

II. PTOLEMY'S *LETTER TO FLORA*

Multiple sources confirm that Ptolemy was a prominent and early student of Valentinus, active in the second century C.E.; however, little is known about his life. Yet a letter he wrote does survive. Embedded within Epiphanius's *Panarion* is a lengthy letter written by Ptolemy to a woman named Flora. In this letter, Ptolemy offers his views on what was a fundamental question for early Christians: what is the status of the law of Moses now that Jesus has fulfilled God's plan of salvation? He opens the letter by carving out a middle position between two extremes. On the one hand are those who assert that God the Father ordained the entire law. On the other hand are those who claim that the entire law is the work of the devil. Ptolemy situates his own view between these two. He posits the existence of three heavenly beings, the Perfect God, the just god, and the devil, and argues that the law is not the product of a single author, but of three: the just god, Moses, and the elders. Further, he argues that the portion of the law revealed by the just god itself divides into three parts: the pure but imperfect part, the part interwoven with injustice, and the symbolic part. When the Savior comes and announces the truth of the Perfect God, Ptolemy claims that the imperfect part becomes fulfilled, the unjust part becomes abolished, and the symbolic part takes on a spiritual meaning.

Ptolemy does not discuss first principles, the aspect of his theology he is best known for among the heresiologists, but he does end his *Letter to Flora* with a promise of future teaching "once you have been deemed worthy of the apostolic tradition," an advanced lesson that would cover the "origin and generation" of the cosmic beings and substances.

The Greek text below is based on K. Holl, *Epiphanius, Ancoratus und Panarion*, vols. 1–3, GCS 25, 31, 37 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1915, 1922, 1933).

3.1 Τὸν διὰ Μωσέως τεθέντα νόμον, ἀδελφή μου καλὴ Φλώρα, ὅτι μὴ πολλοὶ προκατελάβοντο, μήτε τὸν θέμενον αὐτὸν ἐγνωκότες μήτε τὰς προστάξεις αὐτοῦ ἀκριβῶς, ἡγοῦμαι καὶ σοὶ εὐσύνοπτον ἔσεσθαι μαθούσης τὰς διαφωνούσας γνώμας περὶ αὐτοῦ.

3.2 Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς νενομοθετῆσθαι τοῦτον λέγουσιν, ἕτεροι δὲ τούτοις τὴν ἐναντίαν ὁδὸν τραπέντες ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀντικειμένου φθοροποιοῦ διαβόλου τεθεῖσθαι τοῦτον ἰσχυρίζονται, ὥς καὶ τὴν τοῦ κόσμου προσάπτουσιν αὐτῷ δημιουργίαν, πατέρα καὶ ποιητὴν τοῦτον λέγοντες εἶναι τοῦδε τοῦ παντός.

3.3 <Πάντως δὲ> διέπταισαν οὗτοι, δίδοντες ἀλλήλοις καὶ ἑκάτεροι αὐτῶν διαμαρτύντες παρὰ σφίσιν αὐτοῖς τῆς τοῦ προκειμένου ἀληθείας.

3.4 Οὔτε γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦ τελείου θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς φαίνεται τοῦτον τεθεῖσθαι, ἐπόμενος γάρ ἐστιν, ἀτελεῖ τε ὄντα καὶ τοῦ ὑφ' ἐτέρου πληρωθῆναι ἐνδεῆ, ἔχοντά τε προστάξεις ἀνοικείας τῇ τοῦ τοιούτου θεοῦ φύσει τε καὶ γνῶμῃ.

3.5 Οὗτ' αὖ πάλιν τῇ τοῦ ἀντικειμένου ἀδικία νόμον προσάπτειν <τὸ> ἀδικεῖν ἀναιροῦντα. τῶν τε ἐξῆς ἐστὶ μὴ συνορώντων τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ σωτῆρος εἰρημένα· «οἰκία γὰρ ἢ πόλις μερισθεῖσα ἐφ' ἑαυτὴν ὅτι μὴ δύναται στήναι» ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν ἀπεφῆνατο.

3.6 Ἔτι τε τὴν τοῦ κόσμου δημιουργίαν ἰδίαν λέγει εἶναι «τά τε πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ γεγονέναι καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ γεγονέναι οὐδὲν» ὁ ἀπόστολος. προαποστερήσας τὴν τῶν ψευδηγορούντων ἀνυπόστατον σοφίαν, καὶ οὐ φθοροποιοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ δικαίου καὶ μισοπονήρου. ἀπρονοήτων δέ ἐστιν ἀνθρώπων, τῆς προνοίας τοῦ δημιουργοῦ μὴ αἰτίαν λαμβανομένων καὶ μὴ μόνον τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ὄμμα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τοῦ σώματος πεπηρωμένων.

3.7 Οὗτοι μὲν οὖν ὥς διημαρτήκασιν τῆς ἀληθείας δῆλόν σοί ἐστιν ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων· πεπόνθασι δὲ τοῦτο ἰδίως ἑκάτεροι αὐτῶν, οἱ μὲν διὰ τὸ ἀγνοεῖν τὸν τῆς δικαιοσύνης θεόν, οἱ δὲ διὰ τὸ ἀγνοεῖν τὸν τῶν ὅλων πατέρα, ὃν μόνος ἐλθὼν ὁ μόνος εἰδὼς ἐφάνερωσε.

