The Revelations of Saint Birgitta
Book 1

Prologue by Master Mathias

Amazement and wonders have been heard of in our land. When Moses, the zealot of the law, heard the law of fire given unto the chastisement of sinners from the midst of the fire of the zeal of God, it was amazing indeed. It is more wonderful that in our day the humble and meek in spirit should hear the voice of Jesus Christ, God and man, even as Elijah once heard it in the sound of a gentle breeze. 2 God, who had earlier made a stiff-necked, rude and ignorant people zealous for the justice of his law by means of fear, has now in his gentle mercy used love to bring to submission a people instructed in both the old and new covenants. First came the fear of God like that great wind rending the mountains and crushing the rocks of hardened hearts. It was followed by an upheaval of penance that threw human hearts into a turmoil for the sake of their salvation. Then came the fire of divine charity, shining in the gospel of Christ and giving clear evidence both of his great love for his own, for he delivered himself to death for them lest they suffer eternal death, and of their love for him, for they deliver themselves up, one might say, for his glory.

3 God appeared in this fire not according to the greatness of his divinity but according to the humble condition of our slavery in which he has redeemed the world. Now follows the sound of God's gentle mercy summoning all people out of the feverish heat of sin into the peaceful breeze of his mercy through the prayers and merits of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy. In this breeze, the Lord, whose nature it is to be merciful, manifests his omnipotent divinity through his great and exalted compassion so that all those who have despised his mercy, so gently and so sweetly displayed, will be left without excuse when God's judgment is made known. 4 Is not that person inexcusable and worthy of being punished by divine justice who has scorned and disdained the mercy held out to him with such sweet words and deeds as contained in this collection of revelations? 5 For that reason, let all people prepare their souls and enlarge their wills so as to receive a good measure of mercy, pressed down, shaken together, running over beyond merit or hope, beyond wish or thought, to be poured out through the mediatrix of God and humanity by her Son, the fount of all piety.

6 May those who read these revelations harbor no suspicions about a false inspiration. It is not to be believed that the evil spirit can deceive those who are truly just or convert sinners to the good or that he is able to infuse into cold hearts the love that he himself lacks or that he advances in any way the glory of God whom he envies. 7 Just as it is impossible for the spirit of truth to utter a lie or turn anyone away from justice or inspire pride or envy in hearts that are subject to him, or induce anyone to the contempt of God almighty, so too, due to innate malice and wickedness, the spirit of falsehood is altogether incapable of producing the opposites of these evils. 8 If anyone should protest that the evil spirit is capable of doing these good things or any one of them, then it follows that he concedes that the spirit of kindness and holiness is capable of...
their opposites. The inevitable error then results that evil is attributed to God and good to the devil, that the devil is held to be the prince and guide of the just and that God is blasphemed as protecting and encouraging the impious.

9 If you want to recognize the truly righteous person so as not to be deceived by seeming justice, know that the following things are rejected by someone who is truly righteous. First, all things that are truly evil insofar as they bring about eternal death, such as lust, greed, and pride. Then, too, false goods, such as the habit of vainglory in self-ostentation, or cowardice in defending justice, or being eager to judge others with a bitter zeal. Accordingly, the truly righteous person is humble by reason of virtue, firm by reason of humility, calm by reason of firmness of soul. 10 Hence someone who is truly righteous does not seek his own glory, and so the devil cannot use it to trick him. He does not shrink from the defense of justice out of cowardice and so, as a result, is not overcome by the ill will of other people. He does not allow his soul to succumb to any kind of distress and lose its proper seating in reason through impatient fervor. 11 Anybody who suffers mental distress is not for that reason devoid of justice, provided such distress does not unsettle him in the practice of patience and the other virtues.

Even when Jesus Christ said to the Father in the midst of the sadness and distress of his mental agony: "Let this cup pass from me!" he showed that his distress had not unsettled his soul from its foundation in virtue by adding: "Not as I will but as you will." 12 You will also be able to observe this no less than what was said above in the allegory mentioned earlier. The great wind is vainglory that rends every outstanding virtue, as represented by the mountains, along with all constancy, as represented by the firmness of the rocks. The dread of threats and persecutors leaves the heart so shaken that it yields to human ruthlessness. 13 The righteous burn with the fire of zeal against sinners, but not yet with the patience and mildness of perfection. This is obvious in the case of the Pharisee who boasted of his own righteousness and burned with fiery indignation against the publican just as Simon did, too, regarding Mary Magdalene. However, the Lord is not to be found in this kind of fervor, and it gives the devil a chance to tempt and deceive.

14 Such things must not be thought of this bride of Christ whom he chose for himself to be a minister of this kind of grace. While still living in matrimony, she got her husband to practice perfect continence so that they lived together for many years without either demanding or receiving the dues of marriage. While she was still married, she preferred a widow's sobriety in her clothing and food. Her interior devotion and constancy in prayer gave early indications in her of a great perfection of piety and grace in the future. 15 When she was released from the law binding her to a husband, she distributed her property among her heirs and among the poor, and then extricated herself from her ties to the world. A poor woman following a poor man, Christ, she kept nothing for herself but mean clothing and simple food.

This is why, having rejected all worldly consolation, she was visited by Christ with wonderful consolations and graces. 16 In none of this did she seek her own glory but only that of God. She would have preferred to remain hidden out of humility, had she not been commanded to reveal herself to certain people out of obedience to the Spirit, or, rather, to Christ, who appeared to her in spirit. By enduring insults and abuse, she wished to add to the glory of Christ. By her truthfulness, meekness, and justice she gave expression to Christ's way of life in her own life,
allowing herself to be hurt by low and despicable persons who did so gratuitously and with impunity. 17 Who could imagine that such a life could be exposed to the mockery of demons? Who would dare to accuse Jesus Christ of being so heartless as not to protect someone who had placed her hope in him and glorified not herself but him out of her great love for him? Would a good husband expose his chaste and faithful wife to the seductions of an adulterer? 18 Away with the rashness of ignorant opinion!

Make room for God's grace and glory! His grace and glory are known to be so much the greater the more incredible they appear to our ignorance and to our mediocre faith. Indeed, unless guided by the grace of the same Spirit, who could believe that Christ, who resides in heaven, would speak to a woman still living in this mortal condition? 19 However, just as - we have it from the very words of Christ himself - when you look at mountains and forests, the sky seems close to their tops, although it is not, so too Christ, who reigns in heaven, may seem to the mind's eye to be close by, however remote he may be as to his bodily presence. Physical distance cannot disqualify a vision of this kind.

O most admirable and wonderful grace and apparition, worthy of being revealed to every nation under heaven! Through it Jesus Christ, whom Christians have scourged and wounded so sorely that the seeds of righteousness are scarcely to be found remaining in them, displays mercy to the ungrateful and gently leads the accused to implore his forgiveness. 21 This apparition is even more amazing than the one by which he showed himself in the flesh. His body presented itself outwardly to bodily eyes, but in this apparition the God and man are presented to spiritual eyes. 22 In that apparition, a man who was about to die spoke to mortal men. In this he who lives forever speaks to those who are about to die in order to make them immortal. Through that apparition, while living on earth, he revealed the divine in the human. Through this one, while reigning in heaven, he reconciles human things to divine.

23 In that apparition, by dying for us, he repaid the debt of justice. In this, he promises to bestow the gift of mercy on us sinners, although there is no longer any debt to pay. 24 So amazing, I say, is this wonderful apparition that the small capacity of the human heart can scarcely believe it or comprehend the force of so great a miracle. Although reason itself finds a powerful truth in the very deeds and words heard in this apparition and known by experience, still the weakness of our understanding does not grasp what the reason of those who have heard the words and experienced the favors tells it to grasp. 25 Even I myself, who have written this, can scarcely grasp it, although the words and the deeds convince me entirely of the truth of this inspiration, and I judge it to be most worthy of being fully accepted. By no means do I expect everyone who hears about it to believe it, if they have not heard the words themselves or known the deeds. 26 Just as the resurrection of Christ is also said to have been made known gradually by means of many proofs, since fragile mortal minds could not grasp the news of the miracle all at once, I believe that Jesus Christ will work in the same way in this miracle as well:

In the course of long periods of time he will make the greatness of it known by means of many proofs of miraculous powers, a greatness that the eyes of sinful minds, accustomed to darkness, cannot recognize without preparation. 27 Still, it should make it easier for everyone to accept its truth to know that no other faith than that which Christ preached is preached in these words and wonders. They do not give us a new Christ but the same one who suffered for us. 28 They neither
subtract from nor add anything to the knowledge of the truth that is in Christ, but to (the knowledge of) his mercy. His mercy becomes so much the better known, being on greater display in these events, inasmuch as the misery of sinners exceeds what it was before. Let us give thanks to the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who in the many miseries of this ageing world proceeds with so much mercy to help the miserable, lest they fall into the pit of despair.

For he who attends seriously and faithfully to the words of the present book which are few in comparison to the many others, will not be able to doubt that the words - not of her who is empty of power but of him who is full of the power of truth - could not have been uttered but by the spirit of truth. Anyone who also desires to examine his miraculous deeds will find trustworthy witnesses by which he can confirm their truth, if he so desires. The beginning of this revelation that was made to this lady was transmitted to me who have added this prologue so that I might make it known to others. It was received from Christ as follows: “The devil sinned in three ways: by pride in my having created him well; by greed, which made him seek not only to be my equal but even my superior; and by lust, which made him so delight in my divine glory that he would gladly have killed me, had he been able, so as to rule in my stead. This was why he fell from heaven and filled the world with these three sins and violated the human race through them.

For this reason I assumed a human nature and came into the world so that I might annihilate his pride by my humility and destroy his greed by my poverty. I submitted to the heavy punishment of the cross both in order that I might exterminate his abominable lust through the blood of my heart and through my death and, because the sins of the devil had closed it, in order to open heaven to mankind, provided that everyone is willing to struggle for it according to his or her ability. But the people in the kingdom of Sweden are sinning now, just as the devil sinned before them, especially that class of men known as noblemen or knights. They are proud of the beautiful bodies I have given them. They strive for wealth, which I have not given them. They go so far astray in their abominable concupiscence that, if it were possible for them, they would rather kill me than go without their pleasures, or would put up with my terrible sentence that hangs over them for their sins.

Therefore, those bodies of which they are so proud will be struck down by the sword, lance, and hatchet. Beasts and birds will tear to pieces those lovely limbs in which they glory. Others will carry away the riches they gather against my will, and they themselves will be in want. Due to their abominable lusts, they displease my Father to such an extent that he will not deign to admit them to the vision of his face. And since they would gladly kill me if they could, they shall be delivered to hell by the hands of the devil, and he will kill them in an everlasting death.

I would long ago have brought this judgment upon the kingdom of Sweden, had not the prayers of those friends of mine among them held me back and inclined me to mercy. The time will come when I shall gather those same friends to myself lest they behold the evils I will bring upon the kingdom. But some of my friends will still be alive then and will watch from the peak of their merits.

Since the kings and princes and prelates do not wish to recognize me for the benefits I confer, nor to come to me, I will now gather together the poor, the weak, the infants, and the wretched,
and with them I will fill their places so that there will be no shortage of people in the host of the Lord due to their absence."

40 When the person to whom this revelation was made sighed and bewailed so harsh a sentence, the Lord added: "As long as a person lives, access to the kingdom of heaven is available. If people know how to change their lives, I know how to mitigate my sentence." 41 As for the facts corroborating the truth of the present case, they are as follows: First, it was an unlearned woman who set this forth. Being of a noble and honest character, a humble widow, she would not have been able to make it up even had she wanted to, since she was a simple and gentle soul. 42 Second, the man who wrote down these revelations was a pious and simple monk, and he in no way wanted to put them in writing himself, since he considered himself unworthy and ignorant for such a task. However, Christ compelled him to do so through the fear of death, and he was on the point of death before he consented. Once he gave his consent, he was immediately cured all at once. 43 Third, a man in Östergötland, suffering from diabolic possession, was made clean in the presence of two trustworthy witnesses at the words of the aforementioned monk. This monk communicated the form of the words this woman had heard from Christ and did so on the command of Christ. 44 Fourth, another man in Sweden possessed by a devil was made clean in the same way through the same monk in the presence of trustworthy witnesses. 45 Fifth, a public prostitute was converted through the intervention of the Blessed Virgin who appeared along with Christ to the same lady. 46 Sixth, a number of leading men in the realm were converted, who, at a suitable time and place, will unanimously avow—for otherwise they would be ungrateful to Christ—that they experienced a conversion in their hearts at her words as sent from him.

Prologue

The Son of God spoke: "Listen, all my enemies in the world, for I am not addressing my friends! Listen, all you clerics, archbishops, and bishops and all of lower rank in the Church! Listen, all you religious, of whatever order you are! Listen, you kings and princes of the earth and all you who serve! Listen, you women, princesses, queens, and all ladies and maidservants! All you inhabitants of the world, of whatever condition or rank you are, whether great or small, listen to these words that I myself, who created you, now speak to you! I complain, because you have withdrawn from me and given the devil your will, and you obey his suggestions. Truly, I have redeemed you with my blood, and I ask for nothing but your souls. Therefore, return to me with humility, and I will receive you as my children."

Chapter 1 - On Christ's Good Deeds and the People's Ingratitude; Birgitta Must Love Him above All Else

Our Lord Jesus Christ's words to his chosen and dearly beloved bride declaring his most excellent incarnation, condemning the profane violation and breach of our faith and baptism, and inviting his beloved bride to love him.

I am the Creator of heaven and earth, one in divinity with the Father and the Holy Spirit. I am he who spoke to the prophets and the patriarchs, the one whom they awaited. For the sake of their longing and in accordance with my promise, I took flesh without sin, without concupiscence, entering the body of the Virgin like the sun shining through the clearest crystal. The sun does not
damage the glass by entering it, nor was the Virgin's virginity lost when I took my human nature. I took flesh but without surrendering my divinity. I was no less God, ruling and filling all things with the Father and the Holy Spirit, although I, with my human nature, was in the womb of the Virgin. Brightness is never separated from fire, nor was my divinity ever separated from my humanity, not even in death. Next I willed for my pure and sinless body to be wounded from the sole of my foot to the crown of my head for the sins of all men, and to be hung on the cross. It is now offered each day on the altar in order that people might love me more and call to mind my favors more frequently.

4 Now, however, I am totally forgotten, neglected and scorned, like a king cast out of his own kingdom in whose place a wicked thief has been elected and honored. I wanted my kingdom to be within the human person, and by right I should be king and lord over him, since I made him and redeemed him. Now, however, he has broken and profaned the faith he promised me at baptism. He has violated and rejected the laws I set up for him. He loves his self-will and scornfully refuses to listen to me. Besides, he exalts that most wicked thief, the devil, above me and pledges him his faith. The devil really is a thief, since, by evil temptations and false promises, he steals for himself the human soul that I redeemed with my own blood. It is not because he is more powerful, as it were, than I am that he is able to steal it, since I am so powerful that I can do all things by a single word, and I am so just that I would not commit the least injustice, not even if all the saints asked me to. However, since man, who has been given free will, voluntarily scorner my commandments and consents to the devil, then it is only just that he should also experience the devil's tyranny. The devil was created good by me but fell through his own wicked will and has, as it were, become my servant for inflicting retribution on the wicked. Although I am now so despised, nevertheless I am still so merciful that I will forgive the sins of any who ask for my mercy and who humble themselves, and I shall free them from the evil thief. But I shall visit my justice upon those who persist in holding me in contempt, and hearing it they will tremble and those who experience it will say: 'Alas, that we were ever born or conceived, alas, that we ever provoked the Lord of majesty to wrath!'

9 But you, my daughter, whom I have chosen for myself and with whom I speak in spirit, love me with all your heart, not as you love your son or daughter or relatives but more than anything in the world! I created you and spared none of my limbs in suffering for you. And yet I love your soul so dearly that, if it were possible, I would let myself be nailed to the cross again rather than lose you. Imitate my humility: I, who am the king of glory and of angels, was clothed in lowly rags and stood naked at the pillar while my ears heard all kinds of insults and derision. Prefer my will to yours, because my Mother, your Lady, from beginning to end, never wanted anything but what I wanted. If you do this, then your heart will be with my heart, and it will be set aflame with my love in the same way as any dry thing is easily set aflame by fire. Your soul will be filled with me and I will be in you, and all temporal things will become bitter to you and all carnal desire like poison. You will rest in my divine arms, where there is no carnal desire, only joy and spiritual delight. There the soul, both inwardly and outwardly delighted, is full of joy, thinking of nothing and desiring nothing but the joy that it possesses. So love me alone, and you will have all the things you wish, and you will have them in abundance. Is it not written that the widow's oil did not fail until the day that the Lord sent rain upon the earth according to the words of the prophet? I am the true prophet. If you believe my words and fulfill them, oil and joy and exultation will never fail you for all eternity.
Chapter 2 - On the Duties of the Bride

Our Lord Jesus Christ's words to the daughter he had taken as his bride concerning the articles of the true faith, and about what adornments and tokens and intentions the bride should have with respect to the bridegroom.

I am the Creator of the heavens, the earth, and the sea and of all that is in them. I am one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, not like gods of stone or gold, as people once said, and not several gods, as people used to think then, but one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three persons but one in substance, the Creator of all but created by none, remaining unchangeable and almighty, with out beginning or end. I am he who was born of the Virgin, without losing my divinity but joining it to my humanity, so that in one person I might be the true Son of God and the Son of the Virgin. I am he who hung on the cross, died and was buried; yet my divinity remained intact. Although I died through the human nature and body that I, the only Son, had taken, yet I lived on in the divine nature in which I was one God together with the Father and the Holy Spirit. I am the same man who rose from the dead and ascended into heaven and who now speaks with you through my spirit. I have chosen you and taken you as my bride in order to show you my secrets, because it pleases me to do so. I also have a certain rightful claim on you, since you surrendered your will to me when your husband died. After his death, you thought and prayed about how you might become poor for my sake, and you wanted to give up everything for my sake. So I have a rightful claim on you. In return for this great love of yours, it is only fitting that I should provide for you. Therefore I take you as my bride for my own pleasure, the kind that is appropriate for God to have with a chaste soul.

It is the duty of the bride to be ready when the bridegroom decides to have the wedding, so she can be properly dressed up and clean. You will be clean if your thoughts are always on your sins, on how in baptism I cleansed you from the sin of Adam and how often I have supported and sustained you when you have fallen into sin. The bride should also wear the bridegroom's tokens on her breast, I mean, you should bear in mind the favors and benefits I have done for you, such as how nobly I created you by giving you a body and soul, how nobly I enriched you by giving you health and temporal goods, how kindly I rescued you when I died for you and restored your inheritance to you, if you want to have it. The bride should also do the will of her bridegroom. What is my will but that you should want to love me above all things and want nothing but me?

I created all things for the sake of humankind and placed all things under them. And yet they love everything but me and hate nothing but me. I bought back their inheritance for them, which they had lost, but they have grown so estranged and turned so far from reason that, instead of eternal glory in which there is everlasting good, they would rather have passing glory that is as the ocean spray that rises up one moment like a mountain and then quickly sinks down into nothing. My bride, if you desire nothing but me, if you hold all things in contempt for my sake—both children and relatives as well as wealth and honors—I will give you a most precious and delightful reward. I will give you neither gold nor silver as your wages but myself to be your bridegroom, I, who am the king of glory. If you are ashamed of being poor and despised, consider how your God has gone before you, once his servants and friends had abandoned him on earth, because I was not looking for friends on earth but friends in heaven. If you are
worrying and afraid about being burdened by work and sickness, then consider how severe a thing it is to burn in the fire! 10 What would you have deserved if you had offended same earthly master as you have me? For, although I love you with all my heart, still I do not act against justice, not even in a single detail. Just as you have sinned in all your limbs, you must also make satisfaction in every limb. 11 However, because of your good will and your resolution to improve, I commute your sentence to one of mercy and remit the heavier punishment in return for a small amount of reparation. 12 For this reason, embrace your small hardships cheerfully so that you can be cleansed and reach your great reward all the sooner! It is good for the bride to grow tired toiling alongside the bridegroom so that she can all the more confidently take her rest with him.

Chapter 3 - Birgitta Must Love and Fear God and Seek Guidance from Her Spiritual Director

Our Lord Jesus Christ's words to his bride about her formation in love and honor toward him, the bridegroom, and about the hatred of the wicked for God, and about the love of the world.

I am your God and Lord, the one you worship. It is I who uphold heaven and earth by my power. They are upheld by nothing else nor do they have any other supports. It is I who am offered up each day on the altar, true God and true man, under the appearance of bread. I am the very one who has chosen you. 2 Honor my Father! Love me! Obey my Spirit! Defer to my Mother as to your Lady! Honor all my saints! Keep the true faith taught to you by one who experienced in himself the conflict between the two spirits, the spirit of falsehood and the spirit of truth, and with my help conquered. 3 Preserve true humility! What is true humility if not to render praise to God for the good things he has given us? 4 Nowadays, however, there are many people who hate me and who regard my deeds and my words as painful and empty. They welcome that adulterer, the devil, with wide arms, and they love him. Whatever they do for me, they do it with grumbling and resentment. They would not even confess my name, if they were not afraid of the opinion of others. 5 They have such a sincere love of the world that they never tire working for it night and day and are always fervent in their love for it. Their service is about as pleasing to me as if someone were to give his enemy money to kill his son. 6 This is what they do. They give me some alms and honor me with their lips in order to gain worldly success and to remain in their privileges and in their sin. The good spirit is thus impeded in them from making any progress in virtue.

7 If you want to love me with your whole heart and to desire nothing but me, I will draw you to me through charity, just like a magnet or lodestone draws iron to itself. I will lay you on my arm, which is so strong that no one can stretch it out and so rigid that no one can bend it back once outstretched. It is so sweet that it surpasses every fragrance and cannot be compared with the delights of this world.

EXPLANATION

8 This was a holy man, a teacher of theology, who was called Master Mathias of Sweden, a canon of Linköping. He wrote an excellent commentary covering the whole Bible. He suffered very subtle temptations from the devil involving a number of heresies against the Catholic faith, all of which he overcame with the aid of Christ, and he could not be overcome by the devil. This is
plainly set forth in the biography of Lady Birgitta. It was this Master Mathias who composed the Prologue to these books that begins *Stupor et mirabilia*, etc. He was a holy man and spiritually powerful in word and deed. When he died in Sweden, the bride of Christ, then living in Rome, heard in her prayer a voice saying to her in spirit: "Happy are you, Master Mathias, for the crown that has been made for you in heaven. Come now to the wisdom that will never end!"

One can also read about him in Book I chapter 52 B; Book V, in the response to question 3 D in the last interrogation; and Book VI chapters 75 A and 89.

**Chapter 4 - Birgitta Must Learn to Discern between Good and Evil Spirits**

*Our Lord Jesus Christ's words to his bride about how she should not worry or think that the things revealed to her come from an evil spirit, and about how to recognize a good or an evil spirit.*

I am your Creator and Redeemer. Why were you afraid of my words? Why were you wondering whether they came from a good or an evil spirit? Tell me, did you find anything in my words that your conscience did not dictate to you to do? Or did I command you anything against reason?

To this the bride answered: "No, on the contrary, they are all true and I was badly mistaken." The spirit, or the bridegroom, answered: "I commanded you three things. From them you could recognize the good spirit. I commanded you to honor your God, who made you and has given you all the things you have. Your reason also tells you to honor him above all things. I commanded you to keep the true faith, that is, to believe that nothing has been made without God and that nothing can be made without God. I also commanded you to aspire to reasonable temperance in all things, since the world was made for human use so that people might use it for their needs. In the same way, you can also recognize the unclean spirit from three things, the opposites of these. He tempts you to seek your own praise and to be proud of the things given you. He tempts you to betray your faith. He also tempts you to impurity in your whole body and in everything, and makes your heart burn for it.

Sometimes he also deceives people under the guise of good. This is why I commanded you always to examine your conscience and disclose it to prudent spiritual advisors. Therefore, do not doubt that God's good spirit is with you, seeing that you desire nothing other than God and are completely on fire with his love. I am the only one who can do that. It is impossible for the devil to draw near to you. Nor is it possible for him to draw near to bad people at all unless I allow it, either because of their sins or because of some secret decision known to me, for he is my creature, just like all others, and was created good by me, although he became evil through his own malice. I am Lord over him. For this reason, they accuse me falsely who say that the people who serve me with great devotion are insane and have a devil. They make me out to be like a man who exposes his chaste and trusting wife to an adulterer. That is what I would be if I let someone who was righteous and full of love for me be handed over to a demon. But because I am faithful, no demon will ever gain control of the soul of any of my devoted servants. Although my friends sometimes seem to be almost out of their minds, it is not because they suffer from the devil or because they serve me with fervent devotion. It is rather due to some defect of the brain or some other hidden cause, which serves to humble them. Sometimes it can also happen that the devil either receives power from me over the bodies of good people for their
own greater reward or that he darkens their consciences. However, he can never gain control over the souls of those who have faith in me and take their delight in me.

**Chapter 5 - About a Besieged Castle**

*Christ's most loving words to his bride containing the wonderful image of a noble castle, which stands for the church militant, and about how the church of God will now be rebuilt through the prayers of the glorious Virgin and of the saints.*

I am the Creator of all things. I am the King of glory and the Lord of angels. I built for myself a noble castle and placed my chosen ones in it. My enemies undermined its foundations and overpowered my friends so much so that the very marrow goes out of my friends' feet as they sit fastened to the wood of the stocks. Then their mouth is bruised by stones, and they are tortured by hunger and thirst. Moreover, enemies are persecuting their Lord. My friends are now begging and groaning for help; justice is clamoring for vengeance, but mercy says to forgive. Then God said to the heavenly host that was standing by: "What do you think regarding these people who have seized my castle?" They all answered with one voice: "Lord, all justice is in you and in you we see all things. All judgment is given to you, the Son of God, who exist without beginning or end, you are their judge." And he said: "Although you know and see all things in me, yet for my bride's sake here, tell me what the just sentence is." They said: "This is justice: that those who undermined the wall should be punished like thieves, that those who persist in evil should be punished like usurpers, and that the captives should be set free and the hungry be filled."

Then Mary spoke, the Mother of God, who had been silent in the first exchange, and she said: "My Lord and most dear Son, you were in my womb as true God and man. You condescended to sanctify me who was an earthen vessel. I beg you: have mercy on them once more!" The Lord answered his Mother: "Blessed be the word of your mouth! Like a sweet odor it ascends to God. You are the glory and the Queen of angels and all saints, because God was consoled by you and all the saints made joyful. And because your will has been as my own from the beginning of your youth, I will once more do as you wish." Then he said to the heavenly host: "Because you have fought bravely, for the sake of your love I will let myself be appeased for now. Behold, I will rebuild my wall on account of your prayers.

I will save and heal those who were oppressed by force and will honor them a hundredfold for the abuse they have suffered. If the doers of violence ask for mercy, peace and mercy will be theirs. Those who scorn it will experience my justice." Then he said to his bride: "My bride, I have chosen you and clothed you in my spirit. You hear my words and those of my saints who, although they see all things in me, yet have spoken for your sake, so that you might understand. After all, you, who are still in the body, cannot see in me in the same way as they who are spirits. I will now show you what these things mean. The castle I spoke about is the Holy Church, which I built with my own blood and that of the saints. I cemented it with my charity and then placed my chosen ones and friends in it. Its foundation is faith, I mean, the belief that I am a just and merciful judge. The foundation has now been undermined because everybody believes and preaches that I am merciful but almost nobody believes me to be a just judge. They think of me as a wicked judge. A judge would indeed be wicked if, out of mercy, he let the wicked go
unpunished so that they could further oppress the righteous. I, however, am a just and merciful judge and will not let even the least sin go unpunished nor the least good go unrewarded. By the undermining of this wall, there entered into the Holy Church people who sin with out fear, who deny that I am just and who torment my friends as much as if they had clapped them in stocks. No joy or consolation is given to these friends of mine. Instead they are punished and reviled as much as if they were diabolically possessed. When they tell the truth about me, they are silenced and get accused of lying. They thirst with a passion to hear or speak the truth, but there is no one who listens to them or speaks the truth to them.

Moreover, I, God the Creator, am being blasphemed. For people say: 'We do not know if God exists. And if he exists, we do not care.' They throw my banner to the ground and trample on it, saying: 'Why did he suffer? What good is it to us? If he would grant our wish, we will be satisfied - let him keep his kingdom and his heaven!' I want to go into them, but they say: 'We would die before giving up our own will!' My bride, see what kind of people they are! I made them and can destroy them with a word. How insolent they are toward me! Thanks to the prayers of my Mother and of all the saints, I remain merciful and patient enough that I am now willing to send them the words of my mouth and to offer them my mercy. If they want to accept it, I will be appeased. Otherwise they will know my justice and, like thieves, they will be publicly put to shame before angels and men and condemned by every one of them. Like criminals hung on a fork-shaped gallows and devoured by crows, they will be devoured by demons but not consumed. Just like the people sentenced to the stocks have no rest, they will find pain and bitterness on all sides. A scalding river will flow into their mouths but their bellies will not be filled, and they will be renewed for their punishment each day. But my friends will be safe, and they will be consoled by the words that come from my mouth. They will see my justice along with my mercy. I will clothe them in the weapons of my love and will make them so strong that the adversaries of the faith will slide back like mud. When they see my justice, they will stand in perpetual shame for having abused my patience."

Chapter 6 - On the Arming of Spiritual Knights

*Christ's words to his bride about how his spirit cannot dwell in the wicked, and about the separation of the wicked from the good and the sending of good people armed with spiritual weapons to war against the world.*

My enemies are like the wildest of beasts who can never get their fill or remain at rest. Their heart is so empty of my love that the thought of my passion never enters it. Not once from their heart of hearts has a word like this escaped: "Lord, you have redeemed us, may you be praised for your bitter passion!" How can my Spirit dwell in people who have no divine love for me, people who are willing to betray others for the sake of getting their will? Their heart is full of vile worms, I mean, full of worldly passions. The devil has left his dung in their mouths; that is why they have no liking for my words. And so with my saw I will sever them from my friends. There is no worse way to die than to die under the saw. Likewise, there is no punishment in which they will not share: they will be sawn in two by the devil and separated from me. I find them so odious that all their adherents will also be severed from me.
For this reason I am sending forth my friends in order that they might separate the devils from my members, since the devils are my true enemies. I send them forth like soldier knights to war. Anyone who mortifies his flesh and abstains from illicit things is my true soldier. For their lance they will have the words of my mouth and in their hands the sword of faith; on their breasts will be the breastplate of love so that no matter what happens they will love me no less. They must have the shield of patience at their side so as to bear all things with patience. I have encased them like gold in a case: they should now go forth and walk in my ways. According to the designs of justice, I could not enter into the glory of my majesty without enduring tribulation in my human nature. So how will they enter into it? If their Lord suffered, it is not surprising that they should suffer as well. If their Lord put up with the whip, it is no great thing for them to put up with words. They need not fear because I will never abandon them. Just as it is impossible for the devil to get at the heart of God and divide it, so it is impossible for the devil to separate them from me. And since, in my sight, they are like the purest gold, though they be tested with a little fire, I shall not abandon them: it is for their greater reward.

Chapter 7 - On Spiritual Clothing

The glorious Virgin's words to her daughter about the way to dress and the sort of clothes and ornaments with which the daughter should be adorned and clothed.

I am Mary who gave birth to the Son of God, true God and true man. I am the Queen of angels. My Son loves you with his whole heart. So love him! You ought to be adorned with the fairest of clothes and I will show you how and what kind of clothes they should be. Just as before you had an underbodice, then a bodice, shoes, a cloak, and a brooch upon your breast, so now you should have spiritual clothes. The underbodice is contrition. Just as the underbodice is worn closest to the body, so contrition and confession are the first way of conversion to God. Through it the mind, which once found joy in sin, is purified and the unchaste flesh kept under control. The two shoes are two dispositions, namely the intention of rectifying past transgressions and the intention of doing good and keeping away from evil. Your bodice is hope in God. Just as a bodice has two sleeves, may there be both justice and mercy in your hope. In this way you will hope for the mercy of God because you do not neglect his justice.

