

EPITOME OF HISTORIES

Collected and composed
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PROLOGUE

1

[3] On target one might, in mockery, say, “Diversion is of greater importance to you than work. For, since I had, in truth, long since forsworn matters of business, forborne to be disturbed, absented myself from public life, chosen to live alone, and sentenced myself to perpetual exile—for thus had the One above us arranged our affairs, since He broke my bonds, when, for reasons which He alone understood, He (painfully for me, but nevertheless beneficially) deprived me of those most dear—, it became necessary that I pursue naught but those things which restore a soul and cleanse [4] it of deeds which have, by virtue of their pettiness, defiled it, and those things which appease the Divine concerning the things which, because I had transgressed Its injunctions and ordinances, I did to anger It, and thus to seek forgiveness for my missteps. And I, apathetically disposed toward my work as a result of my indifference to fine things, expended my energy on diversion.

But in order to defend myself even a bit further, I did not rush of my own volition to this undertaking, but men who were my friends urged me to it, observing me at leisure and saying, “Use your leisure for work of general benefit and recompense will be laid up for you before God from this, too.”¹ For they added how those who have labored on histories and have written what happened long ago, have, some of them, written in great detail both the various deeds of the men of old and their stratagems, detailing dispositions and clashes of armies, encampments, fortifications, entrenchments, and if there was anything connected with these, and, in addition to them, descriptions of locales, difficulties of routes, fortifications of cities, steep and trackless mountains, narrowness of passes, heights of towers lofty and, as some say, ethereal; while by others, displaying their level of power with regard to writing, compositions also have

been composed for show, [5] and, as a result, they place public speeches center stage and have employed language very discursively or even very rhetorically; for some their love of distinction actually culminated in dialogues, with the result that, wherever they are writing of those who hold heterodox views and who are in error about correct doctrines, they compose lectures for them as for people present, refute their base opinion, and adduce proofs from the Holy Scripture, or even speak against Jews, showing them to be willing evildoers unless they accept our mystery, and they have employed prophetic oracular responses, and have, moreover, set themselves in opposition to Hellenes, brought their nonsense into public, ridiculed those things related by them as myths, and adduced their writings as evidence of their base opinion, and in places they even speak in maxims and write with a moral purpose.² By the majority, not to say perhaps by all of those who have read the compositions of those histories, these things are regarded as tiresome and off-putting because they both require a surfeit of leisure and because, even if some who apply themselves to the histories manage to be so fortunate, the effort expended on them turns out vain, since the lengthy expositions about alignments and wars and the soldiers' orders-of-battle and of the rest of such things elude their memory, and, in truth, the public speeches and the lectures verge on the useless for those who apply themselves to what is [6] being recounted. "For," they say, "for whom will there be any advantage as a result of knowing what this demagogue said to the people, what the general said to the soldiers, or what that emperor said to the ambassadors from the Persians, or another to those from the Celts or Scythians or perhaps to those from Egypt or those from the Dacians and Triballians, and how another, delivering a speech, conversed with the senatorial council or the plebeian throng?"³ Some, they said, had published compositions of histories of this sort, quite obviously embellished and tending toward the ornate, while others, antithetically opposed to these with regard to the compilation of their histories, having employed succinctness of speech, and thence, as concerns matters of import, penalizing those who have paid serious attention to their compositions, seeing that they omitted, too, very important actions of the men who were being written about—some, moreover, very praiseworthy—having stated things as briefly as possible about them, and these neither clarifying their character, nature, or purpose nor how each of those who have reigned gained sovereignty, nor who he was before this, nor from whom he was descended. They regularly added that some of these compositions have been published in an excessively

simple style, and that these have been very clumsily produced and constructed in phrases crude or sometimes even barbarous, with the result, therefore, that men familiar with literature are repelled by them.⁴ [7] Saying things of this sort and assailing historical compositions as has been described, they constantly prodded me to take books in hand and, having omitted much indeed, some of which, through its quantity, did not naturally cling to the memory, and other things which end in nothing beneficial, and having abridged their obviously embellished narrative, to publish a concise history, the composition succinctly instructing its users about the accomplishments of—or, on the other hand, what has befallen—those about whom the compilation speaks.

So then, they kept inciting me to strip down for such a work and to set upon such a composition.

2

But, for one thing, being intellectually lax (for the truth will be told) and passing life in lethargy, and, for another, seeing that the matter required work and many books, I kept hesitating and shrinking from the attack. But those who were goading me did not let up, and eventually, by the incessancy of their prodding, they roused me to the task. For if a raindrop's persistence is able to hollow the rigidity and hardness of the rock, incessant speech, tapping at the ears, is able to arouse a mind's lethargy and lazy inclination. Then, too, it came to mind that the labor and busywork connected with the compilation would not be unprofitable with regard to spiritual benefit. For the spirits of evil are more accustomed to blow on the mind at rest and rouse waves of base concerns and, from time to time, worries, and [8] to immerse it by the incessancy of their assaults, and either to make it glide off toward sins—even if not in deeds but, in fact, in assents to deeds—or, at times, to wash over it a great gale and tumult. If the mind is engrossed with something, it is prone, on the whole, to escape the inundation of many worries and base concerns. So then, through the stimulus from my friends and through the frightening away of my sordid or, indeed, vain concerns, I committed myself to this study.

Now thus did it happen that I undertook the present composition. If I shall not relate in great detail the history of each of the particulars narrated therein, I beg those who will read it to grant me pardon. For perhaps it will not befall me, spending my time at the very present in this out-of-the-way place, to have possession of all the

books which are useful to me for the purpose of my composition, nor did all the writers of the histories write the same things about the same matters, but, in instances, if not most often, they disagree. And even if I should actually wish to do a thorough treatment of each of the things recounted, and to clarify what a particular writer says about this and what another writer says about the same thing, I would myself also make the treatment of each many lines long. On this account, it has seemed best to me to omit things about which those who have written about the same matters were in opposition, unless it is something very worthy of attention, which, being omitted, will ruin the compilation with regard to matters of import. If the impression of my language is variegated and not throughout [9] internally consistent, let no one fault my language or its father, me. For, having collected the histories from many books, in many instances, indeed, I might use the formulations and phrases of those writers, and also, too, in what I myself might parody or paraphrase, I shall adapt the form of the language I use to their character, lest my writing itself seem internally discordant.⁵

3

But, before the history, let me state in a very summary fashion what will be recounted, in order that those who are going to read the composition know that they will become knowledgeable of many and, among them, most indispensable histories. Indeed, then, encompassed in the *Epitome* is the *Octateuch* and as much as is recounted in it. The books of *Kings* are likewise embraced, and, in addition to these, *Chronicles* and as much as the Hebrew Josephus, discussing antiquities, otherwise stated beyond the more ancient ones, whether he recounted something more discursively or differently compared with these.⁶ The matters of Esdras are recounted, and the matters of the captivities of the Hebrews—of the earlier, the one of the ten tribes, which was brought about by the Assyrian Salmanasar, after he had taken Samaria by siege and had captured the people and had led it away and settled it beyond the Euphrates, and had resettled in Samaria some peoples named Chuthaei,⁷ then, [10] too, the one brought by Nebuchadnesar upon Jerusalem, and how the city became deserted, the temple was burned, and the entire people enslaved,⁸ how, after seventy years, according to the predictions of the prophets, it was granted to the people by Cyrus, after he had destroyed the sovereignty of the Assyrians, to return to Jerusalem, to rebuild the city, and to renovate the temple—; who Cyrus was, how he dissolved

the Assyrians' sovereignty, and who gained the sovereignty after him;⁹ how and by whom the building of the city was hindered, and by whom, in turn, its construction was granted;¹⁰ about Daniel the prophet, how he interpreted the dreams of Nebuchadnesar and the vision of Balthasar, when that barbarian saw the "wrist of the hand" writing on the wall, about certain visions of the prophet, which are all recounted with an abbreviated exegesis;¹¹ about the three boys and the extraordinary things that, by God, came to pass for them or through them;¹² about Esther and how she rescued the race of the Hebrews from total annihilation;¹³ about Judith, who, having outwitted Holophernes, killed him and delivered his army to perdition;¹⁴ about Tobith and how, having been struck by blindness and carried off from wealth to abject poverty, through good work he again, by God's providence, gained vision and received an abundance of wealth.¹⁵ But Alexander of Macedon's affairs, too, [11] have here been abbreviated, the history having necessarily taken note of him both for other reasons and because he sojourned in Jerusalem after his initial defeat of Darius at Issus and especially honored the high priest; and how he ended the Persians' sovereignty and made it subject to himself, how long he reigned, and how, when he died, his sovereignty was divided into four realms;¹⁶ and what came to pass for the Jews from Antiochus Epiphanes, who happened to be a descendent of one of Alexander's successors;¹⁷ how the Hasmonaeans rose against him and redeemed those of their race from the tyranny that had resulted from him, who they were, how they led their tribesmen and for how long; how, after its return to Jerusalem from its captivity under the Assyrians, the people of the Jews was not governed by a sovereign, but ruled by its high priests; that the descendants of the aforementioned Hasmonaeans, being invested with the highpriestly honor and guiding the affairs of the people, even bestowed a diadem on themselves;¹⁸ and how, after the brothers Hyrcanus and Aristobulus had quarreled about the Judaeans' sovereignty, Pompey the Great, being then in command of Romans, after he had been summoned by the siblings to arbitrate, seized the city of Jerusalem and subjected the people to the Romans;¹⁹ how Herod, the son of Antipater, came subsequently into control of the sovereignty of the Jews, who this man was, [12] whence he came, his domestic affairs, and how long his descendants were in control of the sovereignty;²⁰ for what cause and from which time governors were dispatched from Rome to Judaea;²¹ what Josephus wrote about our Savior Jesus Christ, but moreover, about John the Baptist, too;²² and through what reasons the Judaeans refused to submit to the

Romans; and how their people was warred upon by the Romans, and by whom and how Jerusalem suffered its final, irrevocable sack.²³

4

Because the history had taken note of Romans and of Rome, I thought it necessary for me to write about these, too, and to hand down whence and from what the people of the Romans had its beginning; by whom the region of Italy was previously inhabited; whence Romulus, the man who became the founder of Rome, was brought forth to the light of day; how Remus, his brother, was killed and then, too, how the former disappeared; how the city itself was first ruled; what manners and customs it employed;²⁴ how Tarquinius Superbus, after he had changed the sovereignty to a tyranny, was deposed; how many and what sort of wars Rome waged as a result of his deposition; how conditions for Romans were changed to aristocracy and then democracy, with consuls and *dictatores*, then tribunes, too, [13] performing the administration of public affairs;²⁵ what the consulship was in olden days, what the dictatorship was, and what the work of the censors was; what term was assigned to each of these offices; what a triumph was like among them and whence this name was introduced;²⁶ what sorts of things, even if not everything—through lack of books detailing these things—happened in the times of the consuls;²⁷ how, from these, rule for the Romans later changed to monarchy; how, even if not clearly, Gaius Julius Caesar first pretended to this, then, after he had been killed upon the speaker's platform by those who clung to liberty, Augustus Octavius Caesar, who was a nephew of the slain Caesar and who had been given to him in adoption, pursued the killers of his adoptive father, having Antony, too, participating with him in the work, and how, when he had afterwards quarreled also with him, he had been victorious in a naval battle off Actium, and then, when he had overtaken him after he had fled to Alexandria with Cleopatra, he brought the man to such a degree of necessity that he even killed himself; the extent of Roman losses in these civil wars, first when Octavius and Antony took the field against Brutus, Cassius, and Caesar's other killers, and then when these men battled against one another; how Cleopatra, Egypt's queen, a descendant of the Ptolemies, was taken alive [14] how she, too, killed herself, so it was concluded, by the bite of an asp; and that thus, after he had returned to Rome with brilliant victory celebrations, Octavius pursued absolute rule and transformed the leadership of the Romans

into a genuine monarchy;²⁸ who were monarchs after him, how each reached the position, how and for how long he ruled, and what sort of end of life he met; who, during their reigns, after the revered apostles, adorned the thrones of the four great churches (I am speaking of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem) and which of them was deemed worthy of a martyr's end;²⁹ how, more than the others, Diocletian and Maximianus Herculus raged against Christians; how, having laid aside their office, they picked others in their own stead as Caesars, one of whom was Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine the Great, the rule of Gaul and Britain having been assigned to him; how he, dying, made successor of his own office his firstborn son—this none other than Constantine, the Equal of the Apostles; how, after he had defeated the rest, when the cruciform star had appeared to him through the stars in the heaven, he established himself monarch; how he came to Christ and spread the faith, having given license for the preaching of the Gospel; how he constructed a city named after himself in Byzantium, having dubbed it New Rome, [15] and transferred the sovereignty from the senior Rome to it; and who reigned therein after him, of what sort each was with respect to their characters—in addition, with respect to their piety, too—, how long each was in control of the realm, and how each departed life; and who were in charge of the church in Constantinople, how long each was, who of them adhered to right doctrine, who had become heterodox, and how each of these departed from here; and under what emperors and patriarchs and against whom the synods were summoned.³⁰ And thus, the account, descending as far as those who have become emperors in our own time, concludes the compilation, having been mindful of many well-known histories and others obscure.³¹ For me, making a beginning of this compilation, it is necessary to begin with the ineffable first beginning, the cause of all things, the beginning both without beginning and without duration, and the production and genesis of what has been produced by it from the state of not-being toward subsistence and essentiality.

[Now the Divine eternally was, beyond every cause and power, shining timelessly, perpetually moved by the beauty of its own glory and brilliance, without beginning and without duration, neither having previously subsisted earlier from some other essence nor having come to be spontaneously later from things not being and advancing toward a consummation of Its own glory [16] gradually, but eternally being and abiding, because the All Holy Spirit alone, examining all things, supernaturally knew the depths of the Deity,

co-eternally rejoicing and reveling in these. And when, through utmost goodness, immense mercy, and ineffable compassion, It chose to model this visible cosmos and to bring the Second thence to the forefront by Its creation, and also a cosmos first and extraordinary by Its Grace, inasmuch as It, too, has been fashioned according to God's image—I say, in fact, man—, just as having employed the very best course toward Its construction, It earlier subordinated the immaterial powers and the celestial unit commanders, simply thinking, having advanced, swifter than a word, from Its contemplation to work.}]³²

POSTSCRIPT

Book XVIII.29

[768] Let this be the limit of the writing for me and let the course of the history here conclude—a course which has been prolonged at length. For I have not judged it profitable or opportune to commit what remains to writing. Now if the result of my labor appears helpful to any, thanks be to God, through whom all good is accomplished. But if it makes no contribution, let the fault be ours and the offspring return to me, its father, to be fuel for my memory.³³

BOOK XII.15–35

15

[571] After Pseudo-Antoninus¹ had been eliminated, Alexander, the son of Mamaea, his *anepsios*—for this word, which now means “nephew,” was used by the ancients to mean “cousins”—was allotted the rule.² He immediately proclaimed Augusta his own mother, Mamaea, who had handled affairs of state, and she gathered wise men around her son in order that his mores be modulated by them, and from the senate she selected the best counselors, with whom she shared all that had to be done. When the command of the guardsmen and the administration of the treasury had been entrusted to Domitius Ulpianus, he corrected many of Sardanapalus’ deeds. He killed Flavianus and Chrestus in order to succeed them, and not much later was attacked by the guardsmen by night and slaughtered. While Ulpianus still lived, there was, as the result of some trivial confrontation, violence between the people and the guardsmen, and for three days they battled one another. When the soldiers were getting the worst of things and set fire to some houses, the people, in fear for the city, reluctantly retired. Although other uprisings occurred, they were suppressed.³

[572] Alexander’s mother, addicted to riches, amassed wealth from all quarters. She presented to her son a bride, whom she did not assent to be called Augusta, but whom, after a brief interval, she detached from her son and relegated to Libya, though she was the object of his affection. He was unable to oppose his mother, who controlled him.⁴

Now then, Artaxerxes the Persian, who was from an obscure and inglorious family, gained possession of the Parthian realm for the Persians and ruled them. From him Chosroes’ family, too, is said to be descended. After the death of Alexander of Macedon, his Macedonian successors long ruled both the Persians and the Parthians

and the other tribes, but, of course, they marched against one another and destroyed each other. When they had been weakened thus, first Arsacides the Parthian attempted rebellion from them, won control of the Parthians, and left his realm to his descendants, the last of whom was Artabanus. After he had defeated him in three battles, the aforementioned Artaxerxes captured and killed him. Then he marched against Armenia, too, and was beaten when the Armenians and the Medes, with the sons of Artabanus, attacked him. After he had recovered, he, in turn, watched for an opportunity to set upon Mesopotamia and Syria with a larger force and threatened that he would recover everything bequeathed to the Persians from their ancestors.⁵

[573] Then Artaxerxes, with the Persians, overran Cappadocia and besieged Nisibis.⁶ Now Alexander, seeking peace, sent ambassadors to him. The barbarian did not receive the delegation, but dressed four hundred of his grandees in costly robes, put them on horses from the choice mounts, adorned them with glittering arms, and dispatched them to Alexander, thinking that he would thus frighten him and the Romans. When they had arrived and come into Alexander's presence, they said, "The Great King Artaxerxes orders the Romans to abandon Syria and all Asia opposite Europe and to concede to the Persians to rule as far as the sea." Alexander arrested them, stripped them of their arms and robes, deprived them of their horses, dispersed them into many villages, and compelled them to till the soil. For he did not consider it pious to kill them.⁷ He divided his own forces into three groups and launched a triple attack against the Persians. And while much destruction of Persians resulted, very many Romans also perished, not so much at the hands of their enemies as in the return through the mountains of Armenia. For, since the mountains were very frigid, the feet of the marchers and even the hands of some, blackened and morbid, were amputated as a result of the cold. And, on account of this, Alexander became a ground for complaint to the Romans. Hence, out of despondency, or even from the change of climate, he became very ill.⁸

When he had recovered, he attacked the Germans and harassed them with his javeliniers and archers. He also sent a delegation to them about sureties [574] in exchange for subsidies. As a result, the soldiers became enraged and contemplated rebellion.⁹ And, ostensibly against his will, they grabbed a certain Maximinus, a Thracian by extraction, who as a child had been assigned to herd sheep and subsequently had become a soldier, and named him

emperor. He took those who had proclaimed him and headed off immediately to where Alexander was staying. When Alexander learned of this, he exhorted the soldiers with him to his aid, and they promised to help. When Maximinus approached, Alexander assembled his army and ordered it to attack Maximinus' men. But they both reproached and disparaged his mother for her greed, and insolently turning on him they abandoned him as a coward and began to depart. When he saw himself bereft of aid, he withdrew to his tent, embraced his mother, and began weeping. Maximinus sent a centurion and killed Mamaea, Alexander, and those with him, and he came into control of the realm.¹⁰

Mamaea, Alexander's mother, had pursued virtue and a reverent life. While accompanying her son in Antioch, she learned about Origen and summoned him from Alexandria. By him she was taught the word of the faith and became very devout, as Eusebius recounts and certain other writers say. On this account, not only did the contemporary persecution of the Christians subside but also those revering Christ were deemed most worthy of honor.¹¹

[575] At that time, while Urbanus was the bishop in charge of the city of Rome, Hippolytus flourished, a man most holy and wise, who became bishop of the port of Rome, composed many writings, and explicated various points of the divine. Asclepiades was in charge of Antioch and was directing the church of the faithful there. And Sardonius of Jerusalem.¹²

16

After he had led the Romans for ten years, Alexander was disposed of in the manner described, and Maximinus received the empire.¹³ Immediately he both aroused a persecution against the Christians and commanded that those in charge of the churches be killed on the grounds that they were teachers and preachers of the mystery according to Christ. It is said that he initiated the persecution because of his hatred toward Alexander, since the latter honored those who revered Christ. For he was angry with that ruler because, when he had been selected general by him and campaigned against the Persians and had been disgracefully defeated, he endured imperial ire. There was also a second cause of the persecution: many throughout Alexander's household had recognized Christ as God.¹⁴ At that time Ambrose, a learned man, who inspired Origen to exegesis of the divine scripture and provided lavish outlays for him and supplied to him seven tachygraphers [576] who were engaged in the writing

by turns according to appointed times, and no fewer scribes and maidens trained as calligraphers, is said to have been adorned with the crown of martyrdom, together with Protoctetus, a presbyter.¹⁵

