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THE BOOK OF WISDOM



CHAPTER 19

THE BOOK OF WISDOM—A PROLOGUE BY SAINT JEROME

The Book of Wisdom never existed among the Hebrews. Its style has rather the fragrance of Greek eloquence. The Jews claim that it is a work of Philo; it is then said to be a work of Wisdom because in it the coming of Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, and his passion are clearly expressed. This is the Prologue Jerome put before the Book of Wisdom; he shows firstly the origin of this book saying: 'The Book of Wisdom never existed among the Hebrews. Its style, that is, its language is so elegant that it 'has rather the fragrance of Greek eloquence', that is, its taste is more Greek than Hebrew. The Greeks are more eloquent and deeper in their statements than the Hebrews. So, since this book has a most elegant style with the deepest teachings, it is clear that it was written in Greek rather than in Hebrew. Secondly, Jerome names its author when he says: 'The Jews claim that it', namely, the Book of Wisdom 'is a work of Philo' as its compiler but that Solomon was the person who discovered it. While Philo was a Jew he was highly skilled in the Greek language. Jerome says of him in the book *De viris illustribus* that 'he was a Jew of Alexandria of the class of priests'. Thirdly, he gives the reason for the title when he says: 'it is then said to be a work of Wisdom because in it the coming of Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, and his passion are clearly expressed'. The translation is based on the Douay Rheims version of the Bible.

**THE COMMENTARY ON THE CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF WISDOM
ARE THE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SERAPHIC DOCTOR SAINT BONAVENTURE,
OFM**

Chapter 19

On the punishment of the Egyptians by their own death

However, as to the wicked, even to the end. After he had dealt with the punishment of the Egyptians in the death of their firstborn, he explains their punishment by their own death, namely, when they drowned in the Red Sea. Firstly, he treats of the drowning of the Egyptians; secondly, the deliverance of the Hebrews: *For every creature according to its kind was fashioned again as from the beginning, obeying your commandments, that your children might be kept without hurt*; thirdly, the thanksgiving for both: *For while the elements are changed in themselves, as in an instrument the sound of the quality is changed, yet all keep their sound: which may clearly be perceived by the very sight.*

***'For every creature according to its kind was fashioned
again as from the beginning, obeying your commandments,
that your children might be kept without hurt'***

**THE COMMENTARY ON THE
BOOK OF WISDOM CONCLUDES.**

Note however that the Lord magnifies the Saints in many ways: in the first way, by conferring grace, according to Romans 8:30: 'And whom God justified, them God also glorified'. Secondly, by being illustrious by miracles, according to Sirach 48:4: 'Thus was Elijah magnified in his wondrous works; also Exodus 11:3: 'Moses was a very great man in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and of all the people'. Thirdly, by honouring with ecclesiastical dignities; so the Church sings: 'Behold, the great Priest'; 1 Kings 10:23: 'King Solomon exceeded all the kings on the earth in riches and wisdom'. Fourthly, by bringing to the glory of the heavenly kingdom, according to what the Church sings: 'God magnifies him in the sight of the kings', namely, of the Angels, 'and gave him a crown of glory'; Psalm 20:6: 'His glory is great in your salvation, glory and great beauty shall you lay upon him'. The greatness of this glory is so great that the least in that kingdom is greater than the greatest of this world, so Matthew 11:11: 'There has not risen among them that are born of woman a greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is the lesser in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he'. May our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever and ever, lead us to that greatness.

Firstly, the drowning of the Egyptians

In the first part he deals, firstly, with the gravity of the punishment; secondly, the reason for it from the point of view of the one punishing: *And he knew before what they would do*; thirdly, the merit from the point of view of those punishing: *For whilst they were yet mourning, and lamenting at the graves of the dead, they took up another foolish device, and pursued them as fugitives whom they had pressed to be gone*; fourthly, that the punishment was fitting: *For a necessity, of which they were worthy, brought them to this end*.

(Verse 1). *However, as to the wicked*, as if to say: in this way the Israelites were delivered from fire; *however* for but; *to the wicked*, namely, to the Egyptians who lacked the piety of religion for God and compassion for their neighbour, because they treated God with disdain and oppressed God's people; *even to the end*, that is, to the very end; Proverbs 5:4: 'Her end is bitter as wormwood'; *there came upon them wrath without mercy*. *Without mercy*, namely, not relaxing but freeing without mercy and this because the wicked were without mercy; James 2:13: 'Judgment without mercy to one who has not done mercy. *Wrath*, that is, the punishment of sin which is a sign of wrath; *it came upon them*, that is, it came from the heavenly judgment of God for their oppression; Job 21:17: 'How often shall the lamp of the wicked be put out and a deluge come upon them'; Proverbs 1:27: 'When tribulation and distress shall come upon you'. And it *came upon them* quite rightly; *for he knew before*, namely, God, *and*, that is, also, *what they would do*, namely, their sins before they happened; Hebrews 4:13: 'All things are naked and open to God's eyes'; also Psalm 138:3: 'You have understood my thoughts afar off'; also Sirach 23:29: 'All things were known to the Lord God before they were created'.