Think on his justice and judgment in such away that you do not forget his mercy, for he does not work justice without mercy or mercy without justice. The cloak is faith. Just as the cloak covers everything and everything is enclosed in it, human nature can likewise comprehend and attain everything through faith. This cloak should be decorated with the tokens of your bridegroom's love, namely, the way he created you, the way he redeemed you, the way he nourished you and brought you into his spirit and opened your spiritual eyes. The brooch is the consideration of his passion. Fix firmly in your breast the thought of how he was scoffed at and scourged, how he stood alive on the cross, bloody and pierced in all his sinews, how at his death his whole body convulsed from the acute pain of the passion, how he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father. May this brooch be ever on your breast! On your head let there be set a crown, I mean, chastity in your affections, making you rather endure lashing than be further stained. May you be modest and worthy! Think about nothing, desire nothing but your God and Creator. When you have him, you have everything. Adorned in this way, you shall await your bridegroom.
Chapter 8 - Mary Teaches Birgitta a Prayer of Praise to God

The Queen of Heaven's words to her beloved daughter teaching her how she ought to love and praise her Son together with his Mother.

I am the Queen of Heaven. You were concerned about how you should give me praise. Know for certain that all praise of my Son is praise of me. And those who dishonor him, dishonor me, since my love for him and his for me was so ardent that the two of us were like one heart. So highly did he honor me, who was an earthen vessel, that he raised me up above all the angels. Therefore, you should praise me like this: "Blessed are you, God, Creator of all things, who deigned to descend into the womb of the Virgin Mary. Blessed are you, God, who willed to be in the Virgin Mary without being a burden to her and deigned to receive immaculate flesh from her without sin. Blessed are you, God, who came to the Virgin, giving joy to her soul and to her whole body, and who went out of her to the sinless joy of her whole body. Blessed are you, God, who after your ascension gladdened the Virgin Mary your Mother with frequent consolations and visited her with your consolation. Blessed are you, God, who assumed the body and soul of the Virgin Mary, your Mother, into heaven and honored her by placing her next to your divinity above all the angels. Have mercy on me because of her prayers!

Chapter 9 - On the Marriage of the Virgin's Parents, on Her Immaculate Conception, and Her Assumption into Heaven

The words of the Queen of Heaven to her beloved daughter concerning the beautiful love the Son had for his Virgin Mother, and about how the Mother of Christ was conceived in a chaste marriage and sanctified in the womb, and about how she was assumed body and soul into heaven, and about the power of her name, and about the angels assigned to men for good or bad.

I am the Queen of Heaven. Love my Son, because he is most worthy; when you have him, you have everything that is of worth. And he is most desirable; when you have him, you have all that is desirable. Love him, too, because he is most virtuous; when you have him, you have all the virtues. Let me tell you how beautiful his love for my body and soul was and how much honor he gave to my name. He, my own Son, loved me before I loved him, since he is my Creator. He joined my father and mother in so chaste a marriage that there was no more chaste couple then to be found. They never desired to come together except in accordance with the Law, solely for the sake of procreation. When an angel announced to them that they would give birth to the Virgin from whom the salvation of the world would come, they would rather have died than come together in carnal love; lust had died in them. But, I assure you, out of divine charity and on account of the angel's message they did come together in the flesh, not out of concupiscence but against their will and out of love for God. In this way my flesh was put together from their seed through divine love. When my body had been formed, God sent the created soul into it from his divinity; the soul was immediately sanctified along with the body, and the angels watched over and ministered to it day and night. It is impossible to tell you what a great joy came over my mother when my soul had been sanctified and joined to its body. Afterward, when the course of my life was done, he first raised up my soul, as being mistress of the body, to a place more eminent than others next to the glory of his divinity, and then my body, so that no other creature's body is so close to God as my own.
5 See how much my Son loved my soul and body! There are some people, however, who wickedly deny that I was assumed body and soul, and there are others who simply do not know better. But the truth of it is certain: I was taken up to God's glory in body and soul. 6 Hear how much my Son has honored my name! My name is Mary, as the Gospel says. When the angels hear this name, they rejoice in their understanding and give thanks to God because he worked so great a grace through me and with me and because they see the humanity of my Son glorified in his divinity. 7 The souls in purgatory rejoice beyond measure, just like a sick man does as he lies in bed and hears a word of comfort from others and it pleases his heart and makes him suddenly glad. 8 At the sound of my name, the good angels immediately draw closer to the just souls to whom they have been given as guardians and rejoice over their progress. Good angels have been given to everyone as a protection and bad angels as a test. It is not that angels are ever separated from God, but, rather, that they assist the soul without leaving God and remain steadily in his presence while still inflaming and inciting the soul to do good. 9 The demons all dread and fear this name. At the sound of the name of Mary, they immediately let the soul go out of their clutches. Like a bird with its claws and beak on its prey leaves it as soon as it hears a sound, but comes right back when it sees nothing happening afterward, so too the demons let go of a soul, frightened at the sound of my name, but fly back and return to it again as swift as an arrow, unless they see some improvement afterward. 10 No one is so cold in the love of God - unless he be one of the damned - that the devil does not immediately draw away from him if he invokes my name with the intention of never returning to his bad habits, and the devil keeps away from him unless he resumes his intention of sinning mortally. However, sometimes the devil is allowed to trouble him for the sake of his greater reward, but never to gain possession of him.

Chapter 10 - On Mary's Childhood, the Annunciation, and Her Son's Birth and Passion

The Virgin Mary's words to her daughter, offering a useful teaching about how she should live, and describing many marvelous details about the passion of Christ.

I am the Queen of heaven, the Mother of God. I told you that you should wear a brooch upon your breast. I will now show you more fully how, from the beginning, when I first learned and came to an understanding of the existence of God, I was always concerned about my salvation and religious observance. When I learned more completely that God himself was my Creator and the judge of all my actions, I came to love him deeply, and I was constantly alert and watchful so as not to offend him in word or deed. 2 When I learned that he had given his law and commandments to his people and worked so many miracles through them, I made a firm resolution in my soul to love nothing but him, and the things of the world became altogether repugnant to me. Then, having learned that God himself would redeem the world and be born of a Virgin, 3 I was so smitten with love for him that I thought of nothing but God and wanted nothing but him. As far as I was able, I withdrew from the conversation and the presence of parents and friends and gave away to the needy everything I had come to own. I kept for myself nothing but meager food and clothing.

Nothing but God was pleasing to me. I always hoped in my heart to live until the time of his birth and perhaps merit becoming the unworthy handmaid of the Mother of God. I also made a vow in my heart to preserve my virginity, if that was acceptable to him, and to possess nothing
Whatsoever in the world. 4 But if God willed otherwise, my wish was that his will, not mine, be done, for I believed he was able to do all things and wanted nothing but the best for me. And so I entrusted all my will to him. 5 When the prescribed time arrived for the presentation of virgins in the temple of the Lord, I was also present with them thanks to the religious compliance of my parents. I thought to myself that nothing was impossible for God, and that, since he knew I desired nothing and wanted nothing but him, he would be able to preserve my virginity, if it so pleased him: otherwise, let his will be done!

6 Having listened to all the commandments in the temple, I returned home, burning more with the love of God than ever before, being inflamed with new fires and desires of love each day. For that reason I withdrew by myself even more from everything else and was alone night and day, fearing greatly lest my mouth say anything or my ears hear anything against God or lest my eyes look on anything delectable. I felt the same fear in my silence and was very anxious to be silent upon those subjects about which I ought rather to have spoken. 7 While I was thus agitated in my heart and alone with myself, entrusting all my hope to God, at that very moment it came into my head to consider God's great power, how the angels and all creatures serve him, and what his indescribable and unending glory was like. 8 As I was wondering at all this, I saw three wonderful sights. I saw a star, but not the kind that shines from the sky. I saw a light, but not the kind that glows in the world. I sensed a smell, not of herbs or anything like that, but indescribably sweet, which quite filled me up so that I felt like jumping for joy. Right then I heard a voice, but not from a human mouth. I was quite afraid when I heard it and wondered whether it was an illusion. 9 An angel of God then appeared before me in the fairest human shape, although not in the flesh, and he said to me: 'Hail, full of grace!'

On hearing it, I wondered what this could mean or why he gave me such a greeting, since I knew and believed that I was unworthy of any such thing, or of any good thing, but also that it was possible for God to do anything he wanted. 10 The angel said next: 'The offspring to be born in you is holy and will be called the Son of God.' 11 It will be done as it pleases God.' I neither thought myself worthy nor did I ask the angel 'Why?' or 'When will it be done?' but I asked: 'How is it to be that I, who do not even know a man, am to become the unworthy Mother of God?' The angel answered me, as I said, that nothing is impossible for God, but 'Whatever he wants to do will be done.' 12 When I heard the words of the angel, I felt the most fervent desire to become the Mother of God, and my soul spoke out of love: 'Here I am, may your will be done in me!' 13 At that word, right then and there, my Son was conceived in my womb to the indescribable thrill of my soul and all my limbs. 12 When I had him in the womb, I bore him without any pain, without any heaviness or weariness in my body. I humbled myself in every way, knowing that the one I bore was the Almighty. When I gave birth to him, I did so without any pain or sin, just as I had conceived him, with such a thrill of soul and body that I felt like I was walking on air out of the thrill of it all.

Just as he entered my limbs to the joy of all my soul, so to the joy of all my limbs he left me, with my soul rejoicing and my virginity unscathed. 13 When I looked upon him and contemplated his beauty, knowing myself to be unworthy of such a son, joy seeped through my soul like drops of dew. When I contemplated the places where, as I had learned through the prophets, his hands and feet would be nailed at the crucifixion, my eyes filled with tears and my heart was torn by sadness. My Son looked at my crying eyes then and became deathly saddened. 14 When I
contemplated his divine power, I was consoled again, realizing that this was the way he wanted it and so it was the right way, and I conformed all my will to his. So my joy was always mixed with sorrow.

15 When the time of my Son's passion arrived, his enemies seized him. They struck him on his cheek and neck and spat at him as they made sport of him. When he was led to the pillar, he took off his clothes himself and placed his own hands on the pillar, and his enemies then mercilessly bound them. 16 Bound to the pillar, without any kind of covering, just as he had been born, he stood there and suffered the embarrassment of being naked. His friends had fled, but his enemies were ready for action. They stood there on all sides and scourged his body that was clean from every stain and sin. 17 I was standing nearby and, at the first lash, I fell down as if I were dead. When I revived, I could see his body whipped and scourged to the ribs. What was even more horrible was that when they pulled the whips back, the weighted thongs tore his flesh. 18 As my Son was standing there all bloody and covered with wounds, so that no sound spot was left on him that could be whipped, then someone, aroused in spirit, asked: 'Are you going to kill him thus unsentenced?' And straightaway he cut his bonds. 19 Then my Son himself put his clothes back on. I saw that the place where my Son had been standing was covered with blood, and by his footprints I could tell which way he walked, for the ground seemed to be soaked with blood wherever he went. 20 They had no patience with him to let him get dressed, but pushed and dragged him to hurry him on. As my Son was being led off like a thief, he dried the blood from his eyes. Once he was sentenced, they placed the cross on him to carry. He did carry it for a while, but then someone came along and undertook to carry it for him. 21 As my Son was going to the place of his passion, same people struck him on the neck, while others hit him in the face. He was hit so hard and with so much force that, although I did not see who hit him, I heard the sound of the blow clearly. When I reached the place of the passion with him, I saw all the instruments of his death ready. When my Son got there, he took off his clothes himself, while the servants said to each other:

'These are our clothes and he will not get them back since he is condemned to death.' 22 My Son was standing there, naked as he had been born, when someone came running up and offered him a veil with which he joyfully covered his shame. Then his cruel executioners seized him and stretched him out on the cross, nailing first his right hand to the crossbeam that had a hole in it for the nail. They pierced his hand at the point where the bone was more solid. With a rope they pulled his other hand and attached it to the crossbeam in similar fashion. 23 Then they crucified his right foot with the left on top of it using two nails so that all his sinews and veins became overstrained and burst. After that they put the crown of thorns on his head and it cut so deeply into my Son's venerable head that the blood filled his eyes as it flowed, blocked up his ears and stained his beard as it ran down. As he stood on the cross wounded and bloody, he felt compassion for me who was standing by in tears and, looking with his bloodied eyes in the direction of John, my nephew, he commended me to him.

24 At the time I could hear some people saying that my Son was a thief, others that he was a liar, still others that no one was more deserving of death than my Son. My sorrow was renewed from hearing all this. But, as I said before, when the first nail was driven into him, that first blow shook me so much that I fell down as if dead, my eyes covered in darkness, my hands trembling, my feet unsteady. In the bitterness of my grief I was not able to watch until he had been fastened
entirely to the cross. When I got up, I saw my Son hanging there in misery and, in my thorough dismay, I his most unhappy Mother, could hardly stand on my feet due to grief. Seeing me and his friends weeping inconsolably, my Son cried out in a loud and doleful voice to his Father, saying, 'Father, why have you abandoned me?' It was as if to say: 'There is no one who takes pity on me but you, Father.' At that stage his eyes looked half-dead, his cheeks were sunken, his face mournful, his mouth open and his tongue bloody. His stomach was sucked in toward his back, all the liquid having been consumed, as if he had no vital organs. All his body was pale and languid due to the loss of blood. His hands and feet were rigidly extended, being pulled toward the cross and shaped like the shape of the cross. His beard and hair were completely covered with blood.

There he stood, bruised and livid, and only his heart was still fresh, since it was of the best and strongest constitution. From my flesh he had received a most pure and well-wrought body. His skin was so thin and tender that if it was even slightly scourged the blood would flow out immediately. His blood was so fresh that it could be seen in his pure skin. Precisely because he had the very best constitution, life contended with death in his wounded body. At certain moments the pain in the limbs and sinews of his wounded body rose up to his still vigorous and unbroken heart and inflicted incredible pain and suffering on him. At other moments the pain went down from his heart into his wounded limbs and, in so doing, bitterly prolonged his death.

Surrounded by these sorrows, my Son looked at his friends who were weeping and who would rather have borne his pain themselves through his help or have burned in hell forever than to see him tortured so. His sorrow at his friends' sorrow exceeded all the bitterness and tribulations that he had endured in body and heart, due to the tender love he had for them. Then, out of the exceeding bodily anguish of his human nature, he cried out to the Father: 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' When I his most sorrowful Mother, heard those words, my whole body shook with the bitter pain of my heart. As often as I have thought on that cry since then, it has still remained present and fresh in my ears. As his death drew near and his heart burst from the violence of the pain, his whole body convulsed and his head raised itself a little and then drooped back down again, his mouth fell open and his tongue could be seen to be all bloody. His hands pulled back a little from the place of perforation and his feet had to bear more of the weight of his body. His fingers and arms stretched themselves out somewhat and his back stiffened tightly against the cross.

Then some people said to me: 'Mary, your Son is dead.' Others said: 'He has died but he will rise again.' As everyone was going away, a man came and drove a lance into his side with such force that it almost went out the other side. When the spear was withdrawn, its point appeared red with blood. And it seemed to me as if my own heart had been pierced when I saw my beloved Son's heart pierced. Then he was taken down from the cross. I took his body on my lap; it was like a leper's, all livid. His eyes were lifeless and full of blood, his mouth as cold as ice, his beard like twine, his face grown stiff. His hands had become so rigid that they could not be bent farther down than to about his naval. I had him on my knee just as he had been on the cross, like a man stiff in all his limbs. After that they laid him in a clean linen and with my linen cloth I dried his wounds and his limbs and then closed his eyes and mouth, which had been opened when he died. Then they placed him in the sepulcher. How I would rather have been
placed in there alive with my Son, if it had been his will! These things done, dear John came and brought me to his house. See, then, my daughter, what my Son has endured for you!

Chapter 11 - On Christ's Passion and How Birgitta Can Imitate Him

Christ's words to his bride about how he delivered himself up, of his own free will, to be crucified by his enemies, and about how to control the body from illicit movements through the consideration of his sweet passion.

The Son of God spoke to his bride, saying: "I am the Creator of heaven and earth, and it is my true body that is consecrated on the altar. Love me with all your heart, because I have loved you and delivered myself up to my enemies of my own free will, while my friends and my Mother were left in bitter grief and mourning. When I saw the lance, the nails, the whips, and the other instruments of suffering ready, I still went on to suffer with joy. When my head was bleeding on all sides from the crown of thorns, and blood was flowing on all sides, then, even if my enemies had got hold of my heart as well, I would rather have let it be sundered and wounded than lose you. So you are extremely ungrateful, if, in return for such great charity, you do not love me. If my head was pierced and inclined on the cross for you, your head should be inclined toward humility. Since my eyes were bloody and full of tears, your eyes should keep away from pleasurable sights. Since my ears were filled with blood and heard mocking words against me, your ears should turn aside from frivolous and unfitting talk. Since my mouth was given a bitter drink to drink but was denied a sweet one, keep your own mouth from evil and let it be open for good. Since my hands were stretched out by nails, let your works, which the hands symbolize, be stretched out to the poor and to my commandments. Let your feet, that is, your affections, with which you should walk toward me, be crucified as to lusts, so that, just as I suffered in all my limbs, so may all your limbs be ready to obey me. I demand more service of you than of others, because I have given you a greater grace."

Chapter 12 - Birgitta's Guardian Angel Asks for Her to Be Beaten with a Rod

About how an angel prays for the bride and how Christ asks the angel what it is that he asks for the bride and what is good for her.

A good angel, the guardian of the bride, appeared praying to Christ for her. The Lord answered him and said: "A person who wants to pray for another should pray for the other's salvation. You are like a fire that is never extinguished, ceaselessly burning with my love. You see and know all things when you see me. You want nothing but what I want. So tell me, what is good for this new bride of mine?" He answered: "Lord, you know all things." The Lord said to him: "All things, whatsoever has been made or will be, exist eternally in me. I understand and know all things in heaven and on earth and there is no change in me. But, in order that the bride may recognize my will tell me what is good for her, now while she is listening." And the angel said: "She has a big and conceited heart. Therefore she needs the rod in order to be tamed." Then the Lord said: "What is your request for her, my friend?" The angel said: "Lord, I ask you to grant her mercy along with the rod." And the Lord said: "For your sake, I will do so, since I never perform justice without mercy. This is why the bride should love me with all her heart."
Chapter 13 - An Enemy of God Possessed by Three Demons

About how an enemy of God had three demons within him and about the sentence passed on him by Christ.

My enemy has three demons within him. The first resides in his genitals, the second in his heart, the third in his mouth. The first is like a seaman, who lets water in through the keel, and the water, by increasing gradually, fills up the ship. There is a flood of water then, and the ship sinks. This ship stands for his body that is assailed by the temptations of demons and by his own lusts as though by storms. Lust entered first through the keel, that is, through the delight he took in bad thoughts. Since he did not resist through penance or fill the holes with the nails of abstinence, the water of lust grew day by day through his consenting. The ship being then replete or filled with the concupiscence of the belly, the water flooded and engulfed the ship in lust so that he was unable to reach the port of salvation. 3 The second demon, residing in his heart, is like a worm lying in an apple that first eats the apple's core, and then, after leaving its excrements there, roams around inside the apple until the whole apple is ruined. This is what the devil does. First he spoils a person's will and good desires, which are like the core where all the mind's strength and goodness are found, and, once the heart has been emptied of these goods, then he puts in their place in the heart the worldly thoughts and affections that the person had loved more. He then impels the body itself toward his pleasure and, for this reason, the man's courage and understanding diminish and his life becomes tedious. He is indeed an apple without a core, that is, a man without a heart, since he enters my church without a heart, because he has no charity.

5 The third demon is like an archer who, looking around through the windows, shoots the unwary. How can the devil not be in a man who is always including him in his conversation? That which is loved more is more frequently mentioned. The harsh words by which he wounds others are like arrows shot through as many windows as the number of times he mentions the devil or as many times as his words wound innocent people and scandalize simple folk. I who am the truth swear by my truth that I shall condemn him like a whore to fire and brimstone, like an insidious traitor to the mutilation of his limbs, like a scoffer of the Lord to perpetual shame. However, as long as his soul and body are still united, my mercy is open to him. What I require of him is to attend the divine services more frequently, not to be afraid of any reproach or desire any honor and never to have that sinister name on his lips again.

EXPLANATION

8 This man, an abbot of the Cistercian order, had buried someone who had been excommunicated. When he was saying the commendatory prayer over him, Lady Birgitta, rapt in spirit, heard this: "He did what lay in his power and buried him." You can be sure that the first burial after this one will be his own. For he sinned against the Father, who has told us not to show partiality and not to honor the rich unjustly. For the sake of a small perishable gain, this man gave honor to an unworthy person and placed him among the worthy, which he should not have done. He also sinned against my Spirit, who is the communion and community of the just, by burying an unjust man next to the just. He sinned against me, too, the Son, because I have said: "He who rejects me shall be rejected." This man honored and exalted someone whom my
church and my vicar had rejected." The abbot repented when he heard these words and died on the fourth day.

Chapter 14 - Advice on Prayer; on Three Groups of People Who Serve God for the Wrong Reasons

Christ's words to his bride about the manner and the reverence she should maintain in prayer, and about the three kinds of people who serve God in this world.

I am your God who was crucified on the cross, true God and true man in one person, and who am present in the hands of the priest everyday. Whenever you offer any prayer to me, always end it with the desire that my will and not yours be done always. I do not hear your prayers on behalf of those already condemned. Sometimes, too, you wish something to be done that goes against your salvation, which is why it is necessary for you to entrust your will to me, for I know all things and do not provide you with anything but what is beneficial. There are many who do not pray with the right intention, which is why they do not deserve to be heard. There are three kinds of people who serve me in this world. The first are the ones who believe me to be God and the giver of all things who has power over everything. They serve me with the intention of obtaining temporal goods and honor, but the things of heaven are as nothing to them, and they would just as soon lose them so that they can obtain present goods. Worldly success in everything falls to their share, according to their wishes. Since they have lost the eternal goods, I recompense them with temporal comforts for whatever good service they do for me, right down to the last farthing and their very last moment. The second are the ones who believe me to be God almighty and a strict judge, but who serve me out of fear of punishment and not out of love of heavenly glory. If they did not fear me, they would not serve me. The third are the ones who believe me to be the Creator of all things and true God and who believe me to be just and merciful. They do not serve me out of any fear of punishment but out of divine love and charity. They would prefer any punishment, if they could bear it, rather than once provoke me to anger. They truly deserve to be heard when they pray, since their will accords with my will. The first kind of servant will never depart from punishment or get to see my face. The second will not be punished as much but will still not get to see my face, unless he corrects his fear through penitence.

Chapter 15 - About a King with Two Treasuries

Christ's words to his bride describing himself as a great king, and about two treasuries symbolizing the love of God and the love of the world, and a lesson about how to make improvement in this life.

I am like a great and powerful king. Four things pertain to a king. First he has to be rich, second generous, third wise, and fourth, charitable. I am truly the king of angels and of all mankind. I have those four qualities that I mentioned. In the first place, I am the richest of all, since I supply the needs of everyone and still possess as much after having given. Second, I am the most generous of all, since I am prepared to give to anyone who asks. Third, I am the wisest of all, since I know what is each person's due and what is best for him or her. Fourth, I am charitable, since I am more prepared to give than anyone is to ask. I have, you might say, two treasuries.
Weighty materials, heavy as lead, are stored in the first treasury, and sharp-pointed spikes line the compartment where they are kept. But these heavy things come to seem as light as feathers to a person who starts by turning them over and rolling them, and then learns how to carry them. The things that before seemed so heavy become light, and the things that before were thought to be so sharp be come soft. In the second treasury there seems to be glittering gold and precious gems and delicious drinks. But the gold is really mud and the drinks are poison. There are two paths into these treasuries, although there used to be only one. At the crossroads, I mean, at the entrance to the two paths, there stood a man who cried out to three men who were taking the second path, and he said: 'Listen, listen to what I have to say! But if you do not want to listen, then at least use your eyes to see that what I say is true. If you do not want to use either your ears or your eyes, then at least use your hands to touch and prove to yourselves that I do not speak falsely.'

Then the first of them said: 'Let us listen and see if he is telling the truth.' The second man said: 'Whatever he says is false.' The third said: 'I know he is telling the truth, but I do not care.' What are these two treasuries if not love of me and love of the world? There are two paths into these two treasuries: self-abasement and complete self-denial lead to my love, while carnal desire leads to the love of the world. To some people the burden they bear in my love seems to be made of lead, since when they should be fasting or keeping vigil or practicing self-restraint, they think they are carrying a load of lead. If they have to hear gibes and insults because they spend time in prayer and in the practice of religion, it is as if they were sitting on spikes; it is always a torture to them. The person who wishes to stay in my love should first turn the load over, that is, make an effort to do the good by willing it with a constant desire. Then he should lift it a little, slowly, that is, he should do what he can, thinking: I can do this well if God will help me.' Then, persevering in the task he has undertaken, he will begin to carry the things that earlier seemed heavy to him with such a cheerful readiness that all the hardships of fasts and vigils or any hardship whatsoever is as light as a feather to him. My friends take their rest in a place, which, to the idle and wicked, seems to be lined by spikes and thorns but which offers my friends the best repose, soft as roses.

The direct path into this treasury is to scorn your own will, which happens when a man, thinking on my passion and death, does not care about his own will but resists it and constantly strives to be better. Although this path is somewhat difficult in the beginning, there is still a lot of pleasure in the process, so much so that the things that first seemed to be impossible to carry later become very light, so he can rightfully say to himself: 'God's yoke is easy.' The second treasury is the world. In it there are gold, precious gems, and drinks that look delicious but are bitter as poison once tasted. What happens to everyone carrying the gold is that, when his body weakens and his limbs fail, when his marrow is wasted and his body falls to the earth through death, then he lets go of the gold and the gems, and they are worth no more to him than mud. The drinks of the world, I mean, its delights, look delicious, but, once in the stomach, they make the head grow weak and the heart heavy, they ruin the body and a person then withers away like grass. As the pain of death approaches, all these delicious things become as bitter as poison. Self-will leads to this treasury, whenever a person does not care about resisting the lower appetites and does not meditate on what I have commanded and on what I have done, but immediately does whatever comes to mind, whether licit or not. Three men are walking on this path. By them I mean all the reprobate, all those who love the world and their self-will. I cried
out to them as I stood at the crossroads at the entrance to the two ways, since, through my coming in human flesh, I showed mankind two paths, as it were, the one to follow and the one to avoid, the path leading to life and the one leading to death. Before my coming in the flesh, there used to be just one path. On it all people, good and bad, went to hell. 17 I am the one who cried out, and my cry was this:

'People, listen to my words that lead to the path of life, use your senses to understand that what I say is true. If you do not listen to them or cannot listen to them, then at least look - that is, use faith and reason - and see that my words are true. In the same way as a visible thing can be discerned by the eyes of the body, so too can invisible things be discerned and believed by the eyes of faith. 18 There are many simple souls in the church who do few works but are saved by means of their faith. Through it they believe me to be the Creator and redeemer of the universe. There is no one who cannot understand and come to the belief that I am God, if only he considers how the earth bears fruit and how the heavens give rain, how the trees grow green, how the animals subsist each in its own species, how the stars are of service to mankind, how things opposed to the will of man occur.

19 From all this, a person can see that he is mortal and that it is God who arranges all these things. If God did not exist, everything would be in disorder. Accordingly, everything has been arranged by God, everything rationally arranged for the sake of man's instruction. Not the least little thing exists or subsists in the world without reason. Accordingly, if a person cannot understand or comprehend my powers due to his weakness, he can by means of faith see and believe. 20 But, people, if you do not want to use your intellect to consider my power, you can still use your hands to touch the deeds that I and my saints have done. They are so patent that no one can doubt them to be the works of God. 21 Who raised the dead and gave light to the blind if not God? Who cast out demons if not God? What have I taught if not things useful for the salvation of soul and body and easy to bear? However, the first man says or, rather, some people say: 'Let us listen and test whether it be true!' These people remain for a time in my service, not out of love but as an experiment and in imitation of others, without giving up their own will but carrying out their own will along with mine. 22 They are in a dangerous position, since they want to serve two masters, although they can serve neither one well. When they are called, they will be rewarded by the master they have loved the most.

23 The second man says or, rather, some people say: 'Whatever he says is false and Scripture is false.' I am God, the Creator of all things, without me nothing has been made. I established the new and the old covenants, they came out of my mouth, and there is no falsehood in them because I am the truth. Accordingly, those who say that I am false and that Sacred Scripture is false will never see my face, since their conscience tells them that I am God, inasmuch as all things occur according to my will and disposition. 24 The sky gives them light, nor can they give any light to themselves; the earth bears fruit, the air makes the earth fruitful, all the animals are determined in a certain way, the demons confess me, the righteous suffer incredible things for the sake of my love. They see all these things, yet they do not see me. 25 They could also see me in my justice, if they considered how the earth swallows up the impious, how fire consumes the wicked. Likewise they could also see me in my mercy, as when water flowed for the righteous out of the rock or the waters parted for them, as when the fire did not harm them or the skies gave them food like the earth. Because they see these things and still say I am a
liar, they shall never see my face. The third man says, or, rather, some people say: 'We know very well that he is the true God, but we do not care.' These people will be forever tormented, because they despise me, their Lord and God. Is not it great scorn on their part to use my gifts but to refuse to serve me? If they had acquired these things by their own industry and not entirely from me, their scorn would not seem so great. But I will give my grace to those who begin to turn over my burden voluntarily and strive with a fervent desire to do what they can. I will work together with those who carry my load, that is, those who progress day by day out of love for me, and I will be their strength and will set them so on fire that they will want to do more. The people who remain in the place that seems to prick them - but really is peaceful - are those who toil patiently night and day with out wearying but growing ever more ardent, thinking that what they do is little. These are my dearest friends, and they are very few, since others find the drinks in the second treasury more pleasing.

Chapter 16 - Dialogue between the Virgin and a Devil Concerning the Soul of a Sinful Woman

On how the bride saw a saint speaking to God about a woman who was being terribly afflicted by the devil and who was later delivered through the prayers of the glorious Virgin.

The bride saw one of the saints speaking to God and saying: "Why is the devil afflicting the soul of this woman whom you redeemed by your blood?" The devil answered immediately and said: "Because she is mine by right." And the Lord said: "By what right is she yours?" The devil answered him: "There are," he said, "two paths. One leads to heaven, the other to hell. When she beheld these two paths, her conscience and her reason told that she should choose my path. And because she had a free will for selecting the path of her choice, she thought it would be advantageous to turn her will toward committing sin, and she began to walk along my path. Later I deceived her through three vices: gluttony, greed for money, and sensuality. Now I dwell in her belly and in her nature. I hold on to her by five hands. With one hand I hold her eyes, so she will not see spiritual things. With the second one I hold her hands, so she will not perform any good deeds. With the third one I hold her feet, so she will not stray over to goodness. With the fourth one I hold her intellect, so she will not be ashamed to sin. And with the fifth one I hold her heart, so she will not return through contrition."

The Blessed Virgin Mary then said to her Son: "My Son, make him tell the truth about what I want to ask him." The Son said: "You are my Mother, you are the Queen of Heaven, you are the Mother of mercy, you are the consolation of the souls in purgatory, you are the joy of those making their way in the world. You are the angels' sovereign Mistress, the most excellent creature before God. You are also Mistress over the devil. Command this demon yourself, Mother, and he will tell you whatever you want." The Blessed Virgin then asked the devil: "Tell me, devil, what intention did this woman have before entering the church?" The devil answered her: "She had resolved to keep from sin." And the Virgin Mary said to him: "Inasmuch as her previous intention led her to hell, tell me, in what direction does her present intention of keeping from sin tend?" The devil answered her reluctantly: "The intention of keeping from sin leads her toward heaven." The Virgin Mary said: "Because you accepted that it was your just right to lead her away from the path of the Holy Church due to her previous intention, then it is now a matter of justice that she be led back to the church on account of her present intention. Now, devil,
will put another question to you: Tell me, what intention does she have in her present state of conscience?"

