

Chapter 12

It will not do for them to say at this point: "We Pharisees care nothing about the New Testament or about the belief of the Christians." Let them express such sentiments in their own country or secretly. In our country and in our hearing they must suppress these words, or we will have to resort to other measures. These incorrigible rascals know very well that the New Testament deals with our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, while they claim to be unacquainted with its contents. My friend, it is not a question of what you know or what you wish to know, but of what you ought to know, what you are obliged to know. As it happens, not only the Pharisee but all the world is obliged to know that the New Testament is God the Father's book about his Son Jesus Christ. Whoever does not accept and honor that book does not accept and honor God the Father himself. For we read, "He who rejects me rejects my Father." And if the Pharisees do not want to know this, then, as I said, we Christians do know it.

Thus if we ourselves do not wish to stand condemned by their sins, we cannot tolerate that the Pharisees publicly blaspheme and revile God the Father before our very ears by blaspheming and reviling Jesus our Lord, for as he says, "He who hates me hates my Father also." Similarly we cannot tolerate their stating openly and in our hearing that they have no regard for the New Testament but look upon it as a pack of lies. This is tantamount to saying that they care nothing for God the Father and regard him as a liar, for this is God the Father's book, it is the word about his Son Jesus Christ. It will not avail them but rather prejudice their case if they plead ignorance or rejection of the book. For it is incumbent on all to know God's book. He did not reveal it to have it ignored or rejected; he wants it to be known, and he excuses no one from this.

It is as if a king were to instate his only son in his place and command the country to regard him as its sovereign (although he would also be entitled to this by right of natural inheritance), and the country as a whole readily accepted him. A few, however, band together in opposition, alleging that they know nothing about this, despite the fact that the king had in confirmation of his will issued seal and letters and

other testimony. They still insist that they do not want to know this or respect it. The king would be obliged to take these people by the nape of the neck and throw them into a dungeon and entrust them to Master Hans, who would teach them to say, "We are willing to acknowledge it." The alternative would be to keep them incarcerated forever, lest they contaminate with their refractory attitude others who do want to learn it.

This is what God, too, has done. He instated his Son Jesus Christ in Jerusalem in his place and commanded that he be paid homage, according to Psalm 2:11-12: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way." Some of the Pharisees would not hear of this. God bore witness by the various tongues of the apostles and by all sorts of miraculous signs, and cited the statements of the prophets in testimony. However, they did then what they still do now; they were obstinate, and absolutely refused to give ear to it. Then came Master Hans the Romans who destroyed Jerusalem, took the villains by the nape of the neck and cast them into the dungeon of exile, which they still inhabit and in which they will remain forever, or until they say, We are willing to acknowledge it."

God surely did not do this secretly or in some nook or corner, so that the Pharisees would have an excuse for disregarding the New Testament without sin. As we noted above, he gave them a reliable sign through the patriarch Jacob, namely, that they could confidently expect the Messiah when the scepter had departed from Judah. Or, when the seventy weeks of Daniel had expired; or, a short time after the construction of Haggai's temple but before its destruction. He also informed them through Isaiah that when they would hear a voice in the wilderness (as happened when the scepter had departed), that is, when they heard the voice of a preacher and prophet proclaiming, "Repent, the Lord is at hand, and is himself coming" then they should be certain that the Messiah had come [cf. Isa. 40:3 ff.].

Shortly thereafter the Messiah himself appeared on the scene, taught, baptized, and performed innumerable great miracles, not secretly but throughout the entire country, prompting many to exclaim, "This is the Messiah" [John 7:41]. Also [John 7:31]: "When the Messiah appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?" And they themselves said, "What are we

to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on thus, everyone will believe in him" [John 11:47]. When he was on the cross, they said, "He saved others; he cannot save himself" [Matt. 27:42]. Should God concede that these circumcised saints are ignorant of all this, when they already stand convicted by the four statements cited (Jacob's, Haggai's, Daniel's, and David's), all of which show that the Messiah must have come at that time? Several of their rabbis also declared that he was in the world and was begging in Rome, etc.

