαθέντος  
Δαίμονος, οὐ λαλέων ῥήξε λόγον, δέκατον.  
Σαββάτῳ ἑνδέκατον, ξηρὴν χέρα λύσατο δεσμῶν,  
Ὅσσε δὲ δαιμονίου κ' οὔατα, δωδέκατον.  
15. Ἐκ δεκάτοιο τρίτον, κοφίνους δυοκαίδεκα πλήσε,  
Κάνδρῶν χιλιάδας πέντ' ἀπὸ πέντ' ἀκόλων.  
Τέτρατον ἐκ δεκάτου δὲ, κινήσατο νῆα πόδεσσι.  
Τοῖς δ' ὑπόειξε μέγας πόντος ὀρινόμενος.  
Πέντε δὲ καὶ δέκατον, Χαναναίας πνεῦμ' ἐδίωξε,  
20. Μητρὶ χαριζόμενος πολλὰ λιταζομένη.  
Ἐκτον καὶ δέκατον, σπυρίδας λίπον ἔπτ' ἀπὸ ἑπτὰ  
Ἄρτων, χιλιάδες τέσσαρες, ἦν τε κόρος.  
Ἐπτὰ δὲ καὶ δέκατον, θεῖην ἠλλάξατο μορφὴν,  
Στράψας οἷσι φίλοις ἠελίοιο πλέον.  
25. Ὀκτωκαίδεκατον δὲ, σεληναίης ἀπὸ νοῦσου  
Ὡς ἰκέτευσε πατήρ, λύσατο παῖδα φίλον.  
Ἐννεακαίδεκατον, φάος ὄμμασιν ἐξ Ἰεριχοῦς  
Τυφλοῖς εἰνοδίους δῶκε πορευόμενος.  
Εἰκοστὸν δ' αὐγὰς πόρεν ὄμμασι, πηρὰ τ' ἔλυσε  
30. Γούνατα, ἐξ ἱεροῦ λύματα πάντ' ἐλάσας.  
Θαῦμα δὲ Βηθανίηθεν ἰὼν ποίησε μέγιστον,  
Ξηρὴν αἶψα συκὴν, ὡς μιν ἄκαρπον ἶδεν.  
Ἐκ δ' ἐχύθη σταυροῖο βαθὺ σκότος, οἰχομένοιο  
Φωτὸς, καὶ νηοῦ εὐρὺ πέτασμα ῥάγη.  
35. Γαῖα δὲ παλλομένη, γαίης ὑπερ ἔσχισε πέτρας,  
Καὶ νέκυες τύμβους λείψαν ἀνεγρόμενοι.  
Αὐτὰρ ὄγε τριτάτῳ ἐνὶ ἡματι τύμβον ἀνοίξας,  
Αὐθις ἐοῖσι φίλοις ἐν Γαλιλαί' ἐφάνη.

#### **I.1.24. The parables and puzzles according to Matthew (PG 37.495-496)**

Come then, and view the puzzles of the darkened words:

the house built on unstable sand (7:24-27),

the seed, though cast the same upon the earth, unequal grows (13:1-8).

And the seed, to which, though good, bad seeds were mixed (13:24-30).

5 The shrub, a little seed of mustard (13:31-32). Then the yeast

hidden in dough (13:33). A field purchased

for the sake of its treasure (13:44). And the pearl of great price,

which the merchant bought for all he owned (13:45-46);

dragging the net from the sea with all kinds of fish (13:47-48).

10 Taking the lost sheep on his shoulders (18:10-14).

And the king who was harsh to his servant, petty about his debts (18:21-35).

The last who have pay equal to those who were first (20:1-16).

The sons, who were nothing alike, sent into the vineyard (21:28-32).

And those who threw the heir out to his death (21:33-43).

15. And the last-minute guests who filled the feast beloved by the groom (22:1-13)

And then the virgins making vigil with the torches (25:1-13).

And the master who gave his slaves unequal talents (25:14-30).

And the sheep and the goats set up opposite each other (25:31-46).

**Τοῦ αὐτοῦ παραβολαὶ καὶ αἰνίγματα.**

Εἰ δ' ἄγε, καὶ σκοτίων αἰνίγματα δέροκεο μύθων·

Οἶκον ἐπὶ ψάμμου κείμενον ἀδρανέος,

Καὶ σπόρον, ὡς ἐπὶ γαίαν ὁμοῖος, ἤλθεν ἄνισος·

Καὶ σπόρον, ὃ καλῶ σπέρματα ἐχθρὰ μίγη·

5. Καὶ δένδρον, ὀλίγον νάπυος σπόρον· εἶτ' ἐν ἀλεύρω

Ζύμην κρυπτομένην· ὄνιον ἀγρὸν ἔτι

Θησαυροῖο χάριν· καὶ μαργαρίτην πολῦτιμον,

Ἐμπορος δὲν πάντων ἐπρίατο κτεάνων·

Καὶ νεπόδων ἔλκουσαν ἅπαν γένος ἐξ ἀλὸς ἄρκυν·

10. Αἰρόμενόν τ' ὅμοις πλαζόμενον πρόβατον·

Καὶ πικρῶ θεράποντι χρέους πέρι, πικρὸν ἄνακτα

Καὶ πρώτοις πυμάτους μισθὸν ἔχοντας ἴσον·

Πεμπομένους θ' υἱῆας ἐς ἄμπελον οὐδὲν ὁμοίους,

Καὶ τοὺς κληρονόμον ὠσαμένους θανάτῳ·

15. Καὶ σχεδίους νυμφῶνι φίλην πλήσαντας ἐορτήν·

Ἐνθεν ἀκοιμήτους ἐν δαΐδεσσι κόρας  
Καὶ κύριον δούλοισι νέμοντ' οὐκ ἴσα τάλαντα·  
Ἐμπαλιν αὖ προβάτοις ἰσταμένους ἐρίφους.

### **I.1.21. The Miracles of Christ according to Mark (PG 37.491)**

Mark wrote these miracles of God for the Ausonians,

this brave man and Peter (Christ's great aide) were companions.

The demon possessed, fever, leprosy, and paralysis

are healed upon the word of Christ (1:21-2:12). And then a man has dried

5 hands restored (3:1-5). He calmed the wrath of storms and sea (4:35-41),

Legion is crushed (5:1-5:10); a woman's flow no longer bleeds

when touched (5:24-34), then he gives life to Jairus' girl who sleeps (5:35-42).

Five loaves to feed a mob (6:30-44); then he subdued the sea

by treading on it (6:45-49). And he drives a spirit,

10. from a Phoenician girl (7:24-30), so that Tyre and Sidon fear it

he makes the dumb to speak (7:31-37). He fed thousands of men

from seven bits of bread (8:1-8). The blind man saw (8:22-26). And then

his bright form shone out (9:2-8). And then he loosed the chain

that bound the tongue, a spirit gone (9:26-27). Bartimaeus sees

15 the light, from Jericho (10:46-52). When hungry and on the tree

he found no figs, he spoke and none more came (11:12-14).

In Temple precincts, he heals the blind and lame.

#### **Τὰ Χριστοῦ θαύματα κατὰ Μάρκον.**

Μάρκος δ' Αὐσονίοισι Θεοῦ τάδε θαύματ' ἔγραψε,  
Πέτρον θαρσαλέος Χριστοῦ μεγάλῳ θεράποντι.  
Δαίμων καὶ πυρετὸς, καὶ λέπρη, καὶ παράλυσις  
Εἶξε λόγῳ Χριστοῦ. Μετέπειτα δὲ χεῖρ ἐτανύσθη  
5. Ξηρή· καὶ ἀνέμων λήξεν μένος ἠδὲ θαλάσσης.  
Καὶ λεγεῶν ὑπόειξε, καὶ αἱματόεσσαν ἔπαυσε

Πηγὴν, καὶ θυγατρὶ ζωὴν πόρ' Ἱαεῖροιο.  
 Πέντε δ' ἄρ' ἐξ ἄρτων πολλοὶ τράφεν. Ἐνθεν ἔδησε  
 Πόντον ἐπιστεῖβων. Μετέπειτα δὲ, πνεῦμ' ἐδίωξε  
 10. Φοινίσσης, Τυρίοισι τέρας καὶ Σιδονίοισι,  
 Κωφόν τ' οὐ λαλέον. Θρέψεν πάλιν ἔπτ' ἀκόλοισιν  
 Ἀνδρῶν χιλιάδας· καὶ τυφλὸς ἶδεν φάος. Εἶτα  
 Καὶ μορφῆς ἀπέπεμψε σέλας, καὶ δεσμὸν ἔλυσε  
 Γλώσσης, πνεῦμ' ἐλάσας· Βαρτιμαῖός τε φάσσοδε  
 15. Τυφλὸς ἐξ Ἱεριχοῦντος ἐσέδρακεν. Ὡς δὲ ἄκαρπον  
 Εὔρε συκὴν χατέων, νεκρὰν ἔθηκε λόγῳ.  
 Τυφλοὺς δ' αὐτὸν χολοὺς τε ἰήσατο ἐγγύθι νηοῦ.

### **I.1.25. Parables of Christ according to Mark. (PG 37.496-497)**

Great Christ performed many things, proclaiming stories

in parable form. On earth one planting is not the same (4:1-9)

[Although planted together with the seed of the weeds (4:26-29)]

And the mustard seed (4:30-32), and the heir killed by the lawless hands (12:1-12)

[Mark recorded these things, the offshoot of Peter. For the wide-ranging

Hellas of Paul Luke wrote these things.

The demon, and the fever, and the field, the leprosy, and the purification]

#### **Παραβολαὶ Χριστοῦ κατὰ Μάρκον.**

Τόσσα Χριστὸς ἔρεξε μέγας, μύθους δ' ἀγόρευσε  
 Παρβλήδην· ἐπὶ γαίαν ἓνα σπόρον οὔτι ὅμοιον,  
 Καὶ τὸν ζιζανίων σπέρματι συμφυέα,  
 Καὶ νάπυ, κληρονόμον τεθανόνθ' ὑπὸ χειρῶν ἀθέσμοις.  
 5. Μάρκος μὲν δὴ τοῖα, Πέτρου φυτὸν· εὐρυχώρῳ δὲ  
 Ἑλλάδι Παύλοιο Λουκᾶς ἔγραψε τάδε·  
 Δαίμων, καὶ πυρετὸς, καὶ ἄγρη, λέπρα, λύσις τε.

### **I.1.22. The miracles according to Luke (PG 37.492-494)**

Luke wrote these splendid miracles of God for Greece,

A daring [friend] to Paul, the great attendant of Christ.

A demon (4:31-35) and a fever (4:38-39) and leprosy (5:12-15) and paralysis (5:17-25)

at his word yielded. And the withered hand dried up (6:6-10).

5 Then he settled the ailing servant of the centurion (7:1-10).  
 He gave the widow at Nain her son, back from the dead (7:11-16).  
 By his word he purified her who anointed his pure feet with ointment (7:46-48).  
 He settled both the winds (8:22-25) and that great Legion (8:26-31).  
 And he held back the flow of blood (8:43-47), and he drew Jairus' daughter  
 10 into life (8:49-55). And from five loaves and two  
 fishes in the desert he once fed five  
 thousand men (9:10-16). He showed the brilliance of his form (9:28-36).  
 He drove the evil demon from the only-born son (9:37-42),  
 likewise the one inhabiting another's mouth (11:14), just as he  
 15 drove off the one that long crippled the Hebrews with a dread disease (13:10-16),  
 and once he cast the burden from a drowsy man (14:1-5).  
 And he cured ten lepers, one of them a Samaritan (17:11-19).  
 He gave sight to a blind man on the road from Jericho (18:35-42).  
 So many signs they saw from the Christ (who passed away)  
 20 When he appeared from the dead, to his friends.

**Τοῦ αὐτοῦ θαύματα κατὰ Λουκᾶν.**

Λουκάς δ' Ἑλλάδι σεπτὰ Θεοῦ τάδε θαύματ' ἔγραψε,  
 Παύλῳ θαρσαλέος Χριστοῦ μεγάλῳ θεράποντι.  
 Δαίμων καὶ πυρετὸς καὶ λέπρα καὶ παράλυσις  
 Εἶξε λόγῳ· καὶ χεῖρ τείνατο καρφαλῆ.  
 5. Εἶθ' ἑκατοντάρχοιο λελυμένον ἤδρασε παῖδα·  
 Χήρη τ' ἐκ νεκῶν ἐν Ναῖμ υἷα πόρε.  
 Τὴν δὲ μύρῳ χρίσασαν ἀγνοῦς πόδας ἤγνισε μύθῳ.  
 Καὶ στήσεν ἀνέμους, καὶ λεγεῶνα μέγαν.  
 Αἵματος ἔσχε ῥύσιν, καὶ Ἰαίροιο θυγάτρα  
 10. Ἦγαγεν ἐς ζωὴν. Πέντε δ' ἄρ' ἐξ ἀκόλων  
 Καὶ δύο ἰχθυδίων, ἐν ἐρήμῳ πέντε ποτ' ἀνδρῶν  
 Θρέψεν χιλιάδας. Εἶδεος ἦκε σέλας.  
 Δαίμονα τηλυγέτοιο πικρὸν ἀποέργαθε παιδὸς,  
 Καὶ τὸν ἐπὶ γλώσσης ἤμενον, ὡς δὲ πάλαι  
 15. Ἐβραΐην στυγερῆ νούσῳ κλίναντα γυναῖκα,  
 Ναὶ μὴν καὶ ὑδέρου ὄγκον ἀπεσκέδασε.

Καὶ λεπροὺς ἐκάθηρε δέκα, τῶν εἰς Σαμαρείτης.  
Τυφλῶ τ' ἐξ Ἱεριχοῦς φῶς πόρεν εἰνοδίῳ.  
Ὅσσα τ' ἀποψύχοντος ἴδον σημήϊα Χριστοῦ,  
20. Ἦδ' ὡς ἐκ νεκύων οἴσι φίλοισι φάνη.