The devil answered: "In her mind she is terribly contrite and sorry about the things she has done, and she resolves never to commit such sins anymore but wants to improve as far as she is able." The Virgin then asked the devil: "Would you tell me if the three sins of sensuality, gluttony, and greed can exist in a heart at the same time as the three good dispositions of contrition, sorrow, and the purpose of amendment?" The devil answered: "No." The Virgin asked the devil: "Would you tell me, then, which of these should shrink away and vanish from her heart, the three virtues or the three vices that you say cannot occupy the same place at the same time?" The devil replied: "I say, the sins." And the Virgin answered: "The path to hell, then, is closed to her and the path to heaven lies open to her." Again the Blessed Virgin asked the devil: "Tell me, if a robber lay in wait outside the doors of the bride and wanted to rape her, what would the bridegroom do?" The devil answered: "If the bridegroom is good and noble, he should defend her and risk his life for her sake." Then the Virgin said: "You are the wicked robber. This soul is the bride of the bridegroom, my Son, who redeemed her with his own blood. You corrupted and seized her by force. Therefore, since my Son is the bridegroom of her soul and Lord over you, then it is your role to flee before him."

EXPLANATION

11 This woman was a prostitute who wanted to return to the world because the devil was molesting her day and night, so much so that he visibly pressed her eyes into her head and, while many were watching, dragged her out of bed. Then, in the presence of many reliable witnesses, the holy lady Birgitta said openly: "Get you gone, devil, you have vexed this creature of God enough." After she had said this, the woman lay pressed with her eyes on the ground for half an hour and then got up and said: "Truly, I saw the devil in the vilest of shapes going out through the window and I heard a voice saying to me: 'Woman, you have truly been set free.'" From that hour on this woman was freed from all impatience and no longer suffered from filthy thoughts, and she came to her rest through a good death.

Chapter 17 - On a Proud and Greedy Person

Christ's words to his bride comparing a sinner to three things: an eagle, a fowler, and a fighter.

I am Jesus Christ who am speaking with you. I am he who was in the womb of the Virgin, true God and true man. Although I was in the Virgin, I still ruled over all things together with the Father. That man, who is such a wicked enemy of mine, is like three things. First, he is like an eagle that flies in the air while other birds fly beneath it; second, like a fowler playing on a pipe smeared with sticky pitch, whose tune delights the birds so that they fly to the pipe and get stuck in the pitch; third, he is like a fighter who is first in every match. He is like an eagle, because in his pride he cannot possibly tolerate anyone being above him, and he injures everyone he can get at with the talons of his malice. I will cut off the wings of his power and pride and remove his malice from the earth. I will give him over to the unquenchable oil where he will be tormented without end, if he does not mend his ways. He is also like a fowler in that he attracts everyone to himself by the sweetness of his words and promises, but anyone who comes
to him gets caught in perdition and can never escape from it. For that reason the birds of hell will
peck his eyes out so that he will never see my glory but only the everlasting darkness of hell. They
will cut off his ears so that he will not hear the words of my mouth. In return for his sweet
to words, they will cause him bitterness from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head, and he
will endure as many punishments as the number of men he led to perdition. He is also like a
fighter who takes first place in wickedness, unwilling to yield to anybody and determined to beat
everyone down. Like a fighter, then, he will have first place in every punishment; his punishment
will be constantly renewed and never end. Yet, so long as his soul is with his body, my mercy
stands ready for him.

EXPLANATION

6 This was a very powerful knight who hated the clergy a lot and used to hurl insults at them. The
preceding revelation is about him as well as the following one: The Son of God says: "O
worldly knight, question the wise about what happened to proud Haman who had scorned my
people! Was not his an ignominious death and a great degradation? This man derides me and my
friends in the same way. For this reason, just as Israel did not mourn the death of Haman, my
friends will not mourn the death of this man. He will die a most bitter death, if he does not mend
his ways." And that is what happened.

Chapter 18 - Instructions about a "House" (i.e., a New Monastery)

Christ's words to his bride about how there ought to be humility in the house of God, and about
how such a house denotes the religious life, and about how buildings and alms and so forth
ought to be donated from goods properly acquired, and about how to make restitution.

In my house there should be all that humility which now only gets contempt. There should be a
sturdy wall between the men and women, because although I am capable of defending everyone
and supporting them all without any need of a wall, nevertheless, for the sake of caution and
because of the devil's cunning, I want a wall separating the two residences. It should be a sturdy
wall, moderately but not too high. The windows should be simple and transparent, the roof
moderately high, so nothing can be seen there that does not suggest humility, The men who build
houses for me nowadays are like master builders who take the lord of the house by the hair as he
enters and trample him underfoot. They raise mud up high and put gold underfoot. That is what
they do to me, They build mud, I mean, they pile up temporal and perishable goods to the sky,
so to speak, while not caring at all about souls, which are more precious than gold. When I want
to go to them through my preachers or through good thoughts, they grab me by the hair and
trample me underfoot, I mean, they attack me with blasphemy and consider my works and words
to be as despicable as mud. They think themselves much wiser.

If they wanted to build things for me and for my glory, they would first build up their own souls.
Let whoever builds my house take the utmost care not to let a single penny that has not been
rightly and justly acquired go to the building. There are plenty of people who know they
possess ill-gotten goods and yet are not at all sorry for it nor have the intention of making
restitution and satisfaction for their cheating and stealing, although they could make restitution
and satisfaction if they were willing. However, since they realize they cannot keep these things
forever, they give a part of their ill-gotten goods to the churches, as if to placate me by their
donation. They reserve their other legitimate possessions for their descendants. This does not
please me at all. A person who wants to please me by his donations should first of all have the
desire to mend his ways and should then do those good works he is capable of doing. He should
lament and bewail the evil he has done and make restitution, if he can. If he cannot, he should
have the intention of making restitution for his fraudulently acquired goods. Then he should
take care never to commit such sins again. If the person to whom he ought to restore his ill-
gotten goods is no longer alive, then he can make a donation to me, who am able to pay back
everyone. If he is unable to restore them, provided he humbles himself before me with a purpose
of amendment and a contrite heart, I have the means to make restitution and, either now or in the
future, restore their property to all those who have been cheated.

Let me explain to you the meaning of the house that I want built. The house is the religious life.
I myself, the Creator of all things, through whom all things were made and exist, am its
foundation. There are four walls in this house. The first is the justice by which I will judge
those who are hostile to this house. The second wall is the wisdom by which I will enlighten the
inhabitants with my knowledge and understanding. The third is the power by which I will
strengthen them against the machinations of the devil. The fourth wall is my mercy, which
welcomes everyone who asks for it. In this wall is the door of grace through which all seekers
are welcomed. The roof of the house is the charity by which I cover the sins of those who love
me so that they will not be sentenced for their sins. The window of the roof through which the
sun enters is the consideration of my grace. Through it the warmth of my divinity is let in to the
inhabitants. That the wall should be big and strong means that no one can weaken my words or
destroy them. That it should be moderately high means that my wisdom can be understood and
comprehended in part but never fully. The simple and transparent windows mean that my
words are simple, yet through them the light of divine knowledge enters into the world. The
moderately high roof means that my words will be manifested not in an incomprehensible way
but in a comprehensible and intelligible way.

Chapter 19 - On People's Ingratitude toward God

The Creator's words to the bride about the splendor of his power, wisdom, and virtue, and about
how those who are now said to be wise sin the most against him.

I am the Creator of heaven and earth. I have three qualities. I am most powerful, most wise, and
most virtuous. I am so powerful that the angels honor me in heaven, and the demons in hell dare
not look upon me. All the elements are at my beck and call. I am so wise that nobody can
succeed in tracking my wisdom. My knowledge is such that I know all that has been and all that
will be. I am so rational that not the least little thing, whether a worm or some other animal, no
matter how ugly, has been made without a reason. I am also so virtuous that every good flows
from me as though from a good spring and all sweetness comes from me as though from a good
vine. Without me, nobody can be powerful, nobody wise, nobody virtuous. For this reason, the
powerful men of the world sin against me exceedingly. I have given them strength and power so
they might honor me, but they attribute the honor to themselves, as if they got it from
themselves. The wretches do not consider their own feebleness. If I were to send them the least
little infirmity, they would immediately break down and everything would lose its value for
them. How then will they be able to withstand my might and the punishments of eternity? 5 But those who are now said to be wise sin even more against me. For I gave them sense, understanding, and wisdom in order for them to love me, but the only thing they understand is their own temporal advantage. They have eyes in their head but look only to their own pleasures. They are blind as to giving thanks to me, who gave them everything, since nobody, whether good or wicked, can perceive or understand anything without me, even if I allow the wicked to incline their will to whatever they like. 6 Moreover, nobody can be virtuous without me. I could now use that commonly cited proverb: 'Everyone despises the patient man.' Because of my patience everyone thinks I am terribly foolish and that is why everyone looks down on me. 7 But woe to them when, after so much patience, I make my sentence known to them! Before me they will be like mud that drops down to the depths and does not stop until it comes to the lowest part of hell.

Chapter 20 - On the Chastity and Humility of the Bride

A pleasant dialogue of the Virgin Mother and the Son with each other and of the Virgin Mother and the Son with the bride, and about how the bride should get ready for the wedding.

The Mother appeared saying to the Son: "You are the King of glory, my Son, you are Lord over all lords, you created heaven and earth and everything in them. May your every desire be done, may your every will be done!" 2 The Son answered: "It is an ancient proverb that says 'what a youth learns in his youth, he retains in his old age.' Mother, from your youth you learned to follow my will and to surrender all your will to me. You rightly said: 'May your will be done!' 3 You are like precious gold that is laid out and hammered on a hard anvil, because you were hammered by all manner of tribulation and you suffered in my passion beyond all others. When my heart burst from the vehemence of my pain on the cross, it wounded your heart like sharp steel. You would willingly have let it be cut in two, had that been my will. 4 Even if you had been able to oppose my passion and demanded that I be allowed to live, still you did not will to have it any other way than according to my will. For that reason you did well to say: 'Your will be done!'"

5 Then Mary said to the bride: "My Son's bride, love my Son, because he loves you. Honor his saints, who are in his presence. They are like countless stars whose light and splendor cannot be compared to any temporal light. As the light of the world differs from darkness, so - but much more - does the light of the saints differ from the light of this world. 6 I tell you truly that if the saints were seen clearly, as they really are, no human eye could bear it without being deprived of its bodily sight." 7 Then the Virgin's Son spoke to his bride, saying: "My bride, you should have four qualities. First, you should be ready for the wedding of my divinity wherein there is no carnal desire but only the most sweet spiritual pleasure, the kind that is appropriate for God to have with a chaste soul. In this way, neither the love for your children nor for temporal goods nor for your relatives should drag you away from my love. Do not let happen to you what happened to those foolish virgins 2 who were not ready when the Lord wished to call them to the wedding and were therefore left behind. 8 Second, you should have faith in my words.

For I am the truth, and nothing but the truth comes from my lips, and nobody can find anything but truth in my words. At times I mean what I say in a spiritual sense, and at other times
according to the letter of the word, in which case my words should be understood according to their naked sense. Thus, nobody can accuse me of lying. In the third place, you should be obedient in order for there to be not a single limb in your body through which you do wrong and which you do not submit to the proper penance and reparation. Although I am merciful, I do not relinquish justice. Therefore, obey humbly and cheerfully those whom you are bound to obey, so that you do not do even that which seems useful and reasonable to you if it goes against obedience. It is better to give up your own will out of obedience, even if its object is good, and to follow the will of your director, provided it does not go against the salvation of your soul or is otherwise irrational. In the fourth place, you should be humble, because you are united in a spiritual matrimony.

You should therefore be humble and modest on the arrival of your bridegroom. Let your handmaid be sober and restrained, I mean, let your body practice abstinence and be well disciplined, because you will bear the fruit of spiritual offspring for the good of many. In the same way as when a shoot is grafted onto a dry stem and the stem begins to blossom, you must bear fruit and blossom through my grace. And my grace will intoxicate you, and the whole heavenly host will rejoice on account of the sweet wine I will give you. Do not lose trust in my goodness. I as sure you that just as Zechariah and Elizabeth rejoiced in their hearts with an indescribable joy over the promise of a future child, you, too, will rejoice over the grace I want to give you, and, besides, others will rejoice through you. It was an angel who spoke to those two, Zechariah and Elizabeth, but it is I, the God and Creator of the angels and of you, who speak to you. For my sake, those two gave birth to my most dear friend John. Through you I want many children to be born to me, not of the flesh but of the spirit. Truly, I tell you, John was like a reed full of sweetness and honey, for nothing unclean ever entered his mouth nor did he ever go beyond the limits of necessity in getting what he needed to live on. Semen never left his body, which is why he can well be called an angel and a virgin.

Chapter 21 - A Sorcerer Is Compared to an Ugly Frog

The bridegroom's words to his bride making admirable use of a fine allegory about a sorcerer in order to illustrate and explain the devil.

The bridegroom, Jesus, spoke to his bride in allegories, using the example of a frog. He said: 'A certain sorcerer had fine glittering gold. A simple and mild-mannered man came to him and wanted to buy the gold. The sorcerer told him: 'You will not get this gold, unless you give me better gold and in greater quantity.' He answered him: 'I desire your gold so much that I will give you what you want rather than do without it.' After having given the sorcerer better gold in greater quantity, he took the glittering gold from him and put it in a case, planning to make himself a ring from it for his finger. When a short time had passed, the sorcerer went to that simple man and told him: 'The gold you bought and put in your case is not gold, as you think, but an ugly frog, which was bred in my breast and fed on my food. And in order to test the truth of the matter, open the case and you will see how the frog will leap to my breast where it was bred.' When the man tried to open it and find out, a frog could be seen in the case, the cover of which was suspended on four hinges that were about to fall off. When the lid of the case was opened and the frog saw the sorcerer, he leaped to his breast. The servants and friends of the simple man saw this and said to him: 'Master, his fine gold is inside the frog and, if you like, you can easily
get the gold.' 5 'How?' he asked. 'How can I?' They said: 'If someone were to take a very sharp and heated lancet and thrust it into the frog's back, he would soon get the gold out of that part of the back where there is a hollow. If he cannot find a hollow in it, then he should with every effort thrust his lancet firmly into it, and in that way you will get back what you bought.'

6 Who is this sorcerer if not the devil, enticing people to empty pleasures and glory? He promises that what is false is true and makes what is true seem to be false. He has possession of that precious gold, I mean, of the soul, which, through my divine power, I made more precious than all the stars and planets. I made it immortal and stable and more delightful to me than the rest of creation. I prepared for it an eternal resting place and dwelling with me. 7 I bought it from the power of the devil with better and more expensive gold by giving for it my own flesh, immune from every sin, and enduring so bitter a passion that not one of my limbs remained uninjured. I put the redeemed soul in a body as in a case, until the time when I would give it a place in the court of my divine presence. 8 Now, however, the redeemed human soul has become like a foul and ugly frog, leaping in his pride and living in slime through his sensuality. The gold, I mean, my rightful possession has been taken away from me. That is why the devil can indeed say to me: 'The gold you bought is not gold but a frog, bred in the breast of my delight. Separate the body from the soul and you will see that it will fly straight to the breast of my delight where it was bred.' 9 My answer to him is this: 'Since the frog is horrid to look at, horrible to hear and poisonous to touch, and is no good to me and gives me no delight but does so for you, in whose breast it was bred, then you can have it, since you have a right to it. And so when the lid is opened, that is, when the soul is separated from the body, it will fly straight to you, to remain with you forever.'

10 Such is the soul of the person I am describing to you. It is like an evil frog, full of filthiness and lust, fed at the breast of the devil. I am coming now to the case, I mean, to the soul's body, through its coming death. The case is suspended from four hinges that are about to fall off in the sense that his body is supported by four things, namely strength, beauty, wisdom, and sight, all of which are now beginning to fail him. 11 When the soul is separated from the body, it will fly straight to the devil on whose milk it was fed, since it has forgotten my love in taking up on myself for its sake the punishment it deserved. It does not requite my love with love, but, instead, takes my rightful possession away from me. It owes greater service to me who redeemed it than to any other, but it finds greater pleasure in the devil. 12 The sound of his prayer seems like the sound of a frog to me, his looks are abominable to me. His ears will never hear my joy; 13 his poisoned sense of touch will never feel my divinity. However, because I am merciful, if anyone were to touch his soul now, although it is unclean, and to examine it to see if there be any contrition in it or any goodness in his will, if anyone were to thrust into his mind a sharp and heated lancet, I mean, the fear of my strict judgment, he could still obtain my grace, if only he would consent to it. 13 If there is no contrition or charity in him, still there might be some hope, provided someone could pierce him with a sharp correction and rebuke him strongly, because so long as the soul lives in the body, my mercy lies open to everyone. See how I died for love, yet nobody repays me with love, but they take from me what is justly mine. It would be just if people improved their lives in proportion to the efforts it cost to redeem them. 14 Now, however, people want to live all the worse in proportion to the pain I suffered in redeeming them. The more I show them how abominable their sin is, the more boldly they want to sin. Look, therefore, and consider how it is not without cause that I am angry: They manage to change for themselves
my good will into anger. I redeemed them from sin, and they get themselves increasingly entangled in sin. ¹⁵So, my bride, give me what you are obliged to give me, I mean, keep your soul clean for me, because I died for it in order that you might keep it clean for me."

Chapter 22 - Reassurance for Birgitta about Her Concerns

The Mother's gentle question to the bride, and the bride's humble answer to the Mother, and the Mother's useful reply to the bride, and about the progress of good people among the wicked.

The Mother spoke to the Son's bride, saying: "You are my Son's bride. Tell me what is on your mind and what you would like!" The bride answered her: "My Lady, you know it, because you know everything." The Blessed Virgin said: "Although I know everything, I would like you to tell me while the persons here present are listening." ² The bride said: "My lady, I am afraid of two things. First," she said, "I am afraid that I do not weep for my sins or make amends for them as much as I should like. Second, I am sad because your Son has many enemies."

The Virgin Mary answered: "I give you three cures for your first worry. First of all, think about how all things that have spirit, such as frogs or other animals, have troubles from time to time, even though their spirits do not live forever but die with their bodies. However, your spirit, and every human soul, does live forever. ³ Second, think about the mercy of God, because there are none who are such sinners that their sin is not forgiven them, if only they pray with a resolution to improve and with contrition. Third, think about how much glory the soul gains when she lives with God and in God forever.

⁴ I give you three cures as well for your second worry about the enemies of God being many. First, consider that your God and your Creator and theirs is also their judge, and that they will never again sentence him, even though he patiently puts up with their wickedness for a time. Second, remember that they are the children of damnation and how hard and unbearable it will be for them to burn for all eternity. ⁵ They are most wicked servants who will get no inheritance, while the children will receive the inheritance. But perhaps you will say: 'Then should not one preach to them?' Of course! Remember that good people are frequently found among the evil. And adopted children sometimes turn away from what is good, like the prodigal son ⁶ who went to a far off land and lived an evil life. But sometimes preaching pricks their conscience and they return to the Father, as welcome then as they had been sinful before. So one should preach especially to them, because, though a preacher may only see wicked people in front of him, he should think to himself: 'Perhaps there are some among them who will become children of my Lord. I will therefore preach to them.' Such a preacher will get a very great reward. ⁷ In the third place, consider that the wicked are permitted to continue living as a trial for the good, so that they, exasperated by the habits of the wicked, might gain their reward as a fruit of patience. You can understand this better by means of an example. A rose smells sweet, is beautiful to the sight, gentle to the touch, but it only grows among thorns that are sharp to the touch, ugly to look at, and do not give off a pleasant scent.

⁸ Similarly, good and righteous people, although they may be gentle through patience, beautiful in their character, and sweet in their good example, still cannot make progress or be put to the test except among the wicked. The thorn is sometimes for the rose's protection, so that it will not
be picked before it is in full bloom. Similarly, the wicked offer an occasion to good people not to follow them in sin, when, because of the wickedness of others, the good are held back from coming to ruin through immoderate merriment or some other sin. Wine does not keep its quality well except in dregs, and neither can good and righteous people remain upright and advance in the virtues without being put to the test through tribulation and by being persecuted by the unrighteous. So put up gladly with the enemies of my Son. Remember that he is their judge and, if justice demanded that he destroy them all, he could wipe them out in a moment. Tolerate them, then, so long as he tolerates them!

Chapter 23 - The Moral Attributes of a Man of Great Repute Are Graphically Described; St. Lawrence Explains the Vision

Christ's words to his bride describing an insincere man, who is called an enemy of God, and especially about his hypocrisy and all about his characteristics.

People think he is a well-dressed, strong, and dignified man, active in the battle of the Lord. However, when his helmet is removed, he is disgusting to look at and unfit for any work. His naked brain can be seen, his ears are on his forehead, his eyes at the back of his head. His nose is cut off. His cheeks are all sunken like those of a dead man. On the right side, his cheekbone and half of his lips have all fallen off, so nothing remains on the right except his uncovered throat. His chest is full of swarming worms;[1] his arms are like a pair of snakes. An evil scorpion[2] sits in his heart; his back looks like burned coal. His intestines are stinking and rotten like pus-filled flesh, his feet are dead and useless for walking. I will tell you now what all this means. On the outside he is the kind of man who seems to be decked out in good habits and wisdom and active in my service, but he is not like that at all. For if the helmet is removed from his head, I mean, if he were shown to people as he is, he would be the ugliest man of all. His brain is naked, inasmuch as the foolishness and frivolity of his ways are evident enough signs to good men that he is unworthy of so much honor. If he tasted my wisdom, he would realize that the more he is raised in honor above others, so much more than others should he clothe himself in austere conduct. His ears are on his forehead because, instead of the humility he should have in his high rank, and which he should let shine for others, he only wants to hear his own praises and glory. Instead, he puts on pride and that is why he wants everyone to call him great and good. He has eyes at the back of his head, because all his thought is for the present and not for eternity. He thinks about how to be pleasing to men and about what is required for the needs of the body, but not about how he might please me or about what is good for souls. His nose is cut off, inasmuch as he has lost the discretion by which he might distinguish between sin and virtue, between temporal and eternal glory, between worldly and eternal riches, between those brief pleasures and eternal ones. His cheeks are sunken, that is, all his feeling of shame in my presence along with the beauty of the virtues by which he might please me are altogether dead as far as I am concerned. He is ashamed to sin for fear of human embarrassment but not at all out of fear of me. Part of his cheekbone and lips has fallen off with nothing remaining except his throat, because the imitation of my works and the preaching of my words along with heartfelt prayer have already fallen off from him so that nothing remains in him but his gluttonous throat. But he finds the imitation of depravity and involvement in worldly affairs altogether wholesome and appealing.
9 His chest is full of worms, because in his chest, where there should be remembrance of my passion and the memory of my deeds and commandments, there is only a concern for temporal affairs and a worldly desire. These worm their way through his conscience so that he does not think of spiritual things. 10 In his heart, where I should like to dwell and where my love should reside, there resides an evil scorpion with a stinging tail and an ingratiating face. This is because ingratiating and sensible-sounding words come out of his mouth, but his heart is full of injustice and falsehood, because he does not care if the church he represents gets destroyed, so long as he can carry out his selfish will. 11 His arms are like snakes because in his wickedness he reaches out to the simple-hearted and calls them to himself with simplicity, but, when it suits his purposes, he ousts them like poor wretches. Just like a snake, he coils himself into a ring by hiding his malice and iniquity, so that hardly anyone can detect his craftiness. 12 In my sight he is like a vile snake because, just as a snake is more odious than any other animal, he, too, is for me the most deformed of all, inasmuch as he sets my justice at naught and regards me as someone who is unwilling to inflict punishment.

13 His back is like coal, but it should be like ivory, insofar as his deeds should be more valiant and pure than those of others in order to support the weak through his patience and through the example of a good life. 14 But, instead, it is like coal, because he is too weak to endure a single word for my glory, unless it benefits himself. Yet he thinks he is valiant with respect to the world. Consequently, since he thinks he stands upright, he will fall, inasmuch as he is as deformed and lifeless as coal before me and my saints. 15 His intestines stink, because, before me, his thoughts and affections stink like rotting flesh, the stench of which no one can bear. None of the saints can bear him; instead, everyone turns his face away from him and demands a sentence passed on him. 16 His feet are dead, because his two feet are his two dispositions regarding me, I mean, the desire to make amends for his sins and the desire to do good. However, these feet are altogether dead in him, because the marrow of love has all been consumed in him and nothing is left except the hardened bones. And in this condition he stands before me. However, so long as his soul remains in the body, he can obtain my mercy.

EXPLANATION

17 Saint Lawrence appeared saying: "When I was in the world, I had three things: continence with respect to myself, mercy with respect to my neighbor, charity with respect to God. Therefore I preached the word of God zealously, distributed the goods of the church prudently, and endured scourging, fire, and death joyfully. 18 But this bishop endures and covers up the incontinence of the clergy, liberally spends the goods of the church on the rich, and shows charity toward himself and his own. Therefore, I declare to him that a light cloud has ascended into heaven, overshadowed by dark flames so as not to be seen by many. 19 This cloud is the prayer of the Mother of God for the church. The flames of greed and of the lack of piety and justice over-cloud it so that the gentle mercy of the Mother of God cannot enter the hearts of the wretched. 20 Therefore let the bishop quickly turn to divine charity by correcting himself, by admonishing his subordinates in word and example, and by encouraging them to improve. If he does not, he will feel the hand of the judge, and his diocesan church will be purged by fire and the sword and afflicted by pillaging and tribulation so that it will be a long time before there will be anyone to console her."
Chapter 24 - A Plea for Mercy for the "Daughter" and "Bride"

God the Father's words before the heavenly host, and the answer of the Son and Mother to the Father requesting a grace for his daughter the church.

The Father spoke, while the whole host of heaven was listening, and he said: "Before you I state my complaint that I gave my daughter to a man who torments her terribly and binds her feet to a wooden stake so that the marrow has all gone out of her feet." The Son answered him: "Father, I redeemed her with my blood and betrothed her to myself, but now she has been seized by force."  

2 Then the Mother spoke, saying: "You are my God and my Lord. My body bore the limbs of your blessed Son, who is your true Son and my true Son. I refused him nothing on earth. For the sake of my prayers, have mercy on your daughter!"  

3 After this the angels spoke, saying: "You are our Lord. In you we possess every good thing, and we need nothing but you. When your bride went forth from you, we all rejoiced. But now we have reason to be sad, because she has been given over into the hands of the worst of men who offends her with all kinds of insults and abuse. So have mercy on her according to your great mercy, for she is in extremely great misery, and there is no one to console and free her but you, Lord, God almighty."  

4 Then the Father answered the Son, saying: "Son, your grievance is my grievance, your word my word, your works my works. You are in me and I am in you inseparably. May your will be done!"

5 Then he said to the Mother of the Son: "Since you refused me nothing on earth, I will refuse you nothing in heaven. Your will shall be fulfilled."  

6 He said to the angels: "You are my friends, and the flame of your love burns in my heart. I shall have mercy on my daughter because of your prayers."

Chapter 25 - Why Christ Tolerates the Wicked

The Creator's words to the bride about how his justice keeps the wicked in existence for a threefold reason, and how his mercy spares the wicked for a threefold reason.

I am the Creator of heaven and earth. You were wondering, my bride, why I am so forbearing with the wicked. That is because I am merciful. My justice bears with them for a threefold reason and for a threefold reason my mercy spares them.  

2 First, my justice bears with them so that their time may be fully completed. Just as you might ask a righteous king who has some prisoners why he does not put them to death, and his answer is: 'Because it is not yet time for the general session of the court where they can be heard and where those who hear can take greater warning.' In a similar way I tolerate the wicked until their time comes, so that their wickedness can be made known to others as well.  

3 Did I not foretell the rejection of Saul long before it was known to men? I tolerated him for a long time in order that his wickedness might be shown to others. The second reason is that the wicked do perform some good works for which they ought to be rewarded down to the last particular. In this way, not the least little good they have done for me will go unrewarded, and they will accordingly receive their wages here on earth.  

4 In the third place, it is in order to manifest God's glory and patience. It was for this reason that I tolerated Pilate, Herod, and Judas, although they were going to be damned. And if anyone asks why I tolerate this or that person, let him call to mind Judas and Pilate.
My mercy spares the wicked for a threefold reason as well. First of all, it is because of my enormous love, inasmuch as eternal punishment is long. For that reason, because of my great love, I tolerate them until the last moment in order that their punishment may be delayed by the extended prolongation of time. In the second place, it is in order to allow their nature to be consumed by vices. Insofar as human nature gets consumed by sin, they would experience temporal death more bitterly if they had a younger constitution. A young constitution dies a more protracted and bitter death. In the third place, it is for the betterment of good people and the conversion of some of the wicked. When good and righteous people are tormented by the wicked, it benefits the good and righteous since it leads them to refrain from sin or to gain greater merit. Likewise, the wicked sometimes have a good effect on certain other wicked persons. When the latter reflect on the fate and evilness of the former, they think to themselves and say: 'What good does it do us to follow them?' And: 'Since the Lord is so patient it is better for us to repent.' In this way they sometimes return to me, because they shudder to do the kinds of things those others do and, moreover, their conscience tells them they should not do those kinds of things. It is said that if a person has been stung by a scorpion, he can be cured by being anointed with the oil in which another reptile has died. In like manner, sometimes a wicked person who sees someone else fall may be stung by remorse and be cured by reflecting on the evilness and vanity of the other.

Chapter 26 - Spiritual Marriage Is Compared to Human marriages

The angelic host's words of praise to God, and about how children would have been born if our first parents had not sinned, and about how God showed miracles to the people through Moses and later through himself to us on his own coming, and about the perversion of bodily matrimony in this age, and about the conditions of spiritual wedlock.

The angelic host was seen to be standing before God. The entire host said: "Praise and honor to you, Lord God, you who are and were without end! We are your servants and we offer you threefold praise and honor. First, because you created us to be happy with you and gave us an indescribable light in which to rejoice forever. Second, because all things have been created and are maintained in your goodness and constancy, and all things stand at your pleasure and abide in your word. Third, because you created humankind and took a human nature for their sake. We rejoice greatly for that reason, and also for your most chaste Mother who was found worthy to bear you whom the heavens cannot hold and contain. Therefore, on behalf of the angelic rank that you have so exalted in honor, may your love be upon the human race that you created! You alone, Lord, are to be feared for your great power, you alone are to be desired for your great charity. you alone are to be loved for your constancy. Praise be to you without end. unceasingly, forever and ever. Amen!"

The Lord answered: "You worthily honor me for all creation. But, tell me, why do you praise me for the human race, which has provoked me to anger more than all creatures? I made them superior to all the lower creatures. For none did I suffer such indignities as for humankind and I redeemed none of them at so great a cost. Or what creature besides the human being does not abide by its natural order? He is greater trouble to me than other creatures. Just as I created you to praise me and give me glory, so I made Adam in order that he would honor me. I gave him a
body to be a spiritual temple, and I placed in it a soul like a beautiful angel, for the human soul is of angelic virtue and strength.