3.8 Περιλείπεται δὲ ἡμῖν ἀξιωθεῖσιν γε τῆς ἀμφοτέρων τούτων <γνώσεως> ἐκφῆναι σοὶ καὶ ἀκριβῶσαι αὐτόν τε τὸν νόμον, ποταπὸς τις εἴη, καὶ τὸν ὑφ' οὗ τέθεται, τὸν νομοθέτην, ῥηθησομένων ἡμῖν τὰς ἀποδείξεις ἐκ τῶν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν λόγων παριστάντες, δι' ὧν μόνον ἔστιν ἀπταιστος ἐπὶ τὴν κατάληψιν τῶν ὄντων ὁδηγεῖσθαι.

3.1 As for the law that has been established through Moses, my noble sister Flora, not many have grasped it, having no accurate knowledge of him who established it or of its ordinances; I believe that it will be easily grasped by you once you have learned the different opinions about it.

3.2 For some say that it was ordained by God and Father, but others, turning toward the opposite path, maintain confidently that it was established by the opposite, the destructive devil, just as they also credit him with the creation of the world, claiming that he is the father and maker of this entirety.

3.3 <But> they are <utterly> mistaken, refuting one another, and each of them failing utterly to find the truth of the subject.

3.4 For it is apparent that the law was not established by the Perfect God and Father, for it is derivative, being imperfect and in need of fulfillment by another, since it includes ordinances foreign to the nature and opinion of such a God.

3.5 Nor can one attribute the law to the unjust of the opposite one, since it abolishes what is unjust. It is fitting of those who do not understand the things said by the Savior: "For a house or city divided against itself is not able to stand," our Savior proclaimed.

3.6 Still the apostle says that the creation of the world is his own, "All things came to be through him, and apart from him nothing came to be," preemptively taking away the foundationless wisdom of the false accusers, and (demonstrating that creation comes) not from a god that causes destruction, but from (a God who is) just and who despises evil. But (this idea) comes from ignorant people, those who do not grasp the providence of the creator and have blinded not only the eye of the soul, but also that of the body.

3.7 It is clear to you from what has been said that these people miss the truth entirely; each of them has suffered this, the first group because they are ignorant of the God of justice, and the second group because they are ignorant of the Father of the entirety, who was revealed by the one who came alone and alone knew him.

3.8 But it remains for those of us who have been made worthy of the <knowledge> of both of these to reveal to you and to make clear the law itself, of what sort it is, and the lawgiver by whom it was established, presenting proofs of what we say from the words of our Savior, through which alone it is possible to grasp the things that exist without error.

4.1 Πρῶτον οὖν μαθητέον ὅτι ὁ σύμπας ἐκεῖνος νόμος ὁ ἐμπεριεχόμενος τῇ Μωσέως πεντατεύχῳ οὐ πρὸς ἑνὸς τινος νενομοθέτηται, λέγω δὴ οὐχ ὑπὸ μόνου θεοῦ, ἀλλ' εἰσὶ τινες αὐτοῦ προστάξεις καὶ ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων τεθεῖσαι. Καὶ τριχῇ τοῦτον διαιρεῖσθαι οἱ τοῦ σωτῆρος λόγοι διδάσκουσιν ἡμᾶς.

4.2 Εἷς τε γὰρ αὐτὸν τὸν θεὸν καὶ τὴν τοῦτου νομοθεσίαν διαιρεῖται, <διαιρεῖται> δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸν Μωσέα, οὐ καθὰ αὐτὸς δι' αὐτοῦ νομοθετεῖ ὁ θεός, ἀλλὰ καθὰ ἀπὸ τῆς ἰδίας ἐννοίας ὀρμώμενος καὶ ὁ Μωσῆς ἐνομοθέτησέν τινα, καὶ εἰς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τοῦ λαοῦ διαιρεῖται, καὶ πρῶτον εὐρίσκονται ἐντολὰς τινὰς ἐνθέντες ἰδίας.

4.3 Πῶς οὖν τοῦτο οὕτως ἔχον ἐκ τῶν τοῦ σωτῆρος δείκνυται λόγων, μάθοις δ' ἂν ἥδη.

4.4 Διαλεγόμενός που ὁ σωτὴρ πρὸς τοὺς περὶ τοῦ ἀποστασίου συζητοῦντας αὐτῶν, ὃ δὴ ἀποστάσιον ἐξεῖναι νενομοθέτητο, ἔφη αὐτοῖς ὅτι «Μωυσῆς πρὸς τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν ὑμῶν ἐπέτρεψεν τὸ ἀπολύειν τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ. Ἀπ' ἀρχῆς γὰρ οὐ γέγονεν οὕτως. Θεὸς γάρ,» φησί, «συνέζευξε ταύτην τὴν συζυγίαν, καὶ ὁ συνέζευξεν ὁ κύριος, ἄνθρωπος,» ἔφη, «μὴ χωρίζετώ.»