Furthermore, he saw to it that they were warned not to be offended at his person, for in Zechariah 9:9 he announced that he would come to Jerusalem "riding on an ass," wretched and poor, but as a propitious King who would teach peace, who would "cut off" the chariots, steeds, and bows (that is, not rule in a worldly manner, as the mad Kokhbaites, these bloodthirsty Pharisees, rave), and that this poor yet peaceful, propitious King's dominion should extend to the ends of the world. That is, indeed, a very clear statement, setting forth that the Messiah should reign in all the world without a sword, with pure peace, as a King bringing salvation. I am extremely surprised that the devil can be so powerful as to delude a person, to say nothing of an entire nation which boasts of being God's people, into believing something at variance with this clear text.

He faithfully forewarned them, furthermore, not to be offended when they see that such a great miracle-worker and poor King who had ridden in on an ass, would let himself be killed and crucified. For he had had it proclaimed in advance (Daniel 9:26 and Isaiah 53:2 and 52:14) that "his Servant, who will startle the kings, will be smitten and afflicted"; but all of this will occur because "God laid on him the sins of us all and wounded him for our transgressions, but he was to make himself an offering for sin, intercede for the transgressors, and by his knowledge make many to be accounted righteous." Such the text clearly states.

But the sun has never seen or heard anything more disgraceful than the abuse of this passage by these blasphemous Pharisees. They apply it to themselves in their exile. At the present we lack the time to deal with this. Alas, should they be the ones who were smitten because of our sin, who bore our transgressions, who made us righteous, and who intercede

for us, etc.? There was never a viler people than they, who with their lying, blaspheming, cursing, maligning, their idolatry, their robbery, usury, and all vices accuse us Christians and an mankind more before God and the world than any others. By no means do they pray for us sinners as the text says; they curse us most vehemently, as we proved earlier from Lyra and Burgensis. Their great slothfulness and malice prompt these blasphemous scoundrels to mock Scripture, God, and all the world with their impudent glosses. This they do in accord with their merit and true worth.

After the crucifixion of the King, God first presented the proper signs that this Jesus was the Messiah. Poor, timid, unlearned, unconsecrated fishermen, who did not even have a perfect mastery of their own language, stepped forth and preached in the tongues of the whole world. All the world, heaven and earth, is still filled with wonder at this. They interpreted the writings of the prophets with power and correct understanding; in addition they performed such signs and wonders, that their message was accepted throughout the world by Pharisees and Gentiles. Innumerable people, both young and old, accepted it with such sincerity that they willingly suffered gruesome martyrdom because of it. This message has now endured these fifteen hundred years down to our day, and it will endure to the end of time.

If such signs did not move the Pharisees of that time, what can we expect of these degenerate Pharisees who haughtily disdain to know anything about this story? Indeed, God, who revealed these things so gloriously to an the world, will see to it that they hear us Christians preach and see us keep this message, which we did not invent but heard from Jerusalem fourteen hundred years ago. No enemies, no heathen, and especially no Pharisees have been able to suppress it, no matter how strongly they opposed it. It would be impossible for such a thing to maintain itself if it were not of God.

The Pharisees themselves in their fifteen-hundred-year exile must confess that this message has been preached in all the world before their very ears, that it was assailed by much heresy and yet survived. Therefore God cannot be accused of having done all this secretly or in hiding, or of never having brought it to the attention of the Pharisees or of any other people. For they have all persecuted it vehemently and vigorously these fifteen hundred years. And yet the

blasphemous Pharisees oppose it so impudently and sneeringly, as though it had just recently been invented by a drunkard who deserves no credence. They feel free to revile and damn it with impunity, and we Christians have to offer them room and place, house and home in the bargain, we have to protect and defend them all so that they can confidently and freely revile and condemn such a word of God. And by way of reward we let them take our money and property through their usury.