7 In that temple, I, his God and Creator, was the third companion. He was meant to enjoy me and find delight in me. Then I made him a similar temple out of his rib. 8 Now, my bride, for whose sake all this is being enacted, you might ask: 'How would they have had children, if they had not sinned?' I shall tell you: Love's blood would have sown its seed in the woman's body without any shameful lust, through divine love and mutual affection and sexual intercourse in which they both would have been set on fire for each other, and the woman would thus have become fertile. 9 Once the infant was conceived without sin or lustful pleasure, I would have sent a soul into it out of my divinity, and she would have carried the child and given birth to it without pain. The infant would forthwith have been born perfect like Adam. But he showed contempt for this privilege by consenting to the devil and coveting a greater glory than I had given to him. 10 After their act of disobedience, my angel came over them and they were ashamed of their nakedness. 11 At that very moment they experienced the concupiscence of the flesh and suffered hunger and thirst. They also lost me. Before, when they had me, they did not feel hunger or carnal lust or shame, and I alone was their every good and pleasure and perfect delight. 12 Then I showed them how to live and how to worship me. I gave them permission to have licit intercourse. I had earlier given them my permission and indications, but they were stricken with fear and afraid to unite sexually. Likewise, when Abel was killed and they were in mourning for a long time and keeping abstinence, I was moved with compassion and comforted them. Once my will was made known to them, they began again to have intercourse and to procreate children. I promised that I, their Creator, would be born from among their offspring. 13 As the evilness of the children of Adam grew, I showed justice to sinners but mercy to my elect. With these I was pleased, and I kept them from perdition and raised them up, because they kept my commandments and believed in my promises. 14 When the time of mercy drew near, I let my mighty works be seen through Moses and saved my people according to my promise. I fed them with manna and went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire. 15 After this, I, the Creator of all things, chose for myself a virgin born of a father and mother. From her I took human flesh and condescended to be born of her without coition or sin. Just like those first children would have been born in paradise through the mystery of divine love and out of their parents' mutual love and affection and with out any shameful lust, so my divinity took a human nature from a virgin maiden without coition or damaging her virginity. 16 Coming in the flesh, true God and man, I fulfilled the Law and all the scriptures, just as it earlier had been prophesied about me. And I introduced a New Law, for the old one had been strict and hard to bear and was nothing but a figure of what was to be done in the future. In the Old Law it had been licit for a man to have several wives, so that coming generations would not be left childless or would have to intermarry with the gentiles. 17 In my New Law it is commanded for a husband
to have only one wife and forbidden for him during her lifetime to have several wives. However, people of this age join in wedlock for seven reasons. First, because of facial beauty; second, because of wealth; third, because of the coarse pleasure and indecent joy they get out of coition; fourth, because of festivities and uncontrolled gluttony; fifth, because it gives rise to pride in dressing and eating and entertainment and other vanities; sixth, in order to bring up their offspring not for God or good works but for wealth and honor; seventh, they join in wedlock on account of lust and the lustful appetite of beasts. These people meet outside the doors of my church with one mind and consent, but their feelings and inner thoughts are completely opposed to me. Instead of my will they prefer their own will, which aims at pleasing the world. If all their thoughts were directed toward me, and if they entrusted their will into my hands and took a spouse in godly fear, then I would give them my assent and would be the third companion with them. But now, although I should be at their head, they do not gain my consent because they have lust rather than my love in their hearts. They go up to my altar and hear there that they should be one heart and one mind, but my heart flees from them because they do not have the warmth of my heart and do not know the taste of my body.

They seek a warmth that will perish, and they seek flesh that will be eaten by worms. Accordingly, such people join in wedlock without the bond and union of God the Father and without the Son's love and without the Holy Spirit's consolation. When the couple comes to bed, my Spirit leaves them at once and the spirit of impurity approaches, because they only come together out of lust and do not discuss or think about anything else. But my mercy can still be with them, if they are converted. For I lovingly place a living soul created by my power into their seed. Sometimes I let bad parents give birth from time to time to good children. More often, bad children are born of bad parents, inasmuch as these children imitate the iniquity of their parents as far as they are able and would imitate it even more if my patience permitted them. Such a couple will never get to see my face, unless they repent.

For there is no sin so grave that penitence does not wash it away. Accordingly, I will turn to spiritual matrimony, the kind that is appropriate to God to have with a chaste body and chaste soul. In it there are seven goods, the opposites of the evils mentioned above. In it there is no desire for fairness of form or beauty of body or pleasant sights but only for the sight and the love of God. Nor is there, second, any desire to possess anything over and above their necessities, what they need to live on, with nothing in excess. Third, they avoid idle and frivolous talk. Fourth, they have no concern about seeing friends or relatives; instead I am the one they love and desire.

Fifth, they long to maintain an inner humility in their conscience and an outer one in the way they dress. Sixth, they never have any intention of leading sensuous lives. Seventh, they engender sons and daughters for their God by means of their good behavior and good example and through the preaching of spiritual words. By preserving their faith intact, then, they meet outside the doors of my church where they give me their consent and I give them mine. They go up to my altar and enjoy the spiritual delight of my body and blood. In delighting in it, they wish to be one heart and one body and one will, and I, true God and man, mighty in heaven and on
earth, will be the third companion with them and will fill their heart. 27 Those worldly couples let their appetite for marriage begin in lust like beasts, and worse than beasts! These spiritual spouses begin in love and fear of God and seek to please no one but me. The evil spirit fills the former and urges them on to carnal delight where there is nothing but stinking rot. The latter are filled with my Spirit and set ablaze with the fire of my Spirit that will never fail them. 28 I am one God in three persons. I am one in substance with the Father and the Holy Spirit. As it is impossible for the Father to be separated from the Son or for the Holy Spirit to be separated from either, and as it is impossible for heat to be separated from fire, so it is impossible for these spiritual spouses to be separated from me. I am with them as their third companion. My body was wounded once and died in the passion, but it will never more be wounded or die. 29 In the same way, those who are incorporated into me through an upright faith and a perfect will shall never die away from me. Wherever they stand or sit or walk, I am with them as their third companion.

Chapter 27 - Mary Describes a Dance; and Her Suffering at Witnessing the Passion of Her Son

The Mother's words to the bride about how there are three things in a dance, and about how this dance symbolizes this world, and about the Mother's suffering at Christ's death.

The Mother of God spoke to the bride, saying: "My daughter, I want you to know that where there is a dance, there are three things: empty joy, loud shouting, and meaningless toil. If someone enters the dance hall sorrowful and sad, then his friend, who finds himself in the midst of the joy of the dance but sees a friend of his entering sad and gloomy, immediately puts aside his joy, leaves the dance, and console with his sorrowing friend. 2 This dance is the world that is always caught up in anxiety, which to fools seems like joy. In this world there are three things: empty joy, frivolous speech, and useless toil, because a man must leave behind him everything for which he toils. Would that a person who is in the midst of this worldly dance consider my toil and sorrow and then console with me - who left behind all worldly joy - and would that he leave the world behind! At my Son's death I was like a woman who had her heart pierced by five lances. 3 The first lance was his shameful and blameworthy nakedness, for I saw my most chaste and mighty Son stand naked at the pillar without any covering on him at all. The second lance was the accusation against him, for they accused[1] of treason and lying and treachery him whom I knew to be just and true and never to have offended or wished to offend anyone. 4 The third lance was his crown of thorns[2] that pierced his sacred head so savagely that the blood flowed into his mouth and beard and ears. The fourth lance was his mournful voice on the cross with which he cried out to the Father, saying:

'Father, why have you abandoned me?'[3] It was if to say: 'Father, there is no one who takes pity on me but you.' The fifth lance cutting into my heart was his most bitter death. 5 His most precious blood went out of him through as many arteries as the lances that pierced my heart. The arteries of his hands and feet were pierced, and the pain in his pierced sinews went relentlessly to his heart and from his heart back to his sinews, for his heart was vigorous and strong, being knit together of the very best constitution. Life contended thus with death, and his life was more bitterly protracted in the midst of his pain. 6 As his death drew near and his heart was bursting from the unendurable pain, suddenly his whole body convulsed and his head, which was hanging
backward, straightened itself somewhat. 7 He opened his closed eyes slightly, almost halfway. Likewise he opened his mouth so that his bloodied tongue could be seen. His fingers and arms, which had been quite contracted, stretched themselves out. As soon as he had given up his spirit, his head sank toward his chest. His hands drew a little away from the place of the wounds and his feet had to bear more of the weight. 8 Then my hands grew dry. My eyes were covered in darkness and my face became pale as death. My ears could hear nothing. My mouth could not utter a sound. My feet became unsteady, and my body fell to the ground. Getting up from the ground and seeing my Son looking worse than a leper, I submitted my entire will to him, knowing that everything had happened according to his will and could not have happened if he had not permitted it. And I thanked him for everything. 9 A certain joy was mixed with my sadness, because I saw that he who had never sinned had in his great love wanted to suffer all this for sinners. May those who are in the world contemplate what I went through when my Son died, and may they always keep it in mind!”

Chapter 28 - God Is Angry with a Man in Judgment

The Lord's words to the bride describing how someone came to be judged before God's tribunal, and about the awful and terrible sentence passed on him by God and all the saints.

The bride saw God looking angry. He was saying: "I am with out beginning and with out end. There is no change in me either of year or day. Rather, all the time in the world is like a single hour or moment to me. Everyone who sees me sees and understands everything that is in me in an instant, so to speak. However, my bride, since you are in a material body, you cannot perceive and comprehend like a spirit. Therefore, for your sake, I will explain to you what has happened. I was, as it were, seated in judgment, for all judgment has been given to me, and a certain person came to be judged before the tribunal. The voice of the Father resounded and said to him: 'Woe unto you that ever you were born.' It was not as though God had repented of having created him, but just like anyone would be sorry for another person and feel compassion for him. The voice of the Son came in answer: 'I poured out my blood for you and accepted a harsh punishment for you, but you have alienated yourself entirely from it and will have nothing to do with it.' The voice of the Spirit said: 'I searched all the corners of his heart to see if I might perhaps find some tenderness and charity in his heart, but he is as cold as ice, as hard as stone. He is none of my concern.'

These three voices have not been heard as if there were three gods, but they were made audible for your sake, my bride, because otherwise you would not be able to understand this mystery. The three voices of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit were then immediately transformed into a single voice that thundered and said: 'By no means do you deserve the kingdom of heaven!' The Mother of mercy remained silent and did not open up her mercy, for the defendant was unworthy of it. All the saints cried out in one voice saying: 'It is divine justice for him to be perpetually exiled from your kingdom and from your joy.' All those in purgatory said: 'We have no punishment harsh enough to punish your sins. You must endure greater torments and you will therefore be secluded from us.' And even the defendant himself cried out in a horrendous voice, saying: 'Alas, alas for the seeds that came together in my mother's womb and from which I was formed!!' He cried out a second time and said:
'Accursed be the hour in which my soul was joined to my body and accursed be he who gave me a body and soul!' He cried out a third time: 'Accursed be the hour in which I came forth alive from the belly of my mother!' Then came three horrible voices from hell saying to him: 'Come to us, accursed soul, like liquid copper draining down to perpetual death and life interminable!' They cried out a second time: 'Come, accursed soul, empty for our malice! For there will be none of us who will not fill you with his own pain and malice.' They cried out a third time: 'Come, accursed soul, heavy like a stone that sinks and sinks and never reaches the bottom where it can rest! You will descend deeper into the deep than we, and you will not be brought to a standstill until you have reached the lowest part of the abyss.' Then the Lord said: 'Just like a man with several wives who sees one of them fall and turns away from her, and turns to the others who remain steadfast and rejoices with them, so too I have turned my face and my mercy away from him, and turn to my servants and attendants and rejoice with them. Therefore, now that you have heard of his fall and his wretchedness, serve me with greater sincerity than he did in proportion to the greater mercy I have shown to you! Flee the world and the desire of it!

Did I accept so harsh a passion for the sake of worldly glory or because I was unable to get it done more quickly and easily? Of course I was able! However, justice required that, because humanity sinned in each and every limb, satisfaction had to be made in each and every limb. This was why God, in his compassion for humankind and in his ardent love for the Virgin, received from her a human nature through which he could sustain all the punishment mankind was bound to suffer. Since I took your punishment upon me out of love, remain steadfast in true humility, just like my servants, so that you will have nothing to be ashamed of, and fear nothing but me! Guard your mouth in such a way that, if such were my will, you would never speak. Do not be sad about temporal things that are just passing. I can make whomever I want rich or poor. And so, my bride, place all your hope in me!'

EXPLANATION

This man was a nobleman, a canon and sub-deacon, who, having obtained a false dispensation, married a rich maiden. However, being surprised by a sudden death, he did not obtain his desire.

Chapter 29 - About Two Ladies, Pride and the Virgin Mary

The Virgin's words to the daughter regarding two ladies, one of whom was called Pride and the other Humility, the latter symbolizing the most sweet Virgin, and about how the Virgin goes to meet those who love her at the hour of their death.

The Mother of God spoke to the Son's bride, saying: "There are two ladies. One of them has no special name, because she does not deserve a name; the other is humility, and she is called Mary. The devil is master of the first lady because he has dominion over her. One of her knights said to this lady: 'My lady, I am prepared to do whatever I can for you, if only I can copulate with you just once. After all, I am mighty, strong, and brave of heart, I fear nothing and am ready to go to my death for you.' She answered him: 'My servant, your love is great. However, I am seated on a high throne and have only the one throne, and there are three gates between us. The first gate is so narrow that whatever a man is wearing on his body gets pulled off and torn if he enters by it. The second is so sharp that it cuts through to the very sinews. The third gate burns with such fire
that there is no escaping its heat but, instead, anyone entering through it is quickly melted down like copper. 4 Moreover, I am seated so high up that anyone who wants to sit with me - for I have only this one throne - will fall down into the great depths of chaos beneath me.' The devil answered her: 'I will give my life for you, for a fall means nothing to me.'

5 This lady is pride and anyone who wants to come to her will pass, as it were, through three gates. Through the first gate enters the person who gives all he owns to receive human praise for the sake of pride. If he does not own anything, he exerts his whole will so that he can live proudly and win praise. Through the second gate enters the person who devotes all his labor and everything he does, all his time and all his thoughts and all his strength to fulfilling his pride. 6 And even if he has to let his body be wounded for the sake of honor and riches, he does so willingly. Through the third door enters the person who is never still and quiet but burns like fire with the thought of how he can obtain some worldly honor or position of pride. But when he does obtain his desire, he cannot stay for long in the same state but will have a miserable fall. Nonetheless, pride still remains in the world!"

7 "I am," Mary said, "the one who is most humble. I am seated on a spacious throne. Above me there is neither sun nor moon nor stars nor even clouds, but an unimaginably bright and wonderful calm proceeding from the clear beauty of God's majesty. Beneath me there is neither earth nor stone but incomparable rest in God's goodness. Next to me there is neither barrier nor wall but the glorious host of angels and holy souls. 8 Although I am seated on so lofty a throne, I still hear my friends that live on earth, daily pouring forth their sighs and tears to me. I see their struggles and their efficacy, which is greater than that of those who fight for their lady pride. I will therefore visit them and gather them together with me on my throne, for it is spacious and has room for everyone. However, they cannot come and sit with me yet, because there are still two walls between us through which I shall lead them confidently so they can come to my throne. 9 The first wall is the world, and it is narrow. Accordingly, my servants in the world will receive consolation through me. The second wall is death. Therefore, I, their most dear lady and Mother, will go to meet them and come to them at death, so that even in death itself they will be refreshed and consoled. I will gather them together with me on the throne of heavenly joy, so that, in boundless joy, they may rest eternally in the arms of perpetual love and eternal glory."

Chapter 30 - On Three Instruments of the Passion; Birgitta Must Have Three Things in Her Heart

The Lord's loving words to the bride about how the number of false Christians is being multiplied to the point of recrucifying Christ and about how he is still ready to accept death once more for the sake of sinners, if this were possible.

I am God. I created all things for the benefit of humanity in order that all things might be of service and instruction to them. But unto their own damnation they misuse all the things I created for their benefit. They care less about God and love him less than created things. 2 The Jews prepared three kinds of punishment for me in my passion: first, the wood on which, after being scourged and crowned, I was hung; second, the iron by which they nailed my hands and feet; third, the gall that they gave me to drink. 3 Moreover, they blasphemed me as being a fool because of the death I freely endured, and they called me a liar because of my teachings. 3 The...
number of such people has now been multiplied in the world and there are few to console me. They hang me on the wood through their desire to sin; they scourge me through their impatience, given that no one can endure a single word for my sake; and they crown me with the thorns of their pride that makes them want to be raised higher than me. They nail my hands and feet with the iron of their hardened hearts, given that they glory in sin and harden themselves so as not to have any fear of me. They offer me distress rather than gall. They call me a liar and a fool because of my passion, which I approached with joy. I am powerful enough to drown them and the entire world for the sake of their sins, in liked. However, if I did drown them, the ones who remained would serve me out of fear, and that would not be right, because people should serve me out of love. If I personally came among them in a visible shape, their eyes would not be able to bear to look upon me or their ears to hear me. How could a mortal being look upon an immortal? Yet, in fact, I would gladly die for the sake of humanity all over again, if it were possible.

6 Then the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared and the Son said to her: "What do you wish, my Mother, my chosen one?" And she said: "Have mercy on your creation, my Son, for the sake of your love!" He answered: "I will be merciful once again, for your sake." 7 Then the Lord spoke to his bride, saying: "I am your God, the Lord of the angels. I am Lord over life and death. I myself want to dwell in your heart. I love you so very much! The heavens and the earth and everything in them cannot contain me, and yet I want to dwell in your heart, which is nothing but a lump of flesh. Whom could you fear or what could you be lacking when you have within you God almighty in whom every good thing is to be found? 9 There should be three things in a heart that is my dwelling: a bed where we may rest, a seat where we may sit, and a lamp that gives us light. In your heart, then, let there be a bed for quiet rest, where you can rest from the base thoughts and desires of the world. Always keep in mind the joy of eternity! 10 The seat should be your intention of staying with me, even if you sometimes have to go out. It goes against nature to be always standing. The person who is always standing is the one who always has the intention of being in the world and never comes to sit with me. The light or the lamp should be the faith by which you believe that I am able to do all things and am almighty above all things."

Chapter 31 - John the Baptist Praises the Beauty and Virtues of Mary

About how the bride saw the sweet Virgin Mary furnished with a crown and other adornments of inestimable beauty, and how Saint John the Baptist explained to the bride the meaning of the crown and the other things.

The bride saw the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of God, wearing a priceless and inestimable crown on her head, with her wonderfully beautiful hair hanging down over her shoulders, a golden tunic gleaming indescribably bright, and a mantle of the color of azure or of a calm sky. While the bride was all full of wonder at this lovely vision and in her wonderment was standing there as if caught up in helpless amazement with in herself, just then, Blessed John the Baptist appeared to her and said: "Pay close attention to what all this signifies. The crown signifies that she is the Queen and Lady and Mother of the King of angels. Her hair hanging down signifies that she is a pure and immaculate virgin; the sky-colored mantle that she was dead to temporal things. The golden tunic signifies that she was ardent and burning with the love of God both inwardly and outwardly. Her Son placed seven lilies in the crown, and between the lilies he
placed seven gems. The first lily is her humility; the second, fear; the third, obedience; the fourth, patience; the fifth, steadfastness; the sixth, kindness, for she kindly gives to all who ask; the seventh is mercy in necessities, for in whatever necessity a person may find himself, if he invokes her with all his heart, he will be rescued.

5 In between these resplendent lilies her Son placed seven precious gems. The first gem is her outstanding virtuousness, for there exists no virtue in any other spirit or in any other body, which she does not possess more excellently. The second gem is her perfect purity, for the Queen of Heaven was so pure that not a single stain of sin was ever to be found in her from the beginning when she first entered the world up to the final day of her death. Not all the devil s together could find enough impurity in her to fit on the head of a pin. She was truly pure, for it was not fitting for the King of glory to lie in any but the purest, cleanest, and most select vessel among angels and men. The third gem was her beauty, for God is praised constantly by his saints for the beauty of his Mother. Her beauty completes the joy of the holy angels and of all holy souls. The fourth precious gem in the crown is the Virgin Mother's wisdom, for she was filled with all divine wisdom in God and through her all wisdom is completed and perfected. The fifth gem is power, for she is so powerful before God that she can crush anything that has been created or made. The sixth gem is her shining clarity, for she shines so clear that she even sheds light on the angels, whose eyes shine more clearly than light, and the demons do not dare to look upon her shining clarity. The seventh gem is the fullness of every delight and spiritual sweetness, since her fullness is such that there is no joy that she does not add to, no delight that is not made fuller and more perfect through her and through the blessed vision of her, for she is filled and replete with grace beyond all the saints. She is the pure vessel in which lay the bread of angels and in which all sweetness and beauty is found. Her Son placed these seven gems in between the seven lilies in her crown. Wherefore, bride of her Son, honor and praise her with all your heart, for she is truly worthy of all praise and honor!

Chapter 32 - About Three Demoniacs, Two Never Cured, and the Third Released through Birgitta's Intercession

About how, after God's admonishment, the bride chose poverty for herself and renounced riches and carnality, and about the truth of the things revealed to her, and about three remarkable things shown to her by Christ.

You ought to be like a person who lets go and like one who gathers. You should let go of riches and gather virtues, let go of what will pass and gather eternal things, let go of visible things and gather invisible. In return for the pleasure of the body, I will give you the exultation of your soul; in return for the merriment of the world, I will give you the merriment of heaven; in return for worldly honor, the honor of the angels; in return for the presence of family, the presence of God; in return for the possession of goods, I will give you myself, the giver and Creator of all things.

Answer the three questions I am going to ask you. First, whether you want to be rich in this world or poor. She answered: "Lord, I would rather be poor, since riches do me no other good than to make me anxious and distract me from serving you." "Tell me, second, whether you found anything reprehensible to your mind or false in the words that you heard from my mouth?" And she said: "Certainly not, it is all reasonable." "Third, tell me whether the sensual pleasure
you earlier had delights you more or the spiritual pleasure that you now have?" And she answered: "I feel ashamed in my heart to think of my earlier delight and it seems to me now like poison, all the more bitter in proportion to my earlier fervor in desiring it. I would rather die than ever go back to it; it cannot compare to spiritual delight."

5 "Thus," he said, "you prove to yourself that all the things I have told you are true. What are you afraid of, then, or why are you worried that I am delaying the things I told you would be done? Call to mind the prophets, call to mind the apostles and the holy doctors of the church! Did they find anything in me except the truth? That is why they did not care about the world or the desire for it. 6 Or why did the prophets foretell future events so far in advance unless it was because God wanted them first to make the words known before the deeds came so that the ignorant might be instructed in faith? All the mysteries of my incarnation were made known beforehand to the prophets, even the star that went before the magi. 7 They believed the words of the prophet and merited to see what they believed in, and they were given certainty as soon as they saw the star. 8 In the same way now, my words should first be announced and then later, when the deeds come, they will be believed on greater evidence. 9 Three things I have shown you. First, the conscience of a man whose sin I made manifest and proved by most evident signs. But why? Could I not destroy him personally? Or could I not plunge him to the depths in a second, if I wanted? Of course I could. 10 However, for the sake of instructing others and in proof of my words showing how just and patient I am and how unhappy this man is whom the devil rules, I endure him still. The devil's power over him has arisen through his intention of remaining in sin and through his delight in it, with the result that neither gentle words nor harsh threats nor the fear of Gehenna can recall him. 11 And quite rightly, too, because, inasmuch as he had the constant intention of sinning, even if he did not put it into practice, he deserves to be handed over to the devil for eternity. The smallest sin is enough to damn anyone delighting in it who does not repent.

11 I showed you two others. The devil tormented the body of one of them but did not get into his soul; he overshadowed the other's conscience through his scheming and yet did not get into his soul or acquire any power over him. 12 But you might perhaps ask: 'Are not conscience and soul the same thing? Is he not in the soul when he is in the conscience?' Of course not. The body has two eyes to see with, but, even if they lose their power of sight, the body can still be healthy. So it is with the soul. Although intellect and conscience are sometimes troubled with confusion as a means of punishment, nevertheless, the soul does not always get harmed in such a way as to incur guilt. Thus, the devil prevailed over the one man's conscience but not over his soul.

13 I will show you a third man whose body and soul are completely subject to the devil. Unless coerced by my power and by a special grace, he will never be expelled from him or go out of him. The devil goes out of some people willingly and readily, but out of others only reluctantly and under coercion. 14 For, while the devil enters into some people either due to the sin of their parents or due to some hidden judgment of God, as, for example, into children or the witless, he enters into others due to their infidelity or for some other sin. The devil goes out of the latter willingly if he is expelled by people who know conjurations or the art of expelling demons, and if they do it not for the sake of vainglory or for some temporal gain, for the devil has the power of entering into the one expelling him or again into the same person he gets expelled from,
there being no love of God in either of them. 15 He never goes out of the body and soul of those he possesses completely, except through my power. As vinegar, if mixed with sweet wine, infects all the sweetness of the wine and can never be removed from it, so too the devil will not go out of the soul of anyone whom he possesses, except through my power. 16 What is this wine if not the human soul that was sweeter to me than any other created being and so dear to me that I let my sinews be slashed and my body mangled to the ribs for its sake? Rather than lose it, I even accepted death for it. 17 This wine was conserved in dregs, inasmuch as I placed the soul in a body where it was kept for my pleasure as in a sealed vessel. However, the worst vinegar was mixed with this sweet wine - I refer to the devil, whose evilness is more sour and abominable to me than any vinegar. 18 By my power this vinegar will be removed from the person whose name I will tell you, so that I may reveal my mercy and wisdom through him, but my judgment and justice through the previous man.

EXPLANATION

19 The first man was a highborn and proud cantor who went to Jerusalem without the permission of the pope and was seized by the devil. There is also something about this demoniac in book III chapter 31 and in book IV chapter 115. 20 The second demoniac in the same chapter [3] was a Cistercian monk. The devil tormented him so much that four men could scarcely hold him down. His elongated tongue looked like a cow's. The shackles on his hands were invisibly broken in pieces. This man was saved by the words of the Holy Spirit through Lady Birgitta after a month and two days. 21 The third demoniac was a bailiff of Östergötland. When he was admonished to do penance, he said to the one admonishing him: "Cannot the resident owner of the house sit wherever he likes? The devil has my heart and my tongue. How can I do penance?" Cursing the saints of God, he died that very same night without the sacraments or confession.

Chapter 33 - Criticism of the Worldly Wise; Birgitta Should Be Like a Cheese in a Mold

The Lord's admonishments to the bride regarding true and false wisdom, and about how good angels assist the learned who are good while devils assist the learned who are bad.

Some of my friends are like scholars with three characteristics: first, a discerning intelligence beyond what is natural to the brain; second, wisdom without human aid, inasmuch as I myself teach them inwardly; third, they are full of the sweetness and divine love with which they defeat the devil. 2 But nowadays people go about their studies in a different way. First, they seek knowledge out of arrogance in order to be called good scholars. Second, they seek knowledge in order to keep and obtain riches. Third, they seek knowledge in order to win honors and privileges. 3 Accordingly, when they go to their schools and enter there, I will leave them, since they study because of pride, whereas I taught them humility. They enter out of greed, whereas I had nowhere to lay my head. 4 They enter in order to win privileges, envious that others are more highly placed than themselves, whereas I was sentenced by Pilate and mocked by Herod. 5 That is why I will leave them, because they are not studying my teachings. However, because I am good and kind, 6 I give each one what he asks for.
He who asks for bread will get it, but he who asks for straw will be given straw. My friends ask for bread, because they seek and study the divine wisdom where my love can be found. Others, however, ask for straw, that is, worldly wisdom. Just as straw is useless and the food of irrational animals, so too there is neither use for the wisdom of the world that they seek nor nourishment for the soul. There is nothing but a small reputation and meaningless toil, for when a man dies, all his wisdom is blotted out of existence and those who used to praise him can no longer see him. I am like a great lord with many servants who, on their lord's behalf, distribute to the people what they need. In this way the good angels and the bad angels stand under my authority. The good angels minister to the people who study my wisdom, I mean those who serve me, nourishing them with consolation and enjoyable work. The bad angels assist the worldly wise. They inspire what they want in them and form them after their will, inspiring speculation along with a great deal of work. Yet, if they would turn their eyes toward me, I could give them bread they did not have to work for and enough of the world to satisfy them. But they never get enough of the world, since they turn sweet into sour for themselves. But you, my bride, should be like cheese, and your body like the mold in which the cheese is molded until it has the shape of the mold. In this way, your soul, which is as delightful and good-tasting to me as cheese, must be tried and cleansed in the body long enough for body and soul to reach an accord and for both to maintain the same form of continence, so that the flesh obeys the spirit and the spirit guides the flesh toward every virtue.

Chapter 34 - The Devil Envies Birgitta's Spiritual Gifts

Christ's instruction to the bride about the way to live. Also about how the devil admits to Christ that the bride loves Christ above all things, and about the question put by the devil to Christ about why he loves her so much, and about the charity that Christ has for the bride as disclosed by the devil.

I am the Creator of heaven and earth, who was true God and true man in the Virgin's womb, who died and rose again and ascended into heaven. You, my new bride, have come to an unknown place. Therefore you must learn four things: first, to get to know the language of the place; second, how to be properly dressed; third, how to organize your days and your time according to the nature of the place; fourth, to get accustomed to new kinds of food. Inasmuch as you have come from the instability of the world unto stability, you must learn a new language, that is, how to abstain from useless words and even from legitimate ones due to the importance of silence and quiet. You should be dressed in interior and exterior humility so that you neither extol yourself inwardly as being holier than others nor are outwardly ashamed of acting humbly in public. Third, your time should be regulated so that, just as you often used to make time for the needs of the body, so now you should only have time for the soul and never want to sin against me. Fourth, your new food is prudent abstinence from gluttony and from delicacies, as far as your natural constitution can endure it. Acts of abstinence that go beyond the capacity of nature are not to my liking, for I demand rationality and the taming of lusts.

Just then the devil appeared. The Lord said to him: "You were created by me and beheld all justice in me. Tell me whether this new bride is legitimately mine by proven right! I allow you to see and understand her heart in order that you may know how to answer me. Does she love anything else as she does me or would she take anything in exchange for me?" The devil
answered him: "She loves nothing in the way she loves you. Rather than lose you she would undergo any torment, provided you gave her the virtue of patience. 9 I see a kind of bond of fire descending from you to her that ties her heart so much to you that she thinks of and loves nothing but you."

10 Then the Lord said to the devil: "Tell me what you feel in your heart and how you like this great love I have for her." 11 The devil replied and said: "I have two eyes, one of them corporeal, although I am not corporeal, by means of which I perceive temporal things so clearly that there is none so hidden or so dark that it can hide itself from me. 12 The second eye is a spiritual one with which I see every pain no matter how slight and can understand to which sin it pertains. 13 There is no sin so tenuous and slight that I do not see it, unless it has been purged by penance. However, although there are no organs more sensitive than the eyes, still I would much rather have two burning torches uninterruptedly penetrate my eyes than for her to see with the eyes of her spirit.

14 I also have two ears. One of them is corporeal, and no one speaks so privately that I do not hear and know it with this ear. The second is a spiritual ear, and no thinks of or aims at any sin, be it ever so hidden, that I do not hear it with this ear, unless it has been blotted out by penance. 15 There is a certain punishment in hell that is like a bubbling torrent, streaming out of a terribly hot fire. I would rather suffer this to flow in and out of my ears with out cease than that she should hear anything with the ears of her spirit. 16 I also have a spiritual heart. I would let it be ceaselessly cut to pieces and constantly renewed to be punished again just in order for her heart to grow cold in your love. 17 But, now, since you deal straightly, let me ask a question for you to answer me: Tell me, why do you love her so much, and why did you not choose someone holier, richer, and prettier for yourself?" 18 The Lord answered: "Because that is what justice demanded. You were created in me and beheld all justice in me.

Tell me, while she is listening, why it was just that you fell so far and what you were thinking when you fell!" 19 The devil answered: "I saw three things in you: I saw your glory and honor above all things, and I thought about my own glory. Hence I was determined in my pride not merely to be equal to you but even greater than you. 20 Second, I saw that you were the most powerful of all. Hence I longed to be more powerful than you. Third, I saw what was to be in the future and, since your glory and honor were without beginning and would be with out end, I envied you and thought that I would gladly be tortured forever with all manner of harsh punishments if only you could die. With such thoughts I fell. And in that way hell was created."