### **I.1.26. Parables according to Luke. (PG 37.497-498)**

So many parables did Luke record:

of him who set a firm seat built on rock (6:46-49)

and the one who loves more, because he has

undergone more (6:27-39). Then the seed falling on the four

5 kinds of the earth (8:4-8). Then the wayfarer

who falls in with thieves (10:25-37). Then he who comes so early

to the door, asking, but still he does not receive bad things (11:5-13).

And the unclean spirit entering to dwell

with seven others (11:26). And the one who vainly rests

10 in hopes of fruit, not knowing what will stay for him (12:13-21).

He who kept watch for the Anointed coming from

the wedding, useful for one who ministers well (12:35-40),

the aiding of the fruitless fig with manure (13:6-8).

Mustard (13:18-19), and leaven (13:20-21), and the needy at the wedding (14:15ff).

15 The joy in the finding of the drachma (15:8-10), and the nursling (15:1-7).

And the father sympathetic to the son who fell (15:11-32).

And the steward congratulates the clever thieves of

his goods (16:1-13). Lazarus and the rich man (16:19-31).

And then a strict repayment of the widow (18:1-8).

20 Again the tax collector and the blindness of the Pharisee (18:9-14),

and the dividing of the *menas* equally among the ten (19:11-27)

the evil farmers who were jealous of the master (20:9-19).

**Παραβολαὶ κατὰ Λουκᾶν.**

Παροιμιῶν δὲ Λουκᾶς ἐμνήσθη τόσων·  
Τοῦ θέντος ἔδραν ἀσφαλὴ πέτρης ὕπερ  
Καὶ τοῦ παθόντος εὐ πλέον, καὶ τῷ πλέον  
Στέργοντος· εἶτα τοῦ σπόρου εἰς τέσσαρας  
5. Φύσεις πεσόντος γῆς· ἔπειθ' ὁδοιπόρου  
Λησταίς πεσόντος. Εἶτ' ἄωρὶ πρὸς θύρας  
Ἐλθὼν τις αἰτεῖ, κ' οὐ πονηρὰ λαμβάνει.  
Ἀκάθαρτον εἶτα πνεῦμα δ' εἰσοικίζεται  
Ἐπὰ ξὺν ἄλλοις. Καὶ μάτην τις ἐλπίσι  
10. Καρπῶν γέγηθεν, ἀγνοῶν οἱ στήσεται.  
Ἐκ τῶν γάμων δ' ἤκοντι γοηγορητέον  
Χριστῷ, καλῶς τε τῇ θεραπείᾳ χρηστέον.  
Συκὴν τ' ἄκαρπον ταῖς κόπροις ἐπωφελεῖν.  
Νάπυ, ζύμη τε, καὶ πένητες ἐν γάμῳ.  
15. Χαρά τε δραχμῆς εὐρέσει, καὶ θρέμματος.  
Πατὴρ τε παίδων τῷ πεσόντι συμπαθῆς.  
Εἶτ' οἰκονόμος τι τῶν χρεῶν χαρίζεται  
Κλέπτων προμηθῶς. Λάζαρος καὶ πλούσιος.  
Ἐκεῖθε χήρας ἀξίωσις εὐτονος.  
20. Εἶτ' αὐ Τελώνης, καὶ Φαρισαίου τύφος.  
μῶν μερισμὸς, ἰσάριθμος τοῖς δέκα.  
Κακοὶ γεωργοὶ καὶ φονεῖς τοῦ δεσπότου.

**I.1.23. The miracles of Christ according to John. (PG 37.494)**

Now in the sacred book of John you will find few

marvels, but many words of Christ the king.

There was the wedding, and winepourers poured wine from water (2:1-9).

He spoke, and the ill son of the official was made healthy (4:43-50).

5 He spoke, and he who could not flee his chains by purifying took up his bed (5:1-9).

Then he performed a miracle from five loaves (6:1-13). He then traveled

over the turbulent sea, and rescued the disciples (6:16-21).

He healed the man who was blind from birth, anointing him with mud (9:1-6).

On the fourth day, Lazarus was raised from the tomb (11:17-44).

10 And indeed he both died for the dead, and, when he rose for the living

Christ the king appeared to his companions, conversing (20-21).

**Τοῦ αὐτοῦ θαύματα κατὰ Ἰωάννην.**

Παῦρα δ' Ἰωάννου δήεις ἱερῇ ἐνὶ βίβλῳ  
Θαύματα δὴ, πολλοὺς δὲ λόγους Χριστοῖο ἀνακτος.  
Ἦν γάμος, οἰνοχόοι δ' ἐκέρω ἐξ ὕδατος οἶνον.  
Εἶπε, καὶ υἱὸς ἀνουσος ἔην κάμνων βασιλίσκου.  
5. Εἶπε, λέχος δ' ἀνάειρεν, ὃς οὐ φύγε δεσμὰ λοετροῖς.  
Πέντε δ' ἔπειτ' ἄρτων τέλεσεν τέρας. Ἐνθεν ὄδευσεν  
Πόντον ὑπερζείοντα, καὶ ἐξεσάωσε μαθητάς.  
Τυφλὸν δ' ἐκ γενετῆς ἰήσατο, πηλὸν ἀλείψας.  
Τέτρατον ἡμᾶρ ἔην καὶ Λάζαρος ἔργετο τύμβου.  
5. Αὐτὰρ ὁ καὶ νεκύεσσι θάνεν, καὶ ζῶσιν ἀναστάς  
Χριστὸς ἀναξ ἀναφανδὸν ὀμίλεεν οἷς ἐτάροισι.

**I.1.27. The Parables of the four Gospels. (PG 37.498-506)**

I fear I am placing the foundation of my life on  
sand, and I am scattered in the seas and in the winds,  
or seed falling on dry and sterile earth,  
though swiftly I shoot up, quickly I wither,  
5 Struck by the rays of sunlight, and by little blows;  
or the bird would eat me, and then thorns strangle.  
And let not the sower of evil weeds, the jealous enemy,  
mix in evil seed while I sleep,  
And let me not lay my hand to the good  
10 and evil shoots of grass alike, before the sprouts emerge,  
lest I somehow destroy the good shoot with the weeds.  
For very few can put a knowing hand to these,  
where vice and virtue dwelling separately,  
but growing up together, evil is ordered upon the good.  
15 I praise the little mustard seed, though starting small,

soon branches out, and grows to such a height,  
so as to offer perch for birds that dwell in air.

O pearl, so honored and esteemed, I too,

desirous of your beauty, would play the great merchant,

20 and all I have, up to my final tunic,

my precious property, I'd trade instead through sale, and would surpass

all men in wealth, possessing this one thing above all else,

that is, the treasure hidden in the crannies of the field.

I know as well the world that falls within the net,

25 which, on command from Christ the king, while sailing,

The fishers of men surround by casting out the net,

so as to drag them from the ocean depths, and bid those

swimming on the bitter waves of this life follow Christ.

But when you judge the catch, dividing it in half

30 May you not cast me far away, as though a useless fish,

But place me safe in vessels, guarded by the king.

Into God's vineyard, lovely, flourishing and vast,

At dawn I entered to undertake a heavy task.

I have a salary the same as latecomers, and equal praise.

35 Who's jealous, if God should portion His own desire for the work?

The father sends his sons to cultivate the vineyard for cultivation,

the first one first, who willingly received the task,

but not at all did he perform the father's will, as he set forth,

but though the younger one did not accept the charge, he finished it  
40 in haste. To me he seems the better, but sweeter than both to the  
father, is he who takes the charge, and carries out the wish.

But having killed the heir, they'd be driven from the vineyard and fire would destroy  
them.

A wedding feast, which the loving father dear to his excellent son  
celebrates rejoicing. I have a part in this.

45 I have a part in this, along with whoever is my friend!

That man remained outside, who placed before the feast  
his field, or untrained yoke of oxen, or his wife.

Let me not be found among the guests wearing their wedding dress,  
myself in filthy garb, and then bound hands and feet,

50 and so to fall, cut off from friends and the bridegroom's feast.

Or when the ten pure virgins, with burning  
torches keeping watch, looked out with lights unsleeping  
for ruler, bridegroom, their beloved God,

so that alight they went to meet the joyful one approaching,

55 don't put my mind among those dull and senseless ones,  
who labor on when Christ is soon to come,

lest I catch sight of all my torches' feeble flame  
and seek the flowing oil of the light of life too late.

Let not locked doors restrain me from the wedding,

60 while the mingled Word, within, by using great chains of desire,

gives glory and courage to the pure of heart.

And should my king return again from the wedding feast,

to look over the waiting and those not waiting,

me he'd find among the waiting, and would praise me for my fear,

65 Just like a faithful servant, and find me mild among the ones who guard,

and one who gives justly grain to both, and a reliable account.

And when the goats and sheep are split, upon that bitter day,

on either side the pious men and those who are not holy,

may you not set me numbered with the goats, but rather with the sheep,

70 upon your right hand, and may your left wait for the worse.

And yet some brilliant lamp shines outside of me,

on high, from the candelabra. Something good and almost God

to see, which puts its overseeing eye on all.

I love God more and more, regardless if I suffer something

75 painful or something good. For all is good. But should I fall

among the thieves, while departing the great City of Christ

may you not let me be killed by murderous hands.

But if you drive a spirit from my soul, let the enemy

not find me listless, that he may run me down with more.

80 Do not destroy the useless fig, but still have hope

for fruit, and do not cut it off, o king; yet by healing, raise it up.

Finding a drachma, or a sheep, or a son who's wasted all away,

one on the ground, the next in hills, and the other under your feet,

the wretched one who turned around, back to his father's home, o king,  
85 may you count me again among the sons, the sheep, the drachma.  
And when the gracious king forgives me in my pains,  
may I not play the harsh exactor with the debts of fellow slaves.  
and let me strike in secret the debt of those in need, and by this cunning plan,  
when I'm in need, I might later have support!  
90 May I be now like Lazarus, and later, too. The one who  
haughty here is later abandoned and has more than enough flames.  
May I not boast, since I too am an evil taxcollector.  
I merit mercy by my tears, but the Pharisees would fall.  
And should I send away the widow wailing from my gates  
95 unrewarded, and if a rock or fearsome snake  
rather than good bread and pleasing fish,  
as though plotting evil things, I offer from my palm,  
I would receive in turn such things from God. But if the seal has  
storerooms, to be sure, it must have hopes, which quickly vanish,  
100 and night would destroy me with vain dreams.  
And let not the talent, which God has placed into my hands,  
that richer grace of meter for others, I pray,  
remain without profit in our hands,  
or, likewise, a mina of my native speech, an gift to be measured out equally,  
but rather that I might create a work, and receive glory in exchange.  
May I not pay a harsh penalty, and be ashamed.