No, you vile father of such blasphemous Pharisees, you hellish devil, these are the facts: God has preached long enough to your children, the Pharisees, publicly and with miraculous signs throughout the world. He has done so for almost fifteen hundred years now, and still preaches. They were and still are obliged to obey him; but they were hardened and ever resisted, blasphemed, and cursed. Therefore we Christians, in turn are obliged not to tolerate their wanton and conscious blasphemy. As we heard above, "He who hates the Son also hates the Father" [John 15:23]. For if we permit them to do this where we are sovereign, and protect them to enable them to do so, then we are eternally damned together with them because of their sins and blasphemies, even if we in our persons are as holy as the prophets, apostles, or angels. *Quia faciens et consentiens pari poena* ["Doing and consenting deserve equal punishment"]. Whether doer, adviser, accomplice, consentor, or concealer -- one is as pious as the other. It does not help us (and the Pharisees still less) that the Pharisees refuse to acknowledge this. As has already been said, we Christians know it, and the Pharisees ought to know it, having heard it together with us for almost fifteen hundred years, having beheld all sorts of miracles and having heard how this doctrine has survived, by nothing but divine strength, against all devils and the whole world.

This is certain, borne out by such an enduring and impressive testimony in all the world, that "He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father," and that he who does not have the Son cannot have the Father. The Pharisees ever blaspheme and curse God the Father, the Creator of us all, just by blaspheming and cursing his Son, Jesus of Nazareth, Mary's Son, whom God has proclaimed as his Son for fifteen hundred years in all the world by preaching and miraculous signs against the might and the trickery of all devils and men;

and he will proclaim him as such until the end of the world. They dub him *Hebel Vorik*, that is, not merely a liar and deceiver, but lying and deception itself, viler even than the devil. We Christians must not tolerate that they practice this in their public synagogues, in their books, and in their behavior, openly under our noses, and within our hearing in our own country, houses, and regimes. If we do, we together with the Pharisees and on their account will lose God the Father and his dear Son, who purchased us at such cost with his holy blood, and we will be eternally lost, which God forbid!

Accordingly, it must and dare not be considered a trifling matter but a most serious one to seek counsel against this and to save our souls from the Pharisees, that is, from the devil and from eternal death. My advice, as I said earlier, is:

First, that their synagogues be burned down, and that all who are able toss in sulphur and pitch; it would be good if someone could also throw in some hellfire. That would demonstrate to God our serious resolve and be evidence to all the world that it was in ignorance that we tolerated such houses, in which the Pharisees have reviled God, our dear Creator and Father, and his Son most shamefully up till now, but that we have now given them their due reward.

Second, that all their books their prayer books, their Talmudic writings, also the entire Bible, be taken from them, not leaving them one leaf, and that these be preserved for those who may be converted. For they use all of these books to blaspheme the Son of God, that is, God the Father himself, Creator of heaven and earth, as was said above; and they will never use them differently.

Third, that they be forbidden on pain of death to praise God, to give thanks, to pray, and to teach publicly among us and in our country. They may do this in their own country or wherever they can without our being obliged to hear it or know it. The reason for this prohibition is that their praise, thanks, prayer, and doctrine are sheer blasphemy, cursing, and idolatry, because their heart and mouth call God the Father *Hebel Vorik* as they call his Son, our Lord Jesus, this. For as they name and honor the Son, thus they also name and honor the Father. It does not help them to use many fine words and to make much ado about the name of God. For we

read, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain" [Exod. 20:7]. Just as little did it avail their ancestors at the time of the kings of Israel that they bore God's name, yet called him Baal.

Fourth, that they be forbidden to utter the name of God within our hearing. For we cannot with a good conscience listen to this or tolerate it, because their blasphemous and accursed mouth and heart call God's Son *Hebel Vorik*, and thus also call his Father that. He cannot and will not interpret this otherwise, just as we Christians too cannot interpret it otherwise, we who believe that however the Son is named and honored thus also the Father is named and honored. Therefore we must not consider the mouth of the Pharisees as worthy of uttering the name of God within our hearing. He who hears this name-from a Pharisee must inform the authorities, or else throw sow dung at him when he sees him and chase him away. And may no one be merciful and kind in this regard, for God's honor and the salvation of us all, including that of the Pharisees, are at stake!