When he had become ruler, Maximinus at once wrote to the senate, disclosing to it his acclamation by the soldiers. He was oppressive and cruel not to Christians alone, but also to all his subjects, for he was both violent and greedy, and consequently very unjust, a perpetrator of murders, and an outright tyrant, who at any reasonable opportunity resorted to rapes and men's murders. To such a degree did he careen toward bloodguilt that he did not even spare his own wife, for he murdered her. Concealing his ignoble pedigree as much as possible, he dishonored the elite and socialized with men of obscure station. For this, therefore, he was despised.¹⁶

He campaigned against the Germans and plundered their territory, while not one of the barbarians showed himself. Then they appeared around the swamps and the dense forests, and, when the Romans advanced there, a great number were killed. Thus did Maximinus, when he had conquered, return, bringing a throng of prisoners.¹⁷ Appropriating all the possessions of his subjects and enriching himself from all quarters, he did not even refrain from the temples. Then, while everyone was blaming the soldiers who had acclaimed him, those who were stationed in Libya [577] contemplated rebellion when they learned of this and because they had been aroused for another additional reason. For at any reasonable opportunity the guardians of the affairs of Libya were confiscating the wealth of her elite and killing those who possessed it. Consequently, having been compelled, those there rebelled, seized from the senate a certain aged and unwilling man called Gordianus, put a diadem on him, dressed him in purple, and proclaimed him emperor and Augustus. He came to Carthage. And all willingly accepted him because of their hatred for Maximinus. He then wrote to the senate and dispatched men to announce his acclamation to those in Rome.¹⁸ When the envoys were a long time in their voyage, those in Rome, unable to endure Maximinus' tyranny, were moved to rebellion, toppled his statues, and reviled the tyrant. Then, when they had come to the realization that, if Maximinus should survive, there would be no hope of salvation for them, they put forward Maximus and Albinus, two generals, and both enrolled in the senate. Some recorded that they were proclaimed Caesars by the senate since it had not yet learned of the acclamation of Gordianus.¹⁹

At any rate, Maximinus learned of this and rushed toward Italy, having made many threats against the senate. Knowing that Maximus

was advancing against him—for Albinus, for defense of Rome, had remained [578] there—he veered toward Aquileia, having Moors with him, hastening to get possession of the town. Aquileia is said to be the present Venice. But he was repulsed, since those within bravely resisted him. After he had been repulsed from Aquileia and had attacked Maximus' adherents, he was beaten. He then withdrew to his own tent. When his soldiers and his guardsmen had revolted against him, he came before the tent with his son for the purpose of a parley with them. But they immediately attacked both of them and killed them. Maximinus was five-and-sixty years old, of which he ruled six. The heads of those who had been killed were cut off, exhibited to those in Aquileia, and sent on to Rome. Those in Rome stuck the head of Maximinus on a pole in the Forum in order that it be conspicuous to everyone.²⁰

17²¹

Subsequently, Maximus returned to Rome, and Albinus met him, and the people and the senate received him with hymns and applause. Both ruled together and ruled nobly. But the soldiers, at any rate, were vexed that not they but the senate and people had proposed these emperors. Then even the sovereigns themselves had disagreements with one another, and this became the cause of their ruin. For when the soldiers realized that they were at odds they attacked them and, after they had bound both, they led them through [579] the entire city, abused and mocked and, in truth, tortured. Then, when they learned that the Germans planned to rescue them and save them from death, in order that this not happen, they executed them. Of these, Maximus was seventy-four years old, Albinus sixty. According to some they reigned about twenty-two days, but according to others not quite three months.²²

After them, some have written that a certain Pompeianus grasped the empire of the Romans, but that he lost control of it quickly, as if he had gained his power in a dream, for two months had not yet passed when he was deprived, in addition to the monarchy, of his life, too, and killed—by whom and through what reason, I myself, having been unable to discover, have omitted mention—, but others have written that another took control. After him, they write that Publius Balbinus was installed, and that he too tasted a tiny bit of the rule, for they delimited for him a reign of about three months, and that he also was killed as soon as Gordianus from Libya, who, as I have already said, was proclaimed there, gained control.

They write that Gordianus, after he had arrived at Rome, became ill, in part because he was elderly—for he had lived seventy-nine years—and in part because he was exhausted, having been a long time at sea en route, and that he died from this disease, having passed only twenty-two days in it. And they write that he designated his own son successor to the realm, and that he too was called Gordianus and was named for his own father.²³

[580] Now some have recorded that these things happened thus, while others say that some rebelled against the elder Gordianus when he had been proclaimed in Libya, and that, when battle was joined, Gordianus' men were beaten and many of them, and, in truth, his own son, were killed. And they record that, being sorely pained, he hanged himself and thus betook himself from life.²⁴

Those who assign to his son, young Gordianus, the leadership of the Romans after the death from disease of the elder Gordianus have written that the former campaigned against the Persians, engaged them, and, riding his horse in the battle and encouraging his own men and stirring them toward courage, that his thigh broke when the horse slipped and fell upon him, that he was thus conveyed toward Rome, and that he died from the break, having ruled about six years.²⁵

Urbanus, the archpriest of Rome, who had served as archpriest for eight years, died during Maximinus' reign. Pontianus succeeded him. After Philetus, Zebinus was in charge of the church of the Antiochenes.²⁶ Precisely under Gordianus the youth, Pontianus, who had been in charge of the faithful in Rome, quit life and, having occupied his office six years, had as successor Anteros. In fact, Anteros, after he had directed the church for the very briefest moment, departed for another life. After him, Flavianus chanced by divine lot on the archpriesthood, as Eusebius recorded. For it is said that when the [581] faithful had been gathered in order to select from those beside them who was going to direct the episcopacy, that Flavianus too was present, coming just then from the field. Now then, it is said that there had not been a word from anyone about his being put in charge of the church, but that there were others about whose candidacy the assembly was concerned. In such a circumstance, a dove flew down and perched upon Flavianus' head. Subsequently, all those gathered there employed one voice exactly as if from a signal and shouted to him, "You are worthy!" and they bore him to the throne of the archpriest, with no hesitation at all.²⁷ At that time Zebinus, the man in charge of the church of the faithful in Antioch, departed life and was succeeded by Babylas. Origen, staying

at that time around Caesarea in Palestine, acquired many pupils from all over, and he even had the great Gregory the Wonderworker and his brother, Athenodorus, as auditors of his words. At that time Africanus the historian also was noteworthy.²⁸

18

After the youth Gordianus, another Gordianus, in turn, obtained the empire, in lineage, as word has it, related to the departed Gordians. He campaigned against the Persians, did battle with them—Sapor, the son of Artaxerxes being in command of the nation—, defeated his opponents, and, in turn, recovered for the Romans Nisibis and Carrhae, which had been snatched by the Persians under Maximinus.²⁹ [582] Then, when he had reached Ctesiphon, as a result of a conspiracy of Philippus, prefect of the guard, he was killed.³⁰ For this Gordianus, when he had become ruler, chose as prefect his own father-in-law, called Timesocles. Now, as long as he was around, matters having to do with resources were fine for the emperor and affairs of state flowed smoothly for him, but when Timesocles died, Philippus was chosen prefect. Since he wished the soldiers to rebel, he reduced their rations, so implying that the emperor had ordered this. But others say that he withheld the supplies being brought to the camp, with the result that the soldiers were oppressed and, in consequence, were stirred to rebellion. Having rebelled against the emperor, they attacked him as the cause of the famine which had befallen them, and having attacked him, they killed him, after he had been in charge about six years.³¹ Philippus immediately made a dash for the empire. When the murder of Gordianus was announced to the senate, it aroused it to select another emperor. It immediately acclaimed Caesar a certain philosopher, Marcus. He died suddenly, staying in the palace, before getting a firm foot in his rule.³² With him dead, Severus Hostilianus controlled the leadership of the Romans. But he too, almost before he had obtained it, paid his debt. For he became ill, was bled, and died.³³ [583]

19

Then, after he had returned, Philippus came into control of the empire of the Romans. During his return, he appointed his son Philippus colleague in his sovereignty. After he had established a truce with Sapor, the ruler of the Persians, he concluded the war against the Persians, having ceded to them Mesopotamia and Armenia. When he

recognized that the Romans were upset because of the transfer of the territories, after a bit he set the treaties aside and seized the territories. Sapor, as has been recorded, was of enormous bodily size, and such a man had never before been seen.³⁴

Having embarked for the return, Philippus was well disposed to the Christians and even, according to some, also assented to the faith of Christ, with the result that he joined Christians in prayers in a church and there gladly admitted all his sins. For not otherwise would he have been received into communion by the leader of the church, unless he had confessed and enrolled himself among those seeking forgiveness. And it is said that he obeyed him who was in authority.³⁵ Now then, some say that he was the father of the martyr Eugenia. But concerning this opinion, they have been misled. For it has been recorded that that man too had been a commander, but of Egypt, and not of the guard. And after his declaration of faith in Christ, he, after he had renounced his office because of his pledge to Christ, played the man and was adorned with martyrdom.³⁶

[584] After he had undertaken a war against the Scythians, the emperor Philippus returned to Rome.³⁷ In Moesia, Marinus, a unit commander, was chosen by the soldiers to reign. On account of this, Philippus was troubled and conversed with the senate about the revolt. While the others were silent, Decius told him that he did not need to be concerned about Marinus, as he would be killed by the soldiers themselves, since he was unworthy of the realm—which is what happened a little later according to his prediction.³⁸ Then, on account of this, Philippus admired Decius and urged him to depart to Moesia and to punish the instigators of the revolt. But he asked to be excused from the mission, saying that to go there benefited neither himself nor him who sent him. But even yet, Philippus kept urging him. Though unwilling, he departed. After he had departed, the soldiers immediately hailed him sovereign. When he declined, they drew their swords and forced him to accept the empire. Then from there he wrote to Philippus not to be troubled, for if he advanced on Rome, he would set aside the trappings of sovereignty. But distrusting this, Philippus took the field against him. When he had attacked Decius' men, he fell fighting in the front ranks. With him too was killed his son, Philippus. With them dead, all went over to Decius.³⁹ According to some, he reigned for five years, but according to others six months in addition to these. He was a native of Bostra, where, after he had become sovereign, he constructed a city named for himself, having named it Philippopolis.⁴⁰ [585]

At any rate, Decius, as has been said, after all the soldiers had gone over to him, returned to Rome and came into control of the leadership. After he had contemplated the weight of his office and the management of affairs of state, as some say, he appointed Valerianus over the administration of affairs of state.⁴² After they had mutually encouraged one another toward fighting God, they immediately aroused a very violent persecution against those bearing the name Christian. There are some who say that Decius set upon the Christians as a result of his hatred for Philippos, since he had revered them. At any rate, he raged against all the faithful. At that time Flavianus, who had been put in charge of the church in Rome, met with a martyr's death, and Babylas, who directed the church of the faithful in Antioch, and Alexander, the bishop of Jerusalem—who then not for the first time strove on behalf of his faith in the Lord Savior, but earlier, too, as has already been said—, was imprisoned in a dungeon and then died.⁴³ But the great Cyprianus, too, who was bishop of Carthage, then strove on behalf of his faith in Christ. When the aforementioned archpriests had quit life, in Rome, in place of Flavianus, Cornelius became bishop, and in Antioch, in place of Babylas, Flavianus, and in Alexandria, Dionysius, and in Jerusalem, in place of Alexander, Mazabanes. Very many others were then deemed worthy of martyrdom.⁴⁴

[586] At that time Origen was brought before the tyrannical tribunal on the grounds that he was revering Christ, but he did not attain a martyr's death, I think because God did not judge him worthy of this because of the wretched fellow's perversity with regard to orthodox doctrines. For he broke ranks, and this after an ordeal of tortures.⁴⁵ As has been said before, after he had become great in words and thence mighty and pretentious, he did not follow the doctrine of the holy fathers prior to him, but, relying on himself, he reckoned himself an innovator of novel doctrines, and vomited forth from the evil treasure of his heart blasphemies both toward the holy trinity and toward the divine incarnation, and he became the founder of virtually every heresy. For he both taught that the only begotten Son of God was created and estranged him of his glory and his paternal essence, and he debased the Holy Spirit from the rank of the Father and of the Son, saying that neither is the Son able to behold his Father nor, indeed, the Spirit the Son, exactly as the angels are not able to behold the Spirit nor humans the angels. While these were the blasphemies of Origen about the holy and

consubstantial trinity, he did indeed blaspheme about the incarnation of the Son of God, impiously teaching that Christ did not receive flesh animated from the Holy Virgin. For he fabricated a tale that before the foundation of the universe the only-begotten Son of God was united with Intellect, which, as chosen and not submitting to disturbance, he reshaped, and with it to the utmost degree he was made man and [587] took on flesh distinct from intellectual and rational soul. And he taught that the Lord would again set aside the flesh and that his reign would have an end. For he instructed that there was going to be a restoration of the demons, and a temporal, but not everlasting, retribution, and that it would exist for the sake of a purification of sins, and that, after they had been purified, all, both humans and demons, would be restored to the "Unity." The particulars about this "Unity," which require a surfeit of words to clarify its nonsense, were omitted, just as were others of his blasphemies, too.

Now this was the situation with regard to Origen, whom they also called "Adamantine."⁴⁶ And then too did Navatus, a presbyter of the church at Rome, become the originator of a heresy and founder of those who call themselves "Pure Ones," and denied repentance to those who, after they had done obeisance before and offered sacrifice to the idols, were then returning and confessing, and did not admit those who prostrated themselves before him and who, in repentance and contrition, were seeking a remedy for their error. Against him there convened in Rome a synod, in charge of which was Cornelius. It was decreed therein that it was necessary that those who had fallen by the wayside in the time of the persecution, when they had returned, be re-admitted, and that it was necessary to relieve them with the remedies of repentance. But since he did not obey the decrees, those divine fathers expelled Navatus from the church and banished him as a "brother hater."⁴⁷

[588] Eusebius mentions an account of the following sort from a letter of Dionysius, who served as bishop of the church of the Alexandrians. For he says that Dionysius wrote these things verbatim:

There was a certain Serapion among us, a faithful old man, who had lived blamelessly, but had fallen into temptation. He was often in need, and no one attended to him because he had sacrificed. Having become ill, he endured three successive days speechless and senseless. On the fourth day, having briefly recovered, he summoned his daughter's son and said, "Make haste! Call one of the elders for me!" And

again he was voiceless. The boy ran to the elder. And, though he was unable to come (for he was infirm), having previously received an injunction from me that those departing life, if ever they were in need, and most of all if they had happened previously to have been suppliants, be absolved, in order that they depart in good hope, he gave a bit of the Eucharist to the child, having ordered him to soak it and to let it drip into the old man's mouth. The boy returned bearing it. And when he was near, before he entered, Serapion, having again come to, said, "Are you come, child? Since the elder is not able to enter, you do with haste what he ordered and let me depart." The boy soaked it and at once poured it into the mouth of the old man, and when he had swallowed a morsel, straightway he gave up the ghost. Was he not obviously preserved and did he not remain alive until he was absolved and, with his sin absolved, until he could be acknowledged for the many fine things he had done?

These things did the letter of Dionysius relate.⁴⁸

[589] Decius, being so disposed toward those revering Christ, before he had completed two whole years in his rule of the Romans, died most shamefully. For when barbarians were plundering the Bosphorus, Decius engaged them and killed many. When they were hard pressed and offered to surrender all their loot if they were allowed to withdraw, Decius did not give in, but posted Gallus, one of the men of the senate, on the route of the barbarians, ordering him not to let them pass. But Gallus, betraying Decius, proposed to the barbarians that, since a deep swamp was nearby, they deploy there. When the barbarians had so deployed and turned their backs, Decius pursued them. And both he, with his son, and a multitude of Romans fell into the swamp and all perished there, with the result that their bodies, interred in the slime of the swamp, were not found.⁴⁹

21

Then Gallus, whom some writers say was also called Volusianus as a second name, came to power. But others have written that his son was Volusianus and that he ruled with him.⁵⁰ Further, when he had gained control of the empire of the Romans, Gallus made a treaty with the barbarians on condition that they receive from the Romans

an annual tribute and not plunder the possessions of Romans, and, having so arranged, he returned to Rome and proclaimed his son, Volusianus, Caesar.⁵¹ He too became a burden to the Christians, no less than Decius, arousing a persecution against them and killing many. And during his reign there began anew the [590] Persians' unrest, and Armenia was subdued by them, its king, Teridates, having fled, and his children going over to the Persians. Also Scythians, a multitude almost overwhelming in number, made inroads into Italy and overran Macedonia, Thessaly, and Greece. It is said that one group of them, having traversed the Bosphorus and crossed over Lake Maeotis, arrived at the Euxine Sea and plundered many lands. At that time, too, many other peoples attacked the Roman dominion. Plague also then befell the lands, starting from Ethiopia and spreading over almost every land, both East and West, and, lasting for fifteen years, denuded many of the cities of their inhabitants.⁵²

So then, the Scythians, taking annually what had been arranged by the Romans according to treaty, came to receive these things, and, saying that what was given to them was less than what had been promised, departed under threats. A certain Aemilianus, a Libyan man, commander of the army of Moesia, promised that he would give the soldiers all that had been given the Scythians, if they would engage in war with the barbarians. Catching the Scythians by surprise, they killed all but a few and collected much booty from them, overrunning their territory.

Subsequently, when he became haughty in his success, Aemilianus canvassed the soldiers under him. They proclaimed him emperor of the Romans.⁵³ He [591] immediately roused his forces and hastened to occupy Italy. Then indeed, when these matters came to Gallus' attention, he too, having prepared himself on the opposite side, arrayed himself against Aemilianus. When the armies had engaged in combat, Gallus' men were beaten, and being beaten, they attacked their own emperor. When they had killed him and his son, whose reigns had been two years and eight months, they attached themselves to Aemilianus and they too voted him the realm.⁵⁴

22

After he had thus been proclaimed emperor, Aemilianus wrote to the senate, promising that he would rid Thrace of barbarians, that he would campaign against Persia, and that, having turned the realm over to the senate, he would do everything and fight as their

general.⁵⁵ But he did not get around to doing any of the things he said, since there rose up against him Valerianus, who, commander of the forces beyond the Alps, when he had learned about Aemilianus, himself also became a usurper. After he had concentrated the forces under him, he hastened toward Rome. Then, in fact, those who served with Aemilianus, when they had recognized that they were no match in battle for the army of Valerianus, judging that it was not pious that Romans destroy and be destroyed by one another, that wars be joined between men of the same race, and otherwise reckoning, too, that Aemilianus was unworthy of the realm both as ignoble and groveling, and, to be sure, considering that [592] Valerianus was better suited for the rule because he would, for certain, assume affairs in a more authoritative fashion, killed Aemilianus, who had not yet reigned four months and was forty years of age. They submitted themselves to Valerianus and entrusted the empire of the Romans to him without a fight.⁵⁶

When, as has been said, Flavianus had been martyred under Decius, Cornelius received the pastoral office of Rome and, having been distinguished in this for three years, he measured out his lifespan. Lucius was elevated to the throne of the archpriesthood, and, before he had fulfilled his eighth year in the episcopacy of Rome, died. Stephanus succeeded to the office of the pastoral post, from whom there happens to be a directive not to baptize Christians who had converted from heresies, but to purify them by prayer through a laying on of hands. A letter of his about this to the holy martyr Cyprianus is recorded.⁵⁷ When Stephanus had gone to his rest after two years, Xystus occupied the archpriestly throne of Rome. Then, too, the heresy according to Sabellius was stirred up in Ptolemais of the Pentapolis.⁵⁸

Thus did matters stand with regard to the archpriests of Rome.