(Verse 2). *For when they*, namely, the Egyptians, *had turned back*, namely, to their heart, according to the warning of Isaiah 46:8: 'Return, you transgressors, to the heart'. I say, *they turned back* to their heart because from fear they were outside their heart; Psalm 39:13: 'My heart has forsaken me'. *And they had given them leave*, namely, beforehand, *that they might take themselves out*, that is, that the children of Israel might take themselves out of their land; so Exodus 11:8: 'Go forth, you and all the people that are under you'. *And had sent them away*, namely, by forcing them to go, *with great care*, that is, urgently; so Exodus 12:33: 'The Egyptians pressed the people to go forth out of the land speedily'. *Pursued after them*, namely, the Egyptians who, when they had done this, *repented*, that is, were sorrowful over their departure, I say sorrowful in heart and spoken by the mouth and both of these were shown in what they did; Exodus 14:5: 'The heart of Pharaoh and his servants was changed with regard to the people, and they said: What meant we to do that we let Israel go from serving us?'

(Verse 3). I have said well that *they repented and pursued after them. For whilst they were yet mourning*, that is, over the reason for the mourning, namely, the dead firstborn, or: mourning, that is, signs of mourning; *and lamenting*, that is weeping bitterly, or weeping from the heart, or: *lamenting*, that is, weeping over the death of the firstborn. He continues well: *At the graves of the dead*, namely, of the firstborn, *they took up another foolish device, and pursued them as fugitives whom they had pressed to be gone*. He says well: *they took up another foolish device*, because evil thinking comes from humans, while good thinking is from God; 2 Corinthians 3:5: 'Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God'. I say *a foolish device*, that is, of stupidity. For every evil person errs; Proverbs 14:22: 'They err that work evil'. The first thought by which they thought to hold them back by force was foolish; the other by which they thought to call or bring them back by force was foolish. *And those whom they had pressed to be gone*, namely, by compelling the children of Israel to go, as is clear in Exodus 12:33; *as fugitives*, that is, as if they had left without permission which was false; *they pursued them*, as is clear in Exodus 14:9ff.

(Verse 4). *For a necessity, of which they were worthy, brought them to this end, and they lost the remembrance of those things which had happened, that their punishment might fill up what was wanting to their torments*. This is equivalent to saying: and fittingly; *brought them to this end*, namely, of obstinacy and drowning, *a worthy necessity* neither of fortune nor fate but of divine justice. But contra: Because they did this freely not from necessity. It has to be said that it was not a necessity of compulsion but from not being able to change.

But contra: Because they were able to do penance and so avoid that punishment. It must be said that they were able but were unwilling. So that necessity was a consequence of their decision, it did not precede it. Or: they were not able to do this completely on their own nor did they want to ask for the help of God. *And of those things which had happened*, namely, the many plagues inflicted on them for holding back the children of Israel, Exodus, chapters seven, eight, nine, ten and eleven, *they lost the remembrance*, that is, they lost not from any habit but from an action; or by a deed though not from the heart; Hosea 13:6: 'They lifted up their heart and have forgotten me'. *What was wanting to their torments*, namely, the first punishments for they were not yet sufficiently punished; *that their punishment might fill up*, namely, the subsequent punishment and *that* is used as a consequence not as a cause.

(Verse 20). *On the other side*, add: which their nature needs, *the flames*, namely, that were in the column of fire, *wasted not*, by burning, *the flesh*, I say, *of corruptible animals*, namely, humans and beasts, *walking therein* in the flames. He says this because the Hebrews were not afflicted nor burnt by the column of fire as it accompanied them by night, as is clear in Exodus 13:21-22. *Neither did they melt*, namely, the flames, *that good food, which was apt to melt*, namely, by the heat of fire, *as ice*, namely, melted by the heat of the sun, above in Wisdom 16:21: *That which could not be extinguished by fire, being warmed with a little sunbeam presently melted away*. The manna is called *good food*, because it represents the goodness of every food;