### Παραβολαὶ τῶν τεσσάρων εὐαγγελιστῶν.

Δεῖδω μὴ βιότοιον θεμελίον ἐν ψαμάθοισι  
Βαλλόμενος, ποταμοῖσι καὶ εἰν ἀνέμοισι κεδασθῶ,  
Ἦ σπόρος ὡς ἐπὶ γαίαν ἰὼν ξηρὴν καὶ ἄκαρπον,  
Ἦκα μὲν ἀντείλαιμι, τάχιστα δὲ αὐὸς ἔοιμι,  
5. Ἦελίοιο βολῆσι τυπεῖς, καὶ πῆμασι τυτθοῖς·  
Ἦ με φάγοι πετεηνὰ, καὶ ἐκθλίψειαν ἄκανθαι.  
Μὴ δέ μοι ὑπνώοντι κακὸν σπόρον ἐγκαταμίξῃ  
Ζιζανίων ἀρότης τε κακῶν, καὶ βάσκανος ἐχθρός.  
Μὴ δ' ἄρ' ὁμοῦ χλοάουσι βαλὼν ἐπὶ χεῖρα φυτοῖσιν  
10. Ἔσθλοῖς ἠδὲ κακοῖσι, πρὶν ἐν σταχύεσσι σταθῆναι,  
Σύν που ζιζανίοισι καλὸν φυτὸν ἐξολέσαιμι.  
Παύρων γὰρ τοιοῖσδε νοήμονα χεῖρ' ἐπιθεῖναι,  
Ἦνθ' ἀρετὴ κακῆ τε διάνδιχα ναιετάουσαι,  
Ἀγχίθυροι γεγάασι, κακὸν δ' ἐπιτέλλεται ἐσθλῷ.  
15. Αἰνῶ τὸν ὀλίγον νάπτως σπόρον, ὡς ὀλίγος μὲν,  
Δενδροῦται δὲ τάχιστα, καὶ ἐς τόσον ὕψος ὀδεύει,  
Ἦστε καὶ ὀρνίθεσσι πέλειν σκέπας ἠερίοισι.  
Μάργαρε τιμῆι καὶ κύδιμε, σοῦ δ' ἄρ' ἔγωγε  
Κάλλεος ἰμείρων, μέγας ἔμπορος αἶθε γενοίμην,  
20. Πάντων δ' ὅσσα μοὶ ἐστὶ μέχρις πυμάτοιο χιτῶνος.  
Ἦνιον ἀντιλάβοιμι φίλον κτέαρ, ὡς κεν ἅπαντας  
Πλούτῳ νηκήσαιμι, πεπασμένος οἶον ἀπ' ἄλλων,  
Ἦ θησαυρὸν ἀγροῖο μυχοῖς ἐνὶ κρυπτῶν ἐόντα.  
Οἶδα δ' ἐγὼ καὶ κόσμον ἐσω πίπτοντα σαγήνης,  
25. Ἦ Χριστοῦ βασιλῆος ὑποδρήσοντες ἐφετμαῖς,  
Ἀνθρώπων ἀλιῆς ἐὼν λίνον ἀμφὶς ἔθηκαν,  
Ἦς ἀλὸς ἐξερύσωσι βυθῶν, ὀπάσωσι δὲ Χριστῷ  
Νηχομένους πικροῖς ἐνὶ κύμασι τοῦδε βίου.  
Ἦλλ' ὀπότεν κρίνης ἀλίην, διὰ δ' ἀνδιχα τέμνης,  
30. Μὴ μ' ἀπὸ τῆλε βάλοις, ἀχρήϊον οἶά περ ἰχθύν·  
Ἦγγεσι δ' ἐγκατάθειο φυλασσόμενον βασιλῆϊ.  
Ἦς μεγάλην δὲ Θεοῖο καλὴν ἐριθηλέ ἀλωήν,  
Ἦφως μὲν ἔβην, καὶ πλείονα μόχθον ἀνέτην·  
Μισθὸν δ' ὑστατίοισιν ἴσον, καὶ κῦδος ἔχοιμι.  
35. Τίς φθόνος, εἰ μόχθοισι πόθον Θεὸς ἀντιφερίζει;  
Πέμπε πατῆρ υἱῆς ἐς ἄμπελον, ὡς κομέοιεν,  
Τὸν πρότερον, πρότερον· ὁ δ' ἄρα πρόφρων ὑπέδεκτο,  
Οὐ μὴν ἐξετέλεσσε πατρὸς πόθον, ὡσπερ ὑπέστη.  
Αὐτὰρ ὄγ' οὐχ ὑπέδεκτο, καὶ ἐξετέλεσεν ἐφετμὴν  
40. Ὀπλότερος. Κρείσσων μὲν ἐμοῖ, γλυκίων δὲ τοκῆϊ  
Ἀμφοτέρων, ὅς ἔδεκτο, καὶ ἐξετέλεσεν ἐέλδωρ.  
Κληρονόμον δ' ὀλέσαιεν, ὅσοι πυρὸς, ἐκτὸς ἀλωῆς.  
Ἦστι γάμος, τὸν παιδὶ πατῆρ φίλος ἐσθλὸς ἀρίστῳ  
Δαίνουσι καγχαλόων· τοῦδ' ἀντιάσαιμι ἔγωγε,  
45. Τοῦδ' ἐγὼ ἀντιάσαιμι, καὶ ὅς φίλος ἐστὶν ἔμοιγε.  
Μίμνοι δ' ἔκτοθι κείνος, ὅτις πρὸ γάμοιο τίθησιν  
Ἦ ἀγρὸν, ἠὲ βοῶν ζεύγος νέον, ἠὲ δάμαρτα.  
Μηδ' ἐνὶ δαιτυμόνεσσι γαμήλιον εἶδος ἔχουσιν,  
Εἷματ' ἔχων ὀυπῶντα, δεθεῖς χεῖρας τε πόδας τε,  
50. Νυμφώνός τε γάμου τε, φίλων τ' ἀπὸ τῆλε πέσοιμι.  
Ἦνίκα δ' αἰθομέναις ἀγνῶν δεκάς ἐν δαΐδεσσι  
Παρθένοι ἐγρήσσουσαι, ἀκοιμήτοις φαέεσσι

Νυμφίον ἱμερόεντα Θεὸν δοκέωσιν ἄνακτα,  
 Ὡς λαμπραὶ γανόωντι ὑπαντήσωσιν ἰόντι,  
 55. Μὴ μ' ἐνὶ ταῖς κενεῆσι νόον, καὶ ἄφροσι θεῖης,  
 Ἦδη που Χριστοῖο παρεσσομένου μογεύσασαι,  
 Μηδ' ὀλιγοδρανέον δαίδων σέλας ὄμμασι λεύσσω,  
 Ὅψε φάους ζωῆς ὑγρὸν ποθέοιμι ἔλαιον·  
 Μηδέ με κληῖσθέντα γάμων ὥσαιτο θύρετρα,  
 60. Ἐνθα Λόγος καθαρῆσι πόθου μεγάλοις ὑπὸ δεσμοῖς  
 Μιγνύμενος καρδίαις θάρσος καὶ κῦδος ὀπάζει.  
 Ἐκ δὲ γάμων παλίνορσος ἀναξ ἔμὸς εὐτ' ἂν ἐπέλθῃ,  
 Ἐξαπίνης δοκέουσι, καὶ οὐ δοκέουσιν ἐπιστὰς  
 Εὐροὶ μ' ἐν δοκέουσι, καὶ αἰνήσειε φόβοιο  
 65. Ὡς ἀγαθὸν θεράποντα, καὶ ἥπιον ἀρχομένοισι,  
 Καὶ σίτιοιο δοτήρα, λόγου στερεοῖο, φέριστον.  
 Σχιζομένων τ' ἐρίφων καὶ οἴων, ἥματι πικρῶ,  
 Ἄνδρῶν εὐσεβέων τε καὶ οὐχ ὀσίων ἐκάτερθεν,  
 Στήσασαι μὴ μ' ἐρίφοις ἐναρίθμιον, ἀλλ' ὀίεσσι  
 70. Δεξιτερεὴν παρὰ χεῖρα, μένοι τ' ἐνὶ χεῖροσι λαίῃ.  
 Λύχνος δὴ τις ἔμοιγε φαεσφόρος ἔκτοθι λάμποι  
 Λυχνίης καθύπερθε. Καλὸν δέ τι καὶ θεὸν οἶον  
 Ἴδμεναι, ὃς πάντεσσιν ἐπίσκοπον ὄμμα τίθησιν.  
 Αἰεὶ δὲ στέργοιμι Θεὸν πλέον, εἴτε τι πικρὸν  
 75. Εἴτ' ἀγαθὸν παρέχοι· πᾶν γὰρ καλόν. Εἰ δὲ τυπείην  
 Ληῖσταῖς, μεγάλης κατιῶν ἀπὸ Χριστοπόλης,  
 Μὴ με λίπης χεῖρεσσιν ὑπ' ἀνδροφόνοισι δαμήναι.  
 Εἰ δὲ πνεῦμ' ἐλάσεις ψυχῆς ἄπο, μηκέτ' ἀεργὸν  
 Εὐρῶν σὺν πλεόνεσσι καταδράμοι ἐχθρὸς ἐμεῖο.  
 80. Μηδὲ συκῆν ὀλέσειας ἀχρήϊον, ἀλλ' ἔτι καρπὸν  
 Ἔλπεο, μηδὲ τέμης μιν, ἀναξ· κομέων δέ τ' ἐγείρειν.  
 Δραχμὴν τε, πρόβατόν τε, πᾶιν τ' ἀπὸ πάντ' ὀλέσαντα  
 Εὐρῶν, τὴν μὲν ἔραζε, τὸ δ' οὖρεσι, τὸν δ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶν  
 Οἰκτρὸν ὑποστρέψαντα πατρῷον ἐς δόμον, ὧ 'ναξ,  
 85. Αὐθις ἀριθμήσειας ἐν υἰάσι, θρέμμασι, δραχμαῖς.  
 Μὴ δ' ἀγαθοῦ βασιλῆος ἐμοῖς παθέεσσιν ἐόντος,  
 Πρηκτῆρ αὐτὸς ἔοιμι πικρὸς χρήσταις ὁμοδούλις.  
 Καὶ τι χρεῶν κόψαιμι λαθῶν πανυτόφροσι βουλή,  
 Ὡς κεν χρήζω ποτ' ἐς ὕστερον ἄλλαρ ἔχοιμι  
 90. Λάζαρος ἐνθάδ' ἔοιμι, καὶ ὕστερον· ἄλλος ἀγῆνωρ  
 Ἐνθάδε, κείθι δ' ἄτιμος ἔχων φλόγας ἀντὶ κόροιο.  
 Εἶην μὴ μέγαλαυχος, ἐπεὶ κακὸς εἰμι τελώνης.  
 Δάκρυσιν οἶκτον ἔχοιμι, Φαρισσαῖοι δὲ πέσοιεν.  
 Χήρην δ' εἶποτ' ἐμεῖο παρὰ προθύροις μογέουσαν  
 95. Ἄπρηκτον πέμψαιμι, καὶ εἰ λίθον ἢ ὄφιν αἰνὸν  
 Ἀντ' ἄρτοιο φίλοιο καὶ ἰχθύος ἠδυβόροιο  
 Ἐχθρὰ φιλοφρονέων, παλάμης ἀπὸ τῆσδ' ὀρέγοιμι,  
 Τοῖων ἀντιτύχοιμι Θεοῦ πάρα. Εἰ δ' ἀποθήκας  
 Τὰς μὲν σφρηγῖς ἔχει, τὰς δ' ἐλπίδες ὦκα θεούσαι,  
 100. Ἦδε με νῦξ ὀλέσειε σὺν ἀδρανέουσιν ὀνειρίοις,  
 Οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδὲ τάλαντον, ὃ μοι Θεὸς ἐγγυάλιξε  
 Πλειοτέρεην ἄλλοισι μετρῶν χάριν, εὐχομ' ἐγωγε  
 Τοῦτο μένειν παλάμησιν ἐν ἡμετέρεσσιν ἀεργὸν,  
 Ἦε μνᾶν φυσικοῖο λόγου, χάριν ἰσονέμητον,  
 105. Ἄλλ' ἔργον τ' ὀπάσαιμι, κλέους τ' ἐπὶ τ' ἄντι τύχοιμι·  
 Μηδὲ δίκην τίσαιμι πικρῆν, καὶ αἰσχος ἔχοιμι.

## OTHER BIBLICAL POEMS

### I.1.16. On the miracles of Elijah and Elisha the prophets (PG 37.477-479)

These are the miracles of the prophet Elijah the Tisbite.

First he was fed by a crow (1Ki 6). Second he himself

fed richly the Sarephthan woman (1 Ki 17:14),

with small remains of oil and flour;

5 so he also raised her son from the dead

by breathing on him (1Ki 17:19-23). He held back the rain by God,

then he let it come (1Ki 18:45). He sacrificed the offering

in a strange fire (1Ki 18:38) and for strangers, since he lived

for many days without tasting food.

10 He entirely burned up two fifty-men armies (2Ki 1:12).

He went through the Jordan, splitting it with his cloak (2Ki 2:8).

He rose up to heaven on a chariot of fire (2Ki 2:11).

He left both his skin and his grace to Elisha (2Ki 2:12).

Observe, too, the miracles of the latter.

*Elisha*

He went through the Jordan, splitting it with Elijah's cloak (2Ki 2:14).

He blessed the city's fountains with fertility by means of salt (2Ki 2:21).

He killed the arrogant children haughty with beasts (2Ki 2:23).

He led streams from Edom to the thirsting army (2Ki 3:30).

15 He freed the woman from debts by means of fountains of oil (2Ki 4:4).

To the Sunammite woman, who was with child

he gave a son, and raised him back again from the dead (2Ki 4:16 and 2Ki 4:34).

He held off the poison from the grass (2Ki 4:41), and he saved

many from famine with scanty nourishment (2Ki 4:43).

20 He purified Naaman the Syrian of leprosy (2Ki 5:14)

And he sent that sickness to Ghazi (2Ki 5:27). And after

he made axe-heads float from the depths of the Jordan (2Ki 6:6).

He gave bleary eyes to those coming from the Syrians

to their enemies (2Ki 6:18). Then plenty was put out for the army,

25 the work of lepers. And, as a corpse he raised a corpse

when their bodies were laid next to each other (2Ki 13:21).

**Εἰς τὰ θαύματα Ἡλίου τοῦ προφήτου καὶ Ἐλισαίου.**

Τοσαῦτα θαύματ' Ἡλίου τοῦ Θεσβίτου.

Κόραξι πρῶτον ἐτράφη· καὶ δεύτερον

Ἐθρεψε χήραν πλουσίως Σαραφθίαν,

Μικροῖς ἐλαίου καὶ ἀλεύρου λειψάνοις·

5. Ἦς καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν φυσήμασιν

ἤγειρεν. Ὑετόν τ' ἀνέσχεν ἐκ Θεοῦ,

Ἐπειτ' ἀφήκε. Θυσίαν καταγνίσας

Πυρὶ ξένῳ τε καὶ ξένοις, εἴτ' ἤρκεσε

Τροφῆς ἄγευστος ἡμέραις ἐν πλείοσι

10. Ἐφλεξεν ἄρδην πενηκοντάρχας δύο.

Ἰορδάνην διήλθε μηλωτῆ τεμών·

Πυρὸς δ' ἀνήλθεν ἄρματι πρὸς οὐρανὸν

Ὅμοῦ δορὰν τε καὶ χάριν Ἐλισσαίῳ

Ἀφήκεν. Ἄθρει καὶ τὰ τούτου θαύματα·

15. Ἰορδάνην διήλθε μηλωτῆ τεμών.

Πηγὰς ἔθηκεν ἄλσιν εὐτέκνους πόλει.

Παῖδας δ' ὑβριστὰς θηρίοις ἀπώλεσεν

Διψῶντι ῥεύματ' ἐξ Ἐδώμ ἐπήγασε

Στρατῶ· γυναῖκά τε χρέους ἐρῶύσατο

20. Πηγαῖς ἐλαίου· τῇ δὲ Σουναμίτιδι

Οὐκ ὄντ' ἔδωκε παῖδα, κ' ἐκ νεκρῶν πάλιν.

Φθορὰν τ' ἐπέσχεν ἐκ πόας, καὶ πλείοσιν

ἤμυνε λιμὸν ἐνδεεστέρα τροφῇ.