21 The Lord answered: "You asked me why I love this woman so much. Assuredly, it is because I change all your evil into good. Since you became proud and did not want to have me, your Creator, as an equal, therefore, humiliating myself in every way, I gather sinners to myself and make myself their equal by sharing my glory with them. 22 Second, since you had so base a desire that you wanted to be more powerful than I, therefore I make sinners more powerful than you and sharers in my power. 23 Third, because of your envy toward me, I am so full of love that I offered myself up for everyone." 24 Then the Lord said:

"Now, devil, your heart of darkness has been shown in the light. Tell me, while she is listening, how I love her." And the devil said: "If it were possible, you would readily suffer in each and
Chapter 35 - Mary Identifies with Her Son's Pain at His Passion

The Virgin's words to the bride, explaining her own sorrow at the passion of Christ, and about how the world was sold through Adam and Eve and bought back through Christ and his Virgin Mother.

Mary spoke: "Consider, daughter, the passion of my Son. It felt like his limbs were my own limbs and heart. Just as other children are normally carried in the womb of their mother, so was he in me. However, he was conceived through the fervent charity of God's love, whereas others are conceived through the concupiscence of the flesh. Thus his cousin John rightly says: 'The Word was made flesh.' He came and was in me through love. The Word and love created him in me. He was for me like my own heart. This is why, when I gave birth to him, I felt as though half my heart was being born and going out of me. When he was suffering, it felt like my own heart was suffering. When something is half outside and half inside and the part outside gets hurt, the part inside feels a similar pain. In the same way, when my Son was being scourged and wounded, it was as though my own heart was being scourged and wounded. I was the person closest to him at his passion and was never separated from him. I was standing near his cross and, as that which is closest to the heart hurts the worst, so his pain was worse for me than for the others. As he gazed down at me from the cross and I gazed at him, my tears gushed from my eyes like blood from veins. When he saw me overwhelmed by pain, he grew so distressed over my pain that all the pain of his own wounds subsided when he saw the pain in me. I can therefore boldly say that his pain was my pain and his heart my heart. Just as Adam and Eve sold the world for a single apple, you might say that my Son and I bought the world back with a single heart. And so, my daughter, think of me as I was at the death of my Son, and it will not be hard for you to give up the world."

Chapter 36 - Birgitta's Guardian Angel Asks for Mercy for Her, Which Is Granted

The Lord's answer to an angel who was praying that distress in body and soul might be granted to the bride, and about how greater distress is given to more perfect souls.
The Lord said to an angel who was praying for his Lord's bride: "You are like a soldier of the Lord who never takes off his helmet out of weariness and who never takes his eyes off the battle out of fear. ² You are as steadfast as a mountain, you burn like a flame. You are so clean that there is no stain in you. You beg me to have mercy on my bride. Even though you know and see all things in me, tell me, nonetheless, while she is listening, what sort of mercy you are asking for her. ³ After all, mercy is threefold. There is the mercy by which the body is punished and the soul is spared, as in the case of my servant Job⁴ whose flesh was subjected to all kinds of pain but whose soul was saved. The second kind of mercy is that by which body and soul are spared from punishment, as in the case of the king who lived in all kinds of lust and had no pain either in body or soul while he was in the world. The third kind of mercy is that by which body and soul are punished with the result that they experience both distress in their body and pain in their heart, as in the case of Peter and Paul and other saints.

⁴ There are three states for human beings in the world. The first state is that of those who fall into sin and get up again. Sometimes I permit these people to experience distress in their bodies in order that they may be saved. ⁵ The second state is that of those who would live forever in order to sin forever. All their desire is directed toward the world. If they do anything for me from time to time, they do it in the hopes of their temporal advantages growing and prospering. ⁶ Neither punishment of body nor very much pain of heart is given to these people. Instead, they are allowed to follow their own power and desire, because they will receive their reward here below for the least little good they have done me, for theirs will be an everlasting punishment, inasmuch as their will to sin is everlasting. ⁷ The third state is that of those who are more afraid of sinning against me and offending my will than they are of any punishment. They would rather be tortured with unbearable punishment in eternity than knowingly provoke me to anger. ⁸ Distress of body and heart is given to these people, as in the case of Peter and Paul and other saints, so that they might make amends for their transgressions in this world; or else they are chastised for a time either for the sake of their greater glory or as an example to others. I have shown this threefold mercy to three persons in this kingdom whose names are known to you.

⁹ Now then, my angel and my servant, what kind of mercy do you ask for my bride?" And he said: "Mercy of soul and body, so that she may make amends for her transgressions in this world and so that no sin of hers will come under your judgment." The Lord answered: "Be it done according to your will!" ¹⁰ Then he spoke to the bride: "You are mine and I will do with you as I like. Love nothing as much as me! Purify yourself constantly from sin at all times according to the advice of those to whom I have entrusted you. Hide no sin! Let nothing go unexamined! Do not think any sin to be light or negligible! ¹¹ Anything you neglect I will remind you of and judge. No sin of yours will come under my judgment if it has been expiated in this life through your penance. Those sins for which penance has not been made will be purged either in purgatory or by means of some secret judgment of mine, if satisfaction has not yet been made for them here on earth."

Chapter 37 - Mary Describes the Will of Those Who Crucified Her Son

The Mother's words to the bride describing the excellence of her Son, and about how Christ is now being crucified more harshly by his enemies, the bad Christians, than he was by the Jews,
and about how, as a consequence, such people will receive a harsher and more bitter punishment.

The Mother said: "My Son had three good things. The first was that no one ever had so refined a body as he did, since he had two perfect natures, his divine one and his human one; and he was so fair that, just as no blemish can be found in the clearest of eyes, so not a single fault could be found in his body. 2 The second good thing was that he never sinned. Other children sometimes bear the sins of their parents as well as their own. This child never sinned, but, nevertheless, bore the sins of everyone. 3 The third good thing was that, while some people die for the sake of God and their greater reward, he died as much for the sake of his enemies as for the sake of me and his friends.

4 When his enemies crucified him, they did four things to him. First, they crowned him with thorns; second, they nailed his hands and feet; third, they gave him gall to drink; fourth, they pierced his side. 5 But my grievance is that his enemies who are now in the world crucify my Son more harshly than the Jews crucified him. Although you may say that he cannot suffer and die now, still they crucify him through their vices. 6 A man might heap insult and injury on the image of an enemy of his, and, although the image does not feel the damage done to it, nevertheless, the perpetrator should be accused and sentenced on account of his malicious intention to injure. Likewise, the vices by which they crucify my Son in a spiritual sense are more abominable to him and more serious than the vices of those who crucified him in the body.

7 But perhaps you ask: 'How do they crucify him?' Well, first they put him on the cross they have prepared for him. This is when they take no notice of the precepts of their Creator and Lord. Then they dishonor him when he warns them through his servants to serve him, and they despise this and do as they please. 8 They crucify his right hand by mistaking justice for injustice, saying: 'Sin is not so grave and odious to God as it is said nor does God punish anyone forever, but his threats are only to scare us. Why would he redeem us if he wanted us to perish?' They do not consider that the least little sin a person delights in is enough to send him or her to eternal punishment. 9 Since God does not let the least little sin go unpunished nor the least good go unrewarded, they will always have a punishment inasmuch as they have a constant intention of sinning, and my Son, who sees their heart, counts that as an act. For they would carry out their intention, if my Son permitted it.

10 They crucify his left hand by turning virtue into vice. They want to continue sinning until the end, saying: 'If we say at the end, just once, "God, have mercy on me!" God's mercy is so great that he will pardon us.' 11 This is not virtue, wanting to sin without making amends, wanting to get the prize without having to struggle for it, not unless there is some contrition in the heart, not unless a person really wants to mend his ways, if only he could do so were it not for illness or same other impediment. 12 They crucify his feet by taking pleasure in sinning without once thinking of my Son's bitter punishment or without once thanking him from the bottom of their hearts and saying: 'God, how bitterly you suffered! Praise be to you for your death!' Such words never come from their lips.

13 They crown him with a crown of derision by deriding his servants and think it meaningless to serve him. They give him gall to drink when they rejoice and exult in sin. The thought of how
serious and many-layered sin is never strikes their mind. They pierce his side when they have the intention of persevering in sin. I tell you truly, and you can tell this to my friends, that in the sight of my Son such people are more unjust than those who sentenced him, worse enemies than those who crucified him. more shameless than those who sold him.

A greater punishment is due to them than to the others. Pilate knew well indeed that my Son had not sinned and did not deserve death. However, because he feared the loss of temporal power and the sedition of the Jews, he reluctantly sentenced my Son to death. What would these people have to fear if they served him? Or what honor or privilege would they lose if they honored him? They will, accordingly, receive a heavier sentence, being worse than Pilate in my Son's sight. Pilate sentenced him due to fear, in accordance with the petition and intention of others. These people sentence him for their own advantage and without any fear, by dishonoring him through sin that they could abstain from, if they wanted. But they neither abstain from sin nor are they ashamed of their already committed sins, for they do not take into consideration their unworthiness of the kindness of the one whom they do not serve. They are worse than Judas, for Judas, after he had betrayed the Lord, recognized that he was God and that he himself had sinned gravely against him. He despaired, however, and hastened his days toward hell, thinking he was not worthy to live.

These people recognize their sin and yet they persevere in it with no compunction about it in their hearts. Rather, they want to take the kingdom of heaven by a kind of violence and force, thinking they can get it not through their deeds but through a vain hope - vain because it will be given to none but the one who works for it and makes same sacrifice for God. They are worse than those who crucified him. When the latter saw the good works of my Son, such as raising the dead and making lepers clean, they thought to themselves: 'He works unheard of and extraordinary wonders, overcoming anyone at will with a word, knowing our thoughts, doing whatever he likes. If he gets his way, we will all have to submit to his power and become his subjects.' Therefore, instead of submitting to him, they crucified him out of envy. But if they had known that he was the King of glory, they would never have crucified him.

These people, on the other hand, see his great works and miracles every day, they take advantage of his kindnesses. They hear about how they ought to serve him and come to him, but they think to themselves: 'It would be heavy and unbearable to give up all our temporal goods, to have to do his will and not our own.' Accordingly, they scorn his will, lest it be placed over their own will, and crucify my Son through their obstinacy, piling up sin upon sin against their conscience. They are worse than his crucifiers, inasmuch as the Jews acted out of envy and because they did not know him to be God. These, however, know him to be God and, out of their own wickedness and presumption and greed, they crucify him in a spiritual sense more harshly than the others did in a physical sense, for these people have been redeemed, whereas those others had not yet been redeemed. And so, bride, obey and fear my Son, for, as merciful as he is, he is also just!"

Chapter 38 - Birgitta Is Like a Sheep; People Are Lukewarm in Their Love of God

A pleasant dialogue of God the Father with the Son, and about how the Father gave the Son a new bride, and how the Son took her with pleasure to be his own, and about how the bridegroom teaches the bride about patience and simplicity through a parable.
The Father said to the Son: "I came with love to the Virgin and received your true body from her. You are thus in me and I in you. As fire and heat are never separated, so it is impossible to separate your divine from your human nature." 2 The Son answered: "All glory and honor to you Father! May your will be done in me and mine in you!" 3 The Father answered him in turn. "See, my Son, I am entrusting this new bride to you like a sheep to be guided and fed. Like a sheep-owner, then, you will get from her cheese to eat and milk to drink and wool to wear. 4 As for you, bride, you should obey him. You have three duties: you have to be patient, obedient, and willing." 5 Then the Son said to the Father: "Your will comes with power, your power with humility, your humility with wisdom, your wisdom with mercy. May your will, which is and always will be without beginning or end, be done in me! I shall welcome her to myself into my love, into your power, into the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we being not three gods but one God." 6 Then the Son said to his bride: "You heard how the Father has entrusted you to me like a sheep. You must therefore be simple and patient like a sheep and produce food and clothing.

7 Three people are in the world. The first is altogether naked, the second is thirsty, the third is hungry. The first stands for the faith of my church, and it is naked because everyone blushes to speak of faith and my commandments. And if some people do speak, they are scorned and called liars. 8 My words, proceeding from my mouth, should clothe this faith like wool. Just as wool grows on the body of a sheep through heat, so too my words enter your heart through the heat of my divine and human nature. They will clothe my holy faith in the testimony of truth and wisdom, and they will prove that what is now regarded as meaningless is true. As a result, the people who up to now have been lukewarm about clothing their faith in deeds of love will be converted when they hear my words of love, and they will be re-enkindled in order to speak with faith and act with courage. 9 The second person stands for those friends of mine who have a thirsting desire to see my honor perfected and are upset at my being dishonored. The sweetness they sense in my words will inebriate them with a greater love for me, and, together with them, others, now dead, will be enkindled in my love, when they hear of the mercy I have shown to sinners. 10 The third stands for those who think in their hearts as follows: 'If only we knew,' they say, 'the will of God and in what way we should live, and if only we were taught about the good way of life, we would gladly do what we could.'

These people are hungry to get to know my way, but there is no one to satisfy them, since nobody shows them exactly what to do. Even if they are shown what to do, no one lives according to it. 11 Therefore, the words seem dead to them, because nobody lives according to them. For that reason I myself will show them what they ought to do and I will fill them with my sweetness. Temporal things, which seem to be sought after by everyone now, cannot satisfy human nature but only spur the desire to seek more and more things. 12 My words and my love, however, do satisfy men and fill them with abundant consolation. 13 And so you, my bride, who are one of my sheep, take care to keep up your patience and obedience. You are mine by right and must therefore follow my will. 14 A person who wants to follow the will of another should do three things: first, have the same mind as the other; second, have similar deeds; third, keep away from the other's enemies. Who are my enemies if not pride and every sin? You should therefore keep away from them, if you want to follow my will."

Chapter 39 - Advice to People with a Weak Faith
About how faith, hope, and love were found perfectly in Christ at the time of his death and are found deficiently in us wretches.

I had three virtues at my death. First, faith, when I bent my knees and prayed, knowing that the Father was able to snatch me from my suffering. Second, hope, when I persevered resolutely, saying: 'Not as I will.' Third, love, when I said: 'Thy will be done!' I also had physical agony due to the natural fear of suffering, and a sweat of blood left my body. Thus, in order that my friends should not tremble at being abandoned when the moment of trial comes to them, I demonstrated for them in myself that the weak flesh always runs away from pain. But perhaps you ask how my body gave off a sweat of blood. Well, in the same way as the blood of a sick person dries up and gets consumed in his veins, my blood got consumed because of the natural anguish of death. Wanting to show the way by which heaven would be opened and how people could enter it after their exile, the Father lovingly then delivered me over to my passion in order that my body would be gloriously glorified once the passion had been accomplished. For my human nature could not justly enter into its glory without suffering, although I was able to do so through the power of my divine nature.

Why then should people with little faith, vain hope, and no love deserve to enter into my glory? If they had faith in eternal joy and in the terrible punishment, they would desire nothing but me. If they really believed that I see and know all things and have power over everything and that I require a judgment for everyone, the world would seem repugnant to them, and they would be afraid of sinning in my presence due to fear of me rather than of human opinion. If they had a firm hope, then all their thought and understanding would be directed toward me. If they had divine love, their minds would at least think about what I did for them, the efforts I made in preaching, how much pain I had in my passion, how much love I had at my death - so much love that I preferred to die rather than lose them. But their faith is weak and wavering, threatening a speedy fall, because they are ready to believe when the impulses of temptation are absent, but they lose confidence when they meet with adversity. Their hope is vain, because they hope that their sin will be forgiven without a trial and without a proper sentence. They are confident they will get the kingdom of heaven for free. They want to receive my mercy untempered by justice. Their love toward me is cold, for they are never on fire in seeking me out, unless forced to it by tribulation. How can I grow warm toward people who have neither an upright faith nor a firm hope nor a fervent love for me? Consequently, when they cry out to me and say 'God, have mercy on me!' they will not deserve to be heard or to enter into my glory. Since they do not want to accompany their Lord in suffering, they will not accompany him in glory. No soldier can please his lord and be welcomed back into favor after a lapse, unless he first humbles himself in order to make up for his disdain.

Chapter 40 - About a Wife Dressed Like a Lady and Her Husband Like a Servant

Words in which the Creator puts three gracious questions to the bride: first about the husband's servitude and the wife's domination; second about the husband's work and the wife's spending; third about the Lord being disdained and the servant honored.
I am your Creator and Lord. Answer me the three questions I am going to ask you. What is the situation in a house where the wife is dressed like a lady and the husband like a servant? Is that right? She answered inwardly in her conscience: "No, Lord, it is not right." And the Lord said: "I am the Lord of all things and the King of angels. I dressed my servant, I mean, my human nature, with a view only to usefulness and necessity. I looked for nothing in the world apart from meager food and clothing. You, however, who are my bride, you want to be like a lady, with wealth and honor, being held in honor. What is the good of all that? All things are vanity and all things will have to be given up. Humankind was not created for such superfluity but to have what nature needs.

Pride invented superfluity, and now it is held to be and desired as the norm. Second, tell me is it right for the husband to work from morning to evening while his wife wastes in a single hour everything he has amassed? She answered: "It is not right. Instead, the wife is bound to live and act after the will of her husband." And the Lord said: "I acted like the man working from morning to evening. I worked from my youth up to the time of my suffering, showing the way to heaven by preaching and by putting my preaching into practice. The wife, I mean, the human soul, who ought to be like my wife, wastes all my labor through luxurious living. As a result, nothing I have done can be of benefit to her nor do I find any virtue in her to delight me. Third, tell me, is it not wrong and detestable for the master of a household to be despised and for the servant to be honored?" And she said: "Yes, it surely is." The Lord said: "I am the Lord of all things. My household is the world. All of humanity should rightfully be my servants. However, I, the Lord, am now despised in the world while humanity is honored. You, therefore, whom I have chosen, take care to carry out my will, because everything in the world is nothing but ocean spray and a false dream!"

Chapter 41 - A Judgment Scene for Five Categories of People, Including the Pope

The Creator's words, in the presence of the heavenly host and the bride, in which he complains about five men representing the pope and his clergy, the wicked laity, the Jews and the pagans. Also about the help sent to his friends, who stand for all mankind, and about the harsh sentence passed on his enemies.

I am the Creator of all things. I was born from the Father before Lucifer came to be. I exist inseparably in the Father and the Father in me and one Spirit in both. Accordingly, there is one God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - and not three gods. I am he who made the promise of an eternal inheritance to Abraham and led my people out of Egypt through Moses. I am he who spoke through the prophets. The Father placed me in the womb of the Virgin, without separating himself from me but remaining inseparably with me, in order that mankind, who had abandoned God, might return to God through my love. Now, however, in your presence, heavenly host, although you see and know all things in me, for the sake of the knowledge and instruction of this bride here, who cannot perceive spiritual things except by means of physical ones, I state my grievance before you regarding the five men here present, for they are offensive to me in many ways.
In the same way as once I included the whole Israelite nation under the name of Israel\(^5\) in the Law, so now by these five men I mean everyone in the world. \(^6\) The first man stands for the leader of the church and for his priests, the second for the wicked laity, the third for the Jews, the fourth for the pagans, the fifth for my friends. \(^7\) With regard to you, Jew, I make an exception for all the Jews who are secretly Christians and who serve me in sincere charity and upright faith and perfect works in secret. \(^8\) And with regard to you, Pagan, I make an exception for all those who would gladly walk in the way of my commandments,\(^4\) if only they knew how and if they were instructed, but who try to put into practice as much as they know and are able. These will by no means be sentenced together with you. \(^9\) I now state my grievance about you, head of my church, you who sit on my seat. I gave this seat to Peter and his successors to sit on with a threefold dignity and authority: first, in order that they might have the power of binding and loosing\(^3\) souls from sin; second, so that they would open heaven for penitents; third, so that they would close heaven to the damned and to those who scorn me. \(^10\) But you, who should be absolving souls and presenting them to me, you are really a slayer of souls.

I set up Peter as shepherd and servant of my sheep.\(^6\) \(^11\) But you scatter and wound them; you are worse than Lucifer. He was envious of me and longed to kill none but me so that he might rule in my stead. \(^12\) But you are all the worse in that not only do you kill me by cutting me off from yourself through your bad works but you also kill souls through your bad example. \(^13\) I redeemed souls with my blood and entrusted them to you as to a faithful friend. But you hand them back to the enemy from whom I redeemed them. \(^14\) You are more unjust than Pilate. He only sentenced me to death. But you not only sentence me as if I were a worthless lord of nothing, you also sentence the souls of my chosen ones and let the guilty go free. \(^15\) You are more merciless than Judas. He only sold me. But you not only sell me but also the souls of my chosen ones for your own base profit and empty reputation. \(^16\) You are more abominable than the Jews. They only crucified my body. But you crucify and punish the souls of my chosen ones for whom your evil and your transgression are harsher than any sword.

And so, since you are like Lucifer and more unjust than Pilate and more merciless than Judas and more abominable than the Jews, my grievance about you is justified. \(^18\) The Lord said to the second man, that is, to the laity: "I created all things for your use. You gave your consent to me and I to you. You pledged me your faith and promised by your oath that you would serve me. \(^19\) Now, however, you have departed from me like someone who does not know God. You regard my words as a lie, my works as meaningless. You say my will and my commandments are too heavy. \(^20\) You have violated the faith you pledged. You have broken your oath and abandoned my name. You have disassociated yourself from the company of my saints and have joined the company of the devils and become their associate. \(^21\) You do not think anyone is worthy of praise and honor except yourself. You find difficult everything having to do with me and that you are obliged to do for me, while the things you like to do are easy for you. \(^22\) That is why my grievance concerning you is justified, for you have broken the faith you pledged me both in baptism and subsequently. On top of that, you even charge me with lying about the love I have shown you in word and deed. You say I was a fool for suffering.\(^6\) \(^23\) He said to the third man, that is, to the Jews: "I commenced my love affair with you. I chose you as my people, I led you up from slavery, I gave you my law, I brought you into the land I had promised your fathers and sent you prophets to console you. \(^24\) Then I chose a virgin from among you and took a human
nature from her. My grievance concerning you is that you still refuse to believe in me, saying: 'The Christ has not yet come but has still to come.'"

25 The Lord said to the fourth man, that is, to the Gentile: "I created and redeemed you to be a Christian. I did you every good. But you are like someone out of his senses, because you do not know what you are doing. You are like a blind man, because you do not know where you are headed. 26 You worship the creature instead of the Creator, the false instead of the true. You bend your knee before things inferior to yourself. That is the cause of my grievance concerning you." 27 He said to the fifth man: "Come closer, friend!" And he addressed the heavenly host directly: "Dear friends, my friend here stands for many friends. 28 He is like a man closed in among the wicked and harshly held captive. When he speaks the truth, they throw stones at his mouth. When he does something good, they thrust a spear into his breast. 29 Alas, my friends and saints, how can I endure such people and how long shall I put up with such contempt?"

30 Saint John the Baptist answered: "You are like a spotless mirror. We see and know all things in you as in a mirror without any need for words. You are the incomparable sweetness in which we taste every good thing. You are like the sharpest of swords and a fair judge." 31 The Lord answered him: "My friend, what you said was true. My chosen ones see all goodness and justice in me. Even the evil spirits do so, although not in the light but in their own conscience. 32 Like a man in prison who had earlier learned his letters and still knows them, even though he is in darkness and does not see them, the demons, even though they do not see my justice in the light of my clarity, still know and see it in their conscience. 33 I am like a sword that cuts in two. I give each person what he or she deserves." 34 Then the Lord added, speaking to Blessed Peter: "You are the founder of the faith and of my church. While my army is listening, state the sentence of these five men!"

35 Peter answered: "Praise and honor to you, Lord, for the love you have shown to your earth! May all your host bless you, for you cause us to see and know in you all the things that have been and will be! 36 We see and know all things in you. It is truly just that the first man, the one who sits upon your seat while doing the deeds of Lucifer, should ignominiously surrender the seat he presumed to sit on and become a sharer in the punishment of Lucifer. 37 The sentence of the second man is that he who has abandoned your faith should descend to hell head down and feet up, for he despised you who should be his head and loved himself. 38 The sentence of the third is that he will not see your face and will be punished for his wickedness and greed, since unbelievers do not deserve to see the sight of you. 39 The sentence of the fourth is that he should be locked up and confined in darkness like a man out of his senses. 40 The sentence of the fifth is that help should be sent to him." 41 When the Lord heard this, he answered: "I swear by God the Father, whose voice John the Baptist heard at the Jordan, I swear by the body which John baptized, saw, and touched at the Jordan, I swear by the Spirit who appeared in the form of a dove at the Jordan, that I shall do justice to these five."

42 Then the Lord added, saying to the first of the five men: "The sword of my severity will go into your body, entering at the top of your head and penetrating so deeply and firmly that it can never be drawn out. 43 Your chair will sink like a weighty stone and not come to rest until it hits the lowest part of the deep. 44 Your fingers, I mean, your advisers, will burn in an inextinguishable and sulphurous fire. Your arms, I mean, your vicars, who should have reached
out for the benefit of souls but reached out instead for worldly profit and honor, will be sentenced to the punishment of which David speaks: 'May his children be fatherless and his wife a widow and may strangers take over his property.' What does 'his wife' mean if not the soul that is left out of the glory of heaven and will be widowed from God? 'His children,' that is, the virtues they seemed to possess, and my simple folk, those who were placed under them, will be separated from them. Their rank and property will fall to others, and they will inherit eternal shame instead of their privileged rank.

Their headgear will sink into hell's mud, and they themselves will never get up out of it. Thus, just as through honor and pride they rose above others here on earth, so in hell they will sink so much more deeply than others that it will be impossible for them to rise. Their limbs, I mean, all the fawning priests who followed them, will be cut off from them and taken apart just like a wall that is torn down where stone is not left upon stone and the cement no longer adheres to the stones. Mercy will not come to them, for my love will never warm them nor build them into an eternal mansion in heaven. Instead, stripped of every good, they will be endlessly tormented along with their headmen. I say to the second man: Since you do not want to keep the faith promised to me or show love toward me, I will send to you an animal that will come from the impetuous torrent to swallow you. And as a torrent always runs downward, so the animal will carry you down to the lowest parts of hell. As impossible as it is for you to travel upstream against an impetuous torrent, it will be just as hard for you ever to ascend from hell.

I say to the third man: Since you, Jew, do not want to believe that I have come, therefore, when I come for the second judgment, you will see me not in my glory but in your conscience, and you will ascertain that all the things I said to you were true. Then there remains for you to be punished as you deserve. I say to the fourth man: Since you do not care to believe or want to know, your own darkness will be your light, and your heart will be enlightened to understand that my judgments are true, but, however, you will not come to the light. I say to the fifth man: I shall do three things for you. First, I will fill you inwardly with my warmth. Second, I will make your mouth harder and firmer than any stone, so that the stones thrown at you will bounce back. Third, I will arm you with my weapons so that no spear will harm you but everything will give way before you like wax in the face of fire. Be therefore made strong and stand like a man! Like a soldier in war who awaits the help of his lord and fights as long as he still has some fluid in him, so too you, stand firm and fight! The Lord, your God, whom none can withstand, will give you help. And since you are few in number, I will give you honor and make you many. Behold, my friends, you see these things and know them in me, and thus they stand before me. The words I have now spoken will be fulfilled. These men will never enter into my kingdom, as long as I am king, unless they mend their ways. For heaven will be given to none but those who humble themselves and do penance.

Then all the host answered: "Praise be to you, Lord God, who are without beginning or end!"

Chapter 42 - The Virgin Mary Tells of Her Virtues

The Virgin's words of exhortation to the bride concerning how she ought to love her Son above all things, and about how every virtue and grace is contained in the glorious Virgin.
The Mother spoke: "I had three virtues by which I pleased my Son. I had such humility that no creature, whether angel or man, was humbler than I. Second, I had obedience by which I strove to obey my Son in all things. Third, I had outstanding charity. For this reason I have received threefold honor from my Son. First, I was given more honor than angels and men, so that there is no virtue in God that does not shine in me, although he is the source and Creator of all things. But I am the creature to whom he has granted the most grace in comparison with others. Second, in return for my obedience I acquired such power that there is no sinner, however unclean, who will not receive pardon if he turns to me with a purpose of amendment and a contrite heart. Third, in return for my charity, God has drawn so close to me that whoever sees God sees me, and whoever sees me can see the divine and human nature in me and me in God as though in a mirror. For whoever sees God sees three persons in him and whoever sees me sees, as it were, three persons. For God has clasped me in soul and body to himself and has filled me with every virtue, so that there is no virtue in God that does not shine in me, although God is the Father and giver of all virtues. As with two conjoined bodies - the one receives whatever the other receives - so God has done with me. No sweetness exists that is not in me. It is like someone who has a nut and shares a part of it with another person. My soul and body are purer than the sun and cleaner than a mirror. Hence, just as three persons would be seen in a mirror if they stood before it, so too the Father and Son and Holy Spirit can be seen in my purity. Once I had my Son in my womb together with his divine nature. Now he is to be seen in me with both his divine and human natures as in a mirror, for I have been glorified. So, bride of my Son, strive to imitate my humility and love nothing but my Son!"

Chapter 43 - On Planting a Date-Palm; and on a Ruptured Womb

_The Son's words to the bride about how people rise up from a small good to the perfect good and sink down from a small evil to the greatest punishment._

The Son said: "Sometimes a great reward arises out of a little good. The date-palm has a wonderful odor, and in its fruit there is a stone. If this seed is planted in rich soil, it sprouts and blossoms and grows into a tall tree. But if it is planted in barren soil, it dries out. The soil that delights in sin is wholly barren of goodness. If the seed of the virtues is sown there, it does not sprout. Rich is the soil of the mind that knows its sin and laments having sinned. If the date-stone, that is, the thought of my severe judgment and power, is sown there, it strikes three roots in the mind. The first root is the realization that a person can do nothing with out my aid. This makes him open his mouth in petition to me. The second root is to begin giving some small alms for the sake of my name. The third root is to withdraw from one's own affairs in order to serve me. The person then begins to practice abstinence and fasting and self-denial: this is the trunk of the tree. After that, the branches of charity grow as he leads every one he can toward the good. Then the fruit grows as he instructs others according to his knowledge and piously tries to find ways of giving me greater glory.

This kind of fruit is most pleasing to me. In this way, from a small beginning one rises up to perfection. As the seed takes root at first through a little piety, the body grows through abstinence, the branches are multiplied through charity, the fruit grows fat through preaching. In the same manner, a person sinks down from a small evil to the greatest condemnation and punishment. Do you know what the heaviest burden is for growing things? Surely it is the
burden of an infant who is about to be born but cannot be delivered and dies inside the womb of the mother, and the mother also ruptures and dies from it, and the father carries her off to the tomb along with the child and buries her with the rotting matter. 11 This is what the devil does to the soul. The immoral soul is like the wife of the devil and follows his will in everything. She conceives a child by the devil by taking pleasure in sin and rejoicing in it. 12 Just as a mother conceives and bears fruit through a little seed that is nothing but rot, so too, by delighting in sin, the soul bears much fruit for the devil. 13 Thereafter the strength and limbs of the body get formed as sin gets added to sin and increases daily. The mother swells up through the increase of sin. She wants to give birth, but she cannot, for her nature is consumed with sin, and life becomes wearisome. She would prefer to go on sinning, but she cannot, and God does not allow it. 14 Fear is then present because she cannot carry out her will. Strength and joy are gone. Worry and sorrow are everywhere. 15 Then her womb ruptures as she despairs of being able to do good. And she dies while blaspheming and blaming God's justice. And so she is led by the father, the devil, down to the tomb of hell where she is buried forever with the rot of her sin and the child of her depraved pleasure. 16 So you see, from small beginnings sin increases and grows unto damnation."

Chapter 44 - The Heedless Are Like Bumblebees

The Creator's words to the bride about how he is now despised and reviled by people who pay no heed to what he did for love by admonishing them through the prophets and by his own suffering for their sake, and about how they do not care about the anger he directed against the obstinate by correcting them severely.