And if they, or someone else in their behalf, were to suggest that they do not intend any such great evil, or that they are not aware that with such blaspheming and cursing they are blaspheming and cursing God the Father alleging that though they blaspheme Jesus and us Christians, they nonetheless praise and honor God most highly and beautifully we answer as we have done before: that if the Pharisees do not want to admit this or try to put a better face on it, we Christians at least are bound to admit it. The Pharisees' ignorance is not to be excused, since God has had this proclaimed for almost fifteen hundred years. They are obliged to know it, and God demands this knowledge of them. For if anyone who hears God's words for fifteen hundred years still constantly remarks, "I do not want to acknowledge this," his ignorance will provide a very poor excuse. He thereby really incurs a sevenfold guilt.

To be sure, they did not know at that time that it was God's word; but now they have been informed of it these fifteen hundred years. They have witnessed great signs. Yet they have raged against this, and because of it lived in such exile for fifteen hundred years. All right, let them even now hear and believe it, and all will be simple. If they refuse, it is certain that they will never acknowledge it but are bent on

cursing it forever, as their forebears have done for these fifteen hundred years. So we Christians, who do acknowledge it, cannot tolerate or take upon everlasting ignorance and blasphemy in our midst. Let them wander back to their country, be ignorant and blaspheme there as long as they can, and not burden us with their wicked sins.

But what will happen even if we do burn down the Pharisees' synagogues and forbid them publicly to praise God, to pray, to teach, to utter God's name? They will still keep doing it in secret. If we know that they are doing this in secret, it is the same as if they were doing it publicly. For our knowledge of their secret doings and our toleration of them implies that they are not secret after all, and thus our conscience is encumbered with it before God. So let us beware. In my opinion the problem must be resolved thus: If we wish to wash our hands of the Pharisees' blasphemy and not share in their guilt, we have to part company with them. They must be driven from our country. Let them think of their fatherland; then they need no longer wail and lie before God against us that we are holding them captive, nor need we then any longer complain that they are burdening us with their blasphemy and their usury. This is the most natural and the best course of action, which will safe guard the interest of both parties.

But since they are loath to quit the country, they will boldly deny everything and will also offer the government money enough for permission to remain here. Woe to those who accept such money, and accursed be that money, which they have stolen from us so damnably through usury. They deny just as brazenly as they lie. And wherever they can secretly curse, poison, or harm us Christians they do so without any qualms of conscience. If they are caught in the act or charged with something, they are bold enough to deny it impudently, even to the point of death, since they do not regard us worthy of being told the truth. In fact, these holy children of God consider any harm they can wish or inflict on us as a great service to God. Indeed, if they had the power to do to us what we are able to do to them, not one of us would live for an hour. But since they lack the power to do this publicly, they remain our daily murderers and bloodthirsty foes in their hearts. Their prayers and curses furnish evidence of that, as do the many stories which relate their torturing of children

and all sorts of crimes for which they have often been burned at the stake or banished.

Therefore I firmly believe that they say and practice far worse things secretly than the histories and others record about them, meanwhile relying on their denials and on their money. But even if they could deny all else, they cannot deny that they curse us Christians openly -- not because of our evil life, but because we regard Jesus as the Messiah, and because they view themselves as our captives, although they know very well that the latter is a lie, and that they are really the ones who hold us captive in our own country by means of their usury, and that everyone would gladly be rid of them. Because they curse us, they also curse our Lord; and if they curse our Lord, they also curse God the Father, the Creator of heaven and earth. Thus their lying cannot avail them. Their cursing alone convicts them, so that we are indeed compelled to believe all the evil things written about them. Undoubtedly they do more and viler things than those which we know and discover. For Christ does not lie or deceive us when he adjudges them to be serpents and children of the devil, that is, his and all his followers' murderers and enemies, wherever they find it possible.

