

Commentary on the Gospel
According to St. Matthew



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Chapter I

1. The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

JEROME; “The likeness of a man” (Ezec. 1:5) (in Ezechiel’s vision) signifies Matthew, who accordingly opens his Gospel with the human genealogy of Christ (Jerome *Commentariorum in Evangelium Matthaei ad Eusebium libri quatuor: Prologus*, Migne PL 26.15-218d [Prefaces to the commentaries: Matthew, NPNF 2-06]). RABANUS; By this exordium he shows that it is the birth of Christ according to the flesh that he has undertaken to narrate. PSEUDO-CHRYSOSTOM; Matthew wrote for the Jews, and in Hebrew;¹ to them it was unnecessary to explain the divinity which they recognized; but necessary to unfold the mystery of the Incarnation. John wrote in Greek for the Gentiles who knew nothing of a Son of God. They required therefore to be told first, that the Son of God was God, then that this Deity was incarnate (Pseudo-Chrysostom *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum*, Migne PG 56.611-946 [Homil. in Matt. Hom. 1]). RABANUS; Though the genealogy occupies only a small part of the volume, he yet begins thus, *The book of the generation* (Mt. 1:1). For it is the manner of the Hebrews to name their books from that with which they open; as Genesis. GLOSS. The full expression would be, *This is the book of the generation*; but this is a usual ellipse; e.g., *The vision of Isaias* (Isa. 1:1) for, “This is the vision.” *Generation* (Mt. 1:1), he says in the singular number, though there be many here given in succession, as it is for the sake of the one generation of Christ that the rest are here introduced (*Glossa ordinaria*, Migne PL 113-114). CHRYSOSTOM; Or he therefore entitles it, *The book of the generation* (Mt. 1:1) because this is the sum of the whole dispensation, the root of all its blessings; viz. that God became man; for this once effected, all other things followed of course (Chrysostom *Commentarius in Sanctum Mattheum Evangelistam* [2.5], Migne PG 57 [St. Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospel of Saint Matthew, NPNF 1-10]). RABANUS; He says, *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ* (Mt. 1:1), because he knew it was

1 It seems to be the general witness of antiquity that there was a Hebrew copy of St. Matthew’s Gospel, whether written before or after the Greek. This Hebrew copy was interpolated by the Ebionites.

written, “The book of the generation of Adam” (Gen. 5:1). He begins thus then, that he may oppose book to book, the new Adam to the old Adam, for by the one were all things restored which had been corrupted by the other. JEROME; We read in Isaias, *Who shall declare His generation?* (Isa. 53:8). But it does not follow that the Evangelist contradicts the Prophet, or undertakes what he declares impossible; for Isaias is speaking of the generation of the divine nature; St. Matthew of the incarnation of the human (Jerome *Commentariorum in Evangelium Matthaei ad Eusebium libri quatuor* [ch. 1], Migne PL 26.15-218d). CHRYS. And do not consider this genealogy a small thing to hear: for truly it is a marvelous thing that God should descend to be born of a woman, and to have as His ancestors David and Abraham. REMIGIUS; Though any affirm that the prophet (Isaias) does speak of His human generation, we need not answer to his enquiry, *Who shall declare it?* “No man”; but, “Very few”; because Matthew and Luke have. RABANUS; By saying, *of Jesus Christ* (Mt. 1:1), he expresses both the kingly and priestly office to be in Him, for Jesus, who first bore this name, was after Moses, the first who was leader of the children of Israel; and Aaron, anointed by the mystical ointment, was the first priest under the Law. HILARY; What God conferred on those, who, by the anointing of oil were consecrated as kings or priests, this the Holy Spirit conferred on the Man Christ; adding moreover a purification. The Holy Spirit cleansed that which taken of the Virgin Mary was exalted into the Body of the Saviour, and this is that anointing of the Body of the Saviour’s flesh whence He was called Christ.² Because the impious craft of the Jews denied that Jesus was born of the seed of David, he adds, *The son of David, the son of Abraham* (Mt. 1:1) (Augustine [Ambrosiaster] *Quaestiones Veteris et Novi Testamenti [Incertus]* [q. 49], Migne PL 35.2207-2386.). CHRYS. But why would it not have been enough to name one of them, David alone, or Abraham alone? Because the promise had been made to both of Christ to be born of their seed. To Abraham, *And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be*