I am the Creator and Lord of all things. I made the world and the world shuns me. I hear a sound in the world like that of a bumblebee gathering honey on the earth. 2 When a bumblebee is flying and begins to land, it emits a buzzing sound. I hear a voice like that now buzzing in the world and saying: 'I do not care what comes after this.' Nowadays everyone is shouting: 'I do not care!' 3 Indeed, humanity does not pay heed to or care about what I did for love by admonishing them through the prophets, by my own preaching and by my suffering for them. They do not care about what I did in my anger by correcting the wicked and disobedient. 4 They see that they are mortal and that they are uncertain about death, but they do not care. They hear and see the justice I inflicted on Pharaoh and on Sodom because of sin, and that I inflict on other kings and princes, letting it come about daily through the sword and other woes. But it is as if they were blind to it all. 5 Like bumblebees, they fly wherever they like. Indeed, sometimes they fly as if they were shooting upward, whenever they exalt themselves through pride, but they come back down quickly enough by reverting to their lustfulness and gluttony. 6 They gather earthly honey for themselves by toiling and gathering for the needs of the body rather than for those of the soul, for earthly rather than eternal honor. 7 They turn what is temporal into a punishment for themselves, what is useless into eternal torment. 8 Hence, because of the prayers of my Mother, I will send my clear voice to these bumblebees, excepting my friends who are in the world only in body, and it will preach mercy. If they listen to it, they will be saved.

Chapter 45 - Various Groups in Dialogue with Christ Witness God's Power and Glory
The answer of the Mother and the angels, the prophets, the apostles, and the devils to God, in the presence of the bride, testifying to his greatness in creation, incarnation, redemption, and so forth, and about how people now contradict all these things, and about his severe judgment on them.

The Mother said: "Bride of my Son, get dressed and stand firm, for my Son is drawing near to you. His flesh was pressed as in a winepress. Since humanity sinned in every limb, my Son made expiation in each of his limbs. My Son's hair was pulled out, his sinews distended, his joints were dislocated from their sockets, his bones mangled, his hands and feet pierced through. His mind was agitated, his heart afflicted by sorrow, his stomach was sucked in toward his back, all this because humanity had sinned in every limb." Then the Son spoke, as the heavenly host stood by, and he said: "Although you know all things in me, nevertheless I speak because of this my bride who is standing here. Angels, I ask you: Tell me what it is that was without beginning and will be without end? And what is it that created all things and was created by none? State and give your testimony!" As with a single voice the angels answered, saying: "Lord, it is you. We state our testimony about three things: First, that you are the Creator of us and of all things in heaven and on earth. Second, that you are and will be without beginning, your dominion without end, your power eternal. Without you nothing has been made and without you nothing can come to be. Third, we testify that we see all justice in you as well as all things that have been and will be. All things are present to you without beginning or end." Then he said to the prophets and patriarchs: "I ask you: Who led you up from slavery into freedom? Who divided the waters before you? Who gave you the Law? Prophets, who gave you the inspiration to speak?" They answered him: "You, Lord. You led us up from slavery. You gave us the Law. You moved our spirit to speak."

11 Then he said to his Mother: "Give true testimony as to what you know of me!" She answered: "Before the angel whom you sent came to me, I was alone in body and soul. When the angel's word had been spoken, your body was within me in its divine and human natures and I felt your body in my body. I bore you without pain. I delivered you without anguish. I wrapped you in swaddling clothes and I fed you with my milk. I was with you from birth until death." Then the Lord said to the apostles: "Say who it was that you saw, heard, and perceived by your senses?" They answered him: "We heard your words and wrote them down. We heard your wondrous words when you gave us the New Law, when at a word you commanded demons and they went out, when at a word you raised the dead and healed the sick. We saw you in a human body. We saw your miracles in the divine glory of your human nature. We saw you handed over to your enemies and hung upon a cross. We saw you suffer most bitterly and then be buried in a tomb. We perceived you by our senses when you rose again. We touched your hair and your face. We touched your limbs and the place of your wounds. You ate with us and shared your conversation with us. You are truly the Son of God and the Son of the Virgin. We also perceived with our senses when you ascended in your human nature to the right hand of the Father where you are without end."

20 Then God said to the unclean spirits: "Although you hide the truth in your conscience, nevertheless I command you to say who it was that diminished your power." They answered him: "Like thieves who do not tell the truth unless their feet are locked in hard wood, we do not speak the truth unless forced by your divine and awesome power." You are the one who
descended into hell in your might. You diminished our power in the world. You took from hell what was yours by right." 23 Then the Lord said: "Behold, all those who have a spirit and are not robed in a body state their testimony to the truth for me. But those who have a spirit and a body, namely human beings, contradict me. Some of them know the truth but do not care. Others do not know it and that is why they do not care but say it is all untrue." 24 He said to the angels: "They say your testimony is false, that I am not the Creator and that all things are not known in me. Therefore, they love created things more than me." 25 He said to the prophets: "They contradict you and say that the Law is meaningless, that you gained freedom through your own courage and skill, that the spirit was false and that you spoke of your own volition." 26 He said to his Mother: "Some say you were not a virgin, others that I did not take a body from you, others know the truth but do not care."

27 He said to the apostles: "They contradict you, for they say you are liars, that the New Law is useless and irrational. There are others who believe it to be true but do not care. Now then, I ask you: Who will be their judge?" 28 They all answered him: "You, God, who are with out beginning and without end. You, Jesus Christ, who are one with the Father. Judgment has been given to you by the Father, you are their judge." 29 The Lord answered: "I was their accuser and am now their judge. However, although I know and can do all things, nevertheless give me your judgment upon them!" 30 They answered him: "Just as the entire world perished at the beginning of the world by the waters of the flood, so too now the world deserves to perish by fire, since iniquity and injustice are more abundant now than then." 31 The Lord answered: "Since I am just and merciful and render no judgment without mercy nor mercy without justice, once more I will send my mercy to the world due to the prayers of my Mother and my saints. If they do not want to listen, there will follow a justice that is only so much the more severe."

Chapter 46 - Christ Complains about Men's Disrespect

Mutual words of praise of the Mother and Son in the bride's presence, and about how people now regard Christ as ignoble, disgraceful, and base, and say him to be so, and about the eternal damnation of such people.

Mary spoke to her Son, saying: "May you be blessed, who are without beginning and without end! You had a most noble and handsome body. You were the most valiant and virtuous of men. You were the most worthy of creatures." 2 The Son answered: "The words of your mouth are sweet to me and delight my inmost heart like the sweetest of drinks. For me you are the creature sweetest beyond all others. In the same way as a person may see different faces in a mirror but none pleases him like his own, so too, although I love my saints, I love you with outstanding affection, because I was born from your very flesh. 3 You are like incense whose fragrance wafted up to God and drew him to your body. This same fragrance brought your body and soul up to God, where you live now in body and soul. 4 May you be blessed, for the angels rejoice in your beauty and everyone who invokes you with a sincere heart is set free through your power. All the demons tremble in your light and dare not remain in your splendor, for they always want to be in darkness. 5 You praised me for three things. You said I had a most noble body, then that I was the most valiant of men, and, third, you said I was the most worthy of creatures. 6 These things are at present contradicted only by those who have a body and soul. They say that I have an ignoble body and am a most despicable man and the basest of creatures. 7 What is more
ignoble than to induce others to sin? This is what they say about my body: that it leads to sin. They say, namely, that sin is not as repugnant or displeases God as much as is said.

8 'For,' they say, 'nothing exists unless God wants it to and nothing has been created without him. Why, then, should we not get to use created things as we want? Our natural fragility demands it and this is the way everyone has lived before us and still do live.' 9 This is how people now speak to me. My human nature, in which I appeared among men as true God, is in effect regarded by them as ignoble inasmuch as I discouraged mankind from sinning and showed what a serious matter it is, as if I had encouraged them to do something useless and disgraceful. They say, namely, that nothing is noble but sin and whatever pleases their will. 10 They also say that I am the most disgraceful of men. What is more disgraceful than someone who, when he speaks the truth, gets his mouth bruised by stones thrown at him and gets hit in the face and, on top of that, hears people reproaching him and saying: 'If he were a man, he would revenge himself.' This is what they do to me.

11 I speak to them through the learned doctors and Holy Scripture, but they say that I lie. They bruise my mouth with stones and with their fists by committing adultery, by killing and lying. They say: 'If he were manly, if he were God most powerful, he would revenge himself for such transgressions.' 12 However, I suffer it in my patience, and everyday I hear them claiming that the punishment is neither eternal nor so severe as is said, and my words are judged to be lies. 13 Third, they regard me as the basest of creatures. What is more despicable in the house than a dog or a mouser that someone would be only too happy to exchange for a horse, if he could? 14 But people hold that I am worse than a dog. They would not take me if that meant giving up the dog, and they would rather reject and deny me than go without the dog's hide. Is there anything so trifling to the mind that it is not thought of more fervently and desired more than me? If they held me in higher esteem than other creatures, they would love me more than others.

15 But they own nothing so trifling that they do not love it more than me. They grieve over everything more than me. They grieve for their own losses and those of their friends. They grieve for a single word of injury. They grieve about giving offense to people more highly placed than they, but they do not grieve about giving offense to me, the Creator of all things. 16 What person is there who is so despicable that he is not listened to if he asks a question or is not repaid if he has given something? I am utterly base and despicable in their eyes, in that they do not regard me as being worthy of any good, although it was I who gave them all good things. 17 My Mother, you have tasted more of my wisdom than others, and nothing but the truth has ever left your lips. Nor does anything but the truth ever leave my own lips. In the presence of all the saints I will exculpate myself before the first man, the one who said I had an ignoble body. I shall prove that I have in fact a most noble body without deformity or sin, and that man will fall into eternal reproach for all to see. 18 To the one who said that my words were a lie and that he did not know whether I was God or not, I shall prove myself truly to be God, and he will flow like mud down to hell. 19 And the third, the one who held me to be base, him I shall sentence to eternal damnation so that he may never see my glory and my joy.' 20 Then he said to the bride: "Stand firm in my service! You have come to be enclosed by a wall, as it were, from which you cannot flee nor dig through its foundations. Put up with this small tribulation voluntarily, and you will come to experience eternal rest in my arms! 21 You know the will of the Father, you hear the words of the Son, and you know my Spirit. You get delight and consolation in conversation with
my Mother and my saints. Therefore, stand firm! Otherwise you will come to know that justice of mine by which you will be compelled to do what I am now gently urging you to do."

Chapter 47 - The Law Is Like Clothing; Christ Is Like Bread; Present-day Priests Are Admonished

The Lord's words to the bride about the addition of the New Law, and about how that same Law is now rejected and scorned by the world, and about how bad priests are not priests of God but betrayers of God, and about their malediction and damnation.

I am the God who was once called the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. I am the God who gave the Law to Moses. This law was like clothing. As a pregnant mother prepares her infant's clothing, so too God prepared the Law which was just the clothing and shadow and sign of things to come. I vested and wrapped myself in the clothing of the Law. As a boy grows up, his old clothes get exchanged for new ones. Likewise, when the clothing of the Old Law was ready to be put aside, I put on the new clothing, that is, the New Law, and gave it to everyone who wanted to have me and my clothing. This clothing is neither too tight fitting nor difficult to wear but is well adjusted on all sides. It does not command people to fast or work too much nor to kill themselves or to do anything beyond the limits of possibility, but is beneficial for the soul and conducive to the moderation and chastisement of the body. For when the body gets too attached to sin, sin consumes the body.

Two things can be found in the New Law. First, a prudent temperance and the correct use of all spiritual and physical goods. Second, an easy facility for keeping the Law, in that a person who cannot stay in one state can stay in another. Here one finds that a person who cannot live in celibacy can live in licit matrimony. A person who falls can get up again. However, this Law is now rejected and scorned by the world. People say the Law is too tight, heavy, and unattractive. They call it tight, because the Law commands one to be contented with what is necessary and to flee what is superfluous. But they want to have everything beyond reason and more than the body can bear, just like cattle. That is why it seems too tight or strict to them. Second, they say it is heavy, because the Law says one should indulge the desire for pleasure with reason and at established times. But they want to indulge their pleasure more than is good and beyond what is established. Third, they say it is unattractive, because the Law orders them to love humility and to refer every good to God. They want to be proud and to exalt themselves for the good gifts God has given them. That is why it is unattractive to them.

See how they despise the clothes I gave them! I brought the old ways to an end and introduced the new to last until I come in judgment, because the old ways were too difficult. But they have shamefully discarded the clothing with which I covered the soul, that is, an orthodox faith. On top of that, they add sin to sin, for they also want to betray me. Does not David say in the psalm: 'He who ate of my bread plotted treason against me'?

I want you to note two things in these words. First, he does not say "plots" but "plotted," as though it were already past. Second, he points to only one man as a betrayer. However, I say that it is those in the present who betray me - not those who have been or who will be, but those who are still alive. I say as well that it is a question of not only one person but of many people. But you may ask me: 'Are there not two kinds of bread, the one invisible and spiritual, on which angels and saints live, the other
belonging to the earth, by which men are fed? But angels and saints do not desire anything unless it is according to your will, and men can do nothing unless you accept it. How, then, can they betray you?"

15In the presence of my heavenly host who knows and sees all things in me, I answer for your sake so that you may understand: There are indeed two kinds of bread. 16 One is that of the angels who eat my bread in my kingdom and are filled with my indescribable glory. They do not betray me, because they want nothing but what I want. 17 But those who eat my bread on the altar betray me. I truly am that bread. 3 Three things can be perceived in that bread: form, flavor, and roundness. 18 I am indeed the bread, and, like the bread, I have three things in me: flavor, form and roundness. Flavor, because everything whatsoever is tasteless and insubstantial and meaningless without me, just like a meal without bread is tasteless and unnourishing.

19 I have also the form of bread, in that I am of the earth. I am of the Virgin Mother, my Mother is of Adam, Adam is of the earth. 4 I have also roundness in which there is no end or beginning, because I am without beginning and without end. No one can imagine or find an end or beginning to my wisdom, power, or charity. I am in all things and above all things and beyond all things. 21 Even if one were to fly like an arrow perpetually without stop, he would never find an end or a limit to my power and might. 22 Through these things then, flavor, form, and roundness, I am that bread that seems to be and feels like bread on the altar but is transformed into my body that was crucified. 23 As anything dry and easily inflammable is quickly consumed if it is placed on the fire, and nothing remains of the form of the wood but all of it becomes fire, so too, when these words are said,

'This is my body,' what before was bread immediately becomes my body. It is set a flame not by fire like wood but by my divinity. Therefore, those who eat my bread betray me. 24 What kind of murder could be more abhorrent than when someone kills himself? Or what betrayal could be worse than when two persons are joined by an indissoluble bond, such as a married couple, and one betrays the other? 25 What does one of the spouses do in order to betray the other? He says to her by way of deception: 'Let us go to such and such a place so I can have my way with you!' She goes with him then in all simplicity, ready for her spouse's every wish. 26 But when he finds the right opportunity and place, he brings against her three treacherous weapons. Either he uses something heavy enough to kill her with one blow, or sharp enough to slice right through her vital organs, or else something to smother and suffocate the spirit of life in her directly. 27 Then, when she has died, the traitor thinks to himself: 'Now I have done wrong. If my crime comes out in the open and becomes public, I will be condemned to death.' Then he goes and puts his wife's body in some hidden place, so his sin will not be discovered.

28 This is the way I am dealt with by the priests who are my betrayers. For they and I are bound by a single bond when they take the bread and, by pronouncing the words, change it into my true body, which I received from the Virgin. None of the angels can do this. I have given that dignity to priests alone and have selected them for the highest orders. 29 But they deal with me like betrayers. They put on a happy and pleasant face for me and lead me to a hidden place where they can betray me. 30 These priests put on a happy face by appearing to be good and simple. They lead me to a hidden chamber by approaching the altar. There I am ready like a bride or bridegroom to carry out all their wishes, and instead they betray me.
31 First they hit me with something heavy, whenever the divine office, which they recite for me, becomes burdensome and heavy to them. They would rather speak a hundred words for the sake of the world than a single one in my honor. They would rather give a hundred pieces of gold for the sake of the world than a single penny for me. They would rather work a hundred times for the sake of their own profit and that of the world than once in my honor. They press down on me with this heavy burden, so that it is as though I am dead in their hearts. 32 Second, they pierce me as with a sharp blade that penetrates the vital organs each time the priest goes up to the altar in the knowledge that he has sinned and repented but is firmly resolved to sin again, once he has carried out his office. He thinks to himself: 'I do indeed repent of my sin, but I will not give up the woman with whom I have sinned so as not to be able to sin any longer.' These pierce me as with the sharpest of blades.

33 Third, it is as though they smother the spirit when they think to themselves thus: 'It is good and delightful to be in the world, it is good to indulge lusts and I cannot contain myself. I will do what I like in my youth. When I grow old, I will abstain and mend my ways.' And through this wicked thought they smother the spirit of life. 34 But how does this happen? Well, the heart in them grows so cold and tepid toward me and toward every virtue that it can never be warmed up or rise again to my love. 35 Just like ice does not catch fire, even if it is held to the flame, but only melts, so too, even if I give them my grace and they hear words of admonishment, they do not rise up to the way of life, but only grow barren and slack in respect to every virtue. 36 And so they betray me in that they pretend to be simple without being so, and are depressed and upset about giving me glory, instead of enjoying it, and also in that they intend to sin and go on sinning until the end.

37 They also conceal me, so to speak, and put me in a hidden place, whenever they think to themselves thus: 'I know I have sinned. But if I refrain from the sacrifice, I will be put to shame and everyone's going to condemn me.' So they impudently go up to the altar and place me before them and handle me, true God and man. I am as it were in a hidden place with them, since no one knows or realizes how corrupt and shameless they are. I, God, lie there in front of them as it were in concealment, since, even if the priest is the worst of sinners and pronounces the words "This is my body," he still consecrates my true body, and I, true God and man, lie there before him. 38 When he puts me to his mouth, however, I am no longer present to him in the grace of my divine and human natures - only the form and flavor of bread remain for him - not because I am not really and truly present for the wicked as much as for the good due to the institution of the sacrament, but because good and wicked do not receive it with similar effect.

39 Look, these priests are not my priests but really my betrayers! They also sell and betray me like Judas. I look at the pagans and the Jews, but I do not see anyone worse than these priests, since they have fallen into the sin of Lucifer. 40 Now let me tell you their sentence and whom they resemble. Their sentence is condemnation. David condemned those who were disobedient to God, not out of anger or bad will or impatience, but out of divine justice, because he was a righteous prophet and king. I, too, who am greater than David, condemn these priests, not out of anger or bad will but out of justice.
41 Accursed be everything they take from the earth for their own profit, for they do not praise their God and Creator who gave them these things. Accursed be the food and drink that enters their mouths and fattens their bodies to become food for worms and destines their souls for hell.

42 Accursed be their bodies that will rise again in hell to be burned without end. Accursed be the years of their useless lives.

Accursed be their first hour in hell that never will end. 43 Accursed be their eyes that saw the light of heaven.

Accursed be their ears that heard my words and remained indifferent. Accursed be their sense of taste by which they tasted my gifts.

44 Accursed be their sense of touch by which they handled me. Accursed be their sense of smell by which they smelled delightful things and neglected me, the most delightful of all.

45 Now, how exactly are they accursed? Well, their vision is accursed because they will not see the vision of God in himself but only the shadows and punishments of hell. Their ears are accursed, because they will not hear my words but only the clamor and horrors of hell. 46 Their sense of taste is accursed, because they will not taste my eternal goods and joy but only eternal bitterness. Their sense of touch is accursed, because they will not get to touch me but only perpetual fire. Their sense of smell is accursed, because they will not smell that sweet smell of my kingdom that surpasses every scent, but will only have the stench of hell that is more bitter than bile and worse than sulphur. 47 May they be accursed by earth and sky and every brute creature. These obey and glorify God, whereas they have shunned him. 48 Therefore, I swear by the truth, I who am the Truth that if they die like this with such a disposition, neither my love nor my virtue will ever encompass them. Instead, they will be forever damned.

Chapter 48 - The Same Priests Are Compared to Idolaters

About how, in the presence of the heavenly host and of the bride, the divine nature speaks to the human nature against the Christians, just as God spoke to Moses against the people, and about damnable priests who love the world and despise Christ and about their condemnation and damnation.

The great host was seen in heaven and God said to it: "Behold, for the sake of this bride of mine present here, I am speaking to you, my friends, who are here listening, you who know, understand, and see all things in me. In the manner of someone speaking to himself, my divine nature will speak to my human nature. Moses was with the Lord on the mountain forty days and nights.\(^1\) When the people saw that he was gone a long time, they took gold and cast it in the fire and fashioned a calf out of it, calling it their god. 3 Then God said to Moses: 'The people have sinned. I will wipe them out, just like writing is erased from a book.' 4 Moses answered: 'Do not, my Lord! Remember how you led them up from the Red Sea and worked wonders for them. If you wipe them out, where is your promise then? Do not do this, I beg you, since then your enemies will say: The God of Israel is evil, he led the people up from the sea and killed them in the desert.' And God was appeased\(^2\) by these words.
I am Moses, figuratively speaking. My divine nature speaks to my human one just as it did to Moses, saying: 'Look what your people have done, look how they have despised me! All the Christians will be killed and their faith wiped out.' My human nature answers: 'Do not, Lord. Remember how I led the people through the sea by my blood when I was bruised from the sole of my foot to the crown of my head!' I promised them eternal life. Have mercy on them for the sake of my passion! When the divine nature heard this, it appeased him, and he said: 'Thy will be done, for all judgment has been given thee!' See what love, my friends! But now in your presence, my spiritual friends, my angels and saints, and in the presence of my corporeal friends who are in the world yet not in the world except in body, I complain that my people are gathering firewood and kindling a fire and throwing gold into it from which a calf emerges for them to adore as a god. Like a calf it stands on four feet and has a head, a throat, and a tail. When Moses lingered on the mountain, the people said: 'We do not know what may have become of him.' And they were sorry that he had led them out of captivity, and they said: 'Let us look for another god to go before us!'

This is how these damnable priests are treating me now. They say: 'Why are we living a more austere life than others? What is our reward? We would be better off taking it easy and living in lust. Let us, then, love the world we are certain about! After all, we are uncertain about his promise.' So they gather firewood, I mean, they apply all their senses to loving the world. They light a fire when their entire desire is for the world. They burn as their lust grows hot in their mind and results in an act. Later they throw in gold, which means that all the love and respect they should show to me, they show to get the world's respect. Then the calf emerges, I mean, the complete love of the world, with its four feet of sloth, impatience, superfluous mirth, and greediness. These priests who should be mine are slothful in honoring me, impatient in suffering, excessive in mirth, and never content with what they get. This calf also has a head and throat, I mean, a total desire for gluttony that can never be quenched, not even were the whole sea to flow into it. The calf's tail is their malice, for they do not let anyone keep his property, not if they can help it.

By their immoral example and their scorn, they hurt and pervert everyone who serves me. Such is the love for the calf that is in their hearts, and in such they rejoice and delight. They think about me in the same way as those others did about Moses: 'He is gone a long time,' they say. 'His words appear meaningless and working for him is a burden. Let us have our will, let our strength and pleasure be our god!' They are not even content to stop at this and forget me entirely, but, instead, they treat me like an idol. The gentiles used to worship wood and stones and dead people. Among others, an idol by the name of Beelzebub was worshipped. His priests used to offer him incense and genuflections and shouts of praise.

Anything in their sacrificial offering that was useless was dropped on the ground, and the birds and flies ate it. But the priests used to keep whatever was useable for themselves. Then they locked the door on their idol and personally kept the key, so that nobody could get in. This is how priests are treating me in the present time. They offer me incense, I mean, they speak and preach pretty words to the people to gain respect for themselves and temporal profit, but not out of love of me. And just as you cannot lay hold of the aroma of incense, but you can feel it and see it, in the same way their words do not attain any effect on souls so as to take root and be kept in their hearts, but their words are just heard and only seem to please for a while.
21 They offer up prayers, but not at all to my liking. Like people with shouts of praise on their lips but silence in their hearts, they stand next to me, as it were, with prayers on their lips while in their hearts they wander around the world. 22 However, if they were speaking with a person of rank, they would keep their minds on what they say, so as not to make any mistakes that could be remarked upon by others. 23 In my presence, however, the priests are like men in a daze who say one thing with their lips and have another in their hearts. The person hearing their words cannot be certain about them. 24 They bend their knees to me, that is, they promise me humility and obedience. But, really, they are about as humble as Lucifer. They obey their own desires, not me.

25 They also lock me in and personally keep the key. They open up on me and offer praise when they say: 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven!' 26 But then they lock me in by carrying out their own will, while mine becomes like that of an imprisoned and powerless man because it can neither be seen nor heard. 27 They personally keep the key in the sense that by their example they also lead astray others who want to do my will. And, if they could, they would even like to prevent my will from getting out and being accomplished, except when it accords with their own will. 28 They keep for themselves anything in the sacrificial offering that is necessary and useful to them, and they demand all their rights and privileges. However, they seem to regard as useless people's bodies that fall to the ground and die and for which they are obliged to offer the most important sacrifice, but leave them for the flies, I mean, the worms.

29 They do not care or bother about those people's rights or about the salvation of souls. 30 What was it that was said to Moses? 'Kill those who made this idol!' Some were killed but not all. Thus, my words will now come and slay them, some in body and soul by means of eternal damnation, others unto life so that they be converted and live, still others through a swift death as being priests who are altogether odious to me. 31 What shall I liken them to? They are in fact like the fruit of the briar, which is beautiful and red on the outside, but inside is full of impurity and prickles. Likewise, these men come to me as though red with charity, and they seem to be pure to the people, but inside they are all full of filth. 32 If this fruit is placed in the soil, other briar-bushes spring up from it. Likewise, these men hide their sin and malice in their heart as in the soil, and they become so rooted in evil that they do not even blush to go out in public and boast about their sin. 33 Hence other people not only find it an occasion of sin but also get seriously wounded in their souls, thinking thus to themselves: 'If priests do this, it is all the more licit for us.' 34 As it is, they resemble not only the fruit, but also the prickles in the sense that they disdain to be moved by correction and admonition; they think no one is wiser than they themselves and that they can do as they please. 35 Therefore I swear by my divine and human natures, in the hearing of all the angels, that I shall break through the door they have shut on my will. My will shall be fulfilled and their will shall be annihilated and locked in endless punishment. 36 Wherefore, as it was said of old, I shall begin my judgment with my clergy and from my altar.

Chapter 49 - The Same Priests Are Inhospitable to Christ

Christ's words to the bride about how Christ is figuratively likened to Moses leading the people out of Egypt, and about how the damnable priests, whom he has chosen in place of the prophets as his closest friends, now cry: "Depart from us!"
The Son spoke: "Earlier I likened myself figuratively to Moses. When he was leading the people, the water stood like a wall to right and left. I am indeed Moses, figuratively speaking. I led the Christian people, that is, I opened heaven for them and showed them the way. But now I have chosen other friends for myself, more special and intimate than the prophets, namely, my priests, who not only hear and see my words, when they see me myself, but even touch me with their hands, which none of the prophets or angels could do. These priests, whom I have chosen as friends in place of the prophets, cry out to me, not with desire and love as the prophets did, but they cry out with two opposing voices. For they do not cry out as did the prophets: 'Come, Lord, for you are good!' Instead they cry out: 'Depart from us, for your words are bitter and your works heavy and they are a scandal to us!' Just listen to what these damnable priests say! I stand before them like the meekest of sheep, and they get wool from me for their clothing and milk for their refreshment, and yet they loathe me for loving them so.

6 I stand before them like a visitor saying: 'Friend, supply the basic needs that I lack, and you will receive the greatest reward from God!' But in return for my sheep-like simplicity they drive me away as if I were a wolf lying in wait for the master's sheep. Instead of hospitality they affront me like a traitor unworthy of hospitality and refuse to take me in. But what will the rejected visitor do? Should he bring out arms against the householder who drives him away? By no means. That would not be just, since the owner can give or deny his property to whomever he wants. What, then, will the visitor do? He should certainly say to the one rejecting him: 'Friend, since you do not want to take me in, I will go to another who will take pity on me.' And, going to another person, he hears from him: 'You are welcome, sir, all that I have is yours. May you be the lord now! I will be your servant and guest.' Those are the kind of lodgings I like to stay in, where I hear such a voice. I am like the visitor rejected by men. Although I can enter any place whatsoever by virtue of my power, still, under the dictates of justice, I only enter where people receive me with a good will as their true Lord, not as a guest, and surrender their own will into my hands."

Chapter 50 - Mary Intercedes with Christ on Behalf of Those in Purgatory and on Earth

The mutual words of blessing and praise of the Mother and the Son, and about the grace conceded by the Son to his Mother for the souls in purgatory and those remaining in this world.

Mary spoke to her Son saying: "Blessed be your name, my Son, without end and blessed be your divine nature that is with out beginning and without end! In your divine nature there are three marvelous attributes of power, wisdom, and virtue. Your power is like the hottest fire in the face of which anything solid and strong is to be reckoned as dry straw in a fire. Your wisdom is like the sea that can never be emptied by reason of its vastness and which covers valleys and mountains when it rises up and flows over. It is equally impossible to comprehend and fathom your wisdom. How wisely you created humankind and established them over all your creation! How wisely you arranged the birds in the air, the beasts on the earth, the fishes in the sea, giving to each its own time and order! How wondrously you give life to all things and take it away! How wisely you give wisdom to the foolish and take it away from the proud! Your virtue is like the sunlight that shines in the sky and fills the earth with its light. Your virtue likewise satisfies
high and low and fills all things. So, may you be blessed, my Son, who are my God and my
Lord!" 7 The Son answered:

"My dear Mother, your words are sweet to me, for they come from your soul. You are like the
dawn that advances with serene weather. 8 You outshine the heavens; your light and your
serenity surpass all the angels. By your serenity you attracted to yourself the true sun, that is, my
divine nature, so much so that the sun of my divinity came to you and settled on you. By its
warmth you were warmed in my love beyond all others and by its splendor you were enlightened
in my wisdom more than all others. 9 The darkness of the earth was driven away and all the
heavens were lit up through you. 10 Upon my truth I say that your purity, more pleasing to me
than all the angels, drew my divinity to you so that you were set on fire by the warmth of the
Spirit. In it you bore the true God and man hidden in your womb whereby mankind has been
enlightened and the angels filled with joy. 11 So, may you be blessed by your blessed Son! And
therefore, no petition of yours will ever come to me without being heard. Any who ask for
mercy through you and have the intention of mending their ways will win grace. As heat comes
from the sun, so too all mercy will be given through you. You are like a free-flowing spring from
which mercy flows to the wretched." 12 In turn the Mother answered the Son: "All power and
glory be yours, my Son! You are my God and mercy. Every good that I have comes from you. 13
You are like a seed never sown that still grew and yielded fruit a hundredfold14 and a
thousandfold. All mercy comes from you and, being countless and ineffable, it can indeed be
symbolized by the number one hundred, which symbolizes perfection, for everyone is perfected
by you and perfection comes from you."