4.5 Ἐνταῦθα ἕτερον μὲν τοῦ θεοῦ δείκνυσι νόμον, τὸν κωλύοντα χωρίζεσθαι γυναῖκα ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς, ἕτερον δὲ τὸν τοῦ Μωυσέως, τὸν διὰ τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν ἐπιτρέποντα χωρίζεσθαι τοῦτο τὸ ζευγος.

4.6 Καὶ δὴ κατὰ τοῦτο ἐναντία τῷ θεῷ νομοθετεῖ ὁ Μωσῆς· ἐναντίον γάρ ἐστι τῷ μὴ διαζευγνύναι. Ἐὰν μέντοι καὶ τὴν τοῦ Μωυσέως γνώμην, καθ' ἣν τοῦτο ἐνομοθέτησεν, ἐξετάσωμεν, εὐρεθήσεται τοῦτο οὐ κατὰ προαίρεσιν ποιήσας τὴν ἑαυτοῦ, ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἀνάγκην διὰ τὴν τῶν νενομοθετημένων ἀσθένειαν.

4.7 Ἐπεὶ γὰρ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ γνώμην φυλάττειν οὐκ ἡδύναντο οὗτοι, ἐν τῷ μὴ ἐξεῖναι αὐτοῖς ἐκβάλλειν τὰς γυναῖκας αὐτῶν, αἷς τινες αὐτῶν ἀηδῶς συνώκουν, καὶ ἐκινδύνουν ἐκ τούτου ἐκτρέπεσθαι πλέον εἰς ἀδικίαν καὶ ἐκ ταύτης εἰς ἀπώλειαν,

4.8 τὸ ἀηδὲς τοῦτο βουλόμενος ἐκκόψαι αὐτῶν ὁ Μωσῆς, δι' οὗ καὶ ἀπόλλεσθαι ἐκινδύνουν, δευτερόν τινα. ὥς κατὰ περίστασιν ἤττον κακὸν ἀντὶ μείζονος ἀντικαταλασσόμενος, τὸν τοῦ ἀποστασίου νόμον ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐνομοθέτησεν αὐτοῖς,

4.9 ἵνα, ἐὰν ἐκεῖνον μὴ δύνωνται φυλάσσειν, κἂν τοῦτόν γε φυλάξωσιν καὶ μὴ εἰς ἀδικίας καὶ κακίας ἐκτραπῶσι, δι' ὧν ἀπώλεια αὐτοῖς ἔμελλεν τελειοτάτη ἐπακολουθήσειν.

4.1 First, then, one must learn that the whole law encompassed within the Pentateuch of Moses has not been furnished by one being, I mean, not by one God alone, but some commandments are from him, and some were given by men. The words of the Savior teach us about this threefold division.

4.2 For it is allocated to God himself and his ordinances, but <it is allocated> also to Moses, not meaning that God legislates through him, but that Moses legislated some things that arose from his own thoughts, and (another) is allocated to the elders of the people, and at the beginning they devised some commandments of their own.

4.3 How, then, this occurred in this way is demonstrated by the words of the Savior, you will learn now.

4.4 When conversing with those who argue with him about divorce, which has been legislated to be allowed, the Savior said, "Moses permitted a man to divorce his wife on account of your hard-heartedness. For from the beginning it was not this way. For God," he says, "joined this marriage, and what the Lord has joined," he said, "let no one separate."

4.5 Here he demonstrates that there is a law of God, which prevents a wife from divorcing her husband, and another law, of Moses, which permits the breaking of this union on account of hard-heartedness.

4.6 And according to this, Moses legislates contrary to God; for not joining is contrary (to joining). If, however, we consider the opinion of Moses, according to which he legislated, it will be discovered that he did not give his own law willingly, but out of necessity on account of the weakness of those furnished with the laws.

4.7 For since they were not able to preserve God's opinion, in which it is not possible for them to reject their wives, with whom some of them lived unhappily, and because of this they ran the risk of turning to more unrighteousness and because of this to destruction,

4.8 Moses wanted to eradicate for them this unhappiness, on account of which they ran the risk of being destroyed. Thus, given the circumstances, exchanging a lesser evil for a greater one, he established for them a law of divorce from himself,

4.9 so that, if they were not able to observe the first, they might observe this one and not turn to unrighteousness and wickedness, through which total destruction is destined to follow for them.

4.10 Αὕτη μὲν ἡ τοῦτου γνώμη, καθ' ἣν ἀντινομοθετῶν εὐρίσκεται τῷ θεῷ. πλὴν ὅτι γε Μωσέως αὐτοῦ δείκνυται ἐνταῦθα ἕτερος ὢν παρὰ τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ νόμον, ἀναμφισβήτητόν ἐστι, καὶ δι' ἐνὸς τὰ νῦν ὧμεν δεδειχότες.