Wisdom 16:21: 'Serving everyone's will'. *In all things*, namely, in the aforementioned miracles, *you did magnify your people, O Lord*, namely, the Israelite people by putting down their enemies. *And did honour them*, by exalting them with many gifts; John 12:26: 'Anyone who ministers to me will be honoured by my Father'; also 1 Samuel 2:30: 'I will glorify whosoever shall glorify me, says the Lord'. *And did not despise them*, namely, by deserting them in their troubles; Psalm 33:20: 'Many are the afflictions of the just, but out of them all will the Lord deliver them'; Sirach 2:12: 'Has anyone called upon the Lord and been neglected?' As if to say: no one. *At all times*, namely, of prosperity and adversity; Matthew 28:20: 'Behold, I am with you all days'; and so the Lord is to be blessed *at all times*, according to Psalm 33:2: 'I will bless the Lord at all times'; *and in every place*, namely, whether it be secure or dangerous; *did assist them*, as one ready to help; Isaiah 43:2: 'When you shall pass through the waters, I will be with you'.

(Verse 17). *For while the elements are changed in themselves.* I have said in this way that the Egyptians were afflicted by lower creatures and the Hebrews consoled; *the elements are changed in themselves*, that is, one is changed into the force, power or duty and way of acting of another, and this miraculously; *the sound of the quality*, that is, the quality of the sound, *is changed*, namely, effectively, that is, the natural harmony in its effects is temporarily changed according to the will and command of God directing it. *As in an instrument*, that is, in any musical instrument, understood here by *instrument*, the quality of the sound is changed effectively according to the will of the director; however sometimes *instrument* is understood of a particular instrument as in Psalm 150:4: 'Praise the Lord with strings and organs'. *Yet all*, that is, the single elements and products of elements *keep*, by habit, *their sound*, that is, their natural harmony and order; similarly the chords in an instrument keep their sound and yet the sound of the instrument is changed according to the will of the director; : 'Just as the various sounds in an instrument mix in due proportion to the harmony of the melody, so dissimilar elements, preserving the right of nature, are bent to the will of the Creator. For God did not make a creature to be contrary to itself but to agree to God's will in everything'. *Which*, that is, from this thing, *may clearly be perceived*, that is recognized, *by the very sight*, by accepting the metaphor of the instrument and the truth of what was done in the people of God.

(Verse 18). *For the things of the land*, namely, animals, *were turned into things of the water*, that is, like aquatic animals, namely, when 'people and beasts', 'crossed with dry feet the depth of the Red Sea'. *And the things before swam in the water*, such as frogs, *passed upon the land*, namely, by walking on the land, Exodus 8:6: 'The frogs came up', namely, from the river, 'and covered the land of Egypt'.

(Verse 19). *The fire had power in water*, that is, burns strongly, above its own, namely, natural *virtue* which is that it be put out in water, according to Sirach 3:33: 'Water quenches a flaming fire'. *And the water forgot its quenching nature*, namely, fire because 'hail and fire mixed with it drove on together', as in Exodus 9:24; also above in Wisdom 16:17: *In water, which extinguishes all things, the fire had more force.*

(Verse 5). *And that your people*, namely, the Israelite people, *might wonderfully pass through*, namely, through the Red Sea with dry feet; so Exodus 15:19: 'The children of Israel walked on dry ground in the midst thereof'. *But they*, namely, the Egyptians, *might find a new death*, namely, a new way of dying, namely, by a miraculous drowning; Exodus 15:22 and 27: 'The horse of Pharaoh went in' that is, the cavalry, 'with the chariots and horsemen in the sea, and the Lord returned the waters of the Sea over them'.

Secondly, the deliverance of the Hebrews

For every creature according to its kind was fashioned again as from the beginning, obeying your commandments, that your children might be kept without hurt. Here he treats of the deliverance of the Hebrews and, firstly, in general; secondly, in particular: *For a cloud overshadowed their camp, and where water was before, dry land appeared, and in the Red Sea a way without hindrance, and out of the great deep a springing field.*

(Verse 6). *For every creature* etc., as if to say: the Egyptians are drowned, and the Israelites delivered, *for every creature*, that is, all the elements, *according to its kind as from the beginning* namely, habitual way of acting, *was fashioned again*, that is, was made similar again, namely, in that it did not harm the good or the just who were in a state of innocence; 'Had people not sinned, water would not drown them, fire would not burn them, nor would the points of thorns wound them'. I say, *a creature obeying your commandments*, that is, your direction and will; Psalm 148:6: 'The Lord has established them forever and for ages of ages; he has made a decree and it shall not pass away'; also Jeremiah 5:22: 'I have set the sand a bound for the sea, an everlasting ordinance, which it shall not pass over'. *That your children*, namely, the Hebrews subject to you; Isaiah 8:16: 'Behold, I and my children'; *might be kept without hurt*; Proverbs 2:7: 'The Lord will keep the salvation of the righteous and protect them that walk in simplicity'.