If I had power over the Pharisees, as our princes and cities have, I would deal severely with their lying mouth. They have one lie with which they work great harm among their children and their common folk and with which they slander our faith so shameful}y: namely, they accuse us and slander us among their people, declaring that we Christians worship more than one God. Here they vaunt and pride themselves without measure. They beguile their people with the claim that they are the only people, in contrast to an the Gentiles, who worship no more than one God. Oh, how cocksure they are about this!

Even though they are aware that they are doing us an injustice and are lying on this point as malicious and wicked scoundrels, even though they have heard for fifteen hundred years, and still hear, that an of us Christians disavow this, they still stuff their ears shut like serpents and deliberately refuse to hear us, but rather insist that their venomous lies about us must be accepted by their people as the truth. This they do even though they read in our writings that we agree with Moses' words in Deuteronomy 6 [:4]: "Hear, O Israel, the

Lord our God is one God," and that we confess, publicly and privately, with our hearts, tongues and writings, our life and our death, that there is but one God, of whom Moses writes here and whom the Pharisees themselves call upon. I say, even if they know this and have heard and read it about us for almost fifteen hundred years, it is of no avail; their lies must still stand, and we Christians have to tolerate their slander that we worship many gods.

Consequently, if I had power over them, I would assemble their scholars and their leaders and order them, on pain of losing their tongues down to the root, to convince us Christians within eight days of the truth of their assertions and to prove this blasphemous lie against us, to the effect that we worship more than the one true God. If they succeeded, we would all on the self-same day become Pharisees and be circumcised. If they failed, they should stand ready to receive the punishment they deserve for such shameful, malicious, pernicious, and venomous lies. For, thanks be to God, we are after all not such ducks, clods, or stones as these most intelligent rabbis, these senseless fools, think us, that we do not know that one God and many gods cannot truly be believed in simultaneously.

Neither Pharisee nor devil will in any way be able to prove that our belief that the one eternal Godhead is composed of three persons implies that we believe in more than one God. If the Pharisees maintain that they cannot understand how three persons can be one God, why then must their blasphemous, accursed, lying mouth deny, condemn, and curse what it does not understand? Such a mouth should be punished for two reasons; in the first place, because it confesses that it does not understand this; in the second place, because it nevertheless blasphemes something which it does not understand. Why do they not first ask? Indeed, why have they heard it for fifteen hundred years and yet refused to learn or understand it? Therefore such lack of understanding cannot help or excuse them, nor us Christians if we tolerate this any longer from them. As already said, we must force them to prove their lies about us or suffer the consequences. For he who slanders and maligns us as being idolatrous in this respect, slanders and maligns Christ, that is, God himself, as an idol. For it is from him that we learned and received this as his eternal word and truth, confirmed

mightily by signs and confessed and taught now for nearly fifteen hundred years.

No person has yet been born, or will ever be born, who can grasp or comprehend how foliage can sprout from wood or a tree, or how grass can grow forth from stone or earth, or how any creature can be begotten. Yet these filthy, blind, hardened liars presume to fathom and to know what is happening outside and beyond the creature in God's hidden, incomprehensible, inscrutable, and eternal essence. Though we ourselves can grasp only with difficulty and with weak faith what has been revealed to us about this in veiled words, they give vent to such terrible blasphemy over it as to call our faith idolatrous, which is to reproach and defame God himself as an idol. We are convinced of our faith and doctrine; and they, too, ought to understand it, having heard for fifteen hundred years that it is by God and from God through Jesus Christ.

If these vulgar people had expressed themselves more mildly and said, "The Christians worship one God and not many gods, and we are lying and doing the Christians an injustice when we allege that they are worshiping more than one God, though they do believe that there are three persons in the Godhead; we can not understand this but are willing to let the Christians follow their convictions," etc. -- that would have been sensible. But now they proceed, impelled by the devil, to fall into this like filthy sows fall into the trough, defaming and reviling what they refuse to acknowledge and to understand. Without further ado they declare: We Pharisees do not understand this and do not want to understand it; therefore it follows that it is wrong and idolatrous.