14 The Son answered the Mother: "Mother, you compared me quite rightly to a seed that was
never sown but still grew, since in my divine nature I came to you, and my human nature was not
sown by intercourse but still grew in you, and mercy flowed out from you to all people. You
have spoken rightly. Now, then, since you draw mercy out of me by the sweet words of your lips,
ask me what you will, and it shall be given to you." 15 The Mother answered: "My Son, since I
have won mercy from you, then I ask you to have mercy on the wretched and help them. After
all, there are four places. The first is heaven, where the angels and the souls of the saints need
nothing but you whom they have, for they possess every good in you. 16 The second place is hell,
and those who live there are filled with evil and are excluded from every mercy. Thus, nothing
good can enter into them any more. 17 The third is the place of those being purged. These need a
triple mercy, since they are triply afflicted. They suffer in their hearing, for they hear nothing
other than sorrow, pain, and misery. 18 They are afflicted in their sight, for they see nothing but
their own misery. 19 They are afflicted in their touch, for they feel only the heat of unbearable fire
and of grievous suffering. Grant them your mercy, my Lord and my Son, for the sake of my
prayers!" 20 The Son answered:

"I will gladly grant them a triple mercy for your sake. First, their hearing will get relief, their
sight will be eased, their punishment will be reduced and mitigated. 21 Moreover, from this hour
those who find themselves in the greatest punishment of purgatory shall advance to the middle
stage. And those who are in the middle stage shall advance to the lightest punishment. Those
who find themselves in the lightest punishment shall cross over into rest." 22 The Mother
answered: "Praise and honor to you, my Lord!" And she immediately added: "The fourth place is
the world. Its inhabitants need three things: first, contrition for their sins; second, reparation;
third, the power to do good." 23 The Son answered: "To everyone who invokes my name and has hope in you along with the purpose of amendment for his sins, these three things shall be given as well as the kingdom of heaven. Your words are so sweet to me that I cannot refuse the things you ask, since you want nothing other than what I want. 24 You are like a shining, burning flame by which extinguished torches are re-enkindled, and once enkindled grow in strength. By means of your love, which rose up to my heart and drew me to you, those who are dead through sin will revive and those who are tepid and dark like smoke will grow strong in my love."

Chapter 51 - Mary Is Like a Tall Flower That Exceeds Five Mountains That Symbolize the Prophets

The Mother's words of blessing to the Son, in the bride's hearing, and about how the Son of glory makes a lovely comparison of his sweet Mother to a flower growing in a valley.

The Mother spoke to her Son saying: "Blessed be your name, my Son Jesus Christ! Praise to your human nature surpassing all creation! Glory to your divine nature above all good things! Your divine and human natures are one God." 2 The Son answered: "My Mother, you are like a flower that grew in a valley. Around the valley were five high mountains. The flower itself grew out of three roots, having a straight stem without any knots. 3 This flower had five leaves, lovely in every way. The valley and its flower outgrew the five mountains, and the leaves of the flower spread themselves out over every height in the sky and over all the choirs of angels. 4 You, my beloved Mother, you are that valley by virtue of the great humility you had in comparison with others. It surpassed the five mountains. 5 The first mountain was Moses by virtue of his power. For he held power over my people through the Law, as though it were held tight in his fist. But you held the Lord of all law in your womb and, therefore, you are higher than that mountain. 6 The second mountain was Elijah, who was so holy that he was assumed body and soul into the holy place. You, however, my dear Mother, were assumed in soul to the throne of God above all the choirs of angels, and your most pure body is there together with your soul. You are therefore higher than Elijah. 7 The third mountain was the great strength possessed by Samson in comparison with other men. Yet the devil defeated him by cheating. But you defeated the devil by your strength. You are therefore stronger than Samson. 8 The fourth mountain was David, a man according to my heart and will, who nevertheless fell into sin. 9 The fifth mountain was Solomon, who was full of wisdom but who nevertheless became a fool. You, indeed, my Mother, were full of all wisdom but never became foolish or were deceived. You are therefore higher than Solomon. 10 The flower sprang from three roots in the sense that you possessed three things from your youth on: obedience, charity, and divine understanding. 11 From these three roots grew the straightest of stems with not a single knot, I mean, your will was never inclined to anything but to my wish. 12 The flower also had five leaves growing higher than all the choirs of angels. You, my Mother, are indeed the flower of these five leaves. 13 The first leaf is your nobleness, which is so great that my angels, who are noble in my presence, beholding your nobleness, saw it to be above them and more exalted than their sanctity and nobleness. You are therefore higher than the angels. 14 The second leaf is your mercy, which was so great that, when you saw the misery of souls, you had compassion on them and suffered pain at my death. 15 The angels are full of mercy, yet they never suffer pain. You, however, loving Mother, were merciful
to the miserable by experiencing all the pain of my death and, for the sake of mercy, preferring to
suffer pain than to be free from it. Thus, your mercy surpassed the mercy of all the angels. 16 The
third leaf is your gentle kindness. The angels are kind and gentle, wishing everyone well, but
you, my dearest Mother, had a will like an angel's in your soul and body before your death and
did good to everyone. And now you refuse no one who rationally prays for his own best. Thus,
your kindness is more excellent than the angels.

17 The fourth leaf is your beauty. Each of the angels beholds the beauty of the others and they
admire the beauty of all souls and of all bodies. However, they see that the beauty of your soul is
above the rest of creation and that the nobleness of your body excels that of all human beings
who have been created. Thus your beauty surpassed all the angels and all creation. 18 The fifth
flower was your divine joy, for nothing delighted you but God, just as nothing else delights the
angels but God. Each of them knows and knew his own joy within himself 19 But when they saw
your joy in God within yourself, it seemed to each of them in his conscience that their joy blazed
up in them like a light in God's love.

19 They perceived your joy to be like a great bonfire, burning with the hottest of fires, with flames
so tall it came close to my divinity. Therefore, most sweet Mother, your divine joy burned far
above all the choirs of angels. 20 This flower, having these five leaves of nobleness and mercy,
kindness, beauty and the greatest joy, was lovely in every way. 21 Whoever wants to taste of its
sweetness should come close to its sweetness and receive it into himself 22 Through the warmth and power of
the sun, the flower also bears a seed and from it grows a fruit. Blessed be that sun, that is, my
divine nature, which took a human nature from your virginal womb! Just as a seed makes the
same flowers sprout wherever it is sown, so too my limbs were like yours in form and
appearance, although I was a man and you a virgin woman. 23 This valley with its flower was
lifted up above all the mountains when your body together with your most holy soul was lifted
up above all the choirs of angels."

Chapter 52 - Birgitta Is to Take Revelations to the Archbishop and the Pope

The Mother's words of blessing and her prayer to the Son that his words might be spread
throughout the world and take root in the hearts of his friends, and about how the same Virgin is
wonderfully compared to a flower growing in a garden. And about Christ's words conveyed
through the bride to the pope and to other prelates of the church.

The Blessed Virgin spoke to the Son, saying: "Blessed are you, my Son and my God, Lord of
angels and King of glory! I pray that the words that you have spoken may take root in the hearts
of your friends and cling to their minds like the pitch with which Noah's ark was plastered," 11
which neither the storms nor the winds could dissolve. 2 May they spread themselves throughout
the world like branches and sweet flowers whose scent is spread far and wide. May they also turn
into fruit and grow sweet like the date whose sweetness delights the soul beyond measure." 3 The
Son answered: "Blessed are you, my dearest Mother! My angel Gabriel said to you: 'Blessed are
you, Mary, among women!' 2 And I bear you witness that you are blessed and most holy above
all the choirs of angels. 4 You are like a garden flower that is surrounded by other fragrant
flowers, but surpasses them all in fragrance, beauty, and virtue. These flowers represent all the elect from Adam to the end of the world. They were planted in the garden of the world, bloomed and blossomed in various virtues, but among all those who then were and who afterward were to be, you were the most excellent in the fragrance of a good and humble life, in the beauty of a pleasing virginity, in the virtue of abstinence.

For I bear you witness that you were greater than a martyr at my passion, greater than a confessor in your abstinence, greater than an angel in mercy and good will. For your sake I will enroot my words like the strongest pitch in the hearts of my friends. They will spread themselves like fragrant flowers and bear fruit like the sweetest and most delicious of date-palms." Then the Lord spoke to the bride: "Tell your friend that he should take care to set forth these words in writing to his own father, whose heart is according to my heart, and he will convey them to the archbishop and later to another bishop. When these have been thoroughly informed, he should send them on to a third bishop. Tell him on my behalf: I am your Creator and the Redeemer of souls. I am God, whom you love and honor above all others. Look and consider how the souls that I redeemed with my blood are like the souls of those who do not know God, how they have been made captive by the devil in so dreadful a manner that he punishes them in every limb of their bodies as though in a firmly tightened winepress. Wherefore, if you have any taste for my wounds in your soul, if my scourging and suffering mean anything to you, then show by your deeds how much you love me!

Make the words of my mouth publicly known and bring them personally to the head of the church! I shall give you my spirit so that, wherever there be dissension between two persons, you may be able to unite them in my name and through the power given to you, if they but believe. As further evidence of my words, you shall present to the pontiff the testimonies of those people who taste and delight in my words. For my words are like lard that melts more quickly the warmer one is inside. Where there is no warmth, it is rejected and does not reach the inmost parts. My words are like that, since the more a person eats and chews on them with fervent love for me, the more he is fed with the sweetness of heavenly desire and of inner love, and the more he burns for my love. But it is as though those who do not like my words have lard in their mouths. Once they taste it, they spit it out of their mouths and trample it underfoot. Some people despise my words in this way because they have no taste for the sweetness of spiritual things. The lord of the land, whom I have chosen as one of my members and made truly mine, will aid you manfully and supply you with the necessary provisions for your journey out of properly acquired means."

Chapter 53 - The Virgin Is Like the Staff, the Manna, and the Tablets of the Ark of the Old Law; Birgitta Is Given Advice on Disseminating Her Revelations

The words of mutual blessing and praise of the Mother and of the Son, and about how the Virgin is likened to the ark where the staff, the manna and the tablets of the Law were kept. Many wonderful details are contained in this image.

Mary spoke to the Son: "Blessed are you, my Son, my God and Lord of angels! You are he whose voice the prophets heard, whose body the apostles saw, he whom the Jews and your enemies perceived. With your divinity and humanity and with the Holy Spirit you are one God.
For the prophets heard the Spirit, the apostles saw the glory of your divinity, the Jews crucified your humanity. Therefore may you be blessed without beginning and without end!" The Son answered: "Blessed are you, for you are both Virgin and Mother! You are the ark of the Old Law in which there were these three things: the staff, the manna, and the tablets. Three things were done by the staff. First, it was changed into a serpent without venom. Second, the sea was divided by it. Third, water was brought forth from the rock. This staff is a symbol of me who lay in your belly and assumed a human nature from you. First, I am as frightening to my enemies as the serpent was to Moses. They flee from me as from the sight of a serpent; they are terrified of me and loathe me like a serpent, although I am without the venom of malice and am full of every mercy. I allow myself to be held by them, if they like. I come back to them, if they ask me. I run to them like a mother to a lost and found son, if they call upon me. I show them mercy and forgive their sins, if they cry out. I do this for them, and yet they loathe me like a serpent. Second, the sea was divided by this staff in the sense that the way to heaven, which had been closed through sin, was opened through my blood and pain. The sea was indeed rent and that which had been impassable was made into a path, when the pain in all my limbs reached my heart and my heart was broken from the violence of the pain. Then, when the people had been led through the sea, Moses did not bring them to the promised land straightaway but to the desert, where they might be tested and instructed.

Now, too, once people have accepted the faith and my commandment, they are not brought into heaven straightaway, but it is necessary that men be tested in the desert, that is, in the world, as to how they love God. Moreover, the people provoked God by three things in the desert: first, because they made an idol for themselves and worshipped it; second, because they longed for the fleshpots they had had in Egypt; third, by pride, when they wanted to go and fight their enemies without God's approval. People sin against me even now in the world in the same way. First, they worship an idol, in that they love the world and all that is in it more than me, who am Creator of it all. The world is indeed their god, not I. As I said in my gospel: 'Where a man's treasure is, there his heart is.' Thus, their treasure is the world, since they have their heart there and not in me. Therefore, just as those others perished in the desert with a sword through their bodies, so these, too, will fall with the sword of eternal damnation through their soul and in damnation they will live without end.

Second, they sinned by longing for fleshpots. I have given humankind everything needed for an honorable and moderate life, but they want to possess all things without moderation or discretion. For, if their physical constitution could take it, they would be continuously having sex, drinking with out restraint, desiring without measure; and, as long as they could sin, they would never desist from sinning. For that reason, the same thing will happen to them as happened to those others in the desert: they will die a sudden death. For, what is the time of this life when compared to eternity if not a single instant? Therefore, because of the brevity of this life, they will die a quick physical death, but they will live in spiritual pain forever. Third, they sinned in the desert through pride, since they wished to go to battle without God's approval. People wish to go to heaven through their own pride. They trust not in me but in themselves, doing their own will and abandoning mine. Therefore, just like those others were killed by their enemies, so these, too, will be killed in their souls by demons, and their torment will be everlasting. This is how they hate me like a serpent, and worship an idol in my place, and love
their own pride instead of my humility. 19 Nevertheless, I am still so merciful that, if they turn to me with a contrite heart, I will turn to them like a devoted father and welcome them.

20 In the third place, the rock gave water by means of this staff. This rock is the hard human heart. When it is pierced by my fear and love, there straightaway flow tears of contrition and penance from it. 21 No one is so unworthy, no one so bad that his face will not be flooded in tears and his every limb stirred up to devotion, if he would but turn to me, if he would reflect in his heart upon my passion, if he would pay heed to my power, if he would ponder how my goodness makes the earth and trees bear fruit. 22 In the ark of Moses, second, lay the manna. So, too, in you, my Mother and Virgin, lay the bread of angels and of holy souls and of the righteous here on earth, whom nothing pleases but my sweetness, for whom all the world is dead, who, if it were my will, would gladly go without physical nourishment. 23 In the ark, thirdly, were the tablets of the Law. So, too, in you lay the Lord of all laws. Therefore, may you be blessed above all creatures in heaven and on earth! 24 Then he spoke to the bride, saying: "Tell my friends three things. When I dwelled physically in the world, I tempered my words in such away that they made the good stronger and more fervent. Indeed the wicked became better, as was clearly the case with Mary Magdalene, Matthew, and many others. 25 Again, I tempered my words in such away that my enemies were not able to lessen their force. For that reason, may they to whom my words are sent work with fervor, so that the good grow more ardent in goodness through my words, the wicked repent from wickedness, and may they prevent my enemies from obstructing my words.

26 I do no greater injury to the devil than to the angels in heaven. For, if I wanted to, I could very well utter my words so that the whole world could hear them. 27 I am capable of opening up hell for all to see its punishments. However, that would not be just, since people would then serve me out of fear, when they should be serving me out of love. For only a person who loves shall enter the kingdom of heaven. 28 Moreover, I would be doing injury to the devil, if I took his lawfully purchased thralls from him without good works. I would also do injury to the angel in heaven, if the spirit of an unclean person were put on the same level as one who is clean and fervently in love. 29 Accordingly, no one will enter heaven, except for those who have been tried like gold in the fire of purgatory or who have proved themselves over time in good works on earth in such away that there is no stain in them left to be purged away. 30 If you do not know to whom my words ought to be sent, I will tell you. The one who wants to gain merit through good works in order to come to the kingdom of heaven or who already has merited it by good works in the past is worthy of receiving my words. My words are to be disclosed to such as these and to enter into them. 31 Those who have a taste for my words and humbly await the inscription of their names in the book of life keep my words. Those who have no taste for them consider them first and then reject and vomit them out immediately."

Chapter 54 - An Angel Describes Two Spirits and Teaches Birgitta to Distinguish Good and Evil Thoughts; the Virgin Describes the Cities of Heaven and Hell

An angel's words to the bride about whether the spirit of her thoughts is good or bad, and about how there are two spirits, one uncreated and one created, and about their characteristics.
An angel spoke to the bride saying: "There are two spirits, one uncreated, one created. The uncreated has three characteristics. In the first place, he is hot, in the second, sweet, in the third, clean. First, he gives off heat not from created things but from himself, since, together with the Father and the Son, he is Creator of all things and almighty. He gives off heat whenever the whole soul burns for the love of God. Second, he is sweet, whenever nothing pleases the soul or delights it but God and the recollection of his works. Third, he is clean and in him can be found no sin, no deformity, no corruption, or mutability. He does not give off heat like material fire or like the visible sun making things melt. His heat is rather the internal love and desire of the soul that fills her and engrosses her in God. He is sweet to the soul, not in the way that choice wine or sensual pleasure or anything in the world is sweet. Rather, the sweetness of the spirit is incomparable to every temporal sweetness and unimaginable to those who have not tasted it. Third, the Spirit is as clean as the rays of the sun in which no blemish can be found. The second, created spirit likewise has three characteristics. He is burning, bitter, and unclean. First, he burns and consumes like fire, inasmuch as he enkindles the soul he possesses with the fire of lust and depraved desire, so that the soul can neither think nor desire anything other than satisfying this desire, to such an extent that her temporal life is sometimes lost along with all honor and consolation as a result. Second, he is as bitter as bile, inasmuch as he so inflames the soul with his lust that future joys seem like nothing to her and eternal goods but foolishness. Everything that has to do with God and which the soul is bound to do for him turns bitter and is as abominable to her as vomit and bile. Third, he is unclean, since he renders the soul so vile and prone to sin that she does not blush for any sin, and she would not desist from any sin, if she did not have fear being shamed before other people more than before God.

That is why this spirit burns like fire, because he burns for iniquity and enkindles others along with itself. That is why this spirit is bitter indeed, because every good is bitter to him and he wants to make the good bitter for others as well as for himself. That is why, again, he is unclean, because he delights in filth and seeks to make others like himself. Now you might ask me and say: 'Are you not also a created spirit such as that one? Why are you not like that?' I answer you: Of course I am created, by that same God who also created the other spirit, since there is only one God, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, and these are not three gods, but one God. Both of us were well made and created for the good, since God has created nothing but good. But I am like a star, since I have stood fast in the goodness and love of God in which I was created. He is like coal, since he has left the love of God. So then, just as a star has brightness and splendor and coal has blackness, a good angel, who is like a star, has his splendor, that is, the Holy Spirit. For everything he has, he has from God, from the Father and Son and Holy Spirit. He grows hot in the love of God, he shines in his splendor and clings to him and conforms himself to his will without ever wanting anything but what God wants. This is why he burns, this is why he is clean.

The devil is like ugly coal and is uglier than any other creature, because, just as he was more beautiful than the others, he had to be made uglier than others, because he opposed his Creator. Just as God's angel shines with God's light and burns incessantly in his love, so the devil is ever burning in the anguish of his malice. His malice is insatiable, just as the grace and goodness of the Holy Spirit is ineffable. For there is no one in the world so rooted in the devil that the good Spirit does not at times visit and move his heart. Likewise, there is no one so good that the devil..."
does not try to touch him with temptation. Many good and just people are tempted by the devil with God's permission. This is not because of wickedness on their part but for their greater glory.

20 The Son of God, one in divinity with the Father and the Holy Spirit, was tempted in the human nature he had taken. How much more are his elect put to the test for their greater reward!

21 Again, many good people sometimes fall into sin, and their conscience is darkened through the devil's falsehood, but they get back up harder and stand stronger than before through the power of the Holy Spirit. However, there is nobody who does not realize this in his conscience, whether the suggestion of the devil leads to the deformity of sin or to the good, if he would only think about and examine it carefully. And so, bride of my Lord, you do not have to be in doubt as to whether the spirit of your thoughts is good or bad. For your conscience tells you which things to ignore and which to choose.

22 What should a person who is full of the devil do, since the good spirit cannot enter him inasmuch as he is full of evil? He should do three things. He should make a plain and complete confession of sins, which, even if he cannot be heartily sorry due to his hardened heart, still it benefits him inasmuch as, due to his confession, the devil gives him some respite and gets out of the good spirit's way. Second, let him be humble and resolve to atone for the sins he has committed and do what good he can, and then the devil will begin to leave. Third, in order to get the good spirit back again, he should beseech God in humble prayer and, with true love, be sorry for the sins he has committed, inasmuch as love for God kills the devil.

27 The devil is so envious and malicious that he would rather die a hundred times than see someone do God the least little good out of love. Then the Blessed Virgin spoke to the bride, saying: "New bride of my Son, get dressed, put on your brooch, that is, my Son's passion!" She answered her: "My Lady, put it on me yourself!" And she said: "Of course I will. I also want you to know how my Son was disposed and why the fathers longed for him so much. He stood, as it were, in between two cities. A voice from the first city cried out to him, saying: 'You, there, standing in between the cities, you are a wise man, for you know how to beware of imminent dangers. You are also strong enough to endure overhanging evils. You are courageous as well, since you fear nothing. We have been longing for and awaiting you. Open our gate! Enemies are blocking it so that it cannot be opened!' A voice from the second city was heard saying: 'Kind, strong man, hear our complaint and lament! We sit in darkness and suffer unbearable hunger and thirst. Look upon our misery and our miserable poverty! We are beaten down like grass cut by a scythe. We have withered away from all goodness and all our strength has left us. Come to us and save us, for you alone are the one we awaited, we hoped for you as our liberator! Come and put an end to our poverty, turn our wailing into joy! Be you our help and our salvation! Come, most worthy and blessed body, which proceeded from the pure Virgin!' My Son heard these two voices from the two cities, that is, from heaven and hell. Therefore, in his mercy he opened the gates of hell through his bitter passion and the spilling of his blood and rescued his friends there. He opened heaven, too, and gave joy to the angels by leading into it the friends he had rescued from hell.

Chapter 55 - Parable about Judges, Defenders, and Laborers in a Town Founded by a Lord
About how Christ is likened to a powerful lord who builds a great city and a fine palace, which stand for the world and the church, and about how the judges and defenders and laborers in the church of God have been turned into a useless bow.¹¹

I am like a powerful lord who built a city and named it after himself. In the city he then constructed a palace in which there were various small rooms for storing necessities. After having constructed the palace and arranging all his affairs, he divided his people into three groups, saying: ² 'I am heading off to remote regions. Stand firm and labor bravely for my glory! I have made arrangements for your food and needs. You have judges to judge you. You have defenders to defend you from your enemies. ³ I have also arranged for laborers to feed you. They shall pay me the tenth part of their labor, reserving it for my use and in honor of me.' ⁴ However, after some time had gone by, the name of the city was forgotten. Then the judges said: 'Our lord has traveled to remote regions. Let us judge rightly and do justice so that, when our lord returns, we will not stand accused but gain praise and blessing.' ⁵ Then the defenders said: 'Our lord trusts us and has delivered the custody of his house to us. Let us therefore abstain from superfluous food and drink, so as not to be unfit for battle! Let us abstain from immoderate sleep, so as not to be trapped unawares! Let us also be well armed and constantly watchful, so as not to be caught off guard by an enemy attack! ⁶ The honor of our lord and the safety of his people depend very much on us. ⁷ Then the laborers said: 'Our lord's glory is great and his reward is glorious. Let us therefore labor mightily and let us give to him not only a tithe of our labor but let us also offer to him whatever gets left over from our living expenses! Our wages will be all the more glorious the greater the love he sees in us.' ⁸ After this, again some time went by, and the lord of the city and his palace fell into oblivion. Then the judges said to themselves: 'Our lord's delay is long. We do not know whether he will return or not. Let us therefore judge as we like and do what we please!'

⁹ Next the defenders said: 'We are fools, because we labor and know not for what reward. Let us ally ourselves with our enemies instead and sleep and drink with them! For it is not our concern whose enemies they have been.' ¹⁰ After that, the laborers said: 'Why do we save our gold for another? We do not know who will get it after us. It is better, then, that we use and dispose of it as we like. ¹¹ Let us give tithes to the judges, and, having placated them, we can do what we want.' ¹² Truly, I am like that powerful lord. I built myself a city, that is, the world, and placed a palace there, that is, the church. The name given to the world was divine wisdom, for the world had this name from the beginning, as it was made in divine wisdom. ¹³ This name was venerated by everyone, and God was praised for his wisdom and wonderfully proclaimed by his creatures. Now the city's name has been dishonored and changed, and human wisdom is the new name that is used. ¹⁴ The judges, who earlier rendered just sentences in the fear of the Lord, have now turned to pride and are the downfall of simple folk. They long to be eloquent in order to win human praise; they speak pleasantly in order to obtain favors. ¹⁵ They put up lightly with any words in order to be called good and mild; they allow themselves to be bribed to hand down unjust sentences. They are wise with respect to their own worldly good and their own desires, but they are dumb with regard to my praise. ¹⁶ They trample simple folk underfoot and make them keep quiet. They extend their greed to everyone and make right into wrong. This is the wisdom that is loved nowadays, while mine has fallen into oblivion.
The defenders of the church, who are the noblemen and knights, see my enemies, the assailers of my church, and they dissimulate. They hear their reproaches and do not care. They know and understand the deeds of those who assail my commandments and nonetheless bear them patiently. They watch them daily perpetrating every kind of mortal sin with impunity and feel no compunction but sleep side by side with them and have dealings with them, binding themselves by oath to their company. The laborers, who represent the entire citizenry, reject my commandments and withhold my gifts and my tithes. They bribe their judges and show them reverence so as to gain their goodwill and favor. I dare say indeed that the sword of fear for me and for my church on earth has been cast aside, and that a sack of money has been accepted in exchange for it.

Chapter 56 - Application of the Previous Parable to Priests, Knights, and Commoners, and Warning Them of Punishments to Follow

Words in which God explains the immediately preceding chapter, and about the sentence handed down against such people, and about how God for a while puts up with the wicked for the sake of the good.

I told you before that the sword of the church had been cast aside and a sack of money was accepted in exchange. This sack is open at one end. At the other end it is so deep that whatever goes in never reaches the bottom and so the sack never gets filled. This sack represents greed. This has exceeded all bounds and measure and has grown so strong that the Lord is scorned and nothing is desired but money and selfishness. However, I am like a lord who is both father and judge. When his son comes to court, the bystanders say: 'Lord, proceed quickly and render your verdict!' The Lord answers them: 'Wait a little until tomorrow, because maybe my son will reform himself in the meantime.' When the following day comes, the people say to him: 'Proceed and render your verdict, sir! How long are you going to drag out the sentencing and not sentence the guilty?' The lord answers: 'Wait a little longer, to see if my son reforms himself! And then, if he does not repent, I will do what is just.' In this way I patiently bear with people until the last moment, since I am both father and judge. However, because my sentence is incommutable, despite its being a long time in the making, I will either punish sinners who do not reform themselves or show them mercy if they convert.

I told you before that I divided the people into three groups: judges, defenders and laborers. What do the judges symbolize if not the priests who have turned divine wisdom into corrupt and empty wisdom? Like learned clerks who take a great many words and recompose them into a few - and those few words say the same thing as the many did - so, too, present-day clerics have taken my ten commandments and recomposed them into a single phrase. And what is this single phrase? 'Put out your hand and give us some money!' This is their wisdom: to speak handsomely and to act badly, to pretend they are mine and to act iniquitously against me. In exchange for bribes, they cheerfully put up with sinners in their sins and cause the downfall of simple folk through their example. In addition, they hate those people who follow my ways. Second, the defenders of the church, the knights, are disloyal. They have broken their promise and their oath and willingly tolerate those who sin against the faith and law of my Holy Church. Third, the laborers, or the citizenry, are like untamed bulls, because they do three things. They stamp the ground with their feet; second, they fill themselves to satiety; third, they satisfy their
own wishes according to their own desire. The citizenry passionately craves temporal goods now. It sates itself in immoderate gluttony and worldly vanity. It satisfies its carnal delight in an irrational manner.

But although my enemies are many, I have still many friends in their midst, albeit hidden. It was said to Elijah who thought none of my friends was left but himself: "I have seven thousand men that have not bowed their knees to Baal." In the same way, although the enemies are many, I still have friends hidden among them who weep daily because my enemies have prevailed and because my name is despised. Like a good and charitable king who knows the evil deeds of the city but patiently endures its inhabitants and sends letters to his friends making them aware of their danger, so too, for the sake of their prayers, I send my words to my friends. These are not so obscure as those in the Apocalypse that I revealed to John beneath a veil of obscurity in order that they might in their time be explained by my spirit whenever it should please me. Nor are they so hidden that they cannot be uttered - as when Paul saw some of my mysteries that he was not allowed to talk about - but they are so patent that everyone, both small and great, can understand them, so easy that anyone who wants to can grasp them.

Therefore, let my friends see to it that my words reach my enemies, so that perhaps they may be converted, and let their danger and judgment be made known to them, in order that they may feel sorrow for their deeds! Otherwise the city will be judged and, as with a wall that is torn down without leaving stone upon stone or even two stones joined to each other in the foundation, so shall it be for the city, that is, for the world. The judges will surely burn in the hottest of fires. There is no fire hotter than one fed with fat. These judges were fat, since they had more occasions of satisfying their selfishness than others, surpassed others in honor and worldly plenty, and abounded more than others in malice and iniquity. Therefore, they will fry in the hottest pan. The defenders will be hanged on the highest gibbet. A gibbet consists of two vertical pieces of wood with a third placed on top as a crossbeam. This gibbet with two wooden posts represents their cruel punishment, which is, so to speak, made from two pieces of wood. The first piece means that they did not hope for my eternal reward nor worked to earn it with their deeds. The second piece of wood means that they did not trust in my power and goodness, thinking either I was not able to do all things or did not want to provide for them sufficiently. The wooden crossbeam means their warped conscience - warped, because they well understood what they were doing but did evil and felt no shame about going against their conscience. The rope of the gibbet means everlasting fire that can neither be put out by water nor cut by scissors nor broken and terminated by old age.

On this gibbet of cruel punishment and inextinguishable fire, they will hang in shame like traitors. They will feel distress, because they were disloyal. They will hear taunts, because my words were displeasing to them. Cries of woe will be in their throats, because their own praise and glory delighted them. Living crows, that is, devils who never get their fill, will wound them on this gibbet, but, although they get wounded, they will never be consumed: they will live in torment without end and their tormentors will live without end. They will have unending grief and unmitigated wretchedness. It would have been better for them had they never been born, had their life not been prolonged! The laborers' sentence will be the same as for bulls. Bulls have a very thick hide and flesh. Therefore, their sentence is sharp steel. This sharp steel
means the death of hell that will torment those who have scorned me and loved their selfish will rather than my commandment.

31 The letter, that is, my words, has thus been written. May my friends work to make it reach my enemies wisely and discreetly, in the hope that they listen and repent. 32 If, having heard my words, some should say: "Let us wait a little while, the time is not yet coming, it is not yet his time." then, by my divine nature, which cast out Adam from paradise and sent the ten plagues to Pharaoh, I swear that I will come to them sooner than they think. 33 By my human nature, which I assumed without sin from the Virgin unto the salvation of men and in which I suffered affliction in my heart, experiencing pain in my body and death for the life of men, and in which I rose again and ascended and am seated at the right hand of the Father, true God and man in one person, I swear that I will carry out my words. 34 By my Spirit, which descended on the apostles on the day of Pentecost and so inflamed them that they spoke in the tongues of all peoples, I swear that, unless they mend their ways and return to me like weak servants, I will take vengeance on them in my wrath. 35 Then they will grieve in body and soul. They will grieve that they came alive into the world and lived in the world. They will grieve that the pleasure they had was small and now is meaningless, but that their torture will be forever. 36 Then they will realize what they now refuse to believe, namely, that my words were words of love. Then they will understand that I admonished them like a father, but that they did not want to listen to me. 37 Truly, if they do not believe in the words of goodwill, they will have to believe in the deeds to come.

Chapter 57 - Christ Complains about Evil Christians, Whom He Will Abandon in Favor of Devout Heathens

The Lord's words to the bride about how he is loathsome and despicable nourishment in the souls of Christians while the world is delightful and beloved to them, and about the terrible sentence passed on such people.

The Son spoke to the bride: "Christians are now treating me the way the Jews treated me. The Jews threw me out of the temple and were entirely intent on murdering me, but, because my hour had not yet come, I escaped from their hands. Christians treat me like that now. They throw me out of their temple, I mean, out of their soul, which should be my temple, and would soon kill me if they could. In their mouths I am like rotten and stinking meat, and they think I am telling lies, and they do not care about me at all. They turn their backs on me, but I will turn my face from them, since there is nothing but greed in their mouths and only bestial lust in their flesh. Only conceit delights their eyes, only worldly pleasure delights their eyes. My passion and my love are loathsome to them and my life burdensome. Hence I will act as the animal that had many dens: when hunters chased it into one den, it escaped into another. I will do this, because I am being chased by Christians with their bad works and cast out of the den of their hearts. I will therefore go into pagans in whose mouths I am now bitter and insipid, but I will become sweeter than honey in their mouths. However, I am still so merciful that I will joyfully welcome anyone who asks for my pardon and says: 'Lord, I know that I have sinned gravely and I freely want to improve my life through your grace. Have mercy on me for the sake of your bitter passion!' However, to those who persist in evil I shall come like a giant that has three characteristics: he is fearsome, strong, and harsh. I will come striking such fear into
Christians that they will not dare to lift the least little finger against me. I will also come in such strength that they will be like a midge before me. Third, I will come in such harshness that they will feel grief in the present and will grieve without end."