4.11 Ὅτι δὲ καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων εἰσὶν τινες συμπεπλεγμένοι παραδόσεις ἐν τῷ νόμῳ, δηλοῖ καὶ τοῦτο ὁ σωτήρ. «Ὁ γὰρ θεός» φησὶν «εἶπεν· τίμα τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ τὴν μητέρα σου, ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται·

4.12 «Ὑμεῖς δέ,» φησὶν, «εἰρήκατε,» τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις λέγων· «δῶρον τῷ θεῷ ὃ ἐὰν ὠφεληθῇς ἐξ ἐμοῦ, καὶ ἡκυρώσατε τὸν νόμον τοῦ θεοῦ διὰ τὴν παράδοσιν ὑμῶν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων.»

4.13 Τοῦτο δὲ Ἡσαΐας ἐξεφώνησεν εἰπών· «ὁ λαὸς οὗτος τοῖς χεῖλεσί με τιμᾷ, ἡ δὲ καρδιά αὐτῶν πόρρω ἀπέχει ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, μάτην δὲ σέβονται με, διδάσκοντες διδασκαλίας ἐντάλματα ἀνθρώπων.»

4.14 Σαφῶς οὖν ἐκ τούτων εἰς τρία διαιρούμενος ὁ σύμπας ἐκεῖνος δείκνυται νόμος· Μωσέως τε γὰρ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ εὖρομεν νομοθεσίαν ἐν αὐτῷ. Αὕτη μὲν οὖν ἡ διαίρεσις τοῦ σύμπαντος ἐκείνου νόμου ὧδε ἡμῖν διαιρεθεῖσα τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀληθὲς ἀναπέφαγκεν.

5.1. Πάλιν δὲ δὴ τὸ ἐν μέρος, ὁ αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ νόμος, διαιρεῖται εἰς τρία τινά· εἷς τε τὴν καθαρὰν νομοθεσίαν τὴν ἀσύμπλοκον τῷ κακῷ, ὃς καὶ κυρίως νόμος λέγεται, ὃν οὐκ ἤλθε καταλῦσαι ὁ σωτὴρ ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι, οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἀλλότριος αὐτοῦ ὃν ἐπλήρωσεν, οὐ γὰρ εἶχεν τὸ τέλειον· καὶ εἰς τὸν συμπεπλεγμένον τῷ χείρονι καὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ, ὃν ἀνέῤἤεν ὁ σωτὴρ ἀνοίκειον ὄντα τῇ ἑαυτοῦ φύσει.

5.2 Διαιρεῖται δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸ τυπικὸν καὶ συμβολικὸν τὸ κατ' εἰκόνα τῶν πνευματικῶν καὶ διαφερόντων νομοθετηθέν, ὃ μετέθηκεν ὁ σωτὴρ ἀπὸ αἰσθητοῦ καὶ φαινομένου ἐπὶ τὸ πνευ-ματικὸν καὶ ἄορατον.

5.3 Καὶ ἔστι μὲν ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ νόμος, ὁ καθαρὸς καὶ ἀσύμπλοκος τῷ χείρονι, αὐτὴ ἡ δεκάλογος, οἱ δέκα λόγοι ἐκεῖνοι οἱ ἐν ταῖς δυσὶ πλαξὶ δεδισχασμένοι, εἷς τε ἀπαγόρευσις τῶν ἀφεκτέων καὶ εἰς πρόσταξις τῶν ποιητέων. οἱ καίπερ καθαρὰν ἔχοντες τὴν νομοθεσίαν, μὴ ἔχοντες δὲ τὸ τέλειον, ἐδέοντο τῆς παρὰ τοῦ σωτῆρος πληρώσεως.

5.4 Ὁ δὲ ἐστὶν συμπεπλεγμένος τῇ ἀδικίᾳ, οὗτος ὁ κατὰ τὴν ἄμυναν καὶ ἀνταπόδοσιν τῶν προαδικησάντων κείμενος, ὀφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ καὶ ὀδόντα ἀντὶ ὀδόντος ἐκκόπτεσθαι κελεύων καὶ φόνον ἀντὶ φόνου ἀμύνασθαι. οὐδὲν γὰρ ἤττον καὶ ὁ δεῦτερος ἀδικῶν ἀδικεῖ, τῇ τάξει μόνον διαλλάσσω, τὸ αὐτὸ ἐργαζόμενος ἔργον.

4.10 This was his reason for devising laws contrary to God. Therefore, that the law of Moses is different from the law of God is beyond dispute here, even if we have demonstrated this from one (passage).

4.11 That there are some traditions of the elders embedded in the law the Savior also makes clear. "For God," he says, "said, 'Honor your father and your mother so that it may be well with you.'"

4.12 "But you," he says when speaking to the elders, "have deemed as a gift to God what you have received from me, and you have nullified the law of God through the tradition of your elders."

4.13 This Isaiah also uttered, saying, "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain they honor me, teaching teachings that are the commandments of humans."

4.14 Therefore, clearly it is shown from these things that the whole law is divided into three; for we find within it the legislation of Moses himself and of the elders, and of God himself. This division of the entire law, then, as divided by us, has revealed what is true in it.