25. Ναιμᾶν δὲ λέπρας ἐκκαθήρας τὸν Σύρον,

Πέμπει Γιεζεὶ τὴν νόσον· εἴτ' ἀξίνην

Ἐπλευσε νότοις ἐκ βυθῶν Ἰορδάνου·

Σύρων δὲ τοὺς ἔλκοντας ὄψεις ἀμβλύνας

Ἐδωκεν ἐχθροῖς· εἶτα τῷ στρατῷ κόρον

30. Προεῖτο, λεπρῶν ἔργα. Καὶ νεκρὸς νεκρὸν

ἤγειρεν, ἐγγὺς συντεθέντων ὀστέων.

**I.1.17. Epigram on the martyrion of Elijah, which is called Cherios. (PG 37.479-480)**

[1 Ki 17]

This, stranger, is indeed Zarephath of Sidon,  
but this is the tower of the widow, who guest-lovingly  
received Elijah the Tishbite, prophet of God,  
while a plague was vexing the cities.

5 She had little oil in her flask

and one drachma of flour hidden in the water jar.

This she unsparingly gave to her guest.

The well that nourished the household, she found as a gift.

Elijah nourishing her son when he was alive,

10 raised him up from the darkness of the dead.

But the mother, previously bewailing her childlessness,

became a mother again without birth pains.

**Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὸ μαρτύριον Ἡλίου τὸ καλούμενον Χηρείον.**

Αὕτη, ξένε, καὶ Σαρεπτὰ τῆς Σιδωνίας,  
Οὗτος δὲ χήρας πύργος, ἢ φιλοξένως  
Θεοῦ προφήτην Ἡλίαν τὸν Θεσβίτην,  
Λιμοῦ κακοῦντος τὰς πόλεις, ἐδέξατο·  
5. Ἦι καὶ μικρὸν ἦν ἔλαιον ἐν τῷ καψάκῃ,  
Καὶ δραξ ἁλεύρων ὕδρια κεκρυμμένος.  
Τοῦτο δ' ἀφειδῶς μεταδοῦσα τῷ ξένῳ,  
Πηγὴν, τρέφουσαν οἶκον, εὔρε τὴν δόσιν.  
Ταύτης τὸν υἱὸν Ἡλίας ζῶντα τρέφων,  
10. Θανόντα νεκρῶν ἐξανέστησε ζόφου.  
Μήτηρ δὲ, πρὶν κλαίουσα τὴν ἀπαιδίαν,  
Ἐγένετο μήτηρ αὐθις ὠδίνων δίχα.

**I.1.28. The storm calmed by Christ (PG 37.506)**

There was a time when Christ slept naturally on the merchant's ship,

but the sea rose up with gales that bred waves,  
and the seamen cried out in fear: "Rise, Savior,  
protect the perishing." The king rose up and commanded  
the waves and the winds to rest, and they did so.

Because of this miracle those present spoke of the nature of God.

**Χειμῶν ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ κατασταλθεῖς.**

Ἦν ὅτε Χριστὸς ἴαυεν ἐφ' ὀλκάδος ἔμφυτον ὕπνον,  
Τετρήχει δὲ θάλασσα κυδοιμοτόκοισιν ἀήταις.  
Δείματί τε πλωτῆρες ἀνίαχον· Ἔγρεο, Σῶτερ,  
Ὀλλυμένοις ἐπάμυνον. Ἄναξ δ' ἐκέλευεν ἀναστὰς  
5. Ἀτρεμέειν ἀνέμους καὶ κύματα, καὶ πέλεν οὕτως.  
Θαύματι δ' ἐφράζοντο Θεοῦ φύσιν οἱ παρεόντες.

## CHAPTER V.

### COMMENTARY

#### **I.1.12. On the genuine books of divinely inspired Scripture (PG 37.472-474).**

This poem, a catalogue of the books of the scriptural canon, is the best known of the group presented here.<sup>93</sup> Gilbert has his own translation, which I have consulted; the circumscribed content of the poem means that our versions do not differ much.<sup>94</sup> Lefherz has claimed that the verse is inauthentic, but his arguments are generally rejected.<sup>95</sup> In manuscript organization of Gregory's corpus, this poem appears at the beginning of Group III, which I discuss in the introduction, and Group XVIII. The poem appears in other manuscripts under Gregory's name, but often lacks the first five introductory lines.<sup>96</sup>

*meter:* The meter of the poem varies. Palla argues that the metrical changes are pedagogically significant insofar as various portions of the Bible are grouped together by meter.<sup>97</sup> The first 8 lines are hexameters, which exhort readers to reflect on Scripture and to avoid non-canonical books. The next 21 lines, which present the books of the Old Testament, are in iambic trimeter, with an elegiac couplet inserted at the introduction of the historical books (9/10), at their conclusion (14/15), and at the end of the list (28/29). The final 10 lines, which present the books of the NT and conclude with a warning to avoid inauthentic texts, begin with one elegiac couplet and a half, followed again by

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<sup>93</sup> On G.'s use of books outside this canon, see Frederick Norris, "Gregory Nazianzen: Constructing and Constructed by Scripture," *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity*, in edited by Paul Blowers, 149-162.

<sup>94</sup> *On God and Man*, 85-86; Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla*, 233.

<sup>95</sup> F. Lefherz, "Studien zu Gregory von Nazianz. Mythologie, Überlieferung, Scholiasten," Diss. Bonn 1958, 68, as cited by Palla, "Ordinamento e polimetria," 176.

<sup>96</sup> Many mss also append to this poem the *Iambs to Seleucus* of Amphilochus of Iconium, a contemporary of Gregory, who offers a similar list, but includes the books of Esther and Revelation.

<sup>97</sup> Palla, "Ordinamento e polimetria," 176-7.

iambic trimeters. The shifts seem to have helped the poem's catechetical end by linking specific meters to biblical units.<sup>98</sup>

**1-2. Exhortation to meditate on the words of Scripture.**

The couplet “mind and tongue” (γλώσση τε νόω τε) is frequent in G.'s poems.<sup>99</sup> For early Christians, prayer and meditation were not primarily silent mental activities, but rather involved vocal recitation and/or singing of the sacred text.

**2. στρωφᾶσθ'**, “turn/spin,” is relatively rare and only appears in this plural imperative form in classical literature.<sup>100</sup> G.'s metaphorical use of the verb, in the sense of “ruminate on,” is unusual. It appears with this definition in the *Lexica*.

**2-5. Rewards for studying Scripture.**

G. offers three incentives for the study: 1. to gain insight; 2. to grow in virtue; 3. to transcend mundane worries. The first motive seems to encourage a better grasp of the literal or historical meaning of scripture, that is, the small details that only come to light on close examination. The second motive, which he calls the ἄριστον (“noblest”), corresponds to the moral reading of the set of poems discussed in the introduction: study of Scripture inspires the Christian to live according to the divine law.<sup>101</sup> The third motive, as a diversion or, rather, as a means of drawing the mind from distraction in the mundane, corresponds to the fourth motive for writing poetry that G. offers in his poem “On his verses” (I.1.39): that it be a means of comfort in his old age.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> McGuckin, “Gregory: the Rhetorician as Poet,” 201 n.27.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. II.1.34, ll.1-10.

<sup>100</sup> Homer *Il.* 20.422; Apollonius *Argonautica* 1.827.

<sup>101</sup> Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla*, 286 notes the preeminence of this motive in the poem.

<sup>102</sup> II.1.39, ll.54-57.

4. καθαροῖο Θεοῦ, “The pure God,” that is, God Himself. The epithet καθαρός applied to God is unusual outside of G.<sup>103</sup> G. uses it rather frequently.<sup>104</sup> μεγάλησιν, “great”; G. uses the adjectives μέγας very often in these poems. The effect is tedious, but I generally translate it consistently as “great.”

6. Literally, “lest in mind you be stolen by foreign books,” i.e. heretical literature. Gregory reprises this sentiment in the final couplet of the poem. The exhortation responds to his persistent concern to distinguish those outside from those inside, as we often find in the moral reading of the parables in I.1.27.

7. παρέγγραπτοι, “spurious”;<sup>105</sup> τελέθουσι from τελέθω, “to be,” which is rather common in Homer (e.g., *Iliad* 9.441; 12.447) becomes relatively infrequent by G.’s time; it has an entry in the *Lexica*.

8. ἔγκριτον, “recognized/approved,” a term that became a quasi-technical word for the canon (Lampe, *s.v.*). G. refers to “number” and “numbering” often in these poems, reminding his audience of the importance of simple methods for recalling the essentials of the narrative; cf. II.28-29, where he notes that the number of books in the OT equals the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet.

9-10. The numbering of the twelve “historical” books. “Hebrew wisdom” (Ἑβραϊκῆς σοφίης) here seems to refer generically to the teachings of the Old Testament.

11. Palla emends the metrically unacceptable text given by Caillau, but I am not certain his version, which follows the majority of the mss, is metrically superior.<sup>106</sup> In either case the meaning of the verse remains virtually the same.

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<sup>103</sup> Outside Gregory it appears in a work attributed to Origen (*Fragmenta in Psalmos*, Ps. 67 v.18 l.3).

<sup>104</sup> E.g. I.2.38, l.37; II.1.45, l.289.

<sup>105</sup> Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961), *s.v.*

<sup>106</sup> Palla, “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 176.

- 12.** Gregory has Δεύτερος Νόμος, a literal rendering of “the Second Law”; the standard title, Δευτερονόμιον appears in one of manuscripts, but probably represents a scribal correction.
- 13.** Ruth may be singled out as the “eighth” since the first seven were often grouped together as a unit in G.’s time as the Heptateuch.
- 14.** Today these two books of the “acts of Kings” are divided into 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings.
- 15.** Ezra or Esdras, the twelfth of the historical books for G., is variously divided in subsequent canonical lists into Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Esdras.
- 16-18.** The five Writings in verse: Job, David’s Psalms, and Solomon’s Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, and Proverbs; the attributions to David and Solomon are traditional.
- 19-27.** The Prophets, the third major division of the OT. G. groups the twelve minor prophets together. The first six, Joel through Zephaniah, do not follow the order that later became standard. Perhaps G. recognizes the discrepancy by calling attention to the fact that Micah is “the third.”
- 20.** Metrically problematic; perhaps the final *epsilon* on Ὠσηè should be ignored.
- 26.** Jeremiah “called from the womb,” an allusion to Jer 1:5.
- 27.** The “grace of Daniel” (Δανιήλου χάρις) perhaps refers to the special visionary nature of the book.
- 29.** A mnemonic marker, to remember the number of books.
- 30-39.** The books of the NT.
- 30.** Repetition of the need for “number” (cf. v.8) to mark a beginning of the new sequence.

νέου μυστηρίου (“New Mystery”) as a description of the New Testament; G. uses the phrase in *De Virtute* (I.2.1, 1.701). It otherwise seems unattested.

**31-32.** In all of the poems on Scripture, G. observes this partition of the audiences of the three authors of the Synoptics, that is, Matthew for the Hebrews, Luke for Greece, and Mark for Italy; each represents one of the three languages of the early Church, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, as inscribed above the Cross.

**33.** John’s epithet, οὐρανοφοίτης (“dwelling in Heaven”), which refers to the mystical quality of the gospel, may also suggest a connection to the Evangelist’s authorship of Revelation, where he reports his heavenly vision; this book is otherwise not mentioned in this list.<sup>107</sup> John is also μέγας; cf. v.5.

**38.** Gilbert makes Jude “eighth,” but I am not sure why, since the Greek has ἑβδόμη and it comes, in fact, seventh on the list.

**39.** The final line repeats the warning to stay away from what is “outside,” a theme frequent in these poems

#### **I.1.14 The Plagues of Egypt (PG 37.475-476)**

G. here presents the list of the plagues in a concise set of verse. There is a moral end to memorizing the series: that the reader might show the proper fear of God. The vocabulary is especially antiquating and Homeric, with some clever allusions. At the same time, most of the key terms for the plagues come from the LXX. G. presents the plagues using identical vocabulary and sequence in *Or.* 16.10, where G. cites the sort of harsh penalties of Exodus as those that the people of Nazianzus have avoided.

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<sup>107</sup> See Frank Thielmann, “The Place of the Apocalypse in the Canon of St. Gregory Nazianzen,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 49.1 (1998), 155-157.

*meter*: elegiac couplets

1. ἀρίθμει, “number,” recalls the injunction to number the books of scripture that opens the first poem in the series, I.1.12.

3. ἐρυθθαίνετο, “redden,” is an unusual epic verb. With the word, G. parallels the reddening of the Red Sea with the reddening of the Xanthus at *Il.* 21.21 (ἐρυθθαίνετο δ’ αἵματι ὕδωρ).

4. βατράχους, “frogs,” is from the LXX.

5. σκνίπεσσιν, “gnats,” is from the LXX.

αὐ is repeated in the same position, a bit like a jingle, *metri causa*.

7. λυγρὸς ὄλεθρος, “murderous plague”; the probable allusion to *Il.* 10.174 renders the alternate mss reading λουγρὸς, listed in the apparatus of the *PG*, unlikely.

9. The reference to “fire” (πυρὸς) must refer to the lightning that came with the hailstorm. The ὄμβρος ἄμικτος seems to allude to the steady fail of the rain, as described in Exodus.

### **I.1.15 The Decalogue of Moses (*PG* 37.476-477)**

This poem is often paired with I.1.14 in a well-attested ms tradition; both appear together in groups III, IV, and IX. Gregory’s list corresponds to the modern-day Orthodox and Protestant numbering of the Ten Commandments, in contrast to the Catholic numbering, which groups together the injunction to worship God alone and the injunction against idol worship, while distinguishing the commandment against coveting another’s property from the commandment against coveting another’s wife. Like I.1.14, the rather obvious structure of the poem can belie some of the linguistic subtleties.

*meter:* dactylic hexameter.