2 This passage is from a work commonly ascribed to Hilary the Deacon. The Fathers bear out its doctrine. E.g., “Since the flesh is not holy in itself, therefore it was sanctified even in Christ, the Word which dwelt in it, through the Holy Ghost, sanctifying His own Temple, and changing it into the energy of His own Nature. For therefore is Christ’s Body understood to be both holy and hallowing, as being made a Temple of the Word united to it bodily, as Paul says.” Cyril of Alexandria. Lib. v. in Joann. p. 992. In like manner Gregory of Nazianzus speaks of “the Father of the True and really Anointed (Christ), whom He has anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows, anointing the manhood with the Godhead, so as to make both one.” Orat. 5. fin. [Select orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen, *NPNF* 2-07].

blessed (Gen. 22:18). To David, *Of the fruit of thy womb I will set upon thy throne* (Ps. 131:11). He therefore calls Christ the Son of both, to show that in Him was fulfilled the promise to both. Also because Christ was to have three dignities; King, Prophet, Priest; but Abraham was prophet and priest; priest, as God says to him in Genesis, *Take me a cow* (Gen. 15:9); Prophet, as the Lord said to Abimelech concerning him, *He is a prophet. And he shall pray for thee* (Gen. 20:7). David was king and prophet, but not priest. Thus He is expressly called the son of both, that the threefold dignity of His forefathers might be recognized by hereditary right in Christ. AMBROSE; He therefore names specially two authors of His birth—one who received the promise concerning the kindreds of the people, the other who obtained the oracle concerning the generation of Christ; and though he is later in order of succession is yet first named, inasmuch as it is greater to have received the promise concerning Christ than concerning the Church, which is through Christ; for greater is He who saves than that which is saved (Ambrose *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam libris X comprehensa* [c.iii], Migne *PL* 15.1527d-1850d). JEROME. The order of the names is inverted, but of necessity; for had he written Abraham first, and David afterwards, he would have to repeat Abraham again to preserve the series of the genealogy. PSEUDO-CHRYSS. Another reason is that royal dignity is above natural, though Abraham was first in time, yet David in honor.

GLOSS. But since from this title it appears that the whole book is concerning Jesus Christ, it is necessary first to know what we must think concerning Him; for so shall be better explained what this book relates of Him. AUG. Cerinthus then and Ebion made Jesus Christ only man; Paul of Samosata, following them, asserted Christ not to have had an existence from eternity, but to have begun to be from His birth of the Virgin Mary; he also thought Him nothing more than man. This heresy was afterwards confirmed by Photinus (Augustine *De haeresibus, ad Quoduultdeum* [8, et 10], Migne *PL* 42.21-50 [On heresies, Teske *AHI* I/15 (1995)]). PSEUDO-ATHAN. The Apostle John, seeing long before by the Holy Spirit this man's madness, rouses him from his deep sleep of error by the preaching of his voice, saying, *In the beginning was the Word* (Jn. 1:1). He therefore, who in the beginning was with God, could not in this last time take the beginning of His being from man. He says further, (let Photinus hear his words), *Glorify thou me, O Father, with thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with Thee* (Jn. 17:5) (Pseudo-Athan., *Vigil. Tapsens.*

(*Athan. Ed. Ben.* vol. ii. p. 646)).³ AUG. The error of Nestorius was, that he taught that a man only was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom the Word of God received not into Unity of person and inseparable fellowship; a doctrine which Catholic ears could not endure (Augustine *De haeresibus, ad Quoduultdeum* [19], Migne *PL* 42.21-50 [On heresies, Teske *AHI* I/15 (1995)]). CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA; Saith the Apostle of the Onlybegotten, *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God* (Phil. 2:6). Who then is this who is in the form of God? or how emptied He Himself, and humbled Himself to the likeness of man? If the above-mentioned heretics dividing Christ into two parts, i.e., the Man and the Word, affirm that it was the Man that was emptied of glory, they must first show what form and equality with the Father are understood to be, and did exist, which might suffer any manner of emptying. But there is no creature, in its own proper nature, equal with the Father; how then can any creature be said to be emptied? or from what eminence to descend to become man? Or how can he be understood to have taken upon Him, as though He had not at first, the form of a servant? But, they say, the Word being equal with the Father dwelt in Man born of a woman, and this is the emptying. I hear the Son truly saying to the Holy Apostles, *If any one love Me, he will keep My word. And My Father will love him: and we will come to him and will make our abode with him* (Jn. 14:23). Hear how He saith that He and the Father will dwell in them that love Him. Do you then suppose that we shall grant that He is there emptied of His glory, and has taken upon Him the form of a servant, when He makes His abode in the hearts of them that love Him? Or the Holy Spirit, does He fulfill an assumption of human flesh, when He dwells in our hearts (Cyril of Alexandria *S. P. N. Cyrilli Alexandriae Archiepiscopi epistolae et variorum ad ipsum: Epistola I: Cyrilli ad monachos Aegypti* [Ep. i], Migne *PG* 77.9-38)? ISIDORE; But not to mention all arguments, let us bring forward that one to which all arguments point, that, for one who was God to assume a lowly guise both has an obvious use, and is an adaptation and in nothing contradicts the course of nature. But for one who is man to speak things divine and supernatural is the highest presumption; for though a king may humble himself a common soldier may not take on him the state of an emperor. So, if He were God made man, all lowly things have place; but if mere man, high