23

Valerianus, when he had assumed the leadership of the Romans with Galienus, his son, also set in motion a most violent [593] persecution against Christians. Many became martyrs in various locations, performing feats of various types in behalf of their faith in Christ.⁵⁹ Then, too, when under him there was an uprising of the peoples, affairs were dire for the Romans. For the Scythians, crossing the Ister, once more enslaved the Thracian territory and besieged the illustrious city of Thessalonica, but nevertheless did not take it. They threw everyone into such great panic that the Athenians rebuilt their city's wall, which

had been dismantled from the times of Sulla, and the Peloponnesians built a wall across the Isthmus from sea to sea.⁶⁰

In addition, the Persians, too, with Sapor their king, overran Syria, ravaged Cappadocia, and were besieging Edessa. Valerianus was hesitating to meet the enemy. When he learned that the soldiers in Edessa had made a sally from the city, engaged the barbarians, and were killing many and taking much booty, he took heart and, having departed with the army that was with him, engaged the Persians. They, being more numerous, encircled the Romans, and many died and some also fled, and Valerianus, with those about him, was captured by the enemy and led off to Sapor. Since he had gained control of the sovereign, he thought that he was in control of everything. And being savage already, hereafter he became worse by far.⁶¹

That Valerianus was taken thus as a prisoner of war [594] by the Persians some record, while others say that Valerianus voluntarily went over to the Persians because, while he was living in Edessa, famine befell the soldiers, and from this they were roused to rebellion and sought to kill the emperor. But, because he feared the uprising of his soldiers, he fled to Sapor, lest he be destroyed by his own men, having betrayed to the enemy not only himself but, so far as it lay in his power, the Roman forces, as well. To be sure, the soldiers were not destroyed, but, when they learned of his treachery, they fled after a few of them had been killed.⁶² But whether the sovereign was taken by the Persians as a prisoner of war or whether he voluntarily put himself in their hands, he was treated ignominiously by Sapor.⁶³

The Persians, attacking the cities with complete impunity, took both Antioch on the Orontes and, of the cities of Cilicia, the very renowned Tarsus, and Caesarea in Cappadocia.⁶⁴ When they had collected a multitude of captives, they did not provide them rations, except the tiniest amount in order for them to stay alive, neither did they allow them to partake of enough water to quench their thirst, but once a day their guards drove them to water just like cattle. Caesarea, being very populous—for it is said that about 400,000 men dwell in it—they did not take—those in it having nobly resisted their enemies and being commanded by a certain Demosthenes, a man brave and intelligent—before a man who had been taken prisoner, [595] a physician, unable to endure the insults leveled at him, suggested a certain spot by which the Persians entered in the night and killed everyone. In fact, their general, Demosthenes, after he had been encircled by many Persians who had been ordered to take him alive, mounted his horse, grasped his naked sword, and flung himself into

the midst of the enemy. After he lay many low, he escaped from the city and managed to get away.⁶⁵ With matters having befallen the Persians thus, they dispersed through the entire eastern territory subject to the Romans and plundered it with impunity.

Now then, the Romans who had fled, so it is said, appointed a certain Callistus as their general. When he had observed the Persians dispersing and recklessly attacking the territories because they did not think that anyone would oppose them, he quickly attacked them, wrought a massive slaughter of the barbarians, and captured the concubines of Sapor, together with much wealth. So he, greatly pained by these things, turned hastily homeward, bringing along Valerianus, who ended his life in Persia, reviled and mocked as a captive.⁶⁶

Not only did Callistus then excel against the Persians, but so did a certain Palmyrene man called Odenathus, who, allying himself with the Romans, destroyed many of the Persians, attacking them as they were returning via the Euphrates territory. Galienus, rewarding him for his generalship, appointed him General of the East.⁶⁷

[596] Moreover, among the dead of the Persian army who were being stripped, women, too, are said to have been found who had been dispatched and equipped in the fashion of men. Some women of this sort were also taken alive by the Romans.⁶⁸ Sapor, on his return, when he happened upon a deep ravine which his baggage train was unable to cross, commanded that captives be slain and tossed into the ravine in order that, once its depth had been filled with the dead bodies, their baggage train thus cross. And it is so recorded that he crossed the ravine.⁶⁹

Thus were the affairs of Valerianus. Xystus was the leader of the church of the Romans, and of the church of the Antiochenes, Demetrianus, having succeeded Flavianus, and of the church of Jerusalem, Hymenaeus, Mazabanes having died, and Dionysius was in charge of the church in Alexandria.⁷⁰

24

After Valerianus, Galienus, his son, assumed the leadership of the Romans.⁷¹ His father, campaigning against the Persians, left him in the West to resist those lying in wait in Italy and those plundering Thrace. Attacking the Alamanni, who were about 300,000 strong, around Mediolanum, he was victorious with 10,000. Then, too, he proceeded against the Aerouli, a Scytho-Gothic race, and prevailed. He also warred against the Franks.⁷²

[597] Auriolus, being from a Getic territory later named Dacia and of undistinguished lineage—for he previously was a mere shepherd—, but with fortune resolved to lift him to greatness, became a soldier and, when he had become very adept, was chosen as attendant of the imperial horses. Doing an excellent job with them, he seemed pleasing to the ruler. When the soldiers in Moesia had rebelled and had proclaimed Ingenuus emperor, and when Galienus had taken the field against him near Sirmium with the other soldiers and was leading the Moors, who are said to be descended from Medes, Auriolus, commanding the cavalry, after he had battled nobly with his horsemen, annihilated many of Ingenuus' adherents and turned the remainder to flight, with the result that Ingenuus himself fled in desperation and, as he fled, was killed by his own guardsmen.⁷³

Then Postumus next revolted against Galienus. For the emperor, having a son by the same name, both clever and handsome, whom he held as successor of the realm, left him behind in the city of Agrippina to aid the Gauls, who were being raided by Scythians. On account of his son's youth, he also set over him a certain person called Albanus. Postumus, who had been left to guard the Rhine River so as to impede the crossing into Roman territory for the barbarians dwelling beyond, attacked some, who, after they had crossed unnoticed, were taking much plunder as they were returning, and he killed many [598], recovered all the plunder, and immediately apportioned it to his soldiers.

Albanus, when he had learned this, sent messengers and demanded that the plunder be brought to him and to the young Galienus. Postumus called his soldiers together and exacted from them their shares of the plunder, scheming to incite them to rebellion. And that is exactly what happened. With them he attacked the city of Agrippina, and the inhabitants of the city surrendered to him both the son of the sovereign and Albanus, and he executed them both.⁷⁴

Galienus, when he had learned of these things, proceeded against Postumus, and, when he had engaged him, was initially beaten and then prevailed, with the result that Postumus fled. Then Auriolus was sent to chase him down. Though able to capture him, he was unwilling to pursue him for long, but, coming back, he said that he was unable to capture him. Thus Postumus, having escaped, next organized an army. Galienus again marched upon him and, after he had penned him in a certain city of Gaul, besieged the usurper. In the siege, the sovereign was struck in the back by an arrow and, having become ill as a result, broke off the siege.⁷⁵

Another war against Galienus was incited by Macrinus, who, having two sons, Macrianus and Quintus, attempted a usurpation. Because he was lame in one leg, he did not don the imperial mantle, but clad his sons in it. [599] The people of Asia joyfully received him. After he had lingered a little on the Persian front, he began to make preparations about Galienus and appointed Ballista, whom he selected cavalry commander, to face the Persians, and left behind his son, Quintus, with him.⁷⁶ Then the sovereign sent Auriolus, with other generals, too, against Macrinus and his son Macrianus. They engaged them, surrounded them, and killed some. For they spared them since they were members of the same race, and they hoped that they would desert to the sovereign. They would not surrender. But in consequence of a certain fortuitous circumstance they all went over to the sovereign. For while on the march, those near the usurpers were holding their standards erect, and one of the standard-bearers, stumbling over his own feet as he marched, fell, and when he fell his standard dropped. Then the rest of the standard-bearers, seeing the fallen standard and not knowing how it had fallen, assumed that the man holding it had purposely lowered it, switching over to the sovereign. And immediately they too lowered and flung down all of theirs and hailed Galienus, the Pannonians alone having remained on Macrinus' side. Then, when even they were considering changing sides, Macrinus, with his son, entreated them not to surrender them, but to kill them first and thus to join the sovereign. When they had done this, the Pannonians surrendered themselves.⁷⁷

To be sure, Quintus, the younger son of Macrinus, was in the East [600] with Ballista, and had made almost all of it subject to himself. Against them Galienus sent Odenathus, who was in command of the Palmyrenes. When the defeat of the Macrini which had occurred in Pannonia was announced to Quintus and Ballista, many of the cities under them rebelled. They were quartered in Emesa. When he arrived there, Odenathus attacked them, was victorious, and himself executed Ballista. But the people of the city executed Quintus. The sovereign, repaying Odenathus for his courage, appointed him general of the entire East.⁷⁸

This Odenathus, after he had become great, faithful to Romans, and had distinguished himself in many wars of sundry peoples and against the Persians themselves, ultimately was murdered by his own brother's son. For the latter, in the company of his uncle on a wild animal hunt, when a beast leaped out, was the first to attack and, having made his cast, killed the beast. Odenathus became

annoyed and threatened his nephew. But he did not stop, but did this a second and third time. Odenathus, enraged, took away his horse. This is reckoned a great insult for the barbarians. Accordingly, the youth, being vexed, threatened his uncle. On this account, he imprisoned him. Then the elder of Odenathus' sons petitioned his father that the prisoner be released. When he had been released, at a dinner party he attacked Odenathus with a sword and killed both him and his son, with whose help he had been released. He too was killed, when some men attacked him.⁷⁹

25

[601] Moreover, there occurred another uprising against Galienus, arranged by Auriolus, commander of all of the cavalry and a very powerful man. He seized the city of Mediolanum and prepared to engage the sovereign. The latter, too, when he had arrived with a force and taken the field against the usurper, destroyed many of the opposition. Then Auriolus was wounded and penned in Mediolanum, besieged there by the sovereign. While Galienus was making sorties against some of the enemy, the empress was on one occasion exposed to danger. For she was present with him. For as the sovereign had sallied forth with the majority of his troops, very few were stationed about his camp. The enemy, when they noticed this, attacked the sovereign's tent, intending to snatch the empress. One of the soldiers who had been left behind had seated himself in front of the tent, removed one of his shoes from his foot, and was mending it. Then, as he saw the enemy attacking, he grabbed a shield and dagger and bravely rushed against them. He struck one and a second and blocked the remainder, who had shied away before his charge. And so, when more soldiers had raced to the spot, the sovereign's wife was saved.⁸⁰

While the sovereign was still besieging Mediolanum, there came to him with horsemen Aurelianus, with whose aid the grandees planned to kill him.⁸¹ But they were putting off the scheme until he took Mediolanum. When they learned that their treason had been discovered, [602] they accelerated the conspiracy. They dispatched some men who announced to Galienus that enemies were attacking. He rushed out against them immediately—the hour already being about mealtime—and with a few men accompanying him. Horsemen met him as he was departing. When they were not far distant and had neither dismounted from their horses nor done anything else which was customarily done in the sovereign's presence, he asked those at hand, "What do they wish?" They replied, "To

remove you from office." He immediately gave his horse the rein and turned to flight. He would have even escaped the conspirators by the speed of his horse had he not chanced upon a channel of water. For the horse shied away from crossing it and balked, and thus did his pursuers capture him. One of them hurled his spear at him. The wounded man fell from his horse, and, after he had lingered for a little while, died as a result of loss of blood, having reigned fifteen years, including those of his father. He was magnanimous in outlook and wished to please all, and no one who petitioned him was unsuccessful, even to the extent that he did not punish either those who had opposed him or those who had associated with the would-be usurpers.

Now some record that Galienus died thus, but others say he was slaughtered by Heraclianus, the prefect. For when Auriolus, serving as general in Gaul, had rebelled against him and arrived in Italy with his forces, Galienus, too, [603] rushed out against him. By night Heraclianus approached him as he slept in his tent, having shared the conspiracy also with Claudius, a man most suited for command, and reported that Auriolus was attacking with a heavy force. Confused by the suddenness of the report, he leaped from his bed and, half-naked, began demanding his weapons. Heraclianus struck him a mortal blow and slew him.⁸²

In his times, Xystus, when he had led the church of the Romans for eleven years, died, and Dionysius succeeded him. But when the shepherd of Christ's flock in Antioch, Demetrianus, also had measured out his life, Paul of Samasota received the church, he who taught lowly things about Christ: that he had become a common man by nature, and not a god. The pastors of the rest of the churches convened a synod against him in which were present both Gregory the Wonderworker and his brother Athenodorus, censured him for thinking evilly about Christ, and publicly renounced him. Since he was not persuaded to leave his church, Aurelianus, then in control and having received from the orthodox a petition about this matter, issued a directive that the church be allotted to those whom the bishops in Rome and Italy appointed. Thereupon, Paul was ignominiously driven from his church, and Domnus took over.⁸³

26

Now then, when Galienus had been killed, Claudius was acclaimed [604] Caesar. Auriolus laid down his arms and was obedient to him. It was he who, again attempting a usurpation, was killed by his

soldiers.⁸⁴ Claudius, who was a good man and in step with justice, forbade anyone to petition from the sovereign another's possessions. For it had been customary that sovereigns were empowered to bestow as gifts even the property of others, whence the laws still in place in the state had their origin. Thereupon, a woman came forward whose estate he had received through royal dispensation prior to his reign and said, "Claudius the cavalry commander did me an injustice." He replied, "Precisely what Claudius, while a private citizen, took away when the laws were of no concern to him, this, having become sovereign, does he restore."⁸⁵

In Rome, in fact, the senate, when it had learned of Galienus' death, executed his brother and son.⁸⁶ Now then, while Postumus was still exercising illegitimate power, and when barbarians had crossed Lake Maeotis to both Europe and Asia and were plundering these areas, and when a council convened to decide what type of war had to be undertaken first, Claudius said, "The war against the usurper is my concern, the one against the barbarians, the state's, and it is proper that that of the state take precedent."

The barbarians overran many areas, and, in fact, besieged Thessalonica, which in the old days is said to have been called Emathia but had its name changed to Thessalonica, from Thessalonica, the daughter of Philip and wife of Cassander.⁸⁷ But they were repulsed from that [605] city and, having attacked Athens, captured her. When they had collected all the books in the city, they were planning to burn them. But one of those who among them seem to be wise dissuaded his tribesmen from their undertaking, saying, "Since they devote their leisure to these, the Greeks are unconcerned with military matters and, thus, become very easily controllable."⁸⁸ Cleodemus, an Athenian man who had managed to get away, attacked them with boats from the sea and killed many, with the result that even the survivors fled from there.⁸⁹

When he had hastened against them after they had been dispersed into many areas, Claudius at one time was victorious in naval battles and at another time in battles joined on land. Storms afflicted them and famine befell them and destroyed them.⁹⁰ While staying in Sirmium, Claudius took sick, and, after he had summoned those of the army who were most renowned, had a discussion with them about a sovereign, and he said that Aurelianus happened to be worthy of the realm. There are those who say that, forthwith, he also proclaimed him sovereign.⁹¹ And some say that the senate in Rome, when it had learned of Claudius' death, because of its longing for Claudius deemed Quintilianus, his brother, worthy of the realm,

and that the military acclaimed Aurelianus.⁹² When Quintilianus, naive and by nature unsuited for the management of affairs, had learned of the acclamation of Aurelianus, he killed himself, severing the vein of his own wrist and, as a result of the hemorrhage there, [606] expired, after he had for but seventeen days, as it were, dreamt his rule.⁹³ But the sources are not in accord with one another about the duration of Claudius' reign, for some record that he ruled about one year, others, among whom is Eusebius, two.⁹⁴

Constas Chlorus, the father of Constantine the Great, was the son of the daughter of the sovereign Claudius' daughter.⁹⁵

27

Aurelianus, after he had assumed the leadership of the Romans, asked those in office how he ought to rule. One of them said to him, "If you want to rule nobly, you must ring yourself with gold and iron, employing the iron against those who cause you discomfort, repaying with gold the very men who do you service." He first, so it is said, had the benefit of his own advice, since he felt the iron not soon thereafter.⁹⁶

Initially this emperor dealt mildly with those revering Christ, but, as the duration of his reign progressed, he changed, and he even resolved to rouse a persecution against the faithful, and forthwith began drawing up edicts, too. But divine justice checked the fury of his evil against those who revered Jesus Christ, cutting short his life.⁹⁷

[607] But not yet about his end, it being necessary to discuss what he did in his reign. For, being a commander most able, he won many wars. For he both subdued the Palmyrenes and defeated and subdued their queen, Zenobia, who had gained control of Egypt and had captured Probus, who was then commander there, himself taking the field against her.⁹⁸ Some say that she was led off to Rome and she was wed to a man, one of the nobles; others say that she died en route, wracked by the change of her fortune, that Aurelianus took one of her daughters for a wife, and that the rest he paired with distinguished Romans.⁹⁹

He also again returned to the Romans' control Gaul, which had for many years been controlled by various men exercising illegitimate power, and, after he had appointed commanders for it, he returned to Rome and entered in triumphal procession upon a chariot drawn by four elephants.¹⁰⁰ He also prevailed over the Gauls, who had then become restless. But when he set his army against the Scythians,

he was killed while he was at Thracian Heracleia. For there was a certain man called Eros, who was a reporter of public gossip and, as some record, an eavesdropper, who reported to the sovereign whatever anyone said about him. When Aurelianus had become angered at him, he plotted against him. He forged his handwriting and composed a certain document that contained the names of some powerful individuals, commanding that they be put to death. By showing this to them, he provoked them [608] to the murder of the emperor. For these men, in fear of their lives, set upon Aurelianus and killed him, six years minus a few months after he had assumed sovereignty.¹⁰¹

28

Tacitus, an elderly man, succeeded him. For it is written that he was seventy-five years old when he was chosen for monarchy. The army recognized him, though he was absent, for he was then residing in Campania. When he received the decision there, he entered Rome in private dress and, with the consent of the Senate and the People, donned the imperial garb.¹⁰²

The Scythians, having crossed Lake Maeotis and the Phasis River, attacked Pontus, Cappadocia, Galatia, and Cilicia. Tacitus, who had joined battle with them, and Florianus, who was prefect, slew many, and the remainder sought safety in flight.¹⁰³ Tacitus appointed Maximinus, one of his kinsmen, as governor of Syria. But, when he behaved badly in his office, he was killed by his soldiers. Those who had killed him, frightened that the emperor would not leave them unpunished, set out after him too and killed him, not yet seven months after he had assumed sovereignty, but according to some not quite two years.¹⁰⁴

29

When he had been slaughtered, two sovereigns were chosen at the same time: Probus by the soldiers in the East, and, by the senate in Rome, Florianus. Both continued to rule: Probus [609] in Egypt, Phoenicia, Syria, and Palestine, and Florianus, in fact, from Cilicia as far as Italy and the Hesperiae. But the latter, not quite three months after he had assumed his reign, departed from life and power at the same time, killed by soldiers reportedly sent by Probus.¹⁰⁵

When he had died as described, Probus invested himself with full power. It is recorded that he was of the highest repute and that

he erected trophies of victory against many peoples and that he rounded up the soldiers who had murdered Aurelianus and Tacitus, severely rebuked them, and had them executed.¹⁰⁶

When Saturninus the Moor, who was his very close friend, attempted to usurp power, he did not believe the news and punished the man who reported it. But Saturninus was killed by the soldiers.¹⁰⁷ Some other fellow in Britain, whom the sovereign had put in charge of this province because Victorinus the Moor, who was close to him, had so requested, studied the possibility of rebellion. Probus, upon learning of this, blamed Victorinus. But he requested that he be sent to the man, departed—ostensibly fleeing the emperor—, and was gladly received by the usurper. After he had murdered him in the night, he returned to Probus. Probus was regarded fondly by all as gentle, kind, and beneficent.¹⁰⁸

Facing the people of the Germans who were attacking cities under the Romans, because the war had lasted a long time, he came to be in a predicament, since famine had befallen [610] his army. Then it is said that a violent rainstorm fell on his camp, and that much grain fell with the shower, if anyone could believe this. The army, when it had collected it, was fed, escaped its peril, and routed its opponents.¹⁰⁹

There was another rebellion against him. For Carus, who was in command of portions of Europe, recognized that the soldiers under him wished to proclaim him emperor and revealed this to Probus, begging that he be recalled from there. But Probus was not willing to remove him from office. Then the soldiers surrounded Carus, compelled him reluctantly to receive the empire of the Romans, and immediately hastened with him against Italy. Probus, when he had learned of this, sent an army with a commander to oppose him. As soon as those dispatched had drawn near Carus, they arrested their commander and surrendered him and themselves to Carus. Probus was killed by his own guardsmen, who had learned of the desertion of the soldiers to Carus. The duration of Probus' sole rule had been not quite six years.¹¹⁰

30

When he had come into control of the realm, Carus crowned his own two sons, Carinus and Numerianus, with an imperial diadem. Together with one of the boys, Numerianus, he immediately marched against the Persians, and captured Ctesiphon and [611] Seleucia.¹¹¹ But the army of the Romans had a close brush with danger. For

they were encamped in a gully, and the Persians, when they observed this, by means of a trench diverted toward the gully the river flowing nearby. But Carus charged the Persians, met with success, and routed them. He returned toward Rome leading a multitude of captives and much booty.¹¹² Then, when the people of the Sarmatians rebelled, he engaged them too, was victorious, and brought the people into line.¹¹³ He was a Gaul by ancestry, but brave and accomplished in matters of warfare. The account of his death has been variously composed by those who have done historical research. Some say that, having campaigned against the Huns, he was killed there. Others say that he was encamped by the River Tigris and that there, in the place where his army had thrown up a palisade, his tent was struck by lightning, and they record that, along with it, he too was destroyed.¹¹⁴

When his lifetime had expired, whether in this or another way, Numerianus, his son, survived in the camp as sole sovereign. He immediately campaigned against the Persians. When war had erupted and the Persians had gotten the upper hand and the Romans had turned tail, some record that he was captured in flight, that the hide was stripped from his body in the fashion of a wineskin, and that he perished thus. But others have written that, while returning from Persia, he developed ophthalmia and was murdered by his own father-in-law, Prefect of the Camp, who, having coveted his sovereignty, nevertheless he did not gain it. For the army [612] chose Diocletian sovereign, since he was there at the time and had exhibited many acts of courage against the Persians.¹¹⁵

Carinus, of course, the other of Carus' sons, living in Rome, presented a menace to the Romans, since he had become brutal, cruel, and vindictive. He was killed by Diocletian, who had come to Rome. The duration of their reign did not, all told, come to three years.¹¹⁶

In these times, Manes, the thrice-accursed, slunk from the Persians into the habitable world about us and spewed forth in this his own venom, from which, up to the present, the Manichaeans name did not vanish. It was he who at one time used to dub himself Paraclete and Holy Spirit—He in whom the spirit of evil manifestly dwelt!—and at another was calling himself Christ—He! The one appointed by the demons to their service!—and brought with him twelve disciples—communicants and preachers of his nonsense, which he used to concoct from many godless dogmas of now extinguished heresies!¹¹⁷

Now then, when Dionysius, the one tending the faithful in Rome, had completed nine years in this office and had given way, Felix

received the holy throne of Rome. When he died after a five-year period, Eutychianus was deemed worthy of the episcopacy of Rome. But this man, too, after he had been bishop not yet ten months, quit his life, and Gaius was introduced into the office of pastor. After he had been in charge of the church about fifteen years [613], Marcellinus became successor. These men lived in the times of the persecutions.¹¹⁸

Now then, in the church of Antioch Timaeus was bishop after Domnus, and Cyrillus succeeded Timaeus, and after Cyrillus the throne received Tyrannus, under whom the assault of the churches had its acme and the tyranny became insufferable. And after Hymenaeus, Zabdas was in charge of the church of Jerusalem, after whom, when he had gone to his rest not much later, Hermon adorned this throne. In Alexandria, when Maximus, the one who had obtained the priesthood eighteen years after Dionysius, had served off his debt, Theonas was bishop. He was followed by Peter, who, having been beheaded, took the crown of martyrdom.¹¹⁹

Thus, then, were the successions of these archpriests.