5.1 Moreover, this part, the law of God himself, is divided into three parts: the pure legislation that is not mixed with evil, which also is properly called law, which the Savior did not come to destroy but fulfill, for what he fulfilled was not foreign to him, for it did not have perfection; and the legislation mixed with inferiority and injustice, which the Savior abrogated, because it was dissimilar to his own nature.

5.2 And it is divided into legislation that is typological and symbolic, which is an image of the spiritual and differentiated, which the Savior transformed from the perceptible and phenomenal to the spiritual and invisible.

5.3 The law of God, pure and not mixed with what is inferior, is the Decalogue, those ten teachings engraved upon two tablets, that prohibit the abstention from things and commanding things to be done. These include pure legislation, though the legislation is not perfect, and they are in need of fulfillment by the Savior.

5.4 There is also the law mixed with injustice, one established for retaliation and repayment of prior injustices, an eye to be cut out for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, and a murder to be repaid with a murder. For the second unjust one is no less unjust, changing in order alone while doing the same thing.

5.5 Τοῦτο δὲ τὸ πρόσταγμα δίκαιον μὲν ἄλλως καὶ ἦν καὶ ἔστι, διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῶν νομοθετηθέντων ἐν παρεκβάσει τοῦ καθαροῦ νόμου τεθέν. ἀνοίκειον δὲ τῇ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν ὅλων φύσει τε καὶ ἀγαθότητι.

5.6 Ἴσως δὲ τοῦτο κατάλληλον, ἐπάναγκες δὲ μᾶλλον· ὁ γὰρ καὶ τὸν ἕνα φόνον οὐ βουλόμενος ἔσεσθαι ἐν τῷ λέγειν «οὐ φονεύσεις,» προστάξας τὸν φονέα ἀντιφονεύεσθαι, δεύτερον νόμον νομοθετῶν καὶ δυσι φόνους βραβεύων, ὁ τὸν ἕνα ἀπαγορεύσας, ἔλαθεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπ' ἀνάγκης κλαπεῖς.

5.7 Διὸ δὴ ὁ ἀπ' ἐκείνου παραγενόμενος υἱός, τοῦτο τὸ μέρος τοῦ νόμου ἀνήρηκεν, ὁμολογήσας καὶ αὐτὸ εἶναι τοῦ θεοῦ. ἐν τε τοῖς ἄλλοις καταρuthμεῖται τῇ παλαιᾷ αἰρέσει καὶ ἐν οἷς ἔφη· «ὁ θεὸς εἶπεν· ὁ κακολογῶν πατέρα ἢ μητέρα θανάτῳ τελευτάτω.»

5.8 Τὸ δὲ ἔστι μέρος αὐτοῦ τυπικόν, τὸ κατ' εἰκόνα τῶν πνευματικῶν καὶ διαφερόντων κείμενον, τὰ ἐν προσφοραῖς λέγω καὶ περιτομῇ καὶ σαββάτῳ καὶ νηστείᾳ καὶ πάσχα καὶ ἄζύμοις καὶ τοῖς τοιοῦτοις νομοθετηθέντα.

5.9 Πάντα γὰρ ταῦτα, εἰκόνες καὶ σύμβολα ὄντα, τῆς ἀληθείας φανερωθείσης μετετέθη. κατὰ μὲν τὸ φαινόμενον καὶ <τὸ> σωματικῶς ἐκτελεῖσθαι ἀνηρέθη, κατὰ δὲ τὸ πνευματικὸν ἀνελήφθη, τῶν μὲν ὀνομάτων τῶν αὐτῶν μενόντων, ἐνηλλαγμένων δὲ τῶν πραγμάτων.

5.10 Καὶ γὰρ προσφοράς προσφέρειν προσέταξεν ἡμῖν ὁ σωτήρ, ἀλλὰ οὐχὶ τὰς δι' ἀλόγων ζώων ἢ τούτων τῶν θυμιαμάτων, ἀλλὰ διὰ πνευματικῶν αἰνῶν καὶ δοξῶν καὶ εὐχαριστίας καὶ διὰ τῆς εἰς τοὺς πλησίον κοινωνίας καὶ εὐποιίας.

5.11 Καὶ περιτομὴν περιτετμησθαι ἡμᾶς βούλεται, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τῆς ἀκροβυστίας τῆς σωματικῆς, ἀλλὰ καρδίας τῆς πνευματικῆς.

5.12 Καὶ τὸ σάββατον φυλάσσειν, ἀργεῖν γὰρ θέλει ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων τῶν πονηρῶν.

5.13 Καὶ νηστεύειν δέ, ἀλλὰ οὐχὶ τὴν σωματικὴν βούλεται νηστείαν ἡμᾶς νηστεύειν, ἀλλὰ τὴν πνευματικὴν, ἐν ᾗ ἔστιν ἀποχὴ πάντων τῶν φαύλων. Φυλάσσεται μέντοι γε καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἡμετέροις ἢ κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον νηστεία, ἐπεὶ καὶ ψυχῇ τι συμβάλλεσθαι δύναται αὕτη μετὰ λόγου γινομένη, ὁπότε μὴτε διὰ τὴν πρὸς τινὰς μίμησιν γίνεται μῆτε διὰ τὸ ἔθος μῆτε διὰ τὴν ἡμέραν, ὥς ὀρισμένης <εἰς> τοῦτο ἡμέρας.