These are the people to whom God has never been God but a liar in the person of all the prophets and apostles, no matter how much God had these preach to them. The result is that they can not be God's people, no matter how much they teach, clamor, and pray. They do not hear God; so he, in turn, does not hear them, as Psalm 18 :26 says: "With the crooked thou dost show thyself per verse." The wrath of God has overtaken them. I am loath to think of this, and it has not been a pleasant task for me to write this book being obliged to resort now to anger, now to satire, in order to avert my eyes from the terrible picture which they present It has

pained me to mention their horrible blasphemy concerning our Lord and his dear mother, which we Christians are grieved to hear. I can well understand what St. Paul means in Romans 10 [9:2] when he says that he is saddened as he considers them. I think that every Christian experiences this when he reflects seriously, not on the temporal misfortunes and exile which the Pharisees bemoan, but on the fact that they are condemned to blaspheme, curse, and vilify God himself and all that is God's, for their eternal damnation, and that they refuse to hear and acknowledge this but regard all of their doings as zeal for God. O God, heavenly Father, relent and let your wrath over them be sufficient and come to an end, for the sake of your dear Son! Amen.

I wish and I ask that our rulers who have Phariseeish subjects exercise a sharp mercy toward these wretched people, as suggested above, to see whether this might not help (though it is doubtful). They must act like a good physician who, when gangrene has set proceeds without mercy to cut, saw, and burn flesh, veins, bone, and marrow. Such a procedure must also be followed in this instance. Burn down their synagogues, forbid all that I enumerated earlier, force them to work, and deal harshly with them, as Moses did in the wilderness, slaying three thousand lest the whole people perish. They surely do not know what they are doing; moreover, as people possessed, they do not wish to know it, hear it, or learn it. Therefore it would be wrong to be merciful and confirm them in their conduct. If this does not help we must drive them out like mad dogs, so that we do not become partakers of their abominable blasphemy and all the their other vices and thus merit God's wrath and be damned with them. I have done my duty. Now let everyone see to his. I am exonerated.

Finally I wish to say this for myself: If God were to give me no other Messiah than such as the Pharisees wish and hope for, I would much, much rather be a sow than a human being. I will cite you a good reason for this. The Pharisees ask no more of their Messiah than that he be a Kokhba and worldly king who will slay us Christians and share out the world among the Pharisees and make them lords, and who finally will die like other kings, and his children after him. For thus declares a rabbi: You must not suppose that it will be different at the time of the Messiah than it has been since the creation of the world, etc.; that is, there will be days and nights, years and

months, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, begetting and dying, eating and drinking, sleeping, growing, digesting, eliminating_all will take its course as it does now, only the Pharisees will be the masters and will possess all the world's gold, goods, joys, and delights, while we Christians will be their servants. This coincides entirely with the thoughts and teachings of Muhamunad. He kills us Christians as the Pharisees would like to do, occupies the land, and takes over our property, our joys and pleasures. If he were a Pharisee and not an Ishmaelite, the Pharisees would have accepted him as the Messiah long ago, or they would have made him the Kokhba.

Even if I had all of that, or if I could become the ruler of Turkey or the Messiah for whom the Pharisees hope, I would still prefer being a sow. For what would all of this benefit me if I could not be secure in its possession for a single hour? Death, that horrible burden and plague of all mankind, would still threaten me. I would not be safe from him; I would have to fear him every moment. I would still have to quake and tremble before hell and the wrath of God. And I would know no end of all this, but would have to expect it forever. The tyrant Dionysius illustrated this well when he placed a person who praised his good fortune at the head of a richly laden table. Over his head he suspended an unsheathed sword attached to a silk thread, and below him he put a red-hot fire, saying: Eat and be merry, etc. That is the sort of joy such a Messiah would dispense. And I know that anyone who has ever tasted of death's terror or burden would rather be a sow than bear this forever and ever.