31¹²⁰

Diocletian, who obtained the leadership—a Dalmatian by race and of obscure lineage (some say that he was a freedman of Anulinus, a member of the senatorial order)—, had become *dux* of Moesia from the ranks of the enlisted men.¹²¹ Others say that he became *comes* of the *domestici*. Some believe that *domestici* were the cavalry.¹²² He addressed the soldiers and assured them that he had had no part in the murder of Numerianus. As he was saying this, he turned to Aper, who was commander of the army, said, “This is his murderer,” [614] and, with the sword in his hand, immediately killed him. When he had arrived in Rome, he took upon himself the affairs of the empire and put his hand to their management.¹²³ Considering the excessive size of the realm, in the fourth year of his leadership, or, according to others, in the second, he chose as his colleague Maximianus Herculus, reasoning that he himself was not adequate for the management of so large an empire.¹²⁴

So then the pair conspired and roused against Christians a persecution more violent and fierce than all those which had gone before, for eagerly—more accurately, maniacally—they rushed to obliterate from all the earth the salvific name of our God, Jesus Christ. Whereupon in every city and countryside so many people stood up manfully in behalf of their pledge to Christ that it was

close to impossible to count them, for they considered this activity more important than all their other business.¹²⁵

When Busiris and Coptos, Egyptian cities in the vicinity of Thebes, had inclined toward rebellion, Diocletian campaigned against them, took them, and razed them.¹²⁶ Then, in turn, Alexandria and Egypt lifted their hand against the Romans, a certain Achilles having incited the Egyptians to this. But when the Romans came against them under Diocletian, they did not resist for very long, and many of those responsible for the revolt were killed, including Achilles.¹²⁷

Diocletian and Maximianus appointed [615] their sons-in-law Caesars: Diocletian appointed Maximinus Gallerius, joining to him in marriage his own daughter, Valeria, and Herculus Maximianus appointed Constans, who was called Chlorus because of his paleness, grandson on his mother's side of the Claudius who, as I have already said, had reigned a bit earlier, likewise promising him his daughter Theodora. Both of these Caesars had wives, but rejected them in order to be in-laws of the sovereigns and married the sovereigns' daughters.¹²⁸

When a certain Amandus rebelled in Gaul, Maximianus went there and suppressed the rebellion. The prefect Asclepiodotus executed Crassus, who had held Britain for three years. When some of the Quinquegentiani occupied Africa, Herculus defeated them.¹²⁹

Now the Caesar Constans, while fighting in Gaul with the Alemanni, was vanquished and victorious on the same day. For first, when the Alemanni fell upon his army with violent force, they all turned to flight. Constans himself, fleeing with them, was almost captured. For, coming back, he found the gates of the city closed. His pursuers, drawing near, were ready to apprehend him, and he would have been led off as a prisoner, except that ropes were lowered from the wall above and used to pull him up. After he had been rescued and entered the city thus, having immediately assembled the army, [616] roused it to action with encouraging words, and, so to speak, breathed courage into it, he straightway went forth, joined with the enemy, and won a famous victory, with the result that about 60,000 of his opponents fell.¹³⁰

When Narses was sovereign of Persia, he who is listed as the seventh to reign in Persia after Artaxerxes, whom the writer of this history previously mentioned as having again renewed the realm for the Persians (for after this Artaxerxes or Artaxares—he had two names—Sapor ruled Persia, and after him Hormisdas, then Vararanes, and after him Vararakes, and then another Vararanes, and finally, Narses), moreover, with Narses then plundering Syria, Diocletian, as he was

traversing Egypt against the Ethiopians, dispatched with an adequate force his own son-in-law Gallerius Maximinus to engage him. He joined battle with the Persians, was defeated, and fled. Diocletian dispatched him again with a larger army. Then, when he attacked them again, he won such an outstanding victory that the earlier defeat was canceled out. He killed the greater part of the Persians and, having pursued Narses, who was wounded, into the interior of Persia, led off his wives and children and sisters as captives, and captured all the riches that Narses had brought with him for his campaign, as well as many people of distinction in Persia.¹³¹ After he had recovered from his wound, Narses sent delegations to [617] Diocletian and Gallerius, asking that his children and wives be returned to him and that a peace treaty be made. He gained his request, ceding to the Romans whatever they wanted.¹³²

Diocletian and Maximianus successfully prosecuted many other wars, some by themselves or their Caesars, some by means of generals, and they expanded the boundaries of the realm.¹³³ Diocletian, when he had become elated and arrogant as a result, no longer tolerated being addressed by the senate as before, but made it a custom to receive obeisance, adorned his clothing and shoes with gold and precious stones and pearls, and introduced greater extravagance into the imperial insignia. For the previous sovereigns had been honored in the fashion of consuls and had as a sign of their sovereignty only a purple robe.¹³⁴

32¹³⁵

When the persecution had become more severe and countless men and women were dying for the sake of their pledge to Christ, and when the faithful still increased in number, these tyrants, going mad, in about the nineteenth year of the reign of Diocletian published proclamations everywhere commanding that the churches of the Christians be pulled down and razed, that their books be burned, their priests, too, as teachers and preachers of the faith, be ruthlessly wiped out, and, of the remainder, [618] that those who had been enrolled in governmental or military positions be dishonorably discharged from the civil service and military, and that those of private station be enslaved.¹³⁶

When Diocletian had already completed his twentieth year in office, both rulers laid aside their sovereignty by agreement, stating publicly that they were jettisoning the burden of affairs, but to those to whom they disclosed the secrets of their hearts they admitted

that they put aside their office out of distress since they were unable to gain the upper hand over Christians or extinguish the Christian gospel, and chose not to enjoy their sovereignty. By agreement they laid aside their office on the same day, the one in Nicomedia, the other, Maximianus, in Mediolanum, and, becoming private persons, Diocletian resided in Salona, a city of Dalmatia, which was also his hometown, and Herculus in Lucania.¹³⁷ Before they abdicated their office, they returned to Rome and celebrated a triumph for the victory over the Persians, in which they led in triumph Narses' wives and children and relatives, as well as leaders of other peoples, and the wealth which they had plundered from the Persians.¹³⁸

But here it would be a good idea to clarify whence the name of the "triumph" is derived. Now they say it took this name from the *thria*, which are the leaves of the fig tree. For before masks were devised for actors, they covered their faces [619] with fig leaves and jested in iambs. The soldiers in victory processions, too, put fig leaves on their faces and made jests about those who held the parades. Thence it is thought that victory parades were named *thriamboi*.¹³⁹ But others say that the triumph was so named because those who made up the procession were composed of a "trio"—the senate, the people, and the soldiers—and, as a result of the three orders banding together, it was called a sort of *triambos*, but that theta replaced the tau for greater euphony.¹⁴⁰

After this victory parade, they resigned their authority and appointed the Caesars rulers, dividing the empire among them, allotting the eastern portion, together with Illyricum, to Gallorius Maximinus, and to Chlorus Constans assigning the West, together with Africa. When these things had happened thus, in Rome the soldiers who used to be called *praetoriani* proclaimed sovereign Maxentius, the son of Herculus Maximianus.¹⁴¹

Now of these three Constans, who was in control in Britain and the Cottian Alps and Gaul, behaved very leniently toward those revering Christ, as, indeed, to all those under his sway, and was disdainful of riches. Maximinus, Commander of the East, both roused a very burdensome persecution against Christians and behaved very harshly toward his other subjects.¹⁴² [620] Being extremely woman-crazy and promiscuous, not only did he seize common women against their will and have sex with them, but also forcefully dragged the wives of prominent men away from their husbands, and, after assaulting them, returned them to their own spouses.¹⁴³ He was so addicted to divinations that he did not do the slightest thing without divinations, and those who carried out the secret rites were held in

honor by him. He decreed the total destruction of the pious and decided to confiscate their properties, imputing no blame against the blameless except their knowledge of God and their faith in Christ.¹⁴⁴

33

In Rome, Maxentius, for his part, turned out to be no more moderate a tyrant to his subjects, but he managed affairs of the empire in the same way as Maximinus, raging likewise against the Christians under his control, subjecting them to all kinds of injuries, and being of a most bitter disposition toward everyone under his sway. He arranged the slaughter of very many prominent men with no proper trial, dared on a daily basis to have sex with noble women and to ruin maidens, outraging them most shamelessly, seized unjustly the fortunes of the well-to-do, and oppressed his subjects with new and heavy imposts.¹⁴⁵

In Rome, having fallen desperately in love with a woman very noble but, moreover, modest, too, who was married to one of the prominent men of Rome, [621] he sent those who tended to such things for him to bring him the woman. But when she discovered that the procurers were standing at her house door, had learned the reason for their visit, and realized that her departure for the tyrant was unavoidable (for her husband, cowering in fear of death, was permitting them to take his wife and lead her away), and that she had no assistance from elsewhere, she requested that a moment be granted her that she might adorn herself and then depart with them. The woman both revered Christ and had been initiated into the divine mystery. She then entered her bedroom and, being left alone, did away with herself in order that she remain undefiled and not forfeit her modesty, having chosen voluntary death, and having left behind her dead body for the procurers and her vile lover.¹⁴⁶

Thus, then, did they rule, but both Diocletian and Maximianus died as private citizens. Authors disagree about their end. For Eusebius says in the eighth book of his *Ecclesiastical History* that Diocletian took leave of his wits and that, with his body wasted by a chronic disease, he violently vomited up his wretched soul, and that Maximianus Herculus actually departed this life by hanging himself.¹⁴⁷ But others do not relate that they died in this way, but that, after they had reconsidered, resolving to possess the empire again, they were apprehended and executed by a decree of the senate.¹⁴⁸

There are also those who say that Herculus, seeking the imperial power again [622], shared with Diocletian the renewed attempt to recover the realm, and that he refused.¹⁴⁹ They say that he went before the council of the Romans and said that his son was not adequate for the management of public affairs; and that, when the soldiers had been moved to anger at his speech on grounds that he was usurping the office, Herculus feared the danger and said that he was not really of that opinion, but that he had said these things making trial of the troops, to see how they were disposed toward his son. And they say that thus he suppressed the tumult among the soldiers; then that he went to Gaul, to Constantine the Great, who was also an in-law of his through his daughter Fausta, plotting against him too and trying to seize his realm, and also that he was discovered, repulsed from his undertaking, and so hanged himself.¹⁵⁰

But while these men measured out their life spans in just one of the ways described, Constans, in the eleventh year of his reign since he had been proclaimed Caesar, having ruled gently and mildly, came to the end of his life while residing in Britain, having, because of his goodness, bequeathed grief for himself among those he ruled, first having appointed successor the elder of his own sons, namely Constantine the Great, whom he begat by his first wife.¹⁵¹ He also had by his second wife, Herculus' daughter Theodora, other sons, Constantinus, Hannibalianus, and [623] Constantius. Constantine the Great was preferred over them, since they were judged by their father to be unsuited for sovereignty.¹⁵² The entire business was arranged by God on behalf of the Divine Gospel, or rather on behalf of all those subject to the empire of the Romans, so that through him the tyrannies might be destroyed. For it is said that when Constans was ill and disheartened over his misfortune in the case of his other children, an angel stood by him, bidding him to bequeath his authority to Constantine.¹⁵³

Constantine, when he was still a lad, was actually given by his father as a hostage to Gallerius, in order that, serving as a hostage, at the same time he be trained in the exercise of the soldierly art. But he, seeing him to be highly skilled, and being envious, plotted against him. First, while fighting the Sarmatians, he ordered him to attack their leader, who stood out because of his armor. Constantine attacked him, took him alive, and brought him to Gallerius. Then he ordered him to take on a lion, a dreadful and violent beast. He accomplished this labor, too, which was admittedly dangerous, but with divine grace preserving him. Knowing from these things that he was envied and plotted against by Gallerius, he escaped by night

with some men in whom he had confidence and returned to his father.¹⁵⁴

Thus did he escape danger [624] and was judged worthy of his father's realm.

34

Maximinus took as colleague in his rule Licinius, who derived his lineage from the Dacians and was the brother-in-law of Constantine the Great.¹⁵⁵ After he had made him colleague in his sovereignty and left him in Illyricum to defend the Thracians, who were being plundered by barbarians, he himself proceeded to Rome, to battle against Maxentius. Then, being suspicious of his own soldiers and fearing lest they desert to the enemy, he desisted from battle and departed.¹⁵⁶ He regretted his appointment of Licinius, first plotted secretly against him, and then openly joined battle with him. He attacked him, was repulsed, defeated, and fled, and in his flight did away with himself.¹⁵⁷

Now some historians stated that Maximinus brought his life to an end in a conclusion of this sort, but others have related that, because he was raving against Christians, divine justice overtook him. For they relate that a severe ulcer beset him in the groin and genitals and devoured the organs of his licentiousness. And that from the putrefaction of these parts worms emerged, and that his suffering was incurable. As to his doctors, they relate that those who immediately gave up the idea of operating were savagely slain, but those who attempted, yet were unable to affect a cure, were killed most pitilessly, because they did not accomplish the impossible. They relate, then, that the tyrant suspected [625] that he was paying the penalty for the unjust murders of those who revered Christ, that he published decrees everywhere commanding that the persecution of the Christians cease, that they live and worship however they wished, and that they pray on his behalf.¹⁵⁸ Here, too, two stories are told. One says that, contrary to all expectations, he was freed of the suffering, then roused the persecution once more and remained incorrigible until he drank the dregs of the cup in the Lord's hand; the other denies the impious fellow any recovery, maintaining that he died of the aforesaid illness, after he had vomited worms from his mouth.¹⁵⁹

He, then, violently terminated his life in one or the other of the ways recounted. [In Rome, Eusebius took charge of the church of the faithful after Marcellinus, who had performed the service for two years, and, when he died a year later, Miltiades succeeded him.

After Miltiades had been in charge of the faithful in Rome for four years, Silvester became his successor. In Antioch, after Tyrannus, who had been bishop for thirteen years, Vitalius was chosen and, after he had completed six years, Philogenes succeeded him, and, after the passage of five more years, Paulinus became his successor. Hermon was allotted the archpriestly throne of Jerusalem after Zabdas, who served for ten years. Of Alexandria, after the holy martyr Peter had adorned its throne for eleven [626] years, Alexander held the archpriesthood. In Rome, after Silvester, who had served twenty-eight years, Julius took charge of the church for fifteen years. After him, Liberius completed his sixth year, and Damasus, who was pastor for twenty-eight years, succeeded him, and Siricius, who served for sixteen years, succeeded him. Then Innocentius was chosen, who taught the Lord's people for fifteen years. Zosimus was set on the throne of the church of the Romans at the death of Innocentius. When he had completed his twelfth year, Celestinus, who was conspicuous in the archpriesthood for ten years, succeeded him. Xystus became his successor, lasting eight years. Then Leon replaced him, defending correct doctrines for twenty-four years. At the decease of Leon, Hilarion, who finished his sixth year, was set on the throne in his place. In his stead, Simplicius was appointed, who himself, after he had performed the pastoral function for nineteen years, passed on, and Felix replaced him. And this man, when he died in his ninth year, left the honor to Gelasius, who enjoyed it for five years. After him, Anastasius was chosen. After four years, he was succeeded by Symmachus. When he had spent twelve years in the archpriesthood, Hormisdas' name was drawn. After he had performed the service for ten years, he departed [627] life, and the throne of the Roman church received John for three years. After him, Felix was in charge of the faithful in Rome, enjoying the honor for four years. Then Boniface was deemed worthy of the leadership for two years, and, after him, Agapetus was chosen. And after he had shepherded the flock of Christ, the chief pastor, for two years in Rome, he paid his dues, and Silverius was appointed archpriest of Rome. When he had served one year as archpriest, he measured out his life span. Vigilus became his successor. When he had completed eighteen years in the office, Pelagius was chosen. After he had devoted himself to this service for five years, he departed, and the archpriestly seat of Rome received John for eight years, and, after him, Gregory for fifteen years. After him, those in charge of the church of Romans can no longer be found in a continuous series. In Antioch in Coele Syria, Eustathius succeeded Paulinus, who had

devoted himself to the service for five years, and, after Eustathius had shepherded the faithful for eighteen years, Euphronius served eight years. After him Flacitus completed a twelfth year. Then Stephanus, an Arian heretic, introduced corruption to the church for three years, and after him Leontius was brought in. After he had been bishop for eight years, he departed this life, and, after him, Eudoxius led the church of Antioch for two years, and, after Eudoxius, Arrianus was bishop for four years, and after him Meletius for twenty-five years. [628] After him, Flavianus was in charge of those of Christ's name for twenty-six years. Then Theodotus undertook the service and completed four years in it. John was brought in to replace him and lasted eighteen years. In John's place Domnus was appointed, and he survived his appointment by eight years. In his place Maximus was seated on the throne of the church of the Antiochenes and remained in charge for four years. He was succeeded by Martyrius, who completed nine years in office. Then Julian sat upon this archpriestly seat for six years and had Peter for successor. After a duration of three years, Stephanus succeeded him and was archpriest for the same number of years. Calandion became Stephanus' heir. After four years, another Peter became heir and tended the church for a duration of three years. Palladius became his successor and completed ten years in office. Then Flavianus was chosen and served as archpriest for thirteen years. After him, Severus, having served seven years, left the sacred seat to Euphrasius. After five years, Ephraimius succeeded him. He lasted ten years in service.]¹⁶⁰