3 [This appears to refer to a work by Vigilius, Bishop of Tapsus, fl. 484. There seems to be confusion among scholars about some works thought to be written by Vigilius or by Athanasius, hence the reference “pseudo-Athanasius.” The book referenced here is Bernard de Montfaucon’s Benedictine Edition of Paris, published in 1698.—Ed., 2010]

things have none (Isidore *Epistolae* [lib. iv.166], Migne *PL* 83.893-914). AUG. Sabellius they say was a disciple of Noetus, who taught that the same Christ was one and the same Father and Holy Spirit (Augustine *De haeresibus, ad Quoduultdeum* [41], Migne *PL* 42.21-50 [On heresies, Teske *AHI* I/15 (1995)]). PSEUDO-ATHAN. The audaciousness of this most insane error I will curb by the authority of the heavenly testimonies, and demonstrate the distinct personality of the proper substance of the Son. I shall not produce things which are liable to be explained away as agreeable to the assumption of human nature; but shall offer such passages as all will allow to be decisive in proof of His divine nature. In Genesis we find God saying, *Let us make man to our image* (Gen. 1:26). By this plural number showing, that there was some other person to whom He spoke. Had He been one, He would have been said to have made Him in His own Image, but there is another; and He is said to have made man in the Image of that other (Pseudo-Athanasius, Vigil. Tapsens. (*Ibid.*, p. 644)). GLOSS. Others denied the reality of Christ's human nature. Valentinus said, that Christ sent from the Father, carried about a spiritual or celestial body, and took nothing of the Virgin, but passed through her as through a channel, taking nothing of her flesh. But we do not therefore believe Him to have been born of the Virgin, because by no other means He could have truly lived in the flesh, and appeared among men; but because it is so written in the Scripture, which if we believe not we cannot either be Christians, or be saved. But even a body taken of spiritual, or ethereal, or clayey substance, had He willed to change into the true and very quality of human flesh, who will deny His power to do this? The Manichaeans said that the Lord Jesus Christ was a phantasm, and could not be born of the womb of a woman. But if the body of Christ was a phantasm, He was a deceiver, and if a deceiver, then He was not the truth. But Christ is the Truth; therefore His Body was not a phantasm (Gloss non occ.). GLOSS. And as the opening both of this Gospel, and of that according to Luke, manifestly proves Christ's birth of a woman, and hence His real humanity, they reject the beginning of both these Gospels (Gloss non occ.). AUG. Faustus affirms, that "the Gospel both begins, and begins to be so called, from the preaching of Christ⁴ in which He nowhere affirms Himself to have been born of men. Nay, so far is this genealogy from being part of the Gospel, that the writer

4 The Ebionites, as well as the Manichaeans, rejected the beginning of St. Matthew, vid. Epiph. Haer. xxx.13 [*Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, trans. Frank Williams (Leiden: Brill, 1987, 1994)]. And the Marcionites the beginning of St. Luke. Epiph. Haer. xlii.11. But what exact portion they rejected is doubtful.