**1-2.** G. introduces the poem with an intricate couplet, distinguishing the Old Law, written on stone tablets, from the New Law of Christ, written on the heart (cf. Jer 31:33; 2 Cor 3:3).

λαϊνέαις, “stony,” an epic word that appears in the *Lexicon*.<sup>108</sup>

**2.** “You” would seem to be Christ, the author of the New Law inscribed on human hearts.

**6.** Presumably from the sunset until sunset, and including the day.

**7.** The peculiar form of this paraphrase, as a macarism, conveys the fourth commandment’s distinctive language, which includes a blessing for its observance; i.e., “so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.”

**8.** Lit., “the murderous guilt of the hand.”

κακόφρονα, “evil-hearted,” is the same adjective applied to Egypt above (I.1.14, I.1 *ad loc.*), further evidence that the two poems are a pair.

### **I.1.13 The Patriarchs, the Sons of Jacob (PG 37.475)**

This five-line summary of the names of the twelve patriarchs has slight literary merit and philological interest. As in all of these initial poems, G. cleverly manages to make the names fit his meter. The poem was frequently copied and appears in the ms Groups III, IV, and IX.

*meter:* dactylic hexameter.

1. Literally, the “patriarchs,” but there is an obvious polyptoton in G.’s use of Ἰακώβ πατρὸς, their “father” and πάτρωοι “forefathers”

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<sup>108</sup> Cf. *Il.* 22.154.

2. The sons of Leah. G. gives Ῥουβεῖμ for the standard LXX spelling, Ῥουβήν, which is slightly more common in patristic literature.

Ἰούδαζ for the standard LXX Ἰούδα.

3. νόθοι, “illegitimate sons/bastards,” is common in the *Iliad*, but never appears in the LXX. Dan and Naphtali are the sons of Rachel’s servant Bilhah.

Gad and Asher are the sons of Leah’s servant Gilhah.

4. These sons are “noble” because they are from Jacob’s marriage to Leah.

5. Joseph is the son of Rachel (Gn 30:23)

Benjamin, a son of Rachel, is the πύματος, “the last,” an adjective frequent in G.

### **I.1.19 The Disciples of Christ (PG 37.487)**

This five-line poem appears in Group III, IV, and IX. It closely resembles the poem on the twelve patriarchs, both beginning with δώδεκα, “twelve,” and offering a list of important biblical figures. In both cases, the final name on the list (Benjamin, Judas) merits special attention.

*meter*: dactylic hexameter; in order to accommodate the names, the lines are more spondaic than is typical for G.

1. The introduction, Δώδεκα δ’ αὖ (“twelve, too”) reinforces this poem’s placement in a pedagogical series, since it follows on the twelve patriarchs.<sup>109</sup>

5. Jude is often identified with Thaddeus, the name that appears in Mt and Mk.

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<sup>109</sup> Bady, “Ordre et desordre,” 344.

## **I.1.18 (PG 37.480-487)**

### **On the genealogy of Christ**

Palla shows that this lengthy poem, preserved in Group III, is in fact composed of two different poems.<sup>110</sup> The first, I.1.18A, comprises ll.1-59 and is primarily concerned to reconcile the genealogy of Matthew with that of Luke. The second, I.1.18B, comprises ll.60-102, and reports the genealogy according to Luke, in reverse order, and then, concisely, that of Matthew. To reconcile the genealogies, G. relies heavily on the account given by Julius Africanus, as preserved in Jerome's *De viris illustribus* (63.3). The catechetical motive of both poems is clear: they function as an apology to prepare students to reconcile the two accounts and a verse paraphrase to aid in memorizing the long list of names.

*meter*: mixed meter.

**1-3.** The opening question presents the content of the poem, which does not, in fact, include a listing of all the names in the genealogies, as we have in I.1.18B.

**3.** The genealogies both trace Christ to a primordial ancestor: Matthew to Abraham and Luke to Adam. The *PG* editors take the final relative clause (“which trace”) to be limited to the genealogy starting with Adam, that is, Luke’s version, but the relative clause must be plural and therefore must refer to both genealogies; each of the two has its own “First Father.”

**6.** That is, the genealogies in Mt and Lk are consistent until they reach David.

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<sup>110</sup> “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 179.

11. Nathan, son of Bathsheba (1 Chr 3:5), the third son born to Bathsheba in Jerusalem; Solomon is the fourth. Generally, Solomon is credited with passing on the kingly line.<sup>111</sup>
12. Χριστὸς ἄναξ μέγας, a combination of standard formulae in G.
14. ὄρουσεν, “he raced ahead,” a Homeric verb that suggests aggressive or speedy action.<sup>112</sup>
18. κέασθεν, “it split/cleaved,” appears in this form only here in G. and is in the *Lexicon*; G. seems to mean that Matthew and Luke report the same genealogies, but Luke reports fewer additions to the generations (such as the names of the women).
19. That is, Jacob in Matthew and Heli in Luke.
24. The “Levirate” marriage (cf. Dt 25:5-10), that is, if a married man dies childless, his brother should marry his widow.
25. The language is confusing here, as Gregory refers to Christ as the “mortal God,” (Θεοῦ βροτέου); he has Christ’s mortal nature in mind.<sup>113</sup>
26. For this problem Eusebius also has a long discussion, which G. seems to adopt here.<sup>114</sup> But Eusebius seems to rely on the claim that “Melchi” was Christ’s grandfather, whereas both Gospels read “Matthat.” Palla notes that the names were often conflated.<sup>115</sup> It is key that Christ descended from Nathan through Melchi/Matthat, since this is the source of his priesthood.

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<sup>111</sup> By contrast to Gregory, Marshall D. Johnson has argued that the aim of Matthew’s genealogy is precisely to refute other Jews who would claim that the Messiah would emerge from the priestly line; see *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies* (SNTSMS 8; London/New York: Cambridge University, 1969) 208, 224.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. *Il.* 2.310; *Il.* 3.325.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. *Il.* 1.34, 1.3; note that Euripides speaks of Dionysus in the same language at *Bacchae* 1.4.

<sup>114</sup> See Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 1.7.

<sup>115</sup> “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 180; cf. Ambrose, *In Lucam* 3:15.

**32.** Thus, Joseph is “of Heli,” as we find in Luke, who reckons according to the Law, but Jacob “begot” Joseph, as we find in Matthew, who reckons according to blood; the two lines converge in Christ.

**33.** The meter shifts here for three lines, to iambic trimeter, perhaps as a “conversational” insertion.

**42.** That is, in referring to Elizabeth as Mary’s kinswoman, the angel refers to Mary relationship to the tribe of Aaron, attributing to her a priestly lineage.

**45.** According to Ex 6:23, Aaron, a Levite, married Elisheba, who was sister of Nahshon, who was of the tribe of Judah. I cannot find the reference to Nahshon marrying Aaron’s daughter. Perhaps G. is confused about the details here, but even if he is wrong, the reference still proves that the tribes mixed.

**49.** G. refers to the Babylonian exile, suggesting that there was a change in reckoning after the Law went unobserved during the occupation.

**59.** This line makes more sense if we take it as the conclusion of a separate poem; Joseph, from Bethlehem, is from the royal line of David. Here G. repeats l.50, only changing μήτρος to πάτρος, in order to frame his presentation of the royal and priestly lineage of Christ.

**60.** The start of the second poem, which presents the details of the genealogy. My notes here are minimal since, as Billius notes, the names are available to anyone who wants to read the scripture. Like Billius, who struggled to put the names in Latin, I cannot manage to make the names fit any recognizable English meter.

**61.** That is, Luke’s genealogy begins with Christ and ends with Adam. G. relates this genealogy to himself, in his typical turn.

62. Gn 2:7, specifying the manner of Adam’s creation.
65. Enoch according to the description of his ascent into heaven in Heb 11:5.
74. Meter faulty; perhaps we are missing a consonant, δ’, before Ἀράμ.
79. Meter faulty, unless we read the final syllable of Ἰωάνων as short, despite its position.
85. Meter faulty and not easily corrected.
95. There seems to be an extra foot in the hexameter.
102. See 1.50 above on Joseph “seeming” to be Christ’s father, reprised here.

### **I.1.20. The Miracles of Christ according to Matthew (PG 37.487-491)**

This poem is treated at some length in the introduction. According to Palla’s reconstruction, this is the first in the series on the miracles and parables of Christ. As the opening poem, it is the longest of the group and most carefully fashioned; many of the details of the miracles present here are absent from the other poems. Although G. stops numbering the miracles at twenty, the final two miracles seem to count in the catalogue. If so, then we have twenty-two miracles, a nice mnemonic, where the number of miracles equals the number of books in the OT, which equals the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet.

*meter*: elegiac couplets.

**1-2.** As in all the miracle poems, G. begins with an opening couplet as a simple introduction to the catalogue.

**1.** ἔρθε, “performed,” is Homeric and is rare in Christian literature before G. Indeed, the first line seems to recall Homer, *Od.*, 14.139:

πάσιν, ἐμοὶ δὲ μάλιστα, τετεύχεται; οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἄλλον  
ἦπιον ὧδε ἀνακτα κινήσομαι, ὀπίσθ' ἐπέλθω.

G.'s placement of ἀναξ close to ὀπίσθ', a word that rarely occurs in post-classical Greek literature, suggests that G. is deliberately classicizing here.

2. Χριστὸς ἀναξ, “Christ the ruler,” a very common epithet in G.'s poems; indeed, G. seems to have coined the title; ἀναξ, a classical word for “King” or “master,” never occurs in the New Testament and is rare by the fourth century.<sup>116</sup>

2. κιννάμενος: a medical term for “mixed,” which appears in Galen and Plotinus. On Christ as *mixed*: Gregory often uses words from the root μίγνυμι to express the union between Christ's divine and human natures.<sup>117</sup> Here the point does not seem to be that Christ is “mixed in a mortal body,” but rather that he is “mixed, and in a mortal body,” that is, his mixture occurs at the level of the union of the two natures, rather than between the divine Person and the mortal body, which would lead to a sort of Apollinarianism; in another poem (I.1.9) G. specifically attacks this view.

3. G. begins recounting Matthew's record of Jesus' miracles at Mt. 8:1, after the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount. This means he ignores the record of Christ ministering to a great multitude (Mt 5:23-25). Palla claims that G. often overlooks “generic” miracles, but such a rule is not consistently observed.

3. The line shows G.'s characteristic juxtaposition of biblical and classical vocabulary; ἀπεσεύσατο, “he shook off,” a word used by Hellenistic authors, especially Theognis;<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> The title is widely imitated in later Byzantine authors; Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 67.

<sup>117</sup> On G.'s use of κράσις and μίξις for “mixed,” see Portmann, *Die göttliche paidogogia*, 63-74 (as applied to humanity, “the first mixing”) and 109-124 (as applied to Christ, “the second mixing”).

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 119, 131.

λεπροῖο, “of the leper,” corresponds to the Greek of the NT, but is hapax in this unusual genitive form. In addition the line introduces a peculiarly Gregorian phrase, πικρὴν νοῦσον, “acute disease,” which G. seems to have invented, and used frequently.<sup>119</sup>

4. The healing of the centurion’s servant, who is paralyzed. Some vocabulary, ἑκατοντάρχου and παιδός, is from the NT, while the word for “binding,” from πήγνυμι, is classical and, used in this context, that is, with limbs, it may mean “to fix” and thereby recall Euripides’ *Cyclops*, 302: οὐκ ἀμφὶ βουπόροισι πηχθέντας μέλη.<sup>120</sup> G. may also juxtapose the “shaking off” of the sickness in l.3 with the “binding” of the limbs here.

5. The healing of Peter’s mother-in-law. Following the text of Matthew, I take χειρὶ to refer to Peter’s mother-in-law’s hands, although the Greek is ambiguous and could refer to Christ’s hand. Instead of the *koine* word for mother-in-law that appears in Matthew, πενθερά (which in the genitive would be metrically impossible here), G. uses the Homeric ἐκυρά (cf. *Il.* 22.451).

6. The calming of the storm. Here G. uses the verb εὔνασε (“he calmed”) perhaps alluding to the Hellenistic author Apollonius of Rhodes, who also uses the verb in a similar context, to refer to a calmed sea (*Argonautica* 1.1155). G.’s μέγας appears again.

7. The Healing of the Gerasene demoniacs. Readings of this biblical place name vary in early witnesses. “Gergesenes” is widely attested, although always with a single consonant. G. here has Γεργεσσηνοῖς, with a double *sigma*, which does not appear in the standard apparatus. The doubled consonant is odd, since metrically the syllable must

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<sup>119</sup> Cf. *epigram* 8.36; *Il.* 1.34, 1.175; *Il.* 1.46, 1.47.

<sup>120</sup> It is worth noting that in the *Cyclops*, Odysseus is here referring to the Cyclops fixing, i.e., placing, limbs on posts, while G. by contrast refers to Christ fixing, i.e., healing, the servant’s limbs.

be short; we are forced to conclude that this is either one of G.'s false quantities or a mistake in the mss.

G. uses the classical σύεσσι for the swine in place of Matthew's χοίρων.

**8.** Healing of the paralytic. The Greek is difficult. PG's Latin version has *eo iubente*, "when Christ bid him." I translate ἔην as a possessive adjective modifying κλίνην. This reading, in fact, suggests that G. was paying close attention to the Gospel text, which also modifies the paralytic's litter with an emphatic placement of the possessive adjective σου, twice in the verse (Mt 9:6).