5.5 To be sure, this commandment was and still is just, on account of the weakness of those who received the legislation, put in place so that they would not deviate from the pure law. But it is foreign to the nature and goodness of the Father of the whole.

5.6 Likewise this is appropriate, and even necessary. For the one who does not want there to be a murder when saying, “You shall not murder,” while commanding that a murder be responded to by another murder, has legislated a second law commanding two murders, although he had forbidden murder setting in motion himself as one being tricked by necessity.

5.7 Therefore, when his Son arrived, he abrogated this part of the law, even though he confessed that it came from God. He recounts this (part of the law as it was) in the old sect, both in other passages and in those in which he said, “God said, ‘The one who slanders father or mother will die.’”

5.8 And there is the typological part, established in the image of the spiritual and differentiated elements; I am speaking about legislation concerning offerings and circumcision and the Sabbath and fasting and Passover and unleavened bread and other topics.

5.9 For all of these things being images and symbols, when the truth appeared, they were transformed. With respect to their phenomenal and corporeal (meanings) they were annulled as accomplished, but with respect to their spiritual (meaning) they were restored, the names remaining the same, but the meanings changed.

5.10 For the Savior enjoined us to make offerings, but not of irrational animals or incense of this sort, but of spiritual praise and glory and thanksgiving and of fellowship and benefaction with those near us.

5.11 And he wanted us to be circumcised, but not with reference to our bodily foreskin, but our spiritual heart.

5.12 And to keep the Sabbath, for he wants to be at rest when it comes to wicked deeds.

5.13 And to fast, but he does not want us to fast bodily, but spiritually, in which there is distance from all things trivial. To be sure, literal fasting is also practiced among us, since it is capable of building up the soul when done within reason, when it comes not from the imitation of others or from habit or on a particular day, as a day set apart <for> this.

5.14 Ἄμα δὲ καὶ εἰς ἀνάμνησιν τῆς ἀληθινῆς νηστείας, ἵνα οἱ μηδέπω ἐκείνην δυνάμενοι νηστεύειν ἀπὸ τῆς κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον νηστείας ἔχωσιν τὴν ἀνάμνησιν αὐτῆς.

5.15 Καὶ τὸ πάσχα δὲ ὁμοίως καὶ τὰ ἄζυμα, ὅτι εἰκόνες ἦσαν, δηλοῖ καὶ Παῦλος ὁ ἀπόστολος «τὸ δὲ πάσχα ἡμῶν,» λέγων «ἐτύθη Χριστός,» καὶ «ἵνα ἦτε,» φησίν, «ἄζυμοι, μὴ μετέχοντες ζύμης»—ζύμην δὲ νῦν τὴν κακίαν λέγει—«ἀλλ' ἦτε νέον φύραμα.»

6.1 Οὕτως γ' οὖν καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ εἶναι νόμος ὁμολογούμενος εἰς τρία διαιρεῖται, εἷς τε τὸ πληρούμενον ἀπὸ τοῦ σωτῆρος, τὸ γὰρ «οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐκ ἐπιπορεύσεις» ἐν τῷ μὴδ' ὀργισθῆναι μηδὲ ἐπιθυμῆσαι μηδὲ ὁμόσαι περιεἴληπται.

6.2 Διαιρεῖται δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸ ἀναιρούμενον τελείως. Τὸ γὰρ «ὀφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ καὶ ὀδόντα ἀντὶ ὀδόντος» συμπεπλεγμένον τῇ ἀδικίᾳ καὶ αὐτὸ ἔργον τῆς ἀδικίας ἔχον, ἀνῆρέθη ὑπὸ τοῦ σωτῆρος διὰ τῶν ἐναντίων.

6.3 Τὰ δὲ ἐναντία ἀλλήλων ἐστὶν ἀναιρετικά· «ἐγὼ γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν μὴ ἀντιστῆναι ὁλως τῷ πονηρῷ, ἀλλὰ ἐάν τις σε ῥάπισῃ, στρέψον αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην σιαγόνα.»

6.4 Διαιρεῖται δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸ μετατεθὲν καὶ ἐναλλαγὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ σωματικοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ πνευματικόν, τὸ συμβολικὸν τοῦτο <τὸ> κατ' εἰκόνα τῶν διαφερόντων νενομοθετημένον.

6.5 Αἱ γὰρ εἰκόνες καὶ τὰ σύμβολα παραστατικά ὄντα ἐτέρων πραγμάτων καλῶς ἐγίνοντο μέχρι μὴ παρῆν ἡ ἀλήθεια· παρούσης δὲ τῆς ἀληθείας τὰ τῆς ἀληθείας δεῖ ποιεῖν, οὐ τὰ τῆς εἰκότος.