does not venture so to entitle it; beginning, ‘The book of the generation,’ not ‘The book of the Gospel.’ Mark again, who cared not to write of the generation, but only of the preaching of the Son of God, which is properly The Gospel, begins thus accordingly, *The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God* (Mk. 1:1). Thus then, all that we read in Matthew before the words, *Jesus began to preach and to say: Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand* (Mt. 4:17), is a part of the genealogy, not of the Gospel. I therefore betook myself to Mark and John, with whose prefaces I had good reason to be satisfied, as they introduce neither David, nor Mary, nor Joseph.” To which Augustine replies, “What will he say then to the Apostle’s words, *Be mindful that the Lord Jesus Christ is risen again from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel* (2 Tim. 2:8). But the Gospel of the Apostle Paul was likewise that of the other Apostles, and of all the faithful, as he says, ‘Whether I, or they, thus have we preached the Gospel.’” (Augustine *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* [ii.1], Migne PL 42.207-518 [Reply to Faustus the Manichæan, *NPNF* 1-04]).

AUG. The Arians will not have the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be of one and the same substance, nature, and existence; but that the Son is a creature of the Father, and the Holy Spirit a creature of a creature, i.e., created by the Son; further, they think that Christ took the flesh without a soul. But John declares the Son to be not only God, but even of the same substance as the Father; for when he had said, *The Word was God* (Jn. 1:1), he added, *All things were made by Him* (Jn. 1:3); whence it is clear that He was not made by Whom all things were made; and if not made, then not created; and therefore of one substance with the Father, for all that is not of one substance with the Father is creature. I know not what benefit the person of the Mediator has conferred upon us, if He redeemed not our better part, but took upon Him our flesh only, which without the soul cannot have consciousness of the benefit. But if Christ came to save that which had perished, the whole man had perished, and therefore needs a Saviour; Christ then in coming saves the whole man, taking on Him both soul and body. How too do they answer innumerable objections from the Gospel Scriptures, in which the Lord speaks so many things manifestly contrary to them? as is that, *My soul is sorrowful even unto death* (Mt. 26:38), and, *I lay down my life... And I have power to lay it down* (Jn. 10:17, 18); and many more things of the like kind. Should they say that He spoke thus in parables, we have at hand proofs from the Evangelists themselves, who in relating His actions, bear witness as to the reality of His body, so of His soul, by mention of pas-

sions which cannot be without a soul; as when they say, *Jesus wondered, was angry*, and others of like kind. The Apollinarians also as the Arians affirmed that Christ had taken the human flesh without the soul. But overthrown on this point by the weight of Scripture proof, they then said that that part which is the rational soul of man was wanting to the soul of Christ, and that its place was filled by the Word itself. But if it be so, then we must believe that the Word of God took on Him the nature of some brute with a human shape and appearance. But even concerning the nature of Christ's body, there are some who have so far swerved from the right faith, as to say, that the flesh and the Word were of one and the same substance, most perversely insisting on that expression, The Word was made flesh; which they interpret that some portion of the Word was changed into flesh, not that He took to Him flesh of the flesh of the Virgin⁵ (Augustine *De haeresibus, ad Quoduultdeum* [49], Migne *PL* 42.21-50 [On heresies, Teske *AHI* I/15 (1995)]; Augustine *De Trinitate* [i.6], Migne *PL* 42.819-1098 [On the Trinity, *NPNF* 1-03]); Augustine *Contra Felicem Manichaeum* [13], Migne *PL* 42.519-552; Augustine *De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII liber unus*[q. 80], Migne *PL* 40.11-100; *De haeresibus, ad Quoduultdeum* 55). CYRIL. We account those persons mad who have suspected that so much as the shadow of change could take place in the nature of the divine Word; it abides what it ever was, neither is nor can be changed (Cyril of Alexandria *Epistle to John of Antioch regarding peace* [tom. 6 Ep. 107], Migne *PG* 77.173). LEO; We do not speak of Christ as man in such a sort as to allow that anything was wanting to Him, which it is certain pertains to human nature, whether soul, or rational mind, or flesh, and flesh such as was taken of the Woman, not gained by a change or conversion of the Word into flesh. These three several errors, that thrice false heresy of the Apollinarists has brought forward. Eutyches also chose out this third dogma of Apollinaris, which denying the verity of the human body and soul, maintained that our Lord Jesus Christ was wholly and entirely of one nature, as though the divine Word had changed itself into flesh and soul, and as though the conception, birth, growth, and such like, had been undergone by that divine Essence, which was incapable of any such changes with the very and true flesh; for such as is the nature of the Only-begotten, such is the nature of the Father, and such is the nature of the Holy Ghost, both impassible and eternal. But if to avoid being driven to