BOOK XIII.1–19

1

[1] Now then, as has been said, thus did Constantine the Great, celebrated among sovereigns and most distinguished among the orthodox, become successor of his father's realm. He was born to his father from the blessed Helen, about whom the writers disagree and are discordant and among them there is no consensus as regards her. For some say that she dwelt with Constans by ordinance of marriage, but was sent away when Maximianus Herculus, as has previously been said, betrothed to him his daughter Theodora and appointed him Caesar. Others have recorded that she was not Constans' legitimate spouse, but a diversion of his erotic desires, and that it was actually from that that Constantine was conceived.¹

[2] When he had succeeded to his father's realm, he ruled Britain and the Alps, and in addition Gaul, still leaning toward the religion of the Hellenes and opposing the Christians, enticed by his wife Fausta toward ardor in the worship of the idols. Fausta was the daughter of Maximianus. He and his father dwelt with two sisters.²

There being three sovereigns, Constantine himself, Licinius, and Maxentius, who was in control in Rome and in Italy, Maxentius behaved not as a sovereign, but as an outright tyrant, inflicting on those whom he tyrannized, as I have already described, a host of horrifying and disgusting things. The people of Rome, unable to endure, dispatched messengers to Constantine, begging that he rid them of Maxentius' tyranny. Thereupon he rose up to depose him, launched a campaign, and advanced toward Rome.³ Maxentius, for his part, stayed put for a long time within the walls, not taking the field against those besieging him, [3] with the additional result that gibes were made against him by some. After some length of time, he marshaled his forces, after he had employed magical practices, both engaging in divination by means of the dissection

of infants and doing other illicit things which instilled dread in Constantine. Then indeed, as he agonized as a result of these things, through a star there appeared to him at midday an image of a cross in heaven and writing about the star in Roman letters, these emblazoned by means of stars and declaring, "Through this conquer!" So then he immediately designed out of gold a cross in accordance with the image that had appeared to him, commanded that this precede his army, and engaged and overwhelmed Maxentius' men, with the result that the greater part of those serving under him were killed and the remainder looked toward flight. Maxentius fled with them and, while he was on the bridge over the Tiber which is called Mulvian, lost his footing and, with his horse, fell into the river and perished. Thus was he destroyed.⁴ The Romans, for their part, released from his tyranny, after they had thrown open the gates of [4] Rome, welcomed Constantine magnificently, praised and glorified him as liberator of the city, and voted to raise at public expense a monument to him in the forum of Rome. He ordered that his monument be fashioned grasping the sign of the cross. He also issued directives that those revering Christ as a god not be punished on account of their worship.⁵

When both Italy and Rome herself had been added thus to his realm, he and Licinius, his sister's husband, remained as sovereigns. For Licinius executed both the son and daughter of Maximinus and from that time on each of them suspected the other. For each thought that, with the other removed, he alone would be monarch, there being no one to dispute with him about the empire.⁶

Now some say that Licinius came thus into control of Gallerius' share, having been chosen colleague by him, as has been said. Others say, after the sister of Constantine had been joined by him in marriage to him, that the soldiers, favoring Constantine, proclaimed him Caesar; that he was dispatched by him to array himself against Maximinus; that, after he had been victorious and had routed him, he ceded his realm to him;⁷ [5] and that, after he had commanded him not to trouble the Christians, he did not observe his injunctions, however, but raged against the Christians no less than had his predecessors, if not even more. For they say that he surpassed every degree of savagery, and that, in addition to the other causes of the differences between them, there was this, too.⁸

Therefore, when he had mobilized the army against Licinius and had often clashed with him, Constantine was at last victorious. Then he made a truce with him on account of his sister, and did not deprive him of his office, but conceded it to him according to their

pacts.⁹ Being faithless, he did not maintain the agreements. Hence, Constantine again warred against him and, when victorious, took both Byzantium and Chrysopolis.¹⁰ Licinius, for his part, fled toward Nicomedia and, when Constantine's sister had approached him, she pleaded on her husband's behalf that his office be preserved for him. As she did not bring her brother to agree to this, she introduced the plea about his safety. And she convinced her sibling. Licinius came to him in common dress and was ordered to reside in Thessalonica [6] as a private citizen. There he lived.¹¹ But the soldiers, for their part, faulted the sparing of Licinius' life because he had often shown himself faithless and a transgressor of pacts. Hence, the decision about this matter was referred to the senate by means of a letter of the sovereign. Now some relate that the senate granted to the soldiers to act with regard to Licinius as seemed fit to them and that they killed him in Thessalonica or near Serrae, as he was trying to escape somewhere. Others say that he was not quiescent while residing in Thessalonica, but was contemplating usurpation. And that, when he found this out, the sovereign Constantine dispatched men to kill him.¹²

It is said that in the battles against him or in those against Maxentius Constantine beheld an armed horseman who was bearing the image of the cross instead of a standard and was advancing before his formation. Again at Adrianople he saw two youths slashing the enemies' ranks. Near Byzantium by night, when all slept, a light was seen by him flashing around the rampart of his [7] army. As a result, then, it began to enter his mind that his success and victories had come to him from a god.¹³

2

When Constantine had thus become sole ruler he was named Flavius (and thus, I suppose, was styled Flavius Constantine), and resided in Rome, not having abandoned the worship of the idols but being initiated into and already accepting Christian teachings.¹⁴ Since he happened to have a body that was diseased and produced many rashes as a result of an unhealthy state of the humors and of corrupt matter, when these were called a contagion by the doctors and likened to leprosy, and their treatment abandoned, he discovered that the priests of Zeus on the Capitoline were saying that he would in no wise effect a cure unless he bathed in the still-steaming blood of young children. Accordingly, from all the territory under him the infants were gathered forthwith and the day of the slaughter

was fixed. The sovereign then set off toward the Capitoline in order to bathe in the children's blood. Their [8] mothers, as he proceeded, began to emit mournful cries and to wail. When he heard these, he asked, "What is the cause of the lamentation?" When he learned that the babies' mothers were mourning, just as if he had come to from drunkenness, he said, "The impiety of the deed is manifest; the result, however, unclear. And even if it were beyond doubt, better that I suffer beset with diseases than to decree the destruction of so many infants and skewer their mothers' souls with a scimitar of sorrow." When he had said this, he turned about, after he had commanded that the children be returned to their mothers and that riches be bestowed on them in order that they have equivalent or even double joy because they had recovered their offspring alive and in addition received riches, too, besides.¹⁵

After he had done this, two men saying they were Peter and Paul the apostles of Christ seemed to be standing beside him by night, and they were saying, "If you wish to gain bodily and spiritual health, summon the bishop Silvester [9] and he will cure for you the corruption of your flesh and will deign to grant you life indestructible." Whereupon, awaking from his sleep, the sovereign sent men to summon the bishop respectfully. When the sacred Silvester had arrived, he said to him, "Tell me, bishop, are gods named Peter and Paul worshipped among you?" He replied, "One God is known to us, and Peter and Paul are his attendants and servants." In turn, then, the sovereign detailed to him the dream, and by him was initiated into our mystery and baptized. He emerged from the all-holy font entirely healthy, and immediately proclaimed amnesty for the Christians, threw open the churches for them, and allowed new ones to be built. Contrariwise, he closed the precincts of the false gods, and decreed that those who wished join the faith of Christ with impunity. For he used to say that he wished no one to be forced, but that he accepted those who were willingly submitting themselves to Christ be received.¹⁶

Thus, then, he came to the faith of Christ. The gospel was spreading and freedom of speech was being granted to Christians. [10] Then Jews approached the sovereign's mother, saying that the sovereign had been deceived and had confused a deed hateful to God with a deed dear to God, calling the destruction of the idols dear to God, but faith in Christ hateful to God. For they said that the sole true god was the one worshipped by them. The abominable ones disparaged Jesus as a human criminal and a wizard. His mother reported these things to her sovereign and son. He judged it necessary

that in his presence and in the presence of the select of the senate the Jews who were saying this debate with the bishop of Rome Silvester and with his adherents, in order that he understand what the allegations from the Jews were. The debate took place. The words of the holy Silvester seemed stronger. The Jews kept saying that Silvester prevailed as a result of his dialectical power, kept seeking a display of signs. Even more, a certain man among them, a wizard named Zambres requested a bull be brought in, saying that through this he was going to reveal the power of his own god. The bull was led forward. Zambres drew near it, whispered something to it in its ear. After it had bellowed out something loud and mournful and had spun about, with a shudder, [11] it collapsed and died.

The Jews began boasting about this, saying that he who heard their god's name could not endure it. "Why then," said Silvester, "does he who is saying this into the animal's ear not hear what is being said? How, then, does he not die, too?" Zambres said, "Now there is no need of twisting and persuasiveness of words, bishop, but of actions." Silvester said, "If then I myself, by the name of Christ, revive this bull that has been killed by you, shall I not seem to do something greater and shall I not demonstrate that the power of Christ is great?" He vowed and forthwith swore by the emperor's health, if he saw the bull recalled to life, to acknowledge Christ as God. Silvester, when he had gazed toward heaven and invoked the Lord, stood near the bull, raised his voice, and cried, "If Christ, whom I preach, is true God, awake, bull, and stand on your feet." Then indeed the bull immediately stirred and sprang up. Those present exclaimed, "Great is Silvester's god." And the Jews, dumbstruck by the marvel, fell at the holy man's feet and implored that God be gracious to them and judge them worthy of divine baptism. The sovereign's celebrated mother, too, being uninitiated, [12] asked to be initiated and baptized.¹⁷ So then, when she had gained her request and recognized the true God, she desired to look upon the places which Christ's beautiful feet had traveled as he preached the gospel of peace. She took with her the marvelous Silvester and arrived in Jerusalem, and she venerated the Lord's tomb, discovered the divine cross to which our God was bodily affixed, and, after she had built many lavish places of worship, returned to her son and sovereign.¹⁸

From Fausta, the daughter of Maximianus, the sovereign produced three sons—Constantine, Constantius, and Constans—and a daughter Helen, who later married Julian. By a concubine he also had another son, called Crispus, older than his other sons, who distinguished himself often in the war against Licinius.¹⁹ His stepmother [13]

Fausta, being erotically obsessed with him, since she did not find him compliant, denounced him to his father as being in love with her and as having often attempted to use force against her. Hence, Crispus was condemned to death by his father, who had been persuaded by his spouse. When the emperor later realized the truth, he chastened his wife both because of her unchasteness and on account of the murder of his son. For after she had been led into an exceedingly hot bath, there she violently ended her life.²⁰

When the Sarmatians and Goths had bestirred themselves against territory of Romans and were plundering the Thracian sector, Constantine the Most Great took the field against them. When he had occupied Thrace, he joined battle with the barbarians and set up a most glorious trophy over them.²¹

3

When, on the basis of a divine oracle, he had resolved to build a city so he might call it after his own name, he first proposed to establish it in Serdica, then in Sigaeum (this is the promontory of the Troad), and there they say he laid foundations. Thereafter, in Chalcedon he began to erect the city. It is said [14] that eagles swooped down and seized the builders' ropes; that, crossing the intervening strait, they threw them down on Byzantium. Then indeed, when this had happened often, it was reported to the sovereign. It did not seem that what had happened had happened by chance, but rather that the divinity was trying to indicate something through it. Then indeed the emperor himself turned his attention to Byzantium, was pleased examining the place, changed his purpose, transferred the workmen there from Chalcedon, lavishly constructed the city, called it Constantinople after his own name, and dedicated it to the Virgin and Mother of God.²²

With the city already completed, on the eleventh day of the month of May, he celebrated its birthday or dedication, at the beginning of the year 5838.²³ Then, as some have written in their histories, he summoned the astronomer Valens, of those who then occupied themselves in this skill the most precise, and commanded him to cast for the city's birthday [15] a horoscope, in order that he know how many years it was going to endure. He foretold that it would last 696 years, and these already have long since passed. Then either one must in fact suspect Valens' prophecy was false and that his skill failed or one must reckon that he spoke of the years in which the qualities of the constitution were preserved, the status

quo and senate honored, its citizens flourished and authority was legitimate, that is, sovereign power, to be sure, but not an outright tyranny, with those in control reckoning public things private and using them for their own pleasures, and some of these not innocent, and making gifts from the treasury to whom they wished, not comporting themselves to their subjects in the fashion of shepherds, shearing the excess of wool and making sparing use of the milk, but in the fashion of brigands, sacrificing the sheep themselves and taking their fill of the meat or sucking out the marrow itself.²⁴

Now the city was constructed thus by this pious sovereign on the site of the ancient Byzantium. The city Byzantium, even before this, happened to be neither among the inglorious nor among the obscure, but was flourishing in an abundance of citizens, in wealth [16] and in well-breeding of men and in strength of walls, and so much so that they were besieged by the Romans for three years, under Severus, who had reigned in the old Rome, and withstood much from those besieging them, as has previously been related by me in my treatment of Severus.²⁵

Concerning the power of Byzantium and the strength of its walls, Dio says the following in his treatment of Severus:

Byzantium used to have very mighty walls. For their breastwork was constructed with thick rectangular stones connected with bronze plates, and on the inside they were fortified with earthworks and buildings, with the result that the whole thing seemed to be one thick wall. There were many towers, large and offset, and they had closely spaced openings all around. The landward walls rose to a great height, the seaward ones were less lofty, and the harbors within the wall both were able to be closed by chains, and their breakwaters bore towers which extended far in both directions. There were 500 ships for the Byzantines, [17] most uniremes, and also those which are biremes, and in some of these rudders were fitted from the prow and the stern, and they had two sets of helmsmen and sailors, in order to attack and withdraw without turning about and to frustrate their adversaries both in attack and retreat.

In addition to these things, Dio mentions that seven towers had been situated between the Thracian Gates and the sea. If anyone approached another of these, it was quiet, but if, in fact, he shouted to or even tossed a stone at the first, it emitted a noise from some

sort of device and transmitted to the second to do the same, and thus it advanced alike through all, and they did not disquiet one another, but all in turn, each from the one preceding it, took up the cry and wail.²⁶

Now such was the ancient city of Byzantium. The celebrated Constantine made it many times larger. [18] Churches were consecrated by him therein and many things were done for its adornment, above all the circular porphyry column, which, the story goes, was conveyed from Rome and set up in the marketplace which was covered with paving stones from which it derived its name "The Plaza." On it he consecrated a bronze cult statue, a marvel to behold on account of its craftsmanship and size. For it was gigantic, and it exhibited the precision of an ancient hand, almost fashioning things actually animant. It is said that the cult statue was a monument of Apollo which had been transferred from the city of Ilium in Phrygia. That most divine emperor erected the statue in his own name, having fastened to its head some of the nails which fastened the body of our Lord to the salvific cross. It stayed standing on the column until our own day. It fell while Alexius Comnenus was reigning, when a powerful and mighty wind blew. It was itself smashed and smashed many of those who happened to be there. He also transferred the Palladium from Troy and erected it in this Plaza marketplace.²⁷

[19] Now the great Constantine adorned the city in many other ways and by elevating Byzantium, which previously was a bishopric of Thracian Heracleia, since it had been subjected to Perinthus by Severus after its capture (as is related in my treatment of Severus), to the patriarchal rank, having preserved seniority for the senior Rome on account of its senior birth and on account of his transference of the sovereignty hither from there.²⁸ Metrophanes the most sacred, who was the son of Dometius, brother of the sovereign Probus, was then bishop of Byzantium. Indeed, it was this Dometius, after he had crossed from faithlessness to faith and had on this account left Rome, who had arrived at Byzantium and was elevated to the summit of the bishopric. After him, another Probus, his son, he whom his brother Metrophanes succeeded, was consecrated for the archpriestly throne.²⁹

4

Under this emperor, Arius, a priest of the church of Alexandria, became notorious, having dared to say that the Son of God was a creation, a word, of another essence, and not co-eternal with the

Father, not himself being the originator of this heresy.³⁰ For first, [20] in addition to many other corrupt opinions, Origen importuned that the only begotten Son of God was a creation, other than his paternal essence, and unable to see his Father, and adduced that the Son himself was invisible to the Spirit, vomiting forth from the vile strongbox of his heart these slanderous things—but they had been set down in letters alone, had been kept secret, and had not yet become public.³¹ Arius brought these to prominence, proclaimed them from the rooftops, caused many to stagger toward impiety, and filled the churches full of disturbances and schisms. When the most pious sovereign recognized this, he ordered the bishops of the prefectures to convene in Nicaea of Bithynia and, after there had been gathered 318 of the holy fathers, among whom were some priests, deacons, and moreover, monks, too, and when the great Athanasius, still enrolled in the contingent of deacons, was present there, and the most Christian sovereign himself arrived at Nicaea and, after he had taken a seat with the sacred fathers, left it to them to discuss the matters spoken of by Arius and to investigate if these deviated at all from the orthodox opinion. After they had investigated and done a careful examination, they declared [21] the Son the same essence and co-eternal with the Father, and they also banished from the company of the orthodox Arius and those of the same mind with him.³²

Of those representing Arius' positions, there was also Eusebius Pamphili, who was bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. He is said to have apostatized subsequently from the opinion of Arius, to have agreed with those who declared the Son co-eternal and of the same essence with the Father, and to have been received by the divine fathers into communion. Now, this is found related by some.³³ But he himself casts these matters in doubt through the things which he is found to have written in his *Ecclesiastical History*. For often in the aforementioned composition he is caught Arianizing, immediately, at just about the beginning of the book—introducing David, who says, “He himself spoke, and they came into being. He himself commanded, and they were created.”—, he says that the Father and Maker is to be thought of as supervisory maker, prescribing with a regal nod, and that the Divine Word is a subsidiary of this, performing its paternal injunctions. [22] And a bit later he says that this, as if it exists as the Father's power and wisdom, has been entrusted with the subsidiary affairs of the realm and rule of all things. Again, after a bit, also that there is some sort of pre-cosmic essence, living and subsisting, the thing acting in service to the

Father and God of all things for the purpose of the making of things that come into being, and Solomon says in the persona of God's wisdom, "The Lord created me ruler of his ways," and so forth. After many other things, he says, ". . . in addition to all these, just as God's Word, pre-existing and existing as an essence prior to all ages, having received the very august honor from the Father, to be venerated as a god."³⁴ These and other things reveal Eusebius in agreement with the Arianizing dogma, unless someone shows that he wrote these things before his reversal. For he is found in the *Acts of the First Synod* championing the right dogma.³⁵

Now the holy synod, when it had ordained the "of the same essence" and "co-eternal" about [23] the Son, immediately set out a pledge of the faith, having theologized in it about the Father and the Son as far as ". . . of whose reign there is no end," having made this the end. For the theology about the Holy Spirit thereafter was added in the second synod, which was convened against Macedonius when was an inquiry about this.³⁶

The emperor, equal to the apostles, was pleased about the unanimity of the fathers and acknowledged them. Since some bore on their bodies the wounds of their pledge on behalf of the Savior, he kissed their crippled limbs and members and blessed them on account of their disfigurements.³⁷ When charges had been given to him against some bishops, he neither read these nor brought them to an inquiry, but in front of all reduced them to ashes in a fire, saying, "Even if I had been an eyewitness of some archpriest committing a sin, I would have sheltered him in my purple."³⁸ When he had transferred those divine fathers thence to the regal city which he had founded, had judged it worthy of their blessing, and had prepared the sacred Alexander to be selected second patriarch therein [24] (for the celebrated Metrophanes had quit his life), he permitted each to depart to his own dwelling place after he had favored them with honors and gifts.³⁹

When the sovereign's mother, the blessed Helen, had reached a very old age (for it is said that she lived eighty years), she, whom her son regally interred, departed for the celestial abodes.⁴⁰ Campaigning against the Persians, he was conveyed by triremes to Soteropolis, which now is called Pythia. After he had there made use of the hot springs, where it is also said he drank a noxious drug concocted for him by his half-brothers, he arrived at Nicomedia. This is where he died, after being ill a considerable time, at the age of sixty-five and having reigned two months short of thirty-two of these. His son Constantius, when he arrived from Antioch (for he was there

fighting against the Persians), found him still alive, tended to him in the fashion befitting his greatness, and lay him in the Church of the Holy Apostles, [25] moreover, in a particular stoa which he himself had constructed for the purpose of his father's burial.⁴¹