**9.** Healing the hemorrhaging woman; an elegantly compact summary of the miracle, which communicates the woman's illness and her action – touching Christ – in a four-word chiasm. While the description of the woman recalls the biblical vocabulary (αἱμορροούσης and ἀψαμένης comes directly from Mt 9:20), G. employs a Homeric form for Christ's action of "holding back," σχέθεν.<sup>121</sup>

**10.** The healing of the ruler's daughter. For some discussion, see the introduction (p.20).

**11.** The healing of two blind men. G. repeats the word for light (φάος) from the previous line. G. has a tendency to repeat key words and phrases for emphasis and probably as an aid to memory;<sup>122</sup> the phrase πόρεν φάος, "gave the light," seems to be G.'s innovation.<sup>123</sup>

This is the first moment in the poem where the insertion of a miracle, the healing of a dumb man, does not begin with a new line.

**12.** G. uses ἐκ here as an adverb, "therefrom" (cf. LSJ, *s.v.*; *Il.* 11.480).

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<sup>121</sup> Cf. Od. 14.494; Od. 23.243; the form also appears in the Byzantine lexicon.

<sup>122</sup> See Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 52-54

<sup>123</sup> Cf. I.1.22 "The miracles according to Luke," l.18.

ῥῆξε λόγον, “he let loose the word,” a phrase G. uses frequently to refer to speaking after a period of silence.<sup>124</sup>

**13** Healing the man with a withered hand. G.’s phrasing here, “loosing the withered hands from its chains” is odd, but consistent with G.’s sense that Christ’s acts to “free” those he heals (cf. 1.26 and 1.29).

**15-16.** The feeding of the five thousand. This is the first miracle that G. treats in a couplet, a structure evident in all subsequent miracles of the catalogue.

Here the sense of the verse is marked by a clever poetic pause: two groups were “filled,” i.e., not only the men, but also the baskets. We also find the juxtaposition of biblical and epic vocabulary. The word for baskets, κοφίνους, is from scripture, while the word for “scraps,” ἀκόλων, is classical.<sup>125</sup>

G. calls those who were fed ἀνδρῶν, “men,” a significant word choice, since in Matthew the number of those fed does not include women and children (Mt 14:21).

The second half of the pentameter in the couplet is an especially memorable play on sound, perhaps to foster memorization for young children: πέντ’ ἀπὸ πέντ’ ἀκόλων.

**17-18.** Walking on the water. There is a probable allusion to the *Il.* 21.263:

ὡς αἰεὶ Ἀχιλῆα κινήσατο κῦμα ῥόοιο  
καὶ λαυπηρὸν ἔόντα: θεοὶ δέ τε φέρτεροι ἀνδρῶν.

κινήσατο is in the same metrical position in both instances. Moreover, G. seems to play on the context of the word in his epic source: just as in the *Iliad* the River, a god, “overtook” Achilles, who was not a god, so Jesus, as God, “overtakes” the sea.

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<sup>124</sup> Cf. I.1.1 (PG 37.399), “On the Father,” 1.8; I.1.13 (PG 37.1229), “To the bishop,” 1.19. The sense of “breaking the silence” in speech dates to classical authors; cf. Herodotus, *Histories*, 1.85, and also appears in the LXX (Is 54:1).

<sup>125</sup> The PG editors note that ἀκόλων has been glossed in the ms (37.489 n.16), presumably because its meaning was obscure to later authors.

**18.** ὀρινόμενος, “aroused,” often describes stormy seas in classical literature.<sup>126</sup>

Gregory does not include any reference to the miracle at Mt 14:34-36, the healing of the sick in Gennesaret; this may simply count as “generic” (cf. 1.3 *ad loc.*).

**19-20.** The healing of the Canaanite woman’s daughter.

From the Greek it is unclear whether πολλά modifies the woman’s rejoicing or her begging. Attention to Matthew’s text suggests that it is the beseeching that is “much”; G. may use the adverb to allude to the woman’s persistent response to Christ’s initial hesitance to heal her daughter (“Even dogs eat of the scraps that fall from the table of their master”). In addition, G. seems to be alluding to πολλά λιταζομένης in the *Sibylline Oracles* 2.2, thus further supporting my translation.<sup>127</sup>

**21-22:** The feeding of the four thousand.

The construction ἔπτ ἀπὸ ἑπτὰ mimics πέντ ἀπὸ πέντ in 1.16 (see note *ad loc.*), which also treats a multiplication of loaves. Here G.’s reference to the “filling” (κόρος), like the reference to “filling” (πλήσε) in 1.16 points to Matthew’s description of the result of the miracle, namely, that all present were filled (ἐχορτάσθησαν).

**23.** The Transfiguration.

G. shifts the language of scripture to allude to Euripides’ *Bacchae*, where Dionysus explains his adoption of human form:

ὦν οὐνεκ’ εἶδος θνητὸν ἀλλάξας ἔχω  
μορφὴν τ’ ἐμὴν μετέβαλον εἰς ἀνδρὸς φύσιν (52-53).

The allusion may suggest that G. knew the parallels between the Incarnation and mythological accounts of divinities taking on human appearance. At the Transfiguration,

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<sup>126</sup> Cf. Il. 2.294; Apollonius, *Argonautica* 1.1086. See Sykes, *Poemata Arcana*, 254 n.20, on the verb as used in *Arcana* 8.20.

<sup>127</sup> On G.’s use of the *Sibylline Oracles*, see Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 38.

Jesus reveals his true divine nature, as a special moment of revelation for his closest friends. Dionysus, by contrast, takes on human form to deceive and thereby test humanity.

**24.** ἥελίοιο πλέον, “brighter than the sun”; with the phrase, G.’s version outdoes the Gospel account, which only has Christ shining *like* the sun.

**25-26.** Healing of a boy with a demon. This couplet is discussed in the introduction (p.20).

G. couples the sun in l.24 and the form of “epilepsy” that contains the root “moon” (σεληναίης) in l.25. The juxtaposition of the two images may well have aided memorization.<sup>128</sup>

After l.25, Gregory includes no reference to Mt. 17:27, the payment of the Temple tax with the coin from the fish’s mouth. Perhaps G. overlooks the miracle because in the Gospel text it is not actually performed, but only anticipated.

**27-28.** The healing of two blind men. Again, “giving light” is G.’s preferred locution for restoring sight (cf. l.11).

The participle, πορευόμενος, (“traveling”) recalls Mt.’s language, ἐκπορευομένων.

**29-30.** G. summarizes a group of miracles, giving sight to the blind, healing the lame, and cleansing the Temple, but he reverses the scriptural order. Notably, he treats the cleansing of the Temple as a miracle, perhaps because Christ’s action reveals his special authority over the Father’s house. Indeed, perhaps this inclusion points to an early Christian conception of miracles (“marvels”) as not simply the moments where Christ

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<sup>128</sup> Moreover, Gregory often juxtaposes sun and moon in his verse; see Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 39.

suspends the laws of nature, as an enlightenment view might hold, but rather to any moment where Christ reveals his divine nature.

**31-32.** The cursing of the fig tree.

G.'s Βηθανίθεν shows that he has in mind the verse prior to this miracle, which speaks of Christ going "into Bethany" (Mt 21:17; εἰς Βηθανίαν). Christ's entry into Jerusalem must therefore have occurred *from* there. G., then, is not simply paraphrasing the miracles in isolation, but rather he has in mind the broader Gospel narrative.

G.'s claim that this is Christ's μέγιστον or "greatest" miracle seems strange, especially since he is just about to present the Resurrection. Elsewhere in his poems G. offers other candidates for the title of μέγιστον θαῦμα, including for instance, in the poem "On the Soul" (I.1.8, l.47), the Resurrection of the body.<sup>129</sup> Here G. may be claiming that the miracle is Christ's greatest because it signifies the passing away of the Old Law and the revelation of the New.

**33-38.** The catalogue of miracles culminates in Christ's death and Resurrection. The passage contains many direct verbal references to Matthew's account.

**34.** πέτασμα comes directly from Matthew's καταπέτασμα.

Here, too, we most likely have another reference to the *Sybilline Oracles*, 8.305.

**35.** The translation is uncertain on account of the ambiguous object of ὑπέρ. Gregory seems to want to communicate the geography of the Scripture, that is, where exactly the rocks split. It may read, as the Latin of the *PG* editors has, "The earth shook, and on earth, it split the rocks."

**35-36.** G.'s tendency to repeat appears again in his use of τύμβον and τύμβους in l.36.

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<sup>129</sup> Other candidates are offered at II.1.1, l.104, "The praise of virginity," where it is the creation of humanity and II.2.7, l.280, "To Nemesius," where it is the Crucifixion.

**37-38.** Christ appears to his “friends,” as he had done at the Transfiguration (1.24).

### **I.1.24. The parables and puzzles according to Matthew (*PG* 37.495-496)**

G. gives an 18-line summary of the parables in Matthew, about half the length of the poem on the miracles and, again, in elegiacs. Unlike the poem on the miracles, the lines of I.1.24 are dependent clauses, not complete sentences. The use of indirect discourse may imitate the nature of the parables as “spoken” by Christ, as opposed to the miracles, which are reported directly. It may well also have been a way of introducing a younger audience to this grammar, which is common in classical literature, but is often abandoned in biblical Greek and in the Byzantine era.

Each miracle is presented succinctly, often in a single line or less. The syntax of the poem is rather difficult, even more than in the poem on the miracles, since the details of the parables are almost entirely ignored. Only a reader who was already quite familiar with the Gospel text could make out the sequence of references and, even then, ambiguities remain. Yet perhaps for this reason, G. seems to favor words taken directly from scripture to paraphrase the parables; he wants to make the references more obvious. The Greek title printed in the *PG* is simply “the parables and puzzles,” although all of the parables come from the First Gospel.

**1.** A single line functions as an exhortation and introduction.

Εἰ δ’ ἄγε occurs frequently at the beginning of G.’s poems, and is a standard Homeric opening.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> E.g. *Il.* 1.302, 1.493.

Here we have a play on “seeing” (δέομαι, a word frequent in epic) and “darkness” (σκοτίων). G. invites the reader to see what is hidden.

**2.** The two foundations. Instead of biblical word for sand (ἄμμον), G. uses the Homeric equivalent here (ψάμμος), even though the two words are metrically identical.

**3.** The parable of the sower.

**4.** The parable of the weeds and wheat. The repetition of καὶ σπόρον at the beginning of lines 3 and 4 is one of G.’s preferred touches. Here it may aid memory, but it also calls attention to the textual proximity of the two “seed” parables in Mt 13. Line 5 will alter the opening phrase slightly to καὶ δένδρον, even as the subsequent reference to σπόρον in the line calls attention to yet a third “seed” parable in the same chapter of Matthew.

**5.** While the referent of the line is clear enough, that is, the parable of the mustard seed, the phrase is impressively compressed. G. presents the yeast hidden in the dough with the same degree of compression. The language here is strictly scriptural, perhaps to fix the referent.

**9.** νεπόδων, “sea creatures,” is an unusual word, but occurs a few times in Callimachus.<sup>131</sup> The word order for the sentence is concentric, perhaps visualizing the net that encloses the catch.

G. ignores Mt 13:51-53, the treasures old and new. Again, he may simply overlook “generic” passages.

**10.** A detail in the parable of the lost sheep, that the shepherd carried the sheep on “his shoulders,” does not appear in Matthew but rather in Luke.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> *Fragment 295.2;*

G. ignores the parables of 15:14-18, the blind leading the blind and food that renders impure.

11. G.'s repetition of the adjective *πικρὸν*, "harsh/petty," to describe both the servant and the ruler underlines the Gospel presentation of the two characters as parallel figures. In these final parables G. notes the simple opposition present in the Gospel by contrasting the opposing groups mentioned in the Jesus' sayings.

12. The workers in the vineyard.

13. The parable of the two sons. G. signals the Gospel's explicit opposition of the response of the two sons by the emphatic *οὐδὲν ὁμοίους*, "not at all alike."

14. The vineyard and the talents.

15. The marriage feast.

16. The ten maidens.

17. The talents.

18. Again, we find emphasis on the opposition between the good and the bad, here through the adverb *ἔμπροσθεν*.

### **I.1.21. The Miracles of Christ according to Mark (PG 37.491)**

Unlike the poems on Matthew, this poem begins with an introduction to Mark the Evangelist and his intended audience. G. reprises the attribution he makes in I.1.12, where he writes that Mark "wrote the marvels of Christ for Italy."

Also departing from the companion poem on Matthew, G. does not here number the miracles, but runs through them summarily. After the opening couplet, enjambment

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<sup>132</sup> Palla, "Ordinamento e polimetria," 183 takes this to be an *amplificatio* of the original text.

appears at almost every verse, carrying the reader along rapidly until the conclusion. Most likely, this hastier treatment of Mark's miracles presupposes some knowledge of Matthew's list. In my translation I have attempted to imitate the mnemonic and catechetical end of the verses through rhyme and assonance. Still, I follow the Greek line by line, attempting to be as literal as possible.

*meter:* The meter shifts to dactylic hexameter, at least for the first ten verses, probably to distinguish the meter from the poems on Matthew and to familiarize students to another standard meter. The last seven lines are corrupt; although they are printed as hexameters in the *PG*, the manuscripts present them variously as elegiacs or in mixed meter.<sup>133</sup> There are some false quantities and other metrical peculiarities, especially with G.'s use of καὶ, which he generally treats as long, but sometimes is short; l.6 requires that the word be scanned both ways.<sup>134</sup>

1. Αὔσονίοισι, a classical Greek designation for the Romans/Italians.
2. θαρσαλέος, "brave/bold," is common in Homer;<sup>135</sup> the force of the adjective to describe Mark is probably generic, since Gregory reprises the same formula to describe Luke, merely substituting Paul for Peter, in his poem I.1.22 on the miracles according to Luke. The epithet makes more sense for Luke, who accompanies Paul in *Acts*, than it does for Mark, who is never explicitly linked to Peter in Scripture. Eusebius, however, takes Mark to be Peter's companion and Mark's Gospel as a record of Peter's teachings.<sup>136</sup>

3. The enjambment of the lines, which I imitate in the translation, begins here.

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<sup>133</sup> See Palla, "Ordinamento e polimetria," 183.