5 Some of the Apollinarians thus held. See Nyssen. [Gregory of Nyssa] Vol. ii. p. 694. A, Theodor. Eranist. p. 174. ed, Schulz [Theodoret *Dialogues* ("Eranistes" or "Polymorphus"), *NPNF* 2-3]. The same doctrine was afterwards ascribed to the Eutyichians, vid. Vigil. Taps. In Eutyich. iv. Theod. Haer. iv. 13.

the conclusion that the Godhead could feel suffering and death, he departs from the corruption of Apollinaris, and should still dare to affirm the nature of the incarnate Word, that is of the Word and the flesh, to be the same, he clearly falls into the insane notions of Manichaeus and Marcion, and believes that the Lord Jesus Christ did all His actions with a false appearance, that His body was not a human body, but a phantasm, which imposed on the eyes of the beholders. But what Eutyches ventured to pronounce as an episcopal decision, that in Christ before His incarnation were two natures, but after His incarnation only one, it behooved that he should have been urgently pressed to give the reason of this his belief. I suppose that in using such language he supposed the soul which the Savior took, to have had its abode in heaven before it was born of the Virgin Mary.⁶ This Catholic hearts and ears endure not, for that the Lord when He came down from heaven showed nothing of the condition of human nature, nor did He take on Him any soul that had existed before, nor any flesh that was not taken of the flesh of His mother. Thus what was justly condemned in Origen,⁷ must needs be rebuked in Eutyches, to wit, that our souls before they were placed in our bodies had actions not only wonderful but various. (Leo *Epistolae* [59 ad Const.; 83 ad Palest.; 35 ad Julian], Migne *PL* 54.551-1218B [Letter 59: To the clergy and people of the city of Constantinople; Letter 124: To the monks of Palestine; Letter 35: To Julian, Bishop of Cos, all in *NPNF* 2-12). REMIG. These heresies therefore the Apostles overthrow in the opening of their Gospels, as Matthew in relating how He derived His descent from the kings of the Jews proves Him to have been truly man and to have had true flesh. Likewise Luke, when he describes the priestly stock and person; Mark when he says, *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God* (Mk. 1:1); and John when he says, *In the beginning was the Word* (Jn. 1:1); both show Him to have been before all ages God, with God the Father.

2. Abraham begot Isaac. And Isaac begot Jacob. And Jacob begot Judas and his brethren.

AUG. Matthew, by beginning with Christ's genealogy, shows that he has undertaken to relate Christ's birth according to the flesh. But Luke, as rather

6 This opinion, which involves Nestorianism, the opposite error to Eutychianism or Monophysitism, is imputed to Eutyches by Flavian, ap. Leon. Ep. xxii. 3. Ephraem, Antioch. ap Phot. p. 805. Leont. De Sectis 7 init.

7 See Origen in Joan. t. i. n. 37. t. xx. n. 17 [*Commentary on the Gospel of John*, ANF 09], Periarch. ii. 6. n. 4 [*Periarchon / De principiis*, Migne PG 11], in Cels. i. 32, 33 [*Against Celsus*, ANF 04].