The celebrated emperor is recorded to have expended riches zealously and more zealously to have procured them for himself, so his profligacy with respect to extravagances is not to be condemned, but contrariwise judged magnificence befitting a great man—but let me not say anything mean about that divine man! Hence the accursed Julian, in his discourse *Concerning the Caesars*, jeering just so at this most pious sovereign because of his excessive extravagance, introduces Hermes, who converses with him and asks what is the distinguishing feature of a good sovereign, and him saying in response to the question that the emperor ought to have acquired much and expended much.⁴² It is said that he was not unacquainted with words but even to have been no less keen about these than about arms. Therefore, it is said that his tongue was honed for discourse and that there were certain charms in it which enchanted his listeners' ears. It has also been recorded that he despised evil and regularly remarked that it was necessary that the man in control spare nothing at all, [26] not even his own limbs themselves, to ensure the stability of public affairs. Being humanely disposed toward those converting from evil, he used to say that one must amputate the diseased and rotted limb lest it also infect the healthy, not, however, that which already happened to be healthy or was becoming healthy.⁴³

5

The thrice-blessed sovereign was transferred to the everlasting abodes. The leadership of the Romans was apportioned among his three sons, as some have related, divided among them by their father, but according to others, when they distributed it among themselves after their father's demise. The division among them is recorded to have proceeded thus: to Constans was allotted Italy, Rome herself, both Africa and Sicily, the rest of the islands, but moreover Illyricum, Macedonia, and, with Greece, the Peloponnese; to Constantine were distributed the Cottian [27] Alps, together with Gaul (the Cottians were named from Cottius, who had been sovereign of these places), and the Pyrenean incline as far as the Moors, who have been separated by the ocean's strait; Constantius' share was as much as was subject to Romans in the eastern portion and, in addition to this, Thrace, together with the city of his father.⁴⁴

When the apportionment of the empire had proceeded in this fashion, Constantius departed for the East, marching against the Persians. For after Sapor, their leader, had learned of the death of the great Constantine, he incessantly attacked and plundered those paying taxes under the Romans.⁴⁵ Constantine, faulting the division of the territories and either demanding that he concede parts of the empire to him or seeking that both redistribute their realms, kept pestering Constans. Because he adhered to the existing distribution of the empire, was clinging to what had been allotted to him, and was not the least bit accommodating to his brother, Constantine took up arms against him and invaded Constans' share. He was abroad in Dacia and, when he learned of Constantine's action, [28] he dispatched against him an army and generals, having himself promised to attack almost immediately with a larger army. Then indeed, when those who had been dispatched had come near Constantine, they set ambushes and, after they had joined in battle with him, pretended to flee. When Constantine's men pursued them, the men placed in ambush, who were now in their rear, set upon them from behind and, after those in flight had turned about, trapped them in between. Much of Constantine's army and he, too, were destroyed. For when his horse had been wounded and, as a result of the wound, had thrashed about and bucked, Constantine fell from his seat and was killed after he had received many wounds, having failed to attain his desire and forfeited his life itself besides, and because he had been the instigator of injustices, also having lost his portion of the empire. Control of the western portion, too, came under one sovereign, Constans.⁴⁶ Then, after he had plunged into depraved loves and a perverted mode of life, he was plotted against and wretchedly destroyed by Magnentius—Magnentius, whom he had saved when he was in jeopardy stemming from a military disturbance, his soldiers [29] having already drawn their swords and having rushed forward to slay him.⁴⁷

Constantius, staying in the East, was battling the Persians, Sapor, as has been said, being sovereign of the race. He was a son of Narses, however, not from a noteworthy wife. For from the foremost of his wives three sons were born to Narses, Adarnarses, Hormisdas, and a third one. After Narses died, the eldest of these three, Adarnarses was the heir of his empire. Since he happened to be inordinately cruel and hard and, as a result, was hated by the Persians, he was deposed from his sovereignty.⁴⁸

Let there be told, too, a typical example of his proverbial cruelty. Once a tent very ornately fashioned for his father from indigenous

hides was brought from Babylon. As soon as he saw it unfolded, Narses asked Adarnarses, who was still a boy, if the tent satisfied him. He replied that, if he gained control of the realm, he would make one better than this from hides of humans. Thus, from childhood he exhibited his cruelty.⁴⁹

[30] So then, after he had been deposed from his sovereignty in this fashion, Sapor, in turn, entered into the office. Forthwith he blinded the one of his brothers, but arrested Hormisdas and kept him under guard. The latter's mother and his wife bribed the guards with money and were permitted to visit him. After they had entered, they furnished him with a file, in order to cut through his iron chains with it, and they also set forth what he must do after this, having readied for him horses and men who would accompany him in his flight. Then his consort served a lavish dinner to the guards. When they had taken their fill of food and had quaffed wine stronger-than-strong, they were seized by a heavy sleep. While they slept, Hormisdas cut through the chains with his file, escaped from the prison, got away, ran off to the Romans, and was most honorably received. Sapor seemed pleased at his flight, since he no longer had anything to fear on his account. For not only did he not seek that the fugitive be returned to him, but he also honorably dispatched his wife to him. Hormisdas was very strong and expert with the javelin, so much that, [31] while aiming a javelin at someone, he could predict where it would strike the enemy.⁵⁰ So then, when he had been appointed to command a large detachment of cavalry, he campaigned with Constantius against his countrymen. The sovereign Constantius, having often attacked the Persians, came up short and lost many of his own men. Of the Persians, very many fell and Sapor himself was wounded.⁵¹

6

Now then, when the wars against the Persians had ended thus for the sovereign Constantius, Magnentius, who had been born from a British father and then was serving in the *protectores* and was named *comes* of two Roman units, learned this and, lately desiring to usurp power, then applied himself more to his objective, because he heard that Constantius was experiencing ill-fortune against the Persians and because he judged that time a suitable opportunity for attempting usurpation. After he had pretended to celebrate his birthday ceremonies in the city Augustulum, he called together the leading men of the city to participate in his symposium, some [32] who

knew along with him of the plan and others who had no part of his scheme. He extended the drinking until evening. After he had risen suddenly from the symposium, he ran into his bedroom and emerged from it after a brief moment in a sovereign's attire with many guardsmen, which threw into confusion those who did not share with him knowledge of the business. After he had addressed those present, he convinced some to join him, but others, indeed, he also compelled. He took them with him, set out immediately for the palace, made distributions of money and set guards for the gates of the city with instructions to admit those entering but to permit no one to exit, lest the enterprise be proclaimed too soon.⁵² He immediately sent men to kill Constans before he learned of the enterprise. He was occupied with a hunt. For he was mad about the chase though fighting constant arthritis, which he suffered as a result of an excess of pleasures, living intemperately. On the pretext of a hunt he was even accustomed to go deep into the woods with the boys and young men who accompanied him, who were collected and brought into proximity with him on account of their beauty, were made up with special care and were a hotbed of licentiousness for lustful eyes, and were for him, so it is said, catamites. [33] At least he used to pass an excessive amount of time in the woods, shunning intercourse with decent men.⁵³ So then, by the Rhone River men who had been dispatched by Magnentius murdered Constans, who was sleeping after the hunt, and also killed some of the few who were with him. Some say that his death did not happen in this fashion, but that, after he had learned of the rebellion against him and had been abandoned, since those about him had deserted him, he fled to a shrine. And they say that there he stripped off the regalia of his sovereignty and, after he had been expelled from there, was killed, having completed his seventeenth year in office and already having passed thirty years of age. It is said that at the moment he was born his father had entrusted astrologers to cast a horoscope about his birth, and that they, in addition to other things which they predicted about him, said this, too, that he would be killed in the embrace of his grandmother.⁵⁴ When she died, Constans made fun of this. But the matter proved in actuality to be so and the prediction of the astrologers did not miss the mark, even if it was oblique. For it was in a small hamlet [34] called Helena after the name of that empress that Constans was killed.⁵⁵

After he had lived so licentiously, thus was he piteously deprived of life. While his attempt at usurpation was flowing smoothly for him, Magnentius was eager that the most notable of those who held

offices be put out of the way.⁵⁶ He fabricated letters sent to them as if from Constans, supposedly summoning them to him, lay in wait along their route, and killed most of them, sparing not even his own conspirators, but destroying them, too.

Such were the things in which he was involved, strengthening the usurpation for himself. For Constantius, when he had learned of his brother's death, was of two minds, as he considered whether to opt for resistance to the Persians, who were ravaging places subject to Romans, or, at least for the present, to ignore them and move against the usurper in order to avenge the murder of his kinsman and gain the West for himself. [35]

7

While Constantius was contemplating these things and continuing to vacillate, Sapor, to whom what had come to pass for Constans also had become known, used the opportunity and, with a weighty army attacked both the territories and cities subject to Romans.⁵⁷ He plundered much territory, but, moreover, captured garrisons and ultimately besieged Nisibis, which of old belonged to the realm of the Armenians, but which under Mithridates, who was a relative-by-marriage of Tigranes, then ruler of Armenia, and had received the city from him, was taken by Romans in a siege.⁵⁸ For after he arrived there Sapor enlisted every device to take the city for himself. For he set rams to the walls and made underground passages, but all these the besieged nobly resisted. He diverted the river which flows through the middle of the city, in order that, oppressed by thirst, the city's inhabitants might betray the city to him. But there was an abundance of water for them from wells and springs.⁵⁹ Since his plans produced nothing efficacious for him, he devised an alternative. [36] Returning up the river, which, as has been said, flowed through the city, and having come to ravines where the terrain through which it flowed narrowed, he dammed the spot and checked its flow. After the water had backed up, he all at once removed the material which was blocking the water's passage and unleashed the flood against the city. Since the water had risen to such a great depth and had struck the wall with extreme force, it collapsed part of it. The barbarian did not immediately enter the city, but, as if it had already been captured and because the time was approaching evening, delayed taking possession of the city until morning so as not to meet any resistance. The people in the city were in turmoil on account of the breaching of the wall, but, since

they saw the Persians delaying their entry, they passed the night without sleep and, with much effort, fortified the spot, having raised another wall within. When Sapor saw this at dawn, he attributed the setback to his own carelessness. But not even under these circumstances did he abandon the siege. After he had devised many things against the city and had thrown away most of his own men (for it is said that over 20,000 of the Persian army were imperiled while Nisibis was under siege), he withdrew in disgrace. For already [37] the Massagetae had attacked Persia and were inflicting indignities on her.⁶⁰ Constantius the sovereign secured Nisibis and reinstated her citizens, and he himself, since, at the Persians' initiative, there already was a truce in the East, hastened toward the West.⁶¹ It was reported to him that Vetrano had acted in common with Magnentius. For this man, when he happened to be commander of the troops in Illyricum and had learned of Magnentius' rebellion and the murder of Constans, did not yield to the usurper, but he too, for his part, had attempted usurpation. He wrote a letter to Constantius saying that he was resisting the usurper and urging him to press on toward his destruction. Then Vetrano and Magnentius, who had concluded a truce with one another under specified conditions, both in common sent ambassadors to Constantius, demanding that he lay down his arms and retain the first rank. Then indeed, the ambassadors, meeting the emperor near Heracleia of Thrace, delivered their messages to him. As a result, he became worried and, when it was night, he saw a dream of the following sort. It seemed that his father [38] was standing next to him, holding his son Constans firmly by the hand and saying to him, "Constantius, behold Constans, your brother, kinsman of many sovereigns, who was destroyed by a usurper. You must avenge him, you must not overlook the empire being sundered or the state being overturned, you must hasten to quash the usurpation, and not leave your brother with justice undone." After this, when Constantius awoke, he took the ambassadors into custody and sent them to jail.⁶² Straightway, with no hesitation, he arrived at Serdica. Vetrano cowered at Constantius' unexpected arrival and received him as one receives a master, having both abandoned his formed plans and jettisoned his agreements with Magnentius. Constantius accepted him warmly and made him a companion at his table. For, after he had stripped off the marks of sovereignty, Vetrano, in the garb of a commoner, embraced the sovereign's feet. And he embraced Vetrano, called him "father," and, offering his hand to him and supporting him, since he was elderly, made him his dinner companion. [39] Then Prusa (this is a city in Bithynia)

was assigned to him for a residence and the countryside allotted to him for supplying of provisions. Living there in luxury for about six years, he measured out his life.⁶³

8

When matters with regard to Vetrano had reached such an end, emperor Constantius hastened against Magnentius. He was staying in Mediolanum, having proclaimed his brother Decentius Caesar and having dispatched him to guard Gaul. While this was happening, Sapor, in turn, since he was free of fear, despoiled the eastern regions and, after he had taken booty and many captives, returned home. Then the sovereign, encircled on all sides by the concerns of war, honored his cousin Gallus with the rank of Caesar and, after he had wed to him his own sister Constantia, sent him to the East to check the Persian inroads.⁶⁴

Now Gallus, when he had been appointed in this fashion, departed to the East, taking his wife, too. Constantius, for his part, [40] departed for the war against Magnentius. In order that the Romans not defile one another in internecine battles and mutual slaughters, he judged it necessary to summon the usurper to negotiations. So then he sent to him men of the notables and inscribed a letter to him, granting pardon for the undertaking, if he should abstain from arms, and conceding Gaul to him, in order that he rule this and be bounded by it. But he, having nothing moderate in mind, did not accept what had been offered to him without trouble by Constantius, but chose war.⁶⁵ Moreover, he advanced toward this with haste, because Silvanus, one of his unit commanders, along with a multitude of infantry, had deserted him and surrendered to Constantius, the emperor. When they had already drawn near and encamped opposite one another, Constantius aroused his own soldiers to valor in speeches and Magnentius implored his men to show themselves loyal and good, promising them many things. When they had deployed themselves opposite one another, they spent most of the day inactive, since no one advanced upon the opposing formation.⁶⁶ Magnentius also employed enchantments. For a certain female magician advised him to slaughter a maiden [41], to mix her blood with wine, and to give it to the soldiers to taste of, while she, in addition to this, recited some spells and invoked the aid of demons.⁶⁷ Just when the day had almost passed, the armies engaged one another and, after the battle had many reversals, in the end victory smiled on Constantius, and until deep into the night Magnentius' men were

being cut to pieces and destroyed. Since the upshot of the war had turned out thus for the usurper, he looked to flight. Lest he be conspicuous fleeing in the imperial regalia, he set these aside and donned common dress, and, after he had put the regalia on the royal horse, released it to run free, in order that it be reckoned by those who saw the horse running riderless that he had been killed and that he not be closely pursued by anyone. Now thus he escaped. But at dawn Constantius ascended a hill, and viewing the adjacent plain—but, moreover, the river flowing beside it, too—filled with corpses, openly shed tears, not so much pleased on account of his victory as much as stung by the destruction of those who had fallen. For it is said that from [42] his men, who numbered altogether about 80,000, about 30,000 fell, and from those of Magnentius, who were 36,000, 24,000 were destroyed. So then he immediately ordered that all the dead among the fallen have the honor of burial, his own men or the enemy not being distinguished, and that those still breathing receive care and medical treatment.⁶⁸

After he had escaped, as has been said, Magnentius both gathered from his own men those who had survived and summoned others, and was trying to compose himself. He sent a man of senatorial rank to Constantius to negotiate, who, suspecting that he was going to spy under the guise of an embassy and meddle with his affairs, restricted his movements. Magnentius then used bishops for a delegation, seeking to be pardoned in order that he serve with the sovereign in a soldier's role. But Constantius made no reply to this delegation and dismissed the ambassadors to depart with nothing accomplished. After he had put his army in motion, he set off, [43] and many of those under Magnentius went over to him, putting into his hands both themselves and their bases. Since he despaired of gaining pardon, Magnentius prepared for war and, remaining in Gaul, gathered great numbers.⁶⁹ In order to throw the emperor into worry and to divert him from himself toward other things, he sent one of those close to him to Antioch for the purpose of killing Gallus. The man who had been sent, in order to avoid suspicion, lodged in an old woman's hut, which had been built by the Orontes River (which earlier was called Ophites, as some relate, then was dubbed Orontes, since the son of the Persians' king Cambyses, who was called Orontes, had fallen into it). Then indeed, when, sent by Magnentius, he had already organized the plot against Gallus and had won over many of the infantry there, while dining one evening with some of his conspirators in the old woman's hut, he began discussing rather freely with them the things which they were

planning, giving little thought of the old woman on the grounds that, on account of her old age, she was uninvolved and did not even comprehend what was being said. She, so it seems, happening to be of a rather clever nature, [44] appeared to hear none of what was being said, but to herself carefully noted everything. When her guest, who had become drunk, dozed off, she secretly left the house, came to the city, and reported everything to the Caesar. Men dispatched by him arrested the plotter against him, who, under compulsion, disclosed the whole affair. Thus did Gallus escape the plot, having punished the plotter and those conspiring with him.⁷⁰

9

After these affairs had ended thus, Magnentius again readied for battle and, when he had engaged Constantius' men, was beaten and fled. Then indeed, the soldiers who had fled with him, since they saw no hope of salvation left for them from any quarter and judging it pointless to risk danger on behalf of a desperate man, planned to surrender him to the emperor. They surrounded his dwelling, where he was lying, and, in the fashion of guards, kept watch on him, lest he escape them unseen. When Magnentius realized their intent and that he had been caught in a place from which there was no escape, he performed, so the story goes, the deed of a madman, having killed all those with him, both kinsmen and friends, and then having struck Desiderius, [45] his brother, many blows with a sword (however, not one of these was fatal). After he had done this, he killed himself, lest he be surrendered to Constantius the emperor by those who had guarded him and endure a more protracted punishment. His brother Decentius, whom he had chosen Caesar, being in Gaul and preparing to come to his brother as an ally, fell into despair when he learned of his destruction and used the noose. After he had received blows from Magnentius, his sibling Desiderius, when he had eluded death and recovered from the blows, willingly went over to Constantius. When Magnentius' usurpation had been so dissolved, as much as he controlled also became subject to Constantius and he became the only one in control of his father's entire realm.⁷¹

Now the West subsequently maintained peace, but the affairs of the East were in turmoil. For Gallus, buoyed by his good fortune, after his arrival in Antioch behaved brutally to those under him, wronged in multifarious fashion by him, while his consort, too, urged him on.⁷² As a result, Constantius, alarmed [46] lest those being wronged by him be stirred to rebellion and there be need of a civil

war for him, selected Domitianus, a man both distinguished and senior, prefect of the praetorians, and, after he had enjoined him in secret to ingratiate himself somehow to Gallus and to convince him to come to him, dispatched him to Antioch. After he had arrived in Antioch, he handled the matter very unskillfully, having openly ordered the Caesar to proceed to the emperor and threatened to withhold the grain allowances to those under him if he did not obey. Provoked to anger by these things and being in general easily moved to rage, he put the prefect under restrictions and assigned soldiers to him as guards. When Montius the *quaestor* objected to the action and said that this was tantamount to outright usurpation, the Caesar was further enraged—but also being incited to anger by his wife on the grounds that he was being treated with contempt —, put the *quaestor* himself in chains and also turned the pair over to the soldiers. They bound both men together, dragged them through the marketplace, tortured them, and, in the end, tossed them in the river and destroyed them.⁷³

When Constantius had learned of these things, he dispatched men to bring [47] Gallus to him. But he sent his wife ahead for the purpose of propitiating her brother, yet while she was en route the end of life came upon her as the result of an illness. Then, after Constantius had learned of his sister's death, sending orders, he immediately stripped Gallus of his rank and exiled him. Then, when he had been urged to do so by his retinue, he also sent men to kill him. Then he changed his mind and sent others to prevent the execution. Those who hated Gallus, especially the eunuch Eusebius, who occupied the office of *praepositus* and was very influential with Constantius, convinced them not to announce the imperial change of mind to those who had been commanded to execute Gallus until they knew the man had been killed.