6.6 Ταῦτα δὲ καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος ἔδειξε, τὸ μὲν τῶν εἰκόνων, ὥς ἤδη εἵπομεν, διὰ τοῦ πάσχα δι' ἡμᾶς καὶ τῶν ἁζύμων δείξας, τὸ δὲ τοῦ συμπεπλεγμένου νόμου τῇ ἀδικίᾳ, εἰπὼν «τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν κατηργῆσθαι,» τὸ δὲ τοῦ ἀσυμπλόκου τῷ χεῖρονι, «ὁ μὲν νόμος,» εἰπὼν, «ἅγιος, καὶ ἡ ἐντολὴ ἀγία καὶ δικαία καὶ ἀγαθή.»

7.1 Ὡς μὲν οὖν συντόμως ἔστιν εἰπεῖν, αὐτάρκως οἶμαί σοι δεδειχθαι καὶ τὴν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων παρεισδύσασαν νομοθεσίαν καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ νόμον τριχῇ διαιρούμενον.

7.2 Περιλείπεται δὲ εἰπεῖν ἡμῖν τίς ποτέ ἐστιν οὗτος ὁ θεὸς ὁ τὸν νόμον θέμενος. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦτο ἡγοῦμαί σοι δεδειχθαι ἐπὶ τῶν προειρημένων, εἰ ἐπιμελῶς ἀκήκοας.

5.14 But at the same time it is a reminder of the true fast, so that those not as yet able to fast truly might have a reminder of it from the literal fasting.

5.15 In a similar way, Paul the apostle makes clear that the Passover and the unleavened bread were images when he says “Our Passover, Christ, has been sacrificed,” and “so that you might be,” he says, “unleavened bread, not sharing in heaven”—but by leaven he means evil—“but you might be a new dough.”

6.1 Thus the law of God itself is agreed upon as being divided into three parts, into the part fulfilled by the Savior, for the (commandments) “You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not make false oaths” are covered by the prohibition of anger and desire and swearing.

6.2 It is also divided into a part abrogated entirely, for “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,” mixed with injustice and having the same work of injustice, was destroyed by the Savior through the opposite.

6.3 Things opposite to each other are mutually destructive: “for I say to you, do not oppose the wicked man, but if anyone hits you, turn the other cheek to him.”

6.4 And it is divided into the part transformed and changed from the bodily to the spiritual, the symbolic which is the image of the surpassing things.

6.5 For the images and the symbols standing in for other things were good before the truth had come; but now that the truth has arrived it is necessary to do things of the truth, not things of the image.

6.6 These things his disciples and the apostle Paul demonstrated, that of the images, as we have already mentioned, through the Passover for us and the unleavened bread; for the law mixed with injustice, when he says, “The law of the commandments in dogmas was annulled”; and for the law not mixed with anything deficient, when he says, “The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.”

7.1 As one speaking concisely, I think I have demonstrated clearly to you the legislation added by humans and the threefold division of the law of God itself.

7.2 Now it remains for us to say who this God is who established the law. But I think that this also has been demonstrated to you in what has been said, if you have listened carefully.

7.3 Εἰ γὰρ μήτε ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ τελείου θεοῦ τέθιται οὗτος, ὥς ἐδιδάξαμεν, μήτε μὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου, ὃ μὴδὲ θεμιτόν ἐστιν εἰπεῖν, ἕτερός τις ἐστι παρὰ τούτους οὗτος ὁ θέμενος τὸν νόμον.

7.4 Οὗτος δὲ δημιουργὸς καὶ ποιητὴς τοῦδε τοῦ παντός ἐστιν κόσμος καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ, ἕτερος ὢν παρὰ τὰς τούτων οὐσίας μέσος τούτων καθεστῶς, ἐνδίκως καὶ τὸ «τῆς μεσότητος» ὄνομα ἀποφέροιτο ἄν.

7.5 Καὶ εἰ ὁ τέλειος θεὸς ἀγαθὸς ἐστιν κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φύσιν, ὥσπερ καὶ ἔστιν, ἕνα γὰρ μόνον εἶναι ἀγαθὸν θεόν, τὸν ἑαυτοῦ πατέρα ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν ἀπεφήνατο, ὃν αὐτὸς ἐφανέρωσεν, ἔστιν δὲ καὶ ὁ τῆς τοῦ ἀντικειμένου φύσεως κακὸς τε καὶ πονηρὸς ἐν ἀδικίᾳ χαρακτηριζόμενος, τούτων δὲ οὗν μέσος καθεστῶς καὶ μήτε ἀγαθὸς ὢν μήτε μὴν κακὸς μήτε ἄδικος, ἰδίως γε λεχθεῖη ἂν δίκαιος, τῆς κατ' αὐτὸν δικαιοσύνης ὢν βραβευτής.