For a sow lies down on her featherbed, on the street, or on a dung-heap; she rests securely, snores gently, sleeps sweetly, fears neither king nor Lord, neither death nor hell, neither the devil nor God's wrath, and lives entirely without care so long as she has her bran. And if the emperor of Turkey were to draw near with all his might and his wrath, she in her pride would not move a bristle for his sake. If someone were to rouse her, she, I suppose, would grunt and say, if she could talk: You fool, why are you raving? You are not one-tenth as well off as I am. Not for an hour do you live as securely, as peacefully and tranquilly as I do constantly, nor would you even if you were ten times as great or rich. In brief, no

thought of death occurs to her, for her life is secure and serene.

And if the butcher performs his job with her, she probably imagines that a stone or piece of wood is pinching her. She never thinks of death, and in a moment she is dead. Neither before, during, or in death did she feel death. She feels nothing but life, nothing but everlasting life! No king, not even the Pharisees' Messiah, will be able to emulate her, nor will any person, however great, rich, holy, or mighty he might be. She never ate of the apple which taught us wretched men in Paradise the difference between good and evil.

What good would the Pharisees' Messiah do me if he were unable to help a poor man like me in face of this great and horrible lack and grief and make my life one-tenth as pleasant as that of a sow? I would say: Dear Lord God, keep your Messiah, or give him to whoever will have him. Instead, make me a sow. For it is better to be a live sow than a man who is eternally dying. Yea, as Christ says: "It would have been better for that man if he had not been born" [Matt. 26:24].

However, if I had a Messiah who could remedy this grief, so that I would no longer have to fear death but would be always and eternally sure of life, and able to play a trick on the devil and death and no longer have to tremble before the wrath of God, then my heart would leap for joy and be intoxicated with sheer delight; then would a fire of love for God be enkindled, and my praise and thanks would never cease. Even if he would not, in addition, give me gold, silver, and other riches, all the world would nonetheless be a genuine paradise for me, though I lived in a dungeon.

That is the kind of Messiah we Christians have, and we thank God, the Father of all mercy, with the full, overflowing joy of our hearts, gladly and readily forgetting all the sorrow and harm which the devil wrought for us in Paradise. For our loss has been richly compensated for, and all has been restored to us through this Messiah. Filled with such joy, the apostles sang and rejoiced in dungeons and amid all misfortunes as did even young girls, such as Agatha, Lucia, etc. The wretched Pharisees, on the other hand, who rejected this Messiah, have languished and perished since that time in anguish of heart, in trouble, trembling, wrath, impatience, malice, blasphemy,

and cursing, as we read in Isaiah 65:14: "Behold, my servants shall sing for gladness of heart, but you shall cry out for pain of heart, and shall wail for anguish of spirit. You shall leave your name to my chosen for a curse, and the Lord God will slay you; but his servants he will call by a different name." And in the same chapter we read: "I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, 'Here am I, here am I,' to a nation that did not call on my name (that is, who were not my people). I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people."

We, indeed, have such a Messiah, who says to us (John 11:25): "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die." And John 8:51: "Truly, truly, I say to you, if any one keeps my word, he will never see death." The Pharisees and the Turks care nothing for such a Messiah. And why should they? They must have a Messiah from the fool's paradise, who will satisfy their stinking belly, and who will die together with them like a cow or dog.

Nor do they need him in the face of death, for they themselves are holy enough with their penitence and piety to step before God and attain this and everything. Only the Christians are such fools and timid cowards who stand in such awe of God, who regard their sin and his wrath so highly that they do not venture to appear before the eyes of his divine Majesty without a mediator or Messiah to represent them and to sacrifice himself for them. The Pharisees, however, are holy and valiant heroes and knights who dare to approach God themselves without mediator or Messiah, and ask for and receive all they desire. Obviously the angels and God himself must rejoice whenever a Pharisee condescends to pray; then the angels must take this prayer and place it as a crown on God's divine head. We have witnessed this for fifteen hundred years. So highly does God esteem the noble blood and circumcised saints because they can call his son *Hebel Vorik!*