<sup>134</sup> On his false quantities, see Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 54-57; Crimi, "Il problema."

<sup>135</sup> Cf. *Il.* 21.589; *Od.* 7.51.

<sup>136</sup> *Ecclesiastical History* 3.39.15, citing the words of Papias.

G. here evokes the man with an unclean spirit, the healing of the crowd, and the cleansing of a leper, presented in sequence at the beginning Mark's Gospel.

**4-5.** "His hand was stretched," χεῖρ ἐτανύσθη; G. is fond of the formula, which appears in Homer.<sup>137</sup> The referent is obscure until 1.5 and ξηροή, which identifies the miracle as the healing of the "dry" hand (cf. Mk 3:1).

**5.** λήξεν μένος, "he calmed the wrath" uses epic language to describe the miracle of the calming of the seas.<sup>138</sup>

**6.** Casting out Legion; G. specifies the original Gospel text through the name Legion, which does not appear in Matthew, but only in Luke and Mark.

Healing of the hemorrhaging woman.

αἱματώεσσαν; a form of the participle "bleeding" that differs slightly from αἱμορροούσης used of the same miracle in Matthew (cf. I.1.20, 1.9), although the two forms are metrically equivalent. G. may use these variations to expose his audience to different verbal forms.

**7.** Healing Jairus' daughter; G. specifies the father's proper name, a detail that does not appear in Matthew, but only in Luke and Mark.

**8.** Walking on the sea; ἔδησε πόντον, "he bound up the sea," is a striking phrase. As in his account of the same miracle in Matthew, G. makes explicit the theophanic implications of the walking on the water, where Christ reveals his divine powers over chaos.

**9-10.** The healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter.

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<sup>137</sup> Cf. II.1.55 1.23; cf. II. 23.761.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. II. 21.305; II. 13.424.

**10-11.** The grammar of the sentence requires that Christ drives out two “spirits,” that is, one from the Phoenician girl and the other one a “deaf and dumb” spirit in the region of Tyre and Sidon.

**11-12.** The feeding of the four thousand. Here G. simple refers to “thousands” without specifying the number as he had in Matthew.

**12.** Healing the blind man at Bethsaida.

**12-13.** The Transfiguration.

**13-14.** While the miracle here occurs at Mk 9:20, the specific language of the δεσμὸν γλώσσης is from the earlier account of a similar miracle, that is, Mk 7:35.

**14-15.** The healing of Bartimaeus. Again, G. marks the miracle’s source by using the proper name, which occurs only in Mark.

**16.** The cursing of the fig tree. Although not called the “greatest” of the miracles, as it is in the poem on Matthew, G. treats the cursing with special attention; it is the only miracle in the catalogue presented in more than one line.

**16.** G. inserts a pentameter here.

**17.** The referent of this line is unclear, perhaps because it is an interpolation.<sup>139</sup>

The account of these miracles, unlike those of Matthew and Luke, does not conclude with the Resurrection.

### **I.1.25. The Parables of Christ according to Mark (PG 37.496-497)**

From the manuscript evidence, Palla claims that only lines 1, 2, and 4 of this poem as it is printed in the *PG* are authentic. If so, there is very little content to the verse, a mere three

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<sup>139</sup> See Palla, “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 183.

parables. I have translated the remaining verses, although the sense remains obscure, especially the reference to Luke at the end. Following the Syriac manuscripts, Palla suggests that the final verses belong at the opening of the subsequent poem, I.1.22, on the miracles of Luke, in place of the verses that are printed in the *PG*.<sup>140</sup> It may be that these lines of the poem look to summarize the two contiguous poems.

*meter*: Like the poem on the miracles of Mark, the authentic lines of this poem are in dactylic hexameter.

2. σπόρον οὔτι ὅμοιον, “seed that is not the same,” resembles the reference to the sower and the seed in the poem on the parables of Matthew (I.1.24, l.3), where the planting was likewise not “the same.”

### **I.1.22. On the miracles of Christ according to Luke (*PG* 37.492-494)**

This poem follows the more compressed structure found in the poem on the miracles in Mark, although all the miracles are presented as complete sentences.

Besides the dubious opening couplet, the meter is elegiacs. Again, G. shifts from the hexameters of the poems on Mark.

1. As noted, the introduction of Luke is virtually identical to the introduction of Mark in l.1 of I.1.21.

2-4. These first four lines are virtually identical to the opening of I.1.21, even though one of the miracles, the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law, is presented differently in Mark

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<sup>140</sup> Palla, “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 183 n.39.

(where Christ touches her) than it is in Luke (where the demon is rebuked by Christ's words). Perhaps this simplification helped memorization.<sup>141</sup>

4. At the healing of the withered hand, G. alters the language he uses in Mark, using *καρφαλέης*, a Homeric word for “dried.”<sup>142</sup>

5. Healing the centurion's daughter; *ἤδρασε*, lit. “he settled,” is a unusual verb, and does not generally mean “he healed.”<sup>143</sup>

6. G. includes the place name Nain, which only occurs in Luke.

7. The anointing at Bethany, elegantly rendered. Note the *polyptoton*, where G. juxtaposes the “sanctifying” of Christ's “sacred” feet in the words *ἀγνοῦς* and *ἡγνισε*. Note also the contrast between the woman anointing Christ with *μύρον*, or oil, and Christ purifying her with *μῦθον*, his word

8. The calming of the storms and the driving out of Legion. By using the verb *στῆσεν*, “he stayed” or “he put down” for both actions, G. stretches its meaning, almost to nonsense. He must mean that he “stayed” the storms and he “settled” Legion in the swine, since Christ did not stay the demon, but rather drove him out.

9. A third, briefer rendering of the healing of the hemorrhaging woman. From Matthew to Mark and now to Luke, the rendering of the miracle becomes progressively more compressed.

9-10. Healing Jairus' daughter. Whereas G. presents the parallel account in Matthew by writing that “she found the light” (*viz.*, since she was actually sleeping; Mt 9:24), here he

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<sup>141</sup> Palla, “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 183.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. *Od.* 5.369.

<sup>143</sup> But cf. the remark on *πήγνυμι* and G.'s use of “fixing” for “healing” (I.1.20, 1.5 *ad loc.*)

states that Christ led her into life (Ἦγαγεν ἐς ζωὴν), since in Luke she is actually accounted dead.

11. The feeding of the five thousand.

12. The Transfiguration. Greek here (εἶδεος ἦκε σέλας) is somewhat peculiar. The *PG* Latin takes εἶδεος as “face,” but I find no warrant for such a translation.

13. The healing of a boy with an unclean spirit. The line is carefully wrought, with an elegant ABACB, construction, perhaps mimicking the way the demon possesses the boy. At the same time, G. includes the unusual word for “only begotten” (τηλυγέντιοιο) to signal Luke’s detail that this boy was the father’s “only begotten” (μονογενής).<sup>144</sup>

14. The healing that precedes the dispute on Jesus and Beelzebul (Lk 15-23).

15. The reference to the Hebrew woman seems to correspond to the Lukan setting of this miracle, that is, on the Sabbath and, perhaps, in the synagogue.

16. The healing of the man with dropsy. The word ὄγκον here has the sense of “a weight/burden” and the word for dropsy, ὑδέου, seems an epexegetical genitive.

17. The healing of the ten lepers. G. includes the detail unique to Luke, that there was a Samaritan in the group.

18. Healing the blind man on the way from Jericho.

19-20: The conclusion, on the Resurrection, resembles the final line from the poem on the miracles in Matthew, here slightly altered to emphasize Christ’s appearance to his friends (perhaps in reference to the Lukan account of Emmaus).

### **I.1.26 The Parables of Christ according to Luke (*PG* 37.497-498)**

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<sup>144</sup> Cf. *II*. 9.482; the word appears in the *Lexica*.

As in the poem on the parables in Matthew, G. presents all of the accounts tersely, in indirect discourse. Here, too, G. rushes through the catalogue and uses frequent enjambment. This group is, in fact, so compressed that it seems to presume some familiarity with the Matthew list, or, perhaps, is simply a prelude to a more thorough reading of the parables in the final poem of the series (I.1.27).

This is the only poem of the group in iambic trimeter.<sup>145</sup> In his translation, Daley has a poem in the same meter and concludes that the effect is conversational. The choice, here, however, seems more arbitrary, since there is no inherent reason that the parables of Luke should sound more conversational than those of Matthew and Mark. Moreover, the iambs seem to hamper G.'s capacity for conveying the basics of the parables. Often the references are virtually inscrutable.

1. As in the other poems on parables, this begins with a single line introduction. The reference to Luke “remembering” the parables (ἐμνήσθη) may be a play on the student who was attempting to “memorize” just as many parables as Luke recorded.

Παροιμιῶν, “of the proverbs,” differs slightly from the term G. generally uses, παραβολαί; see n.51 below.

2-4. The list here is hard to follow. G. ignores the parable of the blind leading the blind (6:39), and makes the two foundations the first on his list. The referent in lines 3 and 4 does not seem to be a parable, but rather to the healing of the woman who anoints Christ's feet (7:36-50), where Christ asserts that whoever has loved much will be

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<sup>145</sup> A. Tuilier argues that G. uses this meter because he presents these parables as “proverbs” (in J. Bernardi, A. Tuilier, and G. Bady, *Grégoire de Nazianze, oeuvres poétiques*, lxii). Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla*, however, believes that the distinction is not observed.

forgiven much. If so, G. has disregarded the biblical sequence, which he usually follows reliably.

**4-5.** The sower and the seed. The reference to the φύσεις (“natures”) of the earth may allude to Luke’s Greek here, which includes many terms related to φύω (i.e., φυέν 2 times and, συμφύεσθαι). The term and its roots are absent from Matthew’s and Mark’s account of the parable.

**5-6.** The Good Samaritan. The salient figure for Gregory is not the “Good Samaritan,” as most modern readers tend to presume, but rather the traveler who falls among the thieves.

**6-7.** G.’s use of the word πονηρὰ (“bad things”) suggests that he is combining the parable of the man who asks his friend for help late in the night with Christ’s subsequent questioning about the way selfish men respond to their children’s request by never giving them bad things for good; at issue in the parable of the visit at night is not receiving “good things” but rather receiving anything at all.

**8-9.** Ἀκάθαρτον πνεῦμα, “unclean spirit,” is taken directly from the Gospel, while G.’s εἰσοικίζεται renders Luke’s εἰς τὸν οἶκον as a verb.

**9-10.** The rich fool; οἶ here is a masculine dative personal pronoun, with the verb στήσεται, “will stand”; the *PG*’s Latin has *quo rapietur*, “by whom it will be snatched,” which corresponds better to the Gospel text, but is hard to reconcile with Gregory’s Greek.

**11-12.** The watchful servants; ἐκ τῶν γάμων is directly from Lk 12:36. But note that G. inserts χριστῷ for “the Anointed” here. He thus intends a Christological reading of the parable, recalling the interpretation that Jesus himself gives in Lk 12:40 (“when the Son of Man comes”).

13. The barren fig tree.

14. The parable of the mustard seed and the hidden yeast; Gregory captures these brief parables in a single word.

14. Very compressed, but Gregory seems to have the parable of the guests and hosts in mind here.

15. The parable of the lost sheep and the lost coin, their Gospel order reversed.

16. The prodigal son. As in the parable of the Good Samaritan, there is a shift in identification of the central character: Gregory places the emphasis on the father who feels pity, rather than on the son who was lost.

17-18. The parable of the dishonest steward. The reference to the οἰκονόμος is direct from Lk.

18. Lazarus and the rich man, as briefly and as directly as can be included in a single line.

19. The widow and the judge.

20. The tax collector and the Pharisee.

21. The parable of the ten pounds; μνῶν, for minas, fixes the referent in Luke. The meter here is faulty.

22. The vineyard and the tenants.

### **I.1.23. The Miracles of Christ according to John (PG 37.494)**

The eleven-line poem on the miracles of John is the shortest of the miracles poems, a point G. himself explains in the first two lines. The vocabulary of the poem is remarkably sophisticated, including a *hapax* at l.3.

*meter*: dactylic hexameter.

1. Gregory’s simple, two-line introduction clarifies the nature of the Gospel for young readers: there are many more words than deeds in John.

δήεις, as printed in the *PG*, seems wrong; the word should have no iota subscript if the word is to mean “meet with, find.”

2. Χριστοῖο ἄνακτος, G.’s preferred epithet for Christ (cf. the poem’s final line).

3. The wedding at Cana; ἐκέρω, is unusual; it only occurs here, and seems to come from κεράννυμι, “to pour.”

4-5. The healing of the official’s son and the healing at the pool. The repetition of εἶπε at the start of both lines, in addition to serving as a helpful mnemonic, plays on the style of the Gospel that G. mentions in the introduction, namely, it has “many words.”

5. Impressively compressed; G. seems to capture the peculiar nature of the paralytic’s plight – that he could not reach the pool to be purified and, therefore, freed from his chains.

The opening of the next four verses seems especially assonant, perhaps as a mnemonic device: Πέντε, Πόντον, Τυφλὸν, Τέτρατον in sequence.

6. The feeding of the five thousand.

7. ὑπερξείοντα, literally “boiling over,” here used metaphorically to refer to the sea.

8. The man blind from birth.

9. The raising of Lazarus, dead four days.

10-11. The Resurrection; G. reprises the formula Χριστὸς ἄναξ from l.2.

The reference to an appearance to “his companions” (οἷς ἐτάροισι) closely parallels the conclusion of the poems on the parables of Matthew and Luke, where Christ appears to

“his friends”; in all three cases, the somewhat unusual form of the possessive adjective appears.