7.6 Καὶ ἔσται μὲν καταδεέστερος τοῦ τελείου θεοῦ καὶ τῆς ἐκείνου δικαιοσύνης ἐλάττων οὗτος ὁ θεός, ἅτε δὴ καὶ γεννητὸς ὢν καὶ οὐκ ἀγέννητος, εἷς γὰρ ἐστιν ἀγέννητος ὁ πατήρ, ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα, ἰδίως τῶν πάντων ἡρτημένων ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. μεῖζων δὲ καὶ κυριώτερος τοῦ ἀντικειμένου γενήσεται καὶ ἐτέρας οὐσίας τε καὶ φύσεως πεφυκὼς παρὰ τὴν ἐκατέρων τούτων οὐσίαν.

7.7 Τοῦ μὲν γὰρ ἀντικειμένου ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία φθορά τε καὶ σκότος, ὕλικὸς γὰρ οὗτος καὶ πολυσχιδής, τοῦ δὲ πατρὸς τῶν ὅλων τοῦ ἀγεννήτου ἡ οὐσία ἐστὶν ἀφθαρσία τε καὶ φῶς αὐτοόν, ἀπλοῦν τε καὶ μονοειδές. ἡ δὲ τούτου οὐσία διττὴν μὲν τινα δύνάμιν προήγαγεν, αὐτὸς δὲ τοῦ κρείττονός ἐστιν εἰκὼν.

7.8 Μὴδὲ σε τὰ νῦν τοῦτο θορυβεῖται θέλουσαν μαθεῖν πῶς ἀπὸ μιᾶς ἀρχῆς τῶν ὅλων <ἀπλῆς> οὐσης τε καὶ ὁμολογουμένης ἡμῖν καὶ πεπιστευμένης, τῆς ἀγεννήτου καὶ ἀφθάρτου καὶ ἀγαθῆς, συνέστησαν καὶ αὗται αἱ φύσεις, ἡ τε τῆς φθορᾶς καὶ <ἡ> τῆς μεσότητος, ὁμοοῦσοι αὗται καθεστῶσαι, τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ φύσιν ἔχοντος τὰ ὅμοια ἑαυτῷ καὶ ὁμοοῦσια γεννᾶν τε καὶ προφέρειν.

7.9 Μαθήσῃ γάρ, θεοῦ διδόντος, ἐξῆς καὶ τὴν τούτων ἀρχὴν τε καὶ γέννησιν, ἀξιομένη τῆς ἀποστολικῆς παραδόσεως, ἣν ἐκ διαδοχῆς καὶ ἡμεῖς παρειλήφαμεν, μετὰ καὶ τοῦ κανονίσαι πάντας τοὺς λόγους τῇ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν διδασκαλίᾳ.

7.10 Ταῦτά σοι, ᾧ ἀδελφῇ μου Φλώρα, δι' ὀλίγων εἰρημένα οὐκ ἠτόνησα· καὶ τὸ τῆς συντομίας προέγραψα ἅμα τε τὸ προκείμενον ἀποχρώντως ἐξέφηνα, ἃ καὶ εἰς τὰ ἐξῆς τὰ μέγιστα σοι συμβαλεῖται, ἐάν γε ὥς καλὴ γῆ καὶ ἀγαθὴ γονίμων σπερμάτων τυχοῦσα τὸν δι' αὐτῶν καρπὸν ἀναδείξῃς.

7.3 For if this law was not established by the Perfect God himself, as we have taught, or by the devil, a notion that is not permitted by God to speak, the one who established the law is someone other than these two.

7.4 Thus he is the creator and maker of the whole universe and everything within it, and since he is different than these two in essence, occupying a place between them, he ought fittingly also to be called “the intermediate.”

7.5 And if the Perfect God is good according to his nature, as indeed he is, for our Savior professed that there is only one good God, his Father, whom he made known, and if the one with the opposite nature is evil and wicked and characteristically unjust, then the one between these two is not good, evil, or unjust, but might uniquely be called just, since he administers the justice that is his.

7.6 This god will be inferior to the Perfect God and lesser than his righteousness, inasmuch as he is begotten and not unbegotten, for there is one unbegotten Father, from whom come all things, because all things depend upon him in kind. Yet he is also greater and more powerful than the adversary, and he has another essence and nature in addition to the essences of the other two.

7.7 For the essence of the adversary is destruction and darkness, for he is material and divided, but the essence of the unbegotten Father of the whole is incorruption and autonomous light, unified and simple. The essence of the unbegotten Father brought forward a twofold power, and the Savior is an image of the greater one.

7.8 But at this time do not be troubled by your desire to learn how from one origin of the whole, being <simple>, and confessed and believed by us, unbegotten and incorruptible and good, these three natures of destruction and the intermediate were contrived, having been established as dissimilar, yet the good has a nature to put forth things that are like itself and of the same substance.

7.9 For God willing, you shall later learn about their origin and generation, once you have been deemed worthy of the apostolic tradition, which we also have received by succession, and we too are able to guarantee the authority of all our words by the teaching of our Savior.

7.10 By offering you these brief teachings, my sister Flora, I have not become fatigued; and I have at once written about this matter concisely, and I have disclosed a sufficient amount, which also in the future will contribute to you greatly, if, like beautiful and good soil receiving fertile seeds, you bring forth their fruit.