describing Him as a Priest for the atonement of sin, gives Christ's genealogy not in the beginning of his Gospel, but at His baptism, when John bare that testimony, *Behold him who taketh away the sin of the world* (Jn. 1:29). In the genealogy of Matthew is figured to us the taking on Him of our sins by the Lord Christ; in the genealogy of Luke, the taking away of our sins by the same; hence Matthew gives them in a descending, Luke in an ascending, series. But Matthew, describing Christ's human generation in descending order, begins his enumeration with Abraham (Augustine *De consensu Evangelistarum* [ii.1], Migne *PL* 34.1041-1230 [Consensus of the Evangelists, *NPNF* 6]). AMBROSE; For Abraham was the first who deserved the witness of faith; *Abram believed God, and it was reputed to him unto justice* (Gen. 15:6). It behooved therefore that he should be set forth as the first in the line of descent, who was the first to deserve the promise of the restoration of the Church, *In thee shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed* (Gen. 12:3). And it is again brought to a period in David, for that Jesus should be called his Son; hence to him is preserved the privilege, that from him should come the beginning of the Lord's genealogy (Ambrose *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam libris X comprehensa* [cap. 3 lib. iii. n. 7, 8], Migne *PL* 15.1527d-1850d). CHRYSOST. Matthew then, desiring to preserve in memory the lineage of the Lord's humanity through the succession of His parents, begins with Abraham, saying, *Abraham begot Isaac* (Mt. 1:2). Why does he not mention Ismael, his firstborn? And again, *Isaac begot Jacob* (Mt. 1:2); why does he not speak of Esau his firstborn? Because through them he could not have come down to David (Chrysostom *Commentarius in Sanctum Matthaeum Evangelistam* [iii], Migne *PG* 57 [St. Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospel of Saint Matthew, *NPNF* 1-10]). GLOSS. Yet he names all the brethren of Juda with him in the lineage. Ismael and Esau had not remained in the worship of the true God; but the brethren of Juda were reckoned in God's people (Gloss.). CHRYSOST. Or, he names all the twelve Patriarchs that he may lower that pride which is drawn from a line of noble ancestry. For many of these were born of maidservants, and yet were Patriarchs and heads of tribes (Chrysostom *Commentarius in Sanctum Matthaeum Evangelistam* [iii], Migne *PG* 57 [St. Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospel of Saint Matthew, *NPNF* 1-10]). GLOSS. But Juda is the only one mentioned by name, and that because the Lord was descended from him only. But in each of the Patriarchs we must note not their history only, but the allegorical and moral meaning to be drawn from them; allegory, in seeing whom each of the Fathers foreshowed; moral instruction in that through each one of the Fathers some virtue may be edified in us either through the signification of his name,

or through his example.⁸ Abraham is in many respects a figure of Christ, and chiefly in his name, which is interpreted the Father of many nations, and Christ is Father of many believers. Abraham moreover went out from his own kindred, and abode in a strange land; in like manner Christ, leaving the Jewish nation, went by His preachers throughout the Gentiles. PSEUDO-CHRYS. Isaac is interpreted “laughter,” but the laughter of the saints is not the foolish convulsion of the lips, but the rational joy of the heart, which was the mystery of Christ. For as he was granted to his parents in their extreme age to their great joy, that it might be known that he was not the child of nature, but of grace, thus Christ also in this last time came of a Jewish mother to be the joy of the whole earth; the one of a virgin, the other of a woman past the age, both contrary to the expectation of nature. REMIG. Jacob is interpreted “supplanter,” and it is said of Christ, *Thou... hast subdued under me them that rose up against me* (Ps. 17:40). PSEUDO-CHRYS. Our Jacob in like manner begot the twelve Apostles in the Spirit, not in the flesh; in word, not in blood. Juda is interpreted “confessor,” for he was a type of Christ who was to be the confessor of His Father, as He spoke, *I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth* (Mt. 11:25). GLOSS. Morally; Abraham signifies to us the virtue of faith in Christ, as an example himself, as it is said of him, *Abram believed God, and it was reputed to him unto justice* (Gen. 15:6). Isaac may represent hope; for Isaac is interpreted “laughter,” as he was the joy of his parents; and hope is our joy, making us to hope for eternal blessings and to joy in them. *Abraham begot Isaac* (Mt. 1:2), and faith begets hope. Jacob signifies “love,” for love embraces two lives; active in the love of our neighbor, contemplative in the love of God; the active is signified by Lia, the contemplative by Rachel. For Lia is interpreted “laboring,”⁹ for she is active in labor; Rachel¹⁰ “having seen the beginning,” because by the contemplative, the beginning, that is God, is seen. Jacob is born of two parents, as love is born of faith and hope; for what we believe, we both hope for and love.

8 Origen considered that there were three senses of Scripture, the literal or historical, the moral, and the mystical or spiritual, corresponding to the three parts of man, body, soul, and spirit. Hom. in Levit. v.5, de Princip. iv. p. 168 [*Periarchon / De principiis*, Migne PG 11]. By the moral sense is meant, as the name implies, a practical application of the text; by mystical, one which interprets it of the invisible and the spiritual world.

9 Lia full of labor, Jerome, *de. nomin. Hebr.* [*Liber De Nominibus Hebraicis*, Migne PL 23.771-858], from לֵאָה, to weary one's self.

10 Rachel, an ewe, (as Gen. 31:38, etc.) Jerom. *ibid.* who also gives the interpretation in the text, from דָּאָה and חָלַל (חֵלְלָה beginning.)