### **I.1.27 The parables of the four Gospels (PG 37.498-505)**

As discussed in the introduction, where would expect the parables of John we instead get G.’s “final prayer.”<sup>146</sup> Here Gregory reexamines the Gospel parables, often from a moral or a personal perspective, generally presenting them in six-line units. Thirty-one lines of this poem appear in another of G.’s verses, “Exhortation to virgins” (I.2.2).<sup>147</sup> Palla argues that they are much more appropriate to the present context and that, thus, they first appeared in this biblical group.<sup>148</sup> While the first half of the poem draws mostly from the parables in Matthew, the second half generally incorporates material specific to Luke, a division that underlines the rather elegant and careful structure of the verse.

*meter*: dactylic hexameter.

1. Mt 7:24-27; Lk 6:47-49. A two-line personal paraphrase of the parable two foundations. Gregory combines the vocabulary of the two versions of the parable. Matthew’s account refers to the foundation built on sand (although, as in I.1.20, Gregory uses the classical ψάμαθος for Matthew’s ἄμμον); Luke, by contrast, mentions the house built on earth without “foundation,” which explains G.’s θεμέλιον.
2. κεδασθῶ, “scattered” is an epic word that Gregory uses instead of scriptural vocabulary.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Palla, “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 184.

<sup>147</sup> Specifically I.1.27, 1-5, 7/8, 51-61, 43-50, 62-66 becomes I.2.2. 371-401

<sup>148</sup> “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 184; on the latter poem, see F. E. Zehles, “Kommentar zu den ‘Mahnungen an di Jungfrauen’ (carmen 1, 2, 2) Gregors von Nazianz, V. 1-354,” Diss. Münster 1987.

<sup>149</sup> The term likewise appears in the *Lexica*.

**3-6.** Four-line personal paraphrase of the parable of the sower (Mt 13:1-9; Lk 8:4-8; Mk 4:1-8). Gregory changes the synoptic order slightly, placing the seed that falls on shallow ground first, before the seed eaten by birds. The vocabulary here does not follow the Gospels very closely.

**4.** ἀντείλαιμι (“to unwind in the opposite direction”) is a rare verb, appearing in Pindar and the *Sybilline Oracles* outside of Gregory.<sup>150</sup> Perhaps he uses it to call to mind Mark’s language: ἐξανέτειλεν (“to spring up”).

**5.** The mention of “little blows” (πήμασι τυτθοίς) does not have any obvious referent in the Gospels, but must mean the blasts of the sun’s rays.

**7-14.** The parable of the weeds among the wheat from Mt 13:24-30; G. relies primarily on Matthew as his source. First the sowing of the bad seed at night (ll.7-8) and then the injunction not to gather the harvest until it is ready, so as not to destroy the good growth with the bad (ll.9-11). The final three lines explain precisely how the parable corresponds to the moral life: very few are capable of distinguishing the good from the bad (κακοῖσι and Ἐσθλοῖς, repeated as a couple both in l.10 and l.14) when they dwell in such close proximity. Indeed, the word for evil, κακόν, and related words, is scattered throughout this parable five times. Perhaps, then, the verse pictures the parable itself: just as it is difficult to extricate the bad from the good without harming the good, so we cannot remove the “evil” from this passage of verse. The passage takes the moral form standard in this poem: first, an outline of the parable, and second an exhortation to observe it.

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<sup>150</sup> See Pindar *Isthmian* 7.5; *Sibyllines* 11.103; it likewise appears in the *Lexicon*.

**9.** The phrase βαλὼν ἐπὶ χεῖρα, “put to the hand,” recalls Callimachus.<sup>151</sup> Alternatively, it may be Homeric separation for ἐπιβαλὼν χεῖρα.

**11.** The “good shoot” here is singular, perhaps emphasizing God’s mercy for the sake of the single just one.

**15-17.** A three-line paraphrase of the parable of the mustard seed (Mt 13:31-32; Mk 4:30-31; Lk 13:18-19). The vocabulary, especially δένδροῦται, recalls Mt and Lk rather than Mk. This parable does not conclude with any moral application of the poem.

**18-23.** Six lines on the pearl of great price (Mt 13:45-46), a parable that appears in this form only in Matthew. The first three lines paraphrase the parable; here G.’s vocabulary closely follows the Gospel (Μάργαρε and τιμήει both have immediate parallels in the Gospel text). The second three lines direct the parable to the first person. G. identifies himself with the merchant who sells all he owns.

**24-31.** A eight-line treatment of the parable of drawing in the net (Mt 13:47-50). G. shows special concern for the fact of falling “within” (ἔσω) the net. He introduces Christ into the parable, making him the king who commands the catch. The apostles, the “fishers of men” (a reference to Mt 4:19), are those who cast the net. Finally, Gregory places himself among those “caught,” begging that he might not be rejected, but rather kept with the catch that is saved and placed in baskets.

**30.** Again, the consistent concern that G. not be “outside” (ἀπὸ τῆλε) the fold, but preserved within it. The phrase appears elsewhere in G.’s writings.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> *In Cererem*, 1.96:

καὶ δ’ αὐτὸς Τριόπας πολιαῖς ἐπὶ χεῖρας ἔβαλλε,  
τοῖα τὸν οὐκ αἰόντα Ποτειδάωνα καλιστρέων.

<sup>152</sup> I.1.1, 1.8; cf. Simelidis, *Selected Poems*, 32.

**31.** “The King,” recalls l. 25 and the reference to Christ. The sense could be either “preserved for the King” or “preserved by the King.”

**32-35.** The parable of the workers in the vineyard (Mt 20:1-15). Gregory identifies himself with the workers who arrive early in the day and yet receive wages equal to those who arrive later. Perhaps he thus alludes to his own Christian formation, that is, growing up in a Christian household as opposed to coming to the faith through conversion. The reference in l. 35 to the “jealous one” (φθόνος) applies to those who complain that the master is unfair in giving an equal salary to the latecomers.

**36-41.** Six lines on the parable of the two sons (Mt 21:28-31). G. takes it that Mt reference to the “πρώτος” must mean the elder, whereas the scripture does not make this clear. G. changes the order so that the second son, and not the first, follows the command after saying that he would not do so.

**41.** ἐέλδωρ, “desire/wish,” is classical and appears in the *Lexica*.<sup>153</sup>

**42.** A very compressed line, which alludes to the parable of the vineyard and the tenants (Mt 21:33-43; Mk 12:1-12; Lk 20:9-19). G. offers no moral reading of the parable.

**43-50:** The Parable of the Marriage Feast (Mt 22:1-14; Lk 14:15-24). G. combines details from the two accounts. For the excuses that the invited offer in rejecting the invitations (l. 47), Gregory follows Luke. But the allusion to the guest without the proper garment, in l. 48, and the binding of his hands and feet (l. 49), comes from Matthew.

Precisely at the center of the poem (ll. 44-45) G. exclaims, “May I take part in this.” The verb ἀντιάσαιμι is archaizing and needs to be clarified in the *Lexicon*. G. distinguishes

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<sup>153</sup> Cf. *Il.* 1.41; *Il.* 1.455; *Il.* 1.504.

those “inside” the feast from those “outside” (ἔκτοθι), that is, the ones who seek to take care of their personal affairs before attending the wedding feast.

From this point, G. relies more on the Lukan version of the parables.

**51-61.** Parable of the ten virgins (Mt 25:1-13). The first four lines paraphrase the parable. The second four direct the parable to G., who begs not to be among the foolish who have no oil. The final three refer to the final lines of the parable, when the bridegroom enters into the wedding feast and shuts the door on the foolish.

**53.** Here G. gives three distinct titles for the bridegroom of the parable of the wise and foolish virgins.

**55.** G. does not want to be “among” the damned, for that would put him “outside” the feast.

**61.** The reference is obscure; the line may be an occasion to include the phrase κῦδος ὀπάξει, alluding to *Il* 8.141: τούτῳ . . Ζεὺς κῦδος ὀπάξει.

**62-66.** Five lines on the parable of the watchful servants (Mt 24:45-51; Lk 12:35-40). G. draws on Lk here, including the detail that the king returns from a wedding (Ἐκ δὲ γάμων).

The final sequence of references to servants in ll.65-66 are obscure, but they may allude to dishonest steward of Lk 16:8.

**67-70.** The parable of the Judgment of the Nations. Again, note the balance: a two-line paraphrase of the parable, followed by two lines of personal reflection. It is not enough that G. ask to be included among the saved; he wants the excluded, those outside, to remain excluded. This is the final parable in Mt, but G. will continue his reflections by returning to earlier parables and alluding to new ones, especially in Luke.

**71-73.** I am not certain of this reference, unless it is simply an allusion to the city set on a hill (Mt 5:14-16; Lk 14:35). The language resembles Matthew's, but the reference to God who sees all is difficult to locate in this context.

**71.** Again, distinguishing the outside from the inside.

**74-75.** A vague reference to accepting all that God gives him.

**75-77.** An allusion to the good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37). As in the treatment of the parables of Luke, we note that the emphasis is on the man who has fallen among the thieves.

**76.** A significant detail: G. refers to himself leaving "great Christopolis," μεγάλης Χριστοπόλεως. The name only occurs here in Greek and may simply refer to his monastic community (often called ουρανοπόλεις in later Byzantine literature). Yet the name may identify Karbala, in Asia Minor, that is, the same name as G.'s estate. In this case, do we have further evidence that the poem was composed while G. was in the region, as he was after his return from Constantinople until the end of his life.

**78-79.** The return of the unclean spirit into the unprepared soul (Mt 12:43-45; Lk 11:24-26).

**80-81.** More Lukan material; here the parable of sparing the barren fig tree is combined with the account of the cursing of the fig tree.

**82-85.** The parables of Lk 15, in close sequence. G. changes the order, to make the sequence lost drachma, lost sheep, prodigal son, which is then reversed to the Gospel order in l.85.

**86-87.** While this couplet could be tied to the following, it seems more likely to be a reference to the parable of the unforgiving servant (Mt 18:21-34), especially by the reference to ὁμοδούλους corresponding to Matthew’s συνδούλους.

**88-89:** The dishonest steward (Lk 16:1-12), with the reference clarified by verbal parallels.

πνυτόφρονι, “cunning,” is a rare word; G. probably takes it from the *Sybilline Oracles*.<sup>154</sup>

**90-91.** Lazarus and the rich man (Lk 16:19-31). Again we find the desire to be with those “inside,” that is, in the tomb with Lazarus.

**92-93:** The tax-collector and the Pharisee (Lk 18:9-14). G. adds the detail of the tax-collector’s tears winning him mercy.

**94-95.** The judge and the widow (Lk 18:1-5). G. again does not follow the Gospel sequence, inserting this paraphrase after the one it precedes in Lk.

**95-98.** Ask and receive bread (Mt 7:9-11; Lk 11:11-12).

**98-100.** The parable of the rich fool (Lk 12:16-21). Again, Gregory is not following the sequence. The reference here is established by the ἀποθήκας in l.98 and in Lk 18. The Greek here is difficult to decipher.

**101-106.** The final six lines seem to go together and allude to the parable of the talents (Mt 25:14-30; Lk 19:11-27). They allow G. to conclude with a general statement about the aim of his poetry, to bear fruit for his audience. Indeed, he has two talents: the gift of meter in verse, and the gift of his oratory, that is, writing and rhetoric. The emphasis here

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<sup>154</sup> *Sybilline Oracles* 8.500.

seems to be on the account in Lk, since G. refers to minas (μνᾶν) rather than talents, which appear in Mt.

**106.** The final, single-line prayer can be incorporated into the previous five lines, but it also functions independently. G. often concludes his poems with a request for mercy that can seem desperate or even apotropaic, warding off an evil he may have incurred by undertaking the task of composing verse.<sup>155</sup>

### **I.1.16 On the miracles of Elijah and Elisha the prophets (PG 37.477-479)**

This poem and the next, I.1.17, appear to be out of sequence, later additions to the corpus; they are the only poems on scripture preserved separately, in Groups XV and XX. Still, they treat biblical themes and, like the rest of the poems I translate, the first of the couple seems fit for catechetical purposes. My notes here are minimal.

*meter:* iambic trimeter

1. G. includes no reference to Elijah stopping the rain (1Ki17:1).
3. Miracle of the barrel of meal and cruse of oil.
- 8-9. The referent to the “strangers” is obscure.
18. “Gourd stew” is the poison mentioned in the scripture.
25. It is unclear which “dead man” raises the dead.

### **I.1.17 Epigram on the martyrion of Elijah, which is called Cherios (PG 37.479-480)**

Although this epigram is preserved with the previous poem in one of the manuscript traditions,<sup>156</sup> it would seem better placed among the collection of epigrams that are grouped together later in the collection, according to the ordering of the *PG*. While it

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<sup>155</sup> See, e.g., the conclusions to II.1.21 (“Against a demon”) and II.1.78 (“To his own soul”).

<sup>156</sup> Specifically, W; see Palla, “Ordinamento e polimetria,” 174.

treats a scriptural theme, the poem does not otherwise belong with the poems aimed at catechesis.

*meter*: iambic trimeter

### **I.1.28 The storm calmed by Christ (PG 37.506-507)**

This poem is the most doubtful of the group and, while it appears in two manuscripts of G.'s poetry, in one of the two it is attributed to Basil.<sup>157</sup> Still, Werhahn, who has doubts, generally accepts the authenticity of the verse on internal grounds. G. follows the three Gospel accounts of the miracle (Mt 8:23-27; Mc 4:35-41; Lk 8:22-25) rather closely. Still, the poem is more an epigram than a paraphrase, and is preserved as such in the *Anthologia Palatina*.<sup>158</sup>

*meter*: dactylic hexameter.

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<sup>157</sup> Palla, "Ordinamento e polimetria," 173.

<sup>158</sup> Palla, "Ordinamento e polimetria," 173.

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