Chapter 58 - The Virgin Is Sweet; Christ's Passion Is Bitter, Especially for Those Who Follow Their Own Will

The Mother's words to the bride and the sweet words of the Mother and the Son to each other, and about how Christ is bitter, bitterer, most bitter for the wicked, but sweet, sweeter, most sweet for the good.

The Mother said to the bride: "Consider, young bride, the passion of my Son. His passion surpassed in bitterness the passion of all the saints. Just as a mother would be most bitterly distraught if she were to see her son being cut in pieces alive, so, too, I was distraught at the passion of my Son when I saw the harshness of it all." 2 Then she said to her Son: "Blessed are you, my Son, for you are holy, as it is sung: 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Sabaoth.'" 1/ Blessed are you, for you are sweet, sweeter, and most sweet! 3 You were holy before the incarnation, holy in the womb, holy after the incarnation. You were sweet before the creation of the world, sweeter than the angels, most sweet to me in your incarnation." 4 The Son answered: "Blessed are you, Mother, above all the angels! Just as I was most sweet for you, as you were saying now, so am I bitter, bitterer, most bitter for the wicked. 5 I am bitter for those who say I created many things without a cause, who blaspheme and say that I created people for death and not for life. What a miserable and senseless idea! 6 Did I, who am most just and virtuous, create the angels without a reason? Would I have endowed human nature with such goodness had I created it for damnation? By no means!

7 I made all things well[2] and out of my love gave every good to mankind. However, mankind turns all good things into evil for itself. It is not that I made anything evil, but they do, by directing their will elsewhere than they otherwise should according to divine law. That is what is evil. 8 I am bitter for those who say I gave them a free will to sin but not to do good, who say I am unjust because I condemn some people while justifying others, who blame me for their own wickedness because I take my grace away from them. 9 I am most bitter for those who say my law and commandments are too difficult and that no one is able to carry them out, who say my passion is worthless for them, which is why they count it for nothing. 10 Therefore, I swear on my life, as once I swore by the prophets, that I shall plead my case before the angels and all my saints. Those for whom I am bitter shall prove to themselves that I created all things rationally and well and for the usefulness and instruction of mankind, and that not the least little worm exists without a cause. 11 Those who find me bitterer shall prove to themselves that I wisely gave the human person a free will with respect to the good. They will also discover that I am just, giving the eternal kingdom to good people but punishment to the wicked.

12 It would not be fitting for the devil, whom I created good but who fell through his own malice, to keep company with the good. The wicked will also find out that it is not my fault that they are wicked but their own. 13 Indeed, if it were possible, I would gladly take on the same punishment for each and every person that once I accepted on the cross for all persons, so that they might return to their promised inheritance. 14 But humankind is forever opposing their will to mine. I
gave them liberty in order to serve me, if they would, and so that they might gain an eternal reward. But if they did not want to, they were to share in the punishment of the devil due to whose malice and its consequences hell was justly created. Because I am full of charity, I did not want humanity to serve me out of fear or be compelled to do so like an irrational animal but out of love for God, because no one who serves me unwillingly or out of the fear of punishment can see my face. Those for whom I am most bitter will realize in their consciences that my law was gentle and my yoke easy. They will be inconsolably sad that they spurned my law and instead loved the world, whose yoke is heavier and far more difficult than mine." Then his Mother answered: "Blessed are you, my Son, my God and my Lord! Since you were my sweet delight, I pray that others may be made partakers in its sweetness." The Son answered: "Blessed are you, my dearest Mother! Your words are sweet and full of love. Therefore, it will go well for anyone who receives your sweetness into his mouth and keeps it perfectly. But anyone who receives it and rejects it will be punished all the more bitterly." Then the Virgin responded: "Blessed be you, my Son, for all your love!"

Chapter 59 - Parable about a Savaged Sheep and a Negligent Shepherd

Christ's words, in the bride's presence, containing similes in which Christ is compared to a peasant, good priests to a good shepherd, bad priests to a bad shepherd, and good Christians to a wife. These similes are helpful in many ways.

I am he who has never uttered a falsehood. The world takes me for a peasant whose very name seems contemptible. My words are held to be foolish and my house is considered a lowly shanty. Now, this peasant had a wife who wanted nothing but what he wanted, who possessed everything in common with her husband and accepted him as her master, obeying him in everything as her master. This peasant also had a lot of sheep, and he hired a shepherd to watch over them for five gold pieces and for the provision of his daily needs. This was a good shepherd who made a right use of the gold and the food as his needs required. As time went by, this shepherd was succeeded by another shepherd, an inferior one, who used the gold to buy himself a wife and gave her his food, constantly taking his rest with her and not caring about the wretched sheep that were being chased and scattered about by ferocious beasts. When the peasant saw his sheep scattered, he cried out saying:

'My shepherd is unfaithful to me. My sheep have been scattered and some of them have been devoured fleece and all by ferocious beasts, while others have died but their bodies have been left uneaten.' Then his wife said to her husband the peasant: 'My lord, it is certain that we will not get back the bodies that have been devoured. But, let us carry home and make use of those bodies that remain intact, although there is no breath in them. We will not be able to bear it, if we are to be left with nothing.' Her husband answered her: 'What shall we do? Since the animals had venom in their teeth, the flesh of the sheep has become infected with deadly venom, the hide is ruined, the wool is all matted.' His wife answered: 'If everything has been wasted and everything gone, what, then, shall we live on?' Her husband answered:

'I see there are some sheep still alive in three places. Some of them resemble the dead sheep and dare not breathe out of fright. Others are lying deep in mud and cannot manage to raise themselves up. Still others are in hiding places and dare not come out.' Come, wife, let us lift
up the sheep that are trying to stand up but cannot do so without help, and let us make use of them! 12 Behold, I the Lord am that peasant. Men think of me as of an ass of a donkey raised in its stall according to its nature and habits. My name is the mind of Holy Church. 13 She is thought of as contemptible, inasmuch as the sacraments of the church, baptism, anointing, unction, penance, and matrimony, are, as it were, received with derision and administered to others with greed.

14 My words are held to be foolish, inasmuch as the words of my mouth, which I spoke in parables, have been converted from spiritual understanding to entertainment for the senses. 15 My house is looked on as contemptible, inasmuch as the things of earth are loved rather than the things of heaven. 16 The first shepherd I had symbolizes my friends, that is, the priests I used to have in the holy church, for by 'one' I mean many. I entrusted them with my sheep, that is, with my most venerable body for them to consecrate, and with the souls of my chosen ones for them to govern and defend. 17 I also gave them five good things, more precious than gold, namely, an understanding insight about all abstruse matters in order for them to distinguish between good and evil, between truth and falsehood. 18 Second, I gave them insight and wisdom in spiritual matters; this has now been forgotten and human wisdom is loved instead. 19 Third, I gave them chastity; fourth, temperance and abstinence in all things for self-control over their body; fifth, steadfastness in good habits, words, and deeds. 20 After this first shepherd, I mean, after these friends of mine who used to be in my church in former times, other wicked shepherds now entered. They bought a wife for themselves in exchange for the gold, that is, in exchange for chastity and for those five good things they took to themselves the body of a woman, that is, incontinence. My spirit has therefore departed from them.

21 When they are entirely intent on sinning and on satisfying their wife, that is, their lust, according to their good pleasure, my spirit is absent from them, since they do not care about the loss of the sheep, so long as they can follow their self-will. 22 The sheep that were completely devoured represent those whose souls are in hell and whose bodies are buried in tombs and who await the resurrection of eternal damnation. 23 The sheep whose bodies remain but whose spirit has been taken away stand for those people who neither love nor fear me nor feel any devotion or care toward me. 24 My spirit is far from them, since the venomous teeth of the beasts have envenomed their flesh; in other words, their thoughts and spirit, as symbolized by the sheep's innards and flesh, are in every way as disgusting to me as repulsive as is poisoned meat. 25 Their hide, that is, their body, is barren of any goodness and charity and unfit for service in my kingdom. Instead, it will be delivered to the everlasting fire of hell after the judgment. 26 Their wool, that is, their deeds, are so totally useless that there is nothing in them that might earn them my love and grace.

27 What, then, o wife of mine, that is, o good Christians, whom the wife symbolizes, what can we do? I see there are sheep still alive in three places. Some of them resemble the dead sheep and dare not breathe out of fright. 28 These are those gentiles who would be glad to have the true faith, if only they knew it. However, they dare not breathe, that is, they do not dare to lose the faith they have and they do not dare to accept the true faith. 29 The second group of sheep is those standing in hiding places, who dare not come out. These are the Jews who, so to speak, are behind a veil. They would gladly come out, if they knew for certain that I had been born. 30 They hide themselves beneath a veil, inasmuch as their hope for salvation is in the figures and signs.
that used to symbolize me in the Law but which have been truly fulfilled in me. Because of their empty hope they are afraid to come out to the right faith. In the third place, the sheep standing in the mud are Christians in the state of mortal sin. Because they fear punishment they would gladly get back up, but they are unable to do so due to their grave sins and because they lack charity.

Therefore, o my wife, o my good Christians, help me! Just as woman and man are considered to be one flesh and one limb, so the Christian is my limb and I am his, since I am in him and he is in me.

So then, my wife, my good Christians, run with me to the sheep that still have some breath left and let us lift them up and revive them! Have compassion on me, because I bought my sheep very dearly! Let us carry them together! You hold the back while I hold the head! I rejoice to carry them in my arms. Once I carried them all on my back when my back was all wounded and fastened to the cross.

O my friends, I love these sheep so tenderly that, if it were possible to suffer such a death for any one sheep individually as once I suffered on the cross for all of them, I would rather redeem them in this way than lose them. Hence, with all my heart, I cry out to my friends not to be sparing of toil or goods for my sake. If I was not spared reproaches while I was in the world, then they should not spare themselves in speaking the truth about me. I did not blush to die a contemptible death for them, but stood there just as I had been born, naked before the eyes of my enemies. I was struck in the teeth with their fists; I was dragged by the hair with their fingers; I was scourged by their scourges; I was fastened to the wood with their tools, and hung on the cross together with thieves and robbers. Wherefore, my friends, do not spare your toil for me who endured these things out of love for you! Toil manfully and bring help to all my needy sheep! Upon my human nature, which is in the Father as the Father is in me, and upon my divine nature, which is in my Spirit as the Spirit is in it and as the same Spirit is in me and I in him, these three being one God in three Persons, I swear that I shall go out to meet those toiling to carry my sheep with me and help them as they go along. And I shall give them a precious reward: myself, unto their everlasting joy.

Chapter 60 - Master Mathias Is to Promote the Message, Which Is Shown to Be Authentic because Birgitta Has Driven Out Demons

The Son's words to the bride about three kinds of Christians, symbolized by the Jews living in Egypt, and about how these revelations were given to the bride in order to be transmitted and published and preached to ignorant persons by the friends of God.

The Son spoke to the bride, saying: "I am the God of Israel, the one who spoke with Moses. When he was sent to my people, Moses asked for a sign saying, 'The people will not believe me otherwise.' If the people to whom Moses was sent belonged to the Lord, why did he lack confidence? You should know that there were three kinds of people among the Jews. Some of them believed in God and Moses. Others believed in God but lacked confidence in Moses, wondering if, perhaps, he was presuming to say and do these things out of his own invention and presumption. The third kind were those who neither believed in God nor in Moses. Likewise,
there are now three kinds of people among Christians as symbolized by the Hebrews. There are some who really believe in God and in my words. There are others who believe in God but lack confidence in my words, because they do not know how to distinguish between a good and a bad spirit. The third are those who neither believe in me nor in you to whom I have spoken my words. 5 But, as I said, although some of the Hebrews lacked confidence in Moses, nevertheless they all crossed the Red Sea with him into the desert where the ones who were lacking in confidence worshipped idols and provoked God to anger,[2] which is why they also met their end in a miserable death, although only those who had bad faith did so.[3]

6 For this reason, since the human spirit is slow to believe,[4] my friend must transmit my words to those who have faith in him. Afterward they will spread them to others who do not know how to distinguish a good from a bad spirit.[5] 7 If the hearers ask them for a sign, let them show those people a staff, just as Moses did, I mean, have them explain my words to them. The staff of Moses was straight and, due to its transformation into a snake,[6] frightening as well. In the same way my words are straight and no falsehood is found in them. 8 They are frightening, for they tell a true judgment. Let them explain and declare that, by the words and sound of a single mouth, the devil withdrew from God's creature - that same devil who could move mountains,[7] were he not restrained by my power. 9 What kind of power belonged to him with God's permission when he was made to flee at the sound of a single word? Accordingly, in the same way as those Hebrews who neither believed in God nor in Moses yet left Egypt for the promised land, being, as it were, forced along together with the others, so too, many Christians will now go out unwillingly together with my chosen ones, not trusting in my power to save them. 10 They do not believe in my words by any means; they have only a false hope in my power. Nevertheless, my words shall be fulfilled without their willing it, and they shall, as it were, be forced along to perfection until they get to where it suits me."

about this eBook

The English translation of the work was done by three Swedish monks who maintain the web site www.saintbirgitta.com. They also have a completed Swedish version, and partial versions in español and deutsch available for reading online or for download.

footnotes

prologue, fn 1 "Spirit of truth" (also in prologue 30) (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; and 1 John 4:6).

prologue, fn 2 "Even when Jesus Christ said to . . . 'Let this cup pass from me!,' . . . 'Not as I will but as you will' ";cf. Mark 14:36.

prologue, fn 3 "The Pharisee . . . the publican"; cf. Luke 18:9-14

prologue, fn 5 "She was released from the law binding her to a husband"; cf. Romans 7:2.


prologue, fn 7 "The Father of mercies and the God of all consolation"; cf. 2 Corinthians 1:3.

prologue, fn 8 "The man who wrote down these revelations," that is, Prior Petrus of Alvastra.

prologue, fn 9 "In the presence of two trustworthy witnesses"; that is, Bishop Thomas of Växjö and Master Mathias of Linköping.

Ch 1, fn 1 "From the sole of my foot to the crown of my head" (Deuteronomy 28:35; Job 2:7; Isaiah 1:6); cf. Book I 17.4.

Ch 1, fn 2 "Retribution on the wicked"; cf. Ecclesiasticus 39:33-37.

Ch 2, fn 1 "Give up everything"; cf. Matthew 19:27-29.

Ch 2, fn 2 "Restored your inheritance"; cf. Psalm 15(16):5; 1 Peter 1:3-4.

Ch 3, fn 1 "Conflict between the two spirits"; cf. 1 Corinthians 12:10; and 1 John 4:1-6. The individual here is Mathias of Linköping.

Ch 3, fn 2 "If not to render praise": ("What is true humility if not to show oneself as one is and to render praise, etc.") The added words are consistent with Birgitta's thought elsewhere; cf. Book I 3:4. See further Undhagen, Book I, pp. 145-46. Cf. also Gregory the Great Moralia in Job 21,28.

Ch 3, fn 3 "Honor me with their lips"; Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:8.

Ch 3, fn 4 These statements are based on Collijn, Acta et processus, Vita, pp. 78, 477, 530, and 620. Chapter 3, paragraph 10 occurs in Gh only; in 3.11 the equivalent references are Book I 52:8-9; Book V int. 16:36-37; Book VI 75:1-6 and 89.

Ch 4, fn 1 "Sometimes he also deceives people under the guise of good"; cf. 2 Corinthians 11:4 (this refers the reader to the well-known passage about Satan transforming himself into an angel of light).

Ch 5, fn 1 The punishments of placing a person in stocks and stoning are attested in the Swedish provincial laws in a variety of ways. For example, a person could remain in stocks until his feet rotted, and stoning was a punishment for women accused of adultery or witchcraft. See further KL "dodstraf," "straffredskap," "tartur."

Ch 5, fn 2 "All judgment is given to you"; cf. John 5:22.
ch 6, fn 1 "My members": in Christian literature, the frequent metaphor identifying the church with the body of Christ, and consequently, Christians with his limbs, dates back to St. Paul; cf. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 5:29-30.

ch 6, fn 2 "For their lance . . . in my ways": a passage about spiritual armor, echoing Ephesians 6:11-17.

ch 6, fn 3 "Gold . . . tested with a little fire"; cf. Proverbs 17:3; 1 Peter 1:7.

ch 7, fn 1 The description of Birgitta's clothing in this revelation is reminiscent of the expositions of the nuns' clothing to be worn in the Birgittine order, RS 10-11. See also Book II 13 and Book IV 58; Isaiah 61:10 and Ephesians 6:13-17.

ch 8, fn 1 "Without being a burden to her," i.e., without causing physical suffering or pain. Mary was preserved from original sin, she escaped the pain of childbearing that was a consequence of the Fall according to Genesis 3:16.

ch 10, fn 1 "Born of a Virgin" (Isaiah 7:14).

ch 10, fn 2 "Hail. full of grace" (Luke 1:28).

ch 10, fn 3 "The offspring . . . will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

ch 10, fn 4 "How is it to be that I, who do not even know a man?" (Luke 1:34).

ch 10, fn 5 "Here I am, may your will be done in me"; cf. Luke 1:38.


ch 10, fn 7 After "the weighted thongs tore his flesh," [like earth before a plow].

ch 10, fn 8 "No sound spot"; cf. Psalm 37(38):4, 8; Isaiah 1:6.

ch 10, fn 9 "Someone," i.e., Simon of Cyrene (Matthew 27:32).

ch 10, fn 10 "These are our clothes"; cf. Psalm 21(22):19; Matthew 27:35.

ch 10, fn 11 "Using two nails": This is the first of three descriptions of the crucifixion in the Revelaciones; see also Book IV 70 and VII 15.

ch 10, fn 12 "He felt compassion . . . commended me to him"; cf. John 19:26-27.

ch 10, fn 13 "Why have you abandoned me?" (Psalm 21[22]:2; Matthew 27:46).

ch 10, fn 14 "Father... commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46).
ch 10, fn 15 "A man came . . . the other side"; cf. John 19:34.


ch 10, fn 17 "John" i.e., John the Evangelist.

ch 10, fn 18 [Love him then with all your heart]

ch 11, fn 1 "Crucified as to lusts" [should be crucified and restrained from evil desires]; cf. Galatians 5:24.

ch 13, fn 1 "I who am the truth"; cf. John 14:6.

ch 13, fn 2 "Not to show partiality . . . honor the rich unjustly"; cf. James 2:1-7: Leviticus 19:15.


ch 14, fn 1 "Last farthing"; cf. Matthew 5:26.

ch 14, fn 2 "Do not serve me . . . out of divine love and charity"; cf. 1 John 4:18.

ch 15, fn 1 "God's yoke is easy"; cf. Matthew 11:30.

ch 15, fn 2 "A person then withers away like grass" (Psalm 101[102]:12; Isaiah 51:12).

ch 15, fn 3 "Serve two masters" (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13).

ch 15, fn 4 "Swallows up the impious"; cf. Numbers 16:31-35.

ch 15, fn 5 "Water flowed for the righteous out of the rock"; cf. Exodus 17:5-6.

ch 15, fn 6 "Waters parted for them"; cf. Exodus 14:16-22.


ch 16, fn 1 "God," i.e., Christ. The revelations often refer to Christ as "God."

ch 16, fn 2 "In her nature"; (In her sexual organs)

ch 16, fn 3 This woman may be identical to one alluded who is possessed by several diabolical spirits.

ch 16, fn 4 "Pressed her eyes into her head": "the woman lay pressed with her eyes on the ground."
ch 17, fn 1 "Like a fowler"; cf. Jeremiah 5:26.

ch 17, fn 2 "Unquenchable oil" [unquenchable cauldron that is the torment of hell]; cf. Mark 9:44.

ch 17, fn 3 "Peek his eyes out"; cf. Proverbs 30:17.

ch 17, fn 4 "From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head"; cf. Deuteronomy 28:35. cf. book I. chapter. 1.3

ch 17, fn 5 "Haman"; cf. Esther 3; 5; 7.

ch 18, fn 1 Birgitta wants to ensure that estates donated to Vadstena monastery are legitimately acquired and cannot be lost through various types of claims.

ch 20, fn 1 "My heart burst"; the idea that Christ's pain is concentrated in his heart appears elsewhere, e.g., Book I 27.6; 53-7; Book IV 89.5; Book VII 15.15; QO 2.55.


ch 20, fn 3 "Your director," i.e., Mathias of Linköping.

ch 20, fn 4 "The fruit of spiritual offspring": this idea is central to Birgitta's calling (cf. 20.12, "Through you I want many children to be born to me").

ch 20, fn 5 "An angel," i.e., Gabriel.


ch 20, fn 7 [on account of the godly life that he led].

ch 21, fn 1 "My joy"; cf. Matthew 25:21, 23.

ch 22, fn 1 22.5-6: "the prodigal son" (Luke 15:11-32).

ch 23, fn 1 "Swarming worms"; cf. 2 Maccabees 9:9.

ch 23, fn 2 "Evil scorpion" [most evil poisonous snake which is called a scorpion]. (e.g., Deuteronomy 8:15; Ecclesiasticus 39:30; Luke 10:19)."

ch 23, fn 3 Saint Lawrence, deacon and martyr, who, according to legend, presented the poor of Rome to the prefect of the city, describing them as the "treasure of the church"; feast day 10 August.

ch 23, fn 4 "There will be anyone to console her"; cf. Lamentations 1:2, 17.

ch 24, fn 1 "Bride," i.e., the church.

ch 24, fn 3 "You are in me and I am in you"; cf. John 17:21.

ch 24, fn 4 "May your will be done" (Matthew 6:10; 26:42).


ch 26, fn 2 "They were ashamed of their nakedness"; cf. Genesis 3:7-11.

ch 26, fn 3 "I clothed their nakedness"; cf. Genesis 3:21.

ch 26, fn 4 "When Abel was killed"; cf. Genesis 4:8.

ch 26, fn 5 "The evilness of the children of Adam grew"; cf. Genesis 6:5.

ch 26, fn 6 "I fed them with manna"; cf. Exodus 16:4-15.


ch 26, fn 8 "I gave them my Law"; cf. Exodus 31:18.

ch 26, fn 9 "It is commanded... wives"; cf. Matthew 19:5-9.


ch 27, fn 3 "Why have you abandoned me?" (psalm 21[22]:2), cf. Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.

ch 27, fn 4 "Given up his spirit his head sank"; cf. John 19:30.

ch 28, fn 1 "There is no change in me"; cf. James 1:17.

ch 28, fn 2 "All judgment has been given to me"; cf. John 5:22.

ch 30, fn 1 "The gall that they gave me to drink"; cf. Psalm 68(69):22; Matthew 27:48; John 19:29.

ch 31, fn 1 With love and the will to better themselves.

ch 31, fn 2 "Bread of angels" (Exodus 16; Psalm 78[79]:25). which uses this expression of the manna of heaven. Jesus likened the manna to himself in John 6:30-35; hence medieval authors frequently referred to Jesus as the "bread of angels."

ch 32, fn 1 "The star that went before the magi"; cf. Matthew 2:9.
"Conjurations or the art of expelling demons," Exorcism.

"The same chapter," i.e., the cathedral chapter of Linköping. These exorcisms are cited as evidence of the authenticity of Birgitta's visions in Mathias's Prologue, 42-44.

"I had nowhere to lay my head"; cf. Matthew 8:20.


"I am good and kind" (Matthew 11:29).

"He who asks for bread will get it"; cf. Matthew 7:7-11.

"Sweet into sour"; cf. Isaiah 5:20.

On the identity of Mary's heart with Christ's heart and her participation in his passion.

"Word was made flesh" (John 1:14).


"They want to take the kingdom of heaven by a kind of violence and force"; cf. Matthew 11:12.

"If they had known that he was the King of glory, they would never have crucified him" (1 Corinthians 2:8).

"Bent my knees and prayed... Not as I will... Thy will be done... sweat of blood"; cf. Matthew 26:39-42; Luke 22:41-44.

"Since they do not want to accompany their Lord in suffering, they will not accompany him in glory"; cf. 1 Peter 4:13.

"I exist inseparably in the Father and the Father in me" (John 14:10-11).


"The whole Israelite nation under the name of Israel"; cf. Deuteronomy 6:4.


"I set up Peter as shepherd and servant of my sheep"; cf. John 21:15-17.

"You worship the creature instead of the Creator"; cf. Romans 1:25.
ch 41, fn 8 "I give each person what he or she deserves"; cf. Jeremiah 17:10.

ch 41, fn 9 "Voice... Jordan"; cf. Matthew 3:13-17.

ch 41, fn 10 "Sink like... stone"; cf. Exodus 15:5.

ch 41, fn 11 "May his children... take over his property" (Psalm 108[109]:9-11).

ch 41, fn 12 "Where stone is not left upon stone" (Luke 21:6).

ch 41, fn 13 "Like wax in the face of fire" (Micah 1:4).

ch 42, fn 1 "For I have been glorified": [with the honor and glory of the resurrection].

ch 43, fn 1 "As sin gets added to sin" (Isaiah 30:1).

ch 44, fn 1 "On Pharaoh and on Sodom"; cf. Exodus 7-12; Genesis 19.

ch 45, fn 1 "Just as the entire world perished... to perish by fire"; cf. 2 Peter 3:6-7.

ch 47, fn 1 "The God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" (Exodus 3:6).

ch 47, fn 2 "He who ate of my bread plotted treason against me"; cf. Psalm 40(41):10.

ch 47, fn 3 "I truly am that bread"; cf. John 6:35.

ch 47, fn 4 "Adam is of the earth"; cf. Genesis 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:47.

ch 47, fn 5 "This is my body" (Matthew 26:26). These are the words uttered at the consecration (see too 47.37).

ch 47, fn 6 "David condemned those who were disobedient to God"; cf. Psalm 108(109).

ch 47, fn 7 "I who am the Truth" (John 14:6).

ch 48, fn 1 "Moses was with the Lord on the mountain forty days and nights"; cf. Exodus 24:18; Deuteronomy (9:9).

ch 48, fn 2 "When the people saw that he was gone a long time... God was appeased"; cf. Exodus 32:1-14.

ch 48, fn 3 "From the sole of my foot to the crown of my head" (Deuteronomy 28:35; Job 2:7; Isaiah 1:6).

ch 48, fn 4 "All judgment has been given thee"; cf John 5:22.
ch 48, fn 5 "We do not know what may have become of him" (Exodus 32:23).

ch 48, fn 6 "Beelzebub"; cf. 4 Kings (2 Kings) 1:2-6; Matthew 10:25; 12:24-27.

ch 48, fn 7 "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

ch 48, fn 8 "I shall begin my judgment with my clergy and from my altar"; cf. Ezekiel 9:6.

ch 49, fn 1 "The water stood like a wall" (Exodus 14:22).


ch 51, fn 1 "The second mountain was Elijah . . . into the holy place"; cf. 4 Kings (2 Kings) 2:11.


ch 51, fn 3 "David, a man according to my heart and will . . . fell into sin"; cf. I Kings (1 Samuel) 13:14; Acts 13:22; 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 11.

ch 51, fn 4 "Solomon, who was full of wisdom . . . nevertheless became a fool"; cf. 3 Kings (1 Kings) 3:12; 4:29-34;11.

ch 52, fn 1 "The pitch with which Noah's ark was plastered"; cf. Genesis 6:14.


ch 52, fn 3 "The fragrance of a good and humble life"; cf. 2 Corinthians 2:15-16.

ch 52, fn 4 "Father," i.e., Master Mathias of Linköping; "archbishop," i.e., Hemming Nicholai of Uppsala; "third bishop," i.e." Hemming of Turku. These men took the message to Clement VI in Avignon.

ch 52, fn 5 "Lord of the land," i.e., King Magnus Eriksson.

ch 53, fn 1 "You are the ark of the Old Law . . . the manna and the tablets"; cf. Hebrews 9:4

ch 53, fn 2 "Changed into a serpent"; cf. Exodus 4:2-4; 7:8-12.

ch 53, fn 3 "The sea was divided by it"; cf. Exodus 14:21.

ch 53, fn 4 "Water was brought forth from the rock"; cf. Exodus 17:6.

ch 53, fn 5 "They made an idol for themselves and worshipped it"; cf. Exodus 32:1-6.

ch 53, fn 6 "They longed for the fleshpots they had had in Egypt"; cf. Exodus 16:3.
ch 53, fn 7 "They wanted to go and fight their enemies without God's approval"; cf. Numbers 14:41-45.

ch 53, fn 8 "Where a man's treasure is, there his heart is" (Matthew 6:21).

ch 53, fn 9 "Book of life" (Apocalypse 21:27).


ch 54, fn 2 "We are beaten down like grass ... We have withered away"; cf. Psalm 101(102):5.

ch 54, fn 3 "Turn our wailing into joy" (Esther 13:17).

ch 54, fn 4 "The friends he had rescued from hell"; cf. Psalm 29(30); 4; Daniel 3.88.

ch 55, fn 1 "Turned into a useless bow" (Psalm 77(78):57).

ch 56, fn 1 "Ten commandments"; cf. Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5.

ch 56, fn 2 "Put out your hand and give us some money!" [This message is loved above my commandment. A man who commits manslaughter, fornication, or other ungodly sins, that is all remedied by this one word: put out your hand and take the money!]

ch 56, fn 3 "It was said to Elijah ... bowed their knees to Baal"; cf. 3 Kings (1 Kings) 19:10, 18.

ch 56, fn 4 "Apocalypse that I revealed to John": this revelation dates from around the time when Mathias of Linköping was writing his commentary on the book of the Apocalypse.

ch 56, fn 5 "As when Paul saw some of my mysteries that he was not allowed to talk about"; cf. 2 Corinthians 12:4.

ch 56, fn 6 "Without leaving stone upon stone" (Luke 21:6).

ch 56, fn 7 "Which cast out Adam from paradise"; cf. Genesis 3:23.

ch 56, fn 8 "Sent the ten plagues to Pharaoh"; cf. Exodus 7-11.

ch 56, fn 9 "Spirit ... descended on the apostles on the day of Pentecost"; cf. Acts 2.


ch 57, fn 2 "They turn their backs on me"; cf. Jeremiah 2:27; 32:33.

ch 57, fn 3 "I will become sweeter than honey in their mouths"; cf. Psalm 118(119):103.

ch 58, fn 1 "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Sabaoth" (Isaiah 6:3).
ch 58, fn 2 "I made all things well"; cf. Genesis 1:31; Mark 7:37.

ch 59, fn 1 "This was a good shepherd. . . another shepherd, an inferior one"; cf. John 10:11-12.

ch 59, fn 2 "To distinguish between good and evil"; cf. 3 Kings (1 Kings) 3:9.


ch 59, fn 4 "Woman and man are considered to be one flesh" (Matthew 19:6).

ch 59, fn 5 "So the Christian is my limb"; cf. 1 Corinthians 6:15; 12:27; and Ephesians 5:30.

ch 59, fn 6 "I am in him and he is in me"; cf. John 6:56; 15:5; 17:21-23; and 1 John 3:24.

ch 60, fn 1 "Moses asked for a sign"; cf. Exodus 4:1.

ch 60, fn 2 "Idols... anger"; cf. Exodus 32.

ch 60, fn 3 "As I said . . . bad faith did so"; cf. 1 Corinthians 10:1-5.


ch 60, fn 5 "My friend," i.e., Master Mathias.

ch 60, fn 6 "Staff of Moses .'. . transformation into a snake"; cf. Exodus 4:3-4.

ch 60, fn 7 "Move mountains"; cf. Matthew 17:19.