He, then, was killed.⁷⁴ Since the barbarians beyond the Rhine were threatening Gaul, to check their raids he dispatched Silvanus, a man who was a most able commander and outstanding with regard to matters of war. The sovereign believed slanders against him (for he had ears attentive to slanders) and began contemplating terrible things against the man. When he learned of this, he turned to rebellion and dressed himself in the attire [48] of a Caesar. He did not indulge in rebellion for long. For Ursicinus was sent there, corrupted some of his soldiers with wealth, and through them killed Silvanus and quashed the rebellion.⁷⁵

Now then, ambassadors from Persia who had been sent by Sapor, who was demanding that Mesopotamia and Armenia be ceded to

Persia in order that the Persians thus cease hostilities against the Romans, met with Constantius near Sirmium as he was moving from the West and returning to Byzantium. For from the remote days of their ancestors these territories had belonged to them. If he did not agree, he made it clear to the emperor that the pursuit of the discussion would be made under Ares as adjudicator. To this, Constantius responded to him that he was amazed that, if he had forgotten, Persians were slaves to the Macedonians and that, since Macedonians were subordinate to Romans, those who were slaves to them were also subjects to Romans. Sapor was enraged by this and looked toward war. Again he settled himself down to a siege of Nisibis. Since he was making no headway against it, he withdrew and made trial of other places. Because he was repulsed from these, too, he arrived at Amida and captured it.⁷⁶ [49]

10

Constantius, unable to administer the whole empire alone, it being of such size as to stretch almost from one end of the earth to the other, summoned from Athens Gallus' sibling Julian, pronounced him Caesar, and gave to him in marriage his own sister Helen. It is said that a dream came to his mother while she was carrying him and that she seemed to give birth to Achilles. When she had awaked and described the dream to her husband, she gave birth to him, feeling almost no pain while she was in labor and giving birth almost before she realized she was about to give birth. Then, since they had great hopes for him, his parents entrusted him to Eusebius of Nicomedia in order that he be initiated by him into the divine scripture.⁷⁷ Having proclaimed him Caesar, the emperor Constantius dispatched him to Gaul with very few soldiers, so there was suspicion that Constantius had not chosen Julian as a colleague of his office, but that, as a pretense for [50] plotting against him, had clad him in the regalia of the Caesar, in order that he be destroyed by the enemy, not having a force sufficient for the war against them.⁷⁸ When he had departed and experienced good fortune, he met the enemy and unexpectedly was victorious. Again, after the enemy had recovered themselves, he engaged them and, after many had been killed, many destroyed in the river flowing adjacent, and no fewer captured alive, erected a victory monument. They say that, when the enemy had been beaten, 11,000 Roman prisoners were then released from the bonds of captivity. He then warred against the Alamanni, experienced good fortune against them, and, after they

had implored him, made peace with the people, who had freed from slavery the Romans among them who had been taken in war.⁷⁹

Then the Caesar Julian, having become conceited and haughty because of these successes, and, as some have recorded, also because he feared Constantius, who was envious of him due to his successes, lest, as he had done with his brother Gallus, he surreptitiously deprive him, too, of life, contemplated rebellion [51] and, when he had won over some of the unit commanders under him, through them he incited the army, and it united and acclaimed him Augustus. Then, drawing their swords and pressing about him, since he pretended he was not going to accept their acclamation, they began to threaten to kill him if he did not comply. Thus, perhaps actually against his will, he yielded to the impetus of the soldierly multitude and accepted the office. When a diadem was sought in order that he be immediately crowned with it, he swore he did not have one. When some began searching for some women's jewelry in order that a diadem be fashioned from it, Julian prevented this on the grounds that it was an unpropitious omen. Since one of the unit commanders was wearing a golden torque which held stones set in gold, they took this and fit it to his head.⁸⁰ He dispatched Pentadius, *magister* of the imperial units, with others to Constantius, and wrote him, defending himself on the grounds that he was brought forward against his will to the proclamation of sovereignty and had been forced by the soldiers, who were not willing to campaign under a Caesar but under a sovereign [52] and in order that they be able to demand from him recompense worthy of their labors, asking that the collegiality of the office be accepted for the benefit it would be to the state, and also promising to send to him the racehorses from Spain, as was customary, and the picked men from Gaul. When he had written these things in the letter, in the signature he did not style himself sovereign, but Caesar, lest Constantius take offense at the signature and dismiss the letter.⁸¹ When this had been delivered to the sovereign Constantius, who was staying at Caesarea in Cappadocia, out of anger he made no response. But he announced to the soldiers the campaign against the Persians and he sent Leonas the *quaestor* to Julian, having written a letter to him and faulting him because he had not awaited his judgment, attributing to his outrageous behavior rather than to his own the fact that he had received the title of Augustus not by the judgment of the holder or authority but at the hands of a disorderly mob of soldiers, and advising him to distance himself [53] from what had improperly occurred and to return to his earlier rank, which he had received

from him. Now then, he entrusted the *quaestor* to remove from authority those who were obtaining offices there and to appoint to office both the prefect of the praetorians himself and others whom he had named for each position.⁸² Therefore, the *quaestor* departed to Julian and reported Constantius' words to him. They were: "You must keep in mind how indebted you are to me, not only because I proclaimed you Caesar, but also because, when you became an orphan at a young age, I raised you, taking charge myself." But he interrupted and said to the *quaestor*, "My good fellow, who imposed orphanhood on me at such an age? Or was it not, in point of fact, my parents' murderer? Does he not see, then, that reminding me of these things, he is scratching the wound and making it worse?" When he had come to the note to him, Julian, in reference to the advice of setting aside the imperial dress and reassuming the rank of a Caesar, said to the *quaestor*, "I shall do this, but at the behest of the armies." For his part, the *quaestor* was terrified, since, if Julian revealed this to the soldiers, being present, [54] he would be ripped apart by them on the spot, and begged him not to share any of these things with the military mob. Now then, having abandoned hope that he would be able to accomplish any of the things assigned to him, he returned with a letter of the usurper which openly reviled the emperor, reproached him as having committed the greatest wrongs against his kin, and threatened that he would become an avenger of those who had unjustly suffered.⁸³

11

He departed for Constantius. The usurper, knowing that many among those close to him sympathized with Constantius, expelled them all from there and began readying himself for civil war. At this time, his wife died, as some say, giving birth to a child by him, as others say, after she had been cast out.⁸⁴ He assembled the soldiers, provoked them to the civil war, and advised that it was necessary that they move against Constantius and not wait for him to come against them.⁸⁵ He already had disowned the Christian faith and, on account of this, was wary of the soldiers, knowing that almost all were Christians. Hence, shadowing his own baseness, he ordered each to worship as he wished. He himself, when the day of our Savior's birthday celebration [55] had arrived, entered the church and, after he had knelt in order to seem to the soldiers to be of the same belief, departed.⁸⁶ He also appointed to offices those whom he wished, and thus advanced toward civil war. He kept saying that he was

not moving against Constantius, but that he wished to bring together as one the Eastern and Western armies, in order that, when they were together, they select the one who would be their sovereign.⁸⁷ He also was boasting that he had foreknowledge of the day on which Constantius would die, having been shown it in a dream through verses which declared the following:

When Zeus the broad boundary of the Water-Pourer
renowned doth reach,
And Cronos upon the Virgin's twenty-fifth degree doth
tread,
Sovereign Constantius of Asia's land, of his dear life,
Will a baneful, biting boundary hold.⁸⁸

And Constantius died when he had abandoned Persian matters (since their sovereign had returned home) and was moving against the usurper. For he was burdened by many cares and, consequently, [56] after he had been overcome by a constant fever and had vomited up black bile, he died in Mopsucrene (this is situated along the foothills of the Taurus), having, so it is said, faulted himself for three things: the murder of his kinsmen (for he killed not only Gallus, as has already been stated, but also the brothers of his own father); the elevation of Julian; and innovation of the faith.⁸⁹

This emperor was kindly disposed to his subjects, aligned with justness with regard to his verdicts, controlled with regard to his regimen, aiming at propriety in the disposition of positions of leadership and honors, appointing no one to the senate who did not have a share of culture or who was not trained in speaking and who knew how to write both in verse and in prose.⁹⁰ But with regard to the faith, he was not pure. For he did not keep in line with the piety of his father, but sided with those who Arianized through the eagerness of Eusebius, foremost of the royal eunuchs.⁹¹ As a result, he compelled the divine Alexander, who had, after the divine Metrophanes, been chosen patriarch of the New Rome, to receive Arius in communion, but he did not assent. Hence, the sovereign commanded that a synod be organized. Then a day for the synod was marked out. [57] On that evening, Alexander went to the sanctuary, threw himself face down, begged God not to allow the wolf, that is to say Arius, to enter among his flock, and said "or release me first from my life!" With tears he passionately entreated this. Then, at dawn, just as the synod was being convened, Arius set out with high hopes. As he went, he felt an urge in his

belly to empty his bowels and bladder. He turned from the road and sat down to void the waste. There also streamed out with the excrement the innards of the wretch, who brought his life to a violent end.⁹²

Now then, after the patriarch Alexander had served as archpriest for twenty-three years, he departed life and Paul the Confessor was introduced by the orthodox in his stead to the throne of Constantinople. When Constantius had returned from Antioch, he removed him from the throne and set in his place Eusebius of Nicomedia, who happened to be a partisan of Arius. Blessed Paul had gone to Julius, Pope of Rome, and, after he had been established by him on the throne of Constantinople, was persecuted again by Constantius, and, sent into exile, [58] was killed by the Arians.⁹³ When Eusebius died, there was elevated by the Arians to the throne of the New Rome Macedonius, who became haughty and transferred the most sacred body of the sainted Constantine from the Church of the Holy Apostles to the divine precinct of the sainted martyr Acacius. As a result, Constantius became enraged, returned to the city of his father, and deposed from the throne and exiled Macedonius the Spirit-fighter, who had served one year, and placed on it Eudoxius, who, representing Arius' faction, served ten years as archpriest. He again transferred his own father's body to the Church of the Holy Apostles.⁹⁴

Then, to be sure, with the help of Artemius, the *dux* of Alexandria and later also a triumphant martyr, Constantius brought back to the city of his father the most sacred bodies of the holy apostles Andrew and Luke and deposited them inside of the altar of the Church of the Holy Apostles.⁹⁵

His wife was Eusebia, who was renowned for her beauty. But she was unlucky in her spouse, who was impotent and, [59] from both sickness and nature, very languid in matters aphrodisiac. For this reason, gradually wasting away, she predeceased Constantius, having remained childless through life. As some say, also having succumbed to hysteria, she died. It is said that Constantius was expert at horsemanship and the javelin, and was acquainted with literature to the degree that he was able to compose verse.⁹⁶

12

After Constantius' death had been announced to Julian, the army acclaimed him Augustus and, having removed the imperial and donned mourning garb, he looked downcast. According to custom, he performed public mourning for the deceased sovereign.⁹⁷ He then

hurried to Byzantium. The senate and people met him and, to the accompaniment of propitious cheers, he advanced toward the palace and took in hand the management of affairs of state. The army which had been with him and its commanders conveyed Constantius' body to Constantinople on a carriage. Julian met and accompanied it, having removed the diadem from his head. The corpse [60] of the deceased emperor was laid to rest in the Church of the Holy Apostles.⁹⁸

Julian executed many of those connected with the palace, and others he exiled and deprived of their possessions.⁹⁹ To the rest of the administrative duties of sovereignty, he added adjudication. Then indeed, once while hearing the case of a man who had been accused of having stolen public funds and who was denying the theft, when the prosecutor said, "Who, O sovereign, will pay the penalty for his crime, if those prosecuted benefit from denial?", he replied, "And who will be acquitted, if prosecutors without proofs are believed?" He also negotiated with embassies which had been sent from various peoples to Constantius. The armies he inspected and reviewed, and the majority of the palace staff he dismissed. He asked for a barber and, when Constantius' barber approached him attired very lavishly, he said he was looking for a barber, not a senator, and dismissed him. Also, when he noticed one of the palace cooks in garb more resplendent than his station, he sent for his own cook, who was dressed like a cook, and asked those present which of them they thought to be a cook. When they [61] said the one attired inexpensively, he excused the other. He was doing these things pursuing esteem as a result of seeming to be without affectation and a genuine philosopher. After he had distributed money to the soldiers, he began to prepare for the war against the Persians.¹⁰⁰

When he had become emperor and had gained control of the empire for himself, he immediately broke forth into manifest Hellenism. For, as has been stated, although he had earlier forsworn Christians' things, he did not allow the birth pang of impiety to burst into the open. For it is said that, while he was nurturing a desire of sovereignty and hiding this in his soul as under a heap of ashes, he approached seers and sorcerers, inquiring whether he would gain power, and by them he was corrupted and diverted to Hellenism.¹⁰¹ After he had gained power, by the inaccessible decrees of God, he produced many martyrs. For he so raged against Christians that he even prevented them from partaking of Hellenic teachings, saying that those who styled these things myths and traduced them must not enjoy the benefit of their assistance nor be armed by them

against them. Wherefore, since the children of Christians were being made to abandon the poets, Apolinarius [62] is said to have hastened to his paraphrase of the Psalter, and Gregory, great in theology, to the composition of verses, in order that, studying these instead of Hellenic teachings, the young be Hellenized in their speech and be instructed in metrics.¹⁰²

He also permitted the Jews to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. When, with much zeal and great expenditures, they had begun the construction and were endeavoring to dig the earth for the setting of foundations, it is said that fire suddenly burst forth from the trenches and consumed the diggers, so they were compelled to abandon the construction.¹⁰³ He killed Eusebius the eunuch, who was made away with on the grounds that he was the murderer of his brother Gallus, and all the other eunuchs he expelled from the palace.¹⁰⁴ Once, when the transgressor was passing by Chalcedon, the bishop Maris began calling him "Avenging Spirit" and "Christ-denier." He feigned patience and said, "Be off, wretch, [63] and bewail the blindness of your eyes." (For he was suffering from a cataract.) He retorted, "I give thanks to my savior Christ because he made provision that I not see your shameless and most impious face!"¹⁰⁵

He set his army in motion against the Persians and arrived at Tarsus, a famous city of Cilicia. When he had arrived there, Artemius, the priest of Asclepius, approached him—for in Aegae (this, too, a city of Cilicia) there was a renowned temple of Asclepius—and requested that he restore again to the temple of Asclepius the columns which the archpriest of the people of the Christians had removed and upon which he had built his church. The transgressor straightway commanded that this be done at the bishop's expense. Then the Hellenes, when they, with much labor and with the greatest cost, had barely taken down one of the columns and moved it with machines as far as the threshold of the door of the church, even after a great length of time were unable to get it outside. They abandoned it and departed. And after Julian had died, the bishop easily righted it again and returned it to its spot.¹⁰⁶

[64] When Julian had arrived in Antioch and began constantly visiting the district of Daphne, in which was located a cult statue of Apollo, a work marvelous for its artistry, the Antiochenes jeered at him and began saying that a sacrificer, not an emperor, was in residence among them. Because he had grown his beard long, they dubbed him "Billy Goat" and the same people began saying that he was ideal for the braiding of ropes. In return, he ridiculed them for their laziness, softness, and effeminacy, and said that he would not offer his beard

to the Antiochenes for the braiding of ropes, lest their hands become worn by its roughness. To them he also wrote a speech, which is titled "Antiochene" or "Beard-hater."¹⁰⁷ He burnt entire hecatombs to Daphnian Apollo, seeking an oracle from him. Since the image was mute, the temple attendants, being asked the cause of its silence, said that the cult statue was silent because of corpses interred there. For the remains of other martyrs and of the holy martyr Babylas had been interred there. So then Julian commanded that all these be removed from there. After they had been removed, a thunderbolt struck Daphne [65] by night and reduced the temple and the cult statue to ashes. Therefore, thinking that the conflagration was the result of a plot of Christians, the "Avenging spirit," in a rage, even closed the churches of the faithful.¹⁰⁸ The great Artemius was punished by him as a Christian and the murder of Gallus was a charge laid upon him; and the presbyters Eugenius and Macarius were punished by him and were deemed worthy of the crowns of martyrs; and also Manuel, Sabel, and Ishmael, who had been sent to him from Persia for the purpose of an embassy, and many others.¹⁰⁹

13

When he had invaded Persia, at first he fared well, captured some cities, killed many men, took possession of much booty and many prisoners, and began to besiege Ctesiphon. After matters suddenly deteriorated for him, he and the majority of his army were destroyed. For the Persians were desperate and clearly willing to hurl themselves toward destruction to cause the Romans some suffering.¹¹⁰ Then indeed two men in the guise of deserters stole toward the sovereign and promised him victory against Persia, if he followed them. For [66] they advised him to leave the river, to burn the triremes which he was bringing with him and the other supply ships, lest the enemy use them, and, with them guiding the way, to lead the army through other routes, safely and swiftly take possession of the interior of Persia, and effortlessly master her. The sinner insanely obeyed them and, although many, including Hormisdas himself, kept telling him that the business was a deception, he set fire to the ships and burned all except twelve. There were 700 triremes and 400 supply ships. When they already had been reduced to ashes, since many of the unit commanders kept objecting that what the deserters were saying was an ambush and deception, he only just, I suppose, gave his assent that the false deserters be interrogated. After they had been interrogated under torture, they revealed their secret.¹¹¹

Now some state that Julian was deceived thus, while others say that, after he had abandoned the siege of Ctesiphon due to its great strength and also because necessities for the army failed, he took thought of withdrawal.¹¹² They say that the Persians appeared to them from behind as they were withdrawing [67] and that they threw those in the rear into disorder; that the Gauls, who comprised the rear guard, arrayed themselves against the enemy very nobly and killed many of them, not just ordinary people, but the distinguished among them, too. The Romans were severely beset by a lack of supplies. Julian, at a loss of what had to be done and whence he ought to continue to withdraw, chose to make his line of march through the hill-country. The Persians observed this, massed in the same spot, and attacked the Romans. On the left wing, the Romans were winning, but on the right they were, in fact, losing. When Julian had learned this, he was in haste to aid those being beaten. He happened, on account of its weight and the searing heat of the sun (for the season was summer), to have removed his breastplate. Then, when he had come in the midst of the enemy, he was struck about the side with a spear. It is said that because the wind had been blowing strongly, a thick cloud spread over the air there. For the masses of the soldiers were stirring up much dust, so that they neither knew where they were nor what they were doing. For it was unclear whence the spear that struck him had been thrown at him, whether by an enemy, by one of his own men, or from a power more divine, [68] for this, too, is sung. Hence, they state that, when he had taken in cupped hand some of the blood flowing from his wound and scattered it in the air, he said, "Have your fill, Nazarene!"¹¹³

Thus did he who had lived impiously violently spew forth his soul, having reigned two years. The army conveyed his body to Tarsus and buried it in a suburb of the city. On his grave was inscribed this epigram:

By Cydnus silver-flowing, when from Euphrates' stream,
Out of Persia's land, with task undone,
An army he had moved, obtain this tomb did Julian,
Both sovereign good and spearman strong.