(Verse 7). *For a cloud*, namely, given by God through the ministry of the Angel, *the camp of those ones*, namely, of the Hebrews, *overshadowed*, 'standing behind, between their camp and the camp of the Egyptians so that they could not come at one another all the night', as is clear in Exodus 14:20. *And*, I say, *from the water that was before*, in the place they passed through, *dry land appeared*, namely, by the blowing of the dry wind, as is clear in Exodus 14:21. *And in the Red Sea*, namely, divided, as is clear in Exodus 24:21, and also in Psalm 135:13: 'Who divided the Red Sea into parts'; *a way*, appeared, *without hindrance*, namely, of water or mud, according to Psalm 76:20: 'Your way is in the sea and your paths in many waters'; Habbakuk 3:15: 'You made a way in the sea for your horses'; also Isaiah 51:10: 'You made the depth of the sea a way that the delivered might pass over'. *And out of the great deep*, that is, after the lowest depth of water previously existing there, *a springing field*, that is, a level and pleasant way as through a flowering field.

(Verse 8). *Through which*, namely, the field, *all the nation*, of the Hebrews, *passed*, or *would pass*, with the Egyptians in pursuit. *Which was covered*, that is, protected, *with your hand*, that is, your power: Isaiah 49:2: 'In the shadow of his hand the Lord has protected me', or by the Son, as in Psalm 143:7: 'Put forth your hand from on high, take me out and deliver me from many waters, from the hand of strange children'.

Thirdly, thanksgiving

Seeing your miracles and wonders. Here thanksgiving is added, firstly, for the deliverance of the Hebrews; secondly, for the punishment or drowning of the Egyptians: *And punishments came upon the sinners*. In the first part he deals, firstly, with the leading out of the Hebrews from Egypt; secondly, the wonders worked for them in Egypt: *For they were yet mindful of those things which had been done in the time of their sojourning*; thirdly, their refreshment in the desert: *And at length they saw a new generation of birds, when being led by their appetite they asked for delicate meats*.

Seeing your, as if to say: not only hearing but also seeing; 1 John 1:1: 'Which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life'. *Your miracles and wonders*; *miracles*, namely, lesser, and *wonders*, namely, greater; or: *miracles* in their deliverance, *wonders* in the overturning of the Egyptians. A wonder applies not only to what is marvelous but also to what is horrible.

(Verse 16). *But they*, namely, the Egyptians, *were struck with blindness*, namely, bodily from the plague of darkness, to which Exodus 10:21ff. refers; and spiritual from blindness of the soul so that they became worse under the punishments; Exodus 7:22: 'Pharaoh's heart was hardened neither did he hear them as the Lord had commanded'. *As those others*, the nameless Sodomites since the sin they committed is not to be mentioned; Romans 1:26: 'God delivered them up to shameful affections'. *At the doors of the just man*, namely, Lot, of whom 2 Peter 2:8 says: 'In sight and hearing he was just'. I say, *they when covered with sudden darkness*, namely, aorasia, or aidentia [invisibility], struck by the Angel, *every one*, namely, of them, *sought the passage of his door*, namely, of Lot, but could not find it; so Genesis 19:11: 'Them that were outside, they struck with blindness from the least to the greatest, so that they could not find the door'.

The obedience of the creatures

For while the elements are changed in themselves. Here after the punishment of the Egyptians, the consoling of the Hebrews and the thanksgiving, he shows the obedience of the creatures in the foregoing and, firstly, he commends this obedience; secondly, he makes it clear by examples: *as in an instrument the sound of the quality is changed, yet all keep their sound*; thirdly, the rejoicing of the people of God over this: *In all things you did magnify your people, O Lord*. – He gives example, firstly, from the lower elements; secondly, in a higher element, namely, in fire when he says: *The fire had power in water above its own virtue, and the water forgot its quenching nature*; thirdly, in elements: *On the other side, the flames wasted not the flesh of corruptible animals walking therein*.

(Verse 13). *For*, for meaning because, *they exercised*, that is, observed like an institution, *a more detestable*, namely, than others, *inhospitality*, against Hebrews 13:2: 'Do not forget hospitality'; also 1 Peter 4:9: 'Using hospitality one towards another without murmuring'. Saint Augustine has the same reading. But some have *detestable* or *more detestable*, namely, extremely detestable, as the preposition indicates increase or intensity; and he says: *inhospitality*, either because they do not receive guests, or because they receive them