Later he was brought back to the Queen of Cities.¹¹⁴

He was aflutter about reputation and wanted to be praised about every little thing, but, being set straight by his friends about those things on which he slipped up, [69] he did not become upset. He

also had a share of every sort of wisdom, and especially the very esoteric; with regard to regimen, he was disciplined, with the result that he even avoided these natural things, belches and expectoration. He used to say that a philosopher ought, if possible, not even breathe.¹¹⁵ They state that while at Antioch he saw a dream, a youth with blond hair, who said to him, "It is necessary that you die in Phrygia." Then, when he was wounded, he asked those present what the place was called. When he heard that it was called Phrygia, he cried out, "O Helios, you have destroyed Julian!"¹¹⁶ It is said that on the day in which he died, his death was known in Antioch. For one of those of the judicial order there—and that man a Hellene and of the same religion as the Transgressor—, passing the night standing watch over the senate house, beheld a composition of stars in heaven emblazoning letters which said, "Today in Persia Julian is being killed." Then, since the day had been noted, it was recognized after this that he was killed on that day. Having lived thirty-one years, [70] thus, as has been described, did he cease life. The man who had been taught through the stars beforehand about his death, held the spectacle to be an inducement toward belief.¹¹⁷

14

After Julian had died, Jovian, then a corps commander, a pious man, son of Varonianus, who had born the title *comes*, was selected by common vote for the rule.¹¹⁸ He was loath to accept the sovereignty. When asked the reason, he cried out that he was a Christian and was not content to reign while the army was practicing Hellenism. Immediately, with one voice, as from a prearranged signal, all cried out that they were Christians.¹¹⁹ When he had received the empire thus, he made peace with the Persians, having from necessity made a treaty not suitable for Romans, for he ceded to them possession of Nisisbis and Singara, famous cities, after he had resettled the cities' inhabitants, by whom, in their lamentations, he was violently cursed, too. But he also yielded many rural areas to them and rights accruing from the first to Romans. When hostages had been given on both sides, the treaty had thus been confirmed. Afterwards, as the Romans were on the march, they were beleaguered by a shortage of supplies, so as not even to have enough water.¹²⁰ [71] Then indeed, as soon as he had arrived in Antioch of Coele Syria, priests of the Christians who, under Constantius and the Transgressor, had been expelled from their churches, he returned to them, and before the others the great Athanasius to Alexandria. After he had come from Antioch to Tarsus

and had decorated Julian's memorial, he returned.¹²¹ After he had come to Ancyra of Galatia, he departed from there, advanced one day's march, halted in Dadastana, and suddenly died, as some have written, after he had eaten fresh mushrooms that were poisonous (for he was simple with regard to his diet), as others have written, since it was winter, he went to sleep in a home that had recently been plastered and, on account of the excessive cold, after coals had been lit inside, much vapor arose from the plaster as it was affected by the fire, he suffocated as a result of this, asleep and unaware of his choking, being heavy in the head from wine. For it is said that he had imbibed much straight.¹²² His wife is said not to have seen him, although she, together with her son Varonianus, had arrived with regal pomp prior to this for a meeting.¹²³

Now then, after Jovian had died, his dejected soldiers came down to Nicaea and, when they had arrived, began deliberating about a sovereign. [72] Some named one man, others another. The majority agreed upon Salustius, who happened to be prefect of the praetorians. After he had put forward his old age for an excuse, he declined. When they requested his son, he did not consent, having judged him unsuitable for such office on account of his youth and naiveté. Hence, Salustius, with the others, voted Valentinian sovereign, even though he was not present.¹²⁴

Now then, Jovian was pious with regard to dogma and a man of goodwill. He had a weakness for wine and sex. With respect to the height of his body, he happened to be tall and was not ignorant of letters.¹²⁵ While a corps commander, he was once marching in a steep place behind Julian, who was leading the way, and stepped on the hem of his purple. Julian, whether he inferred from this or recognized from some prophecy that Jovian was his successor, said, "So be it, even if a man . . ."¹²⁶ He did not rule eight whole months. Now then, his corpse was conveyed to Byzantium and buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles, where, subsequently, [73] his wife Charito also was buried with him. Jovian died in the course of his thirty-third year of age.¹²⁷

15

Now as has been said, Valentinian thus was elected sovereign. When he had been brought forth and acclaimed, he donned the emblems of sovereignty. Salustius, because he demonstrated eagerness that he be acclaimed, requested as a reward to be released from the concerns of the prefecture. The sovereign said, "Have you loaded me with

the weight of such great affairs for this, in order that you yourself not be burdened even by this one?"¹²⁸ Valentinian came from Paeonia. He was pious in matters concerning God. As a result, Julian condemned him to exile, then, after he had been recalled, made him *tribunus* of a unit. He was most noble in strength and most just in judgment. As a result, he punished as unjust many of those then claiming offices, saying that the ruler was obliged, before all others, to take thought of justice.¹²⁹

He took his brother Valens as a colleague in his sovereignty and, having entrusted to him the eastern portion, he himself [74] stayed in the west, organized wars against barbarians, and erected many monuments of victory against them. He had, before his reign, a son named Gratian, who was born to him from his wife Severa. He proclaimed him emperor. He also married a second wife, while the earlier one, too, was still alive. The second wife was Justina, from whom he also begot the young Valentinian and daughters, Justa, Grata, and Galla.¹³⁰

During his reign, when Eudoxius of evil opinion, archpriest of the New Rome, had died, Demophilus, who happened to be of the same opinion as his predecessor, was introduced in his stead. He controlled the church for about twelve years. This sovereign also selected Ambrose the Great as bishop of the city of Mediolanum. When he learned that his brother Valens was espousing the Arian heresy and was forcing all to agree to it, he rebuked him via letters and advised him to abandon the heresy. But he did not abandon it of his own volition and became even more savage against the orthodox.¹³¹

A certain Rhodanus, a *praepositus*, had great influence over Valentinian. Against him, a certain woman called Bernice came [75] to the sovereign Valentinian, charging the *praepositus* with injustice. Then indeed, after the emperor had investigated and learned that the woman was not lying, he summoned the *praepositus* and ordered him to make amends for the injustice to the woman. Confident in his license toward the sovereign, he took no account of the wronged woman. Then the woman again approached the sovereign. When he learned that the *praepositus* had not taken any thought of the woman, he immediately stripped him of office and ordered him bound and led about in the theater during an equestrian contest, while heralds went before him proclaiming his injustice to the woman and his disregard of sovereign command. And he ordered that, after the circumambulation and the proclamation, he be burned there straightway. Such was the end he met. Through sovereign writ, his entire fortune was given to the woman.¹³²

This sovereign died while residing in Gaul, after he had enjoyed a long span of life. For he lived to eighty-four years, having reigned eleven of these and having left his son Gratian as successor of his sovereignty in the West.¹³³

16

Valens, championing the Arianizers, since he was like-minded to them, persecuted the orthodox and inflicted upon them many [76] terrors, heeding his own spouse Domnica.¹³⁴ Once, while he was staying in Nicomedia, there approached him in a delegation from the body of the orthodox eighty priestly men, all of whom, together with the boat on which they were traveling, he ordered burned. All were incinerated in mid-sea, along with their boat, which lasted as far as Dacibyze. Gregory, the one great in theology, has memorialized them, saying, “maritime conflagrations of presbyters.”¹³⁵ Not only did he punish the orthodox, but he also assigned to the Arians all their churches, banishing from these their orthodox bishops. Then indeed, it is said that those of the correct dogma who had been exiled from the catholic church in Nicaea approached Basil the Great, and that he went on a delegation to Valens about this, that he was not won over, and that Basil the Great said, “O Sovereign, your verdict about this must be entrusted [77] to God, let the church be securely locked, and let those of Arius’ faction pray to God while they stand outside. If the church spontaneously opens to them, let them have it! But if it does not open, we must also be permitted to pray to God! And if the doors are spontaneously thrown open, it must be concluded that God has allotted the divine precinct to us. But if the temple does not open for us either, in this case, too, let it be yielded to the Arianizers.” This was pleasing to the sovereign and he permitted that it be so done. Therefore, the church in Nicaea was completely closed. The Arianizers kept praying and prattling for a sufficiently long time, and the church did not open. After a lengthy duration, once the heretics had withdrawn, the orthodox, with Basil the Great leading them, began their entreaty. Immediately the bars and the bolts burst asunder and the doors stood apart from one another and granted entrance for the faithful.¹³⁶

This sovereign allowed the Hellenes to make sacrifices and was solicitous to Jews. To the orthodox alone he was opposed.¹³⁷ When Scythians were ravaging the Thracian and Macedonian territory, he

set out with the intention of meeting them in battle. It was then when the great father [78] Isaacius chanced to meet him as he passed by on horseback and said, "Restore the churches to the orthodox, O sovereign, and know that you will return victorious. But if you wage war against God, thence you will not return." The most impious sovereign was upset about these words and ordered that the holy man be placed under guard until he came back. And he said, "If you return, God has not spoken in me."¹³⁸ And in a dream Valens beheld a man saying to him:

Fast off with you, wretch, to Mimas the Great
Where there waits to seize you a horrible fate.

Then, when he had awakened, he asked who Mimas was. One of those who have devoted themselves to words (for such men used to accompany and reside with emperors, would that it be so now, too!) said to him that Mimas was a mountain in Asia, situated by the sea. He also said that Homer made mention of this in the *Odyssey*, saying, "by windy Mimas." He said, "What need is there for me to go to this mountain and there to die?" Then he campaigned against the Scythians, engaged them around Thrace, was disgracefully beaten, and, fleeing, was hidden in a building, beside which chaff had been swept. Then, after the sovereign's defeat, when the Scythians [79] were plundering that area and also setting homes ablaze, they burned that building to the ground and Valens perished within. Now then, holy Isaacius, while imprisoned, knew in his spirit of Valens' incineration and said to those who happened to be there, "At this moment Valens is dying by fire." Since the day was noted, it was later recognized that the holy man did not err. After the withdrawal of the barbarians from there, when some men were searching for the sovereign's body, a tombstone was discovered in the house in which he had been burned, having an epigram of a man of yore:

Here lies Mimas, a Macedonian, a Commander.¹³⁹

Procopius, the cousin of Julian, rebelled against this sovereign and gained control of Byzantium. When he had been betrayed by his own men and bound from his legs to two trees which had been forcibly bent down, the wretch was ripped in half when the trees were let up. Then, too, the walls of the city of Chalcedon were dismantled, since its citizens sided with Procopius. While they were

being dismantled, in their foundation was discovered a tablet which had the following written on it: [80]

But when, indeed, Nymphs, delighting in dance,
Throughout the Holy City, about her fortified ways, will stand,
And a wall a safeguard mournful for baths will be,
Then, indeed, countless tribes of men dispersed,
Savage, mad, in vile prowess clad,
Having Cimmerian Ister's ford with spear traversed,
Will Scythic range and Mysian land destroy.
And having trod with frenzied hopes on Thrace,
There life's end and destiny would face.¹⁴⁰

Now Valens used the material of Chalcedon's wall for construction of an aqueduct, which popular parlance terms "conduit," by which he caused water to be brought to the city, in order that there be in it an abundance of water for other use and for bathing, and he named it "Valens." The prefect of the city outfitted a Nymphaeum in the so-called Taurus, thereby demonstrating the benefits from the aqueduct. The incursion of the barbarians who took Thrace and also remained afterwards throughout it, occurred after this, as had been written [81] on the tablet.¹⁴¹

In truth, during Valens' reign, it is said that, seeking to know who would reign after Valens, Libanius the sophist and Iamblichus, Proclus' teacher, performed a rooster-divination. This, as word has it, is of this sort. In dust the twenty-four letters are written, and upon each of them a kernel of wheat or barley is placed. Then, as some spells are chanted over them, a rooster is released and it is observed from what letters he takes kernels. It is thought that these, being put together, make a revelation of what is being sought. So then they did this and saw that the rooster took the kernel on the theta, the kernel on the epsilon, the one on the omicron, and the one on the delta. Therefore, what was being revealed seemed ambiguous. For it seemed to reveal either "Theodorus," or "Theodosius," or "Theodotus." When he had learned of this, Valens was suspicious of many called by such names and executed them. He also began to seek the men who had made the divination. As a result, in fear of his cruelty, Iamblichus drank a poison, [82] so some have recorded, and betook himself from life. For Valens was inexorable in his rages. As a result, he used to say, "He who swiftly sets aside rage, could as soon set aside justice." He had reigned thirteen years and four months and perished in a way worthy of his impiety.¹⁴²

Valentinian's son Gratian and the young Valentinian, his brother, gained control of the Roman empire. For Gratian alone was proclaimed by his father, just as has already been recorded. When Valentinian died, he was not present at his father's death. Then indeed, under these circumstances the army proclaimed sovereign the young Valentinian, who happened then to be four years old. After he had returned from his absence, Gratian accorded the soldiers his malediction and some of them even maltreatment, having punished the ringleaders of his brother's proclamation because they had acclaimed another without the current sovereign's permission. He did not reject having his brother rule with him, but accepted him as colleague in his sovereignty.¹⁴³ This sovereign rivaled his father [83] in regard to piety. As a result, he did not provide military cooperation to his uncle Valens, who had once requested it from him against the Scythians, having written to him that, "One must not cooperate with God's enemy." To the pastors who had been driven from their own churches, he allowed by decree their return to them.¹⁴⁴

When, after Valens' defeat, the Scythians were swelled with arrogance, were ravaging Thrace and its environs, and were out of control, Theodosius, a man both most noble and pious he summoned from Hispania (the Hispania of European Iberia is the most distinguished city of those in it). Then, after he had appointed him general, he dispatched him with an army against the barbarians. He attacked them, was victorious, and raised a victory monument, a vast Scythian multitude having been slaughtered in battle and the rest after they had turned to flight, some of them killed while being captured, others killed by one another in their flight. So then, when almost all of those barbarians had perished, Theodosius left the army there and himself went, his own messenger of victory, to Gratian, [84] who was staying in Paeonia. After he had announced his victory to the sovereign and proclaimed the good news of the barbarians' destruction, he was doubted on account of the speed of his achievement and the invincibility of the Scythians. When the emperor had recognized the truth and had been informed of the barbarians' ruin, he both marveled at the man on account of his swiftness and prowess and praised him. Since Valens' portion had, after his ruin, already been attached to him, he surveyed the near limitlessness of the empire, saw, at the same time, that he alone would not be able to guide an empire so great, and acclaimed

Theodosius sovereign of the New Rome, at the same time rewarding him for his valor and judging that no man would be better than he for a sharing of the empire. Then indeed, he entrusted to him all the East and Thrace, and to himself allotted the West.¹⁴⁵ After he had arrived in Gaul, he was killed treacherously by Andragathius, his general, after he had reigned six years from the time of his father's death.¹⁴⁶

18

After Gratian had died, there remained as sovereign emperor [85] of the West the young Valentinian, who was not yet an adolescent. Because his Arianizing mother Justina had corrupted him, he was in agreement with the dogma of the Arians and opposed the orthodox. Therefore, after Maximus had rebelled against him and made an attempt at usurpation, and had prevailed in battles, he, seeking a military alliance, wrote the sovereign Theodosius what had happened. The latter wrote back to him that there was no need for amazement if a slave rebelled and prevailed over a master when the latter was denying his own Master, calling the Creator a creation, a slave, and the same substance and same rank as the Father. After he had departed to assist him, he captured and killed Maximus and the general Andragathius, who had deceitfully murdered Gratian.¹⁴⁷

Then, in turn, Eugenius rebelled against the young Valentinian and made an attempt at usurpation. Therefore, Valentinian, seized with fear, betook himself from life by hanging. Learning of Eugenius' usurpation, Theodosius marched out against him.¹⁴⁸ After he had reached Thessalonica with his army, he was insulted [86] by the Thessalonians and the prefect was murdered, the populace having rioted as a result of certain grievances. Now the sovereign then seemed to exhibit forbearance toward the populace's action. But subsequently he announced an equestrian contest and, when the populace had gathered in the theater, the army surrounded them and with arrows and javelins shot the populace down, with the result that of them almost 15,000 died. After he had sated his anger in this fashion, Theodosius departed and went to the city of Mediolanum. There he was censured by Ambrose the Great and not allowed to enter the church. He did not permit him entrance to the divine precinct unless he enacted a law that capital sentences not be enforced until thirty days should elapse after the sentence. This he did on account of the sovereign's predisposition toward anger, in order that, his anger being spread through the thirty days, he re-examine his

sentences dispassionately and confirm the lawful but annul those that had perhaps been promulgated through rage.¹⁴⁹ After [87] he had engaged the usurper Eugenius in battle in Gaul, Theodosius defeated, captured, and killed him.¹⁵⁰

While a private citizen, he had a pious, modest, and charitable wife, Placilla, from whom were born to him Honorius and Arcadius. Her, too, he made Augusta. After he became sovereign, when she died he married Galla, the daughter of Valentinian the Great.¹⁵¹

While the sovereign was absent in the West, the Jews, who had warmly welcomed Honoratus, the prefect of the city, built a lavish synagogue in Chalcopratii after he had given them permission, for he was serving the interests of the Hellenes. The populace of the city was annoyed about this and abused the prefect. But he paid no heed to the abuse. Then the populace, unable to endure this, set a fire in the synagogue by night and burned it. The prefect therefore wrote about this to Theodosius. He sentenced those who had dared the conflagration of the synagogue to payment of the expenditure on it and commanded that it be rebuilt. [88] After Ambrose the Great had learned this, when the sovereign was residing in the city of Mediolanum and had come to the church for one of the dominical celebrations, he began to speak:

Why, Sovereign, do you outrage Him who made you sovereign from a private citizen and entrusted to you his own flock—which He won with his own blood—and who crowned your recently squalid head, regarding those who deny Him more worthy than those who acknowledge Him, exacting judgments on Christians in behalf of Jews, and, in the middle of this city where Christ is preached and the cross revered, forcing them to build a synagogue for the Christ-killers?

The sovereign was shamed by his reproach and said, “Bishop, shall we grant to the populace to do in unseemly and shameless fashion whatever they wish in well-regulated cities?” “But this is what one must not grant:” retorted the sacred Ambrose, “Jews to possess synagogues in the midst of a pious city and to send up blasphemous prayers in the hearing of the god-fearing! You, of all people, most orthodox Augustus, must not sanction this!” [89] Theodosius was mollified by this, revoked the penalty for the Byzantines, and forbade the Jews to possess a synagogue within the Queen of Cities.¹⁵²

When new taxes had been imposed on the Antiochenes, the populace, having been aroused to anger as a result of the novelty of the exaction, toppled statues of the former wife of the sovereign which were standing in their city's marketplace and dragged them into the public thoroughfares. Enraged on account of this, he abrogated the city's legal rights, subjugated it to its neighbor Laodicea, and threatened to punish its citizens. He would have brought this to pass, if Flavianus, then archpriest of Antioch, had not come to the sovereign, engaged in negotiations, and made him relinquish his anger.¹⁵³ This was when the great father John Chrysostom, who happened to be presbyter of the church in Antioch, composed the speeches titled *The Statues*.¹⁵⁴

19

Then Gregory, the mighty in theology, of late instructing the orthodox in secret in the church of Holy Anastasia [90] on account of the impudence and audacity of the heretics, after the sovereign Theodosius made the churches available to the orthodox and expelled the Arianizers, in forthrightness proclaimed the Son to be the same substance as the Father, and the Holy Spirit God, jointly revered and jointly honored with both. For Macedonius, who, as has been stated, also had briefly been Patriarch of Constantinople, did not allow It to be called God, nor equal in strength to the Father and to the Son, nor, for that matter, of the same substance. As a result, a second synod had then been organized, after the sovereign had issued the order, and, when there had been assembled in the reigning of the cities one-hundred fifty fathers possessed of God—of whom Gregory the Theologian, and the great Gregory, bishop of Nyssa, and the holy Amphilochius, who was in charge of the church of Iconium, took the lead in the disputations—, they decreed the Holy Spirit God, both of the same substance and same power as the Father and the Son, they excommunicated from the catholic church Macedonius and those who held the same opinion as he, they added to the holy creed the clause about the Holy Spirit from “and in the Holy Spirit” to the conclusion, and what had been decreed in the first synod [91] they confirmed. It was then when some of the bishops who envied the Theologian on account of the throne of Constantinople said that he had ascended the throne irregularly, since it had previously been offered to another. As a result, the holy one composed his *Farewell*, read it in public, vacated the throne, and returned to Nazianzus, his own native land. Nectarius, a man

of the senatorial order and one who had held public offices, was selected Constantinople's patriarch.¹⁵⁵ At that time the throne of the New Rome was allotted second rank, having been placed after the elder Rome but preferred before the others.¹⁵⁶

But then, too, Amphilochius the Great began requesting that the sovereign drive the Arians from the city, inasmuch as they were blaspheming the Son of God, or, in the interim, to forbid conventicles. Since he saw that Theodosius was hesitant toward this, he watched for the right moment and, when Arcadius was deliberating with his father, he entered, rendered the appropriate salutation and obeisance to the sovereign, and to Arcadius nonchalantly spoke thus, "Hello to you, too, little boy." When the sovereign became upset about his slight [92] of his son, the holy man then said, "You, being human, did not meekly bear the slighting of your son. Do you think that God does not abominate and despise those who blaspheme his only begotten son and become angry at those who allow them to consort with the orthodox and to destroy many?" Then, astonished at the holy man's method, the sovereign terminated by ordinance the conventicles of the heretics.¹⁵⁷

Upon the sovereign who had destroyed Eugenius, the recent usurper, devolved the entire empire of the Romans, and he proclaimed his two sons sovereigns.¹⁵⁸ Since he wished them to have a share of education both in words and in ethics, he brought from Rome Arsenius the Great, who was a deacon of the church there, famous both for wisdom and for virtue. To him he delivered his sons, after he had enjoined him to behave toward them not as to sovereigns but as to private individuals and ordinary people, to flog them if he saw them being careless or deviating one bit from propriety, and to deal with them as with his own sons. He deemed Arsenius worthy of great honor and greatly enriched him with wealth. After he had taken charge of the boys, [93] he used to seat them on thrones while he himself stood and filled them with his teaching. Once the sovereign unexpectedly surprised them and, when he saw them sitting and Arsenius standing, became upset, roused the boys from their thrones, seated Arsenius, and ordered him to teach them thus. Thereafter, they used to stand beside their teacher while the teacher was sitting. Well now, once the teacher was laying lashes on Arcadius, who had made an error. Wroth with him as a result, he devised a plot against him, began diligently practicing to kill the man, and was planning the slaughter. When he had learned what was being rehearsed, Arsenius secretly retired from the palace and, after he had retreated to Scetis, adopted the solitary life and became like an angel. Although

the sovereign Theodosius made a massive search for him, he did not know where on earth he was.¹⁵⁹

This sovereign became ill in Mediolanum and quit his life after he had guided the realm eighteen years, having apportioned it to his two sons, to Arcadius having assigned the New Rome and the eastern portions, to [94] Honorius having allotted the elder Rome and the western.¹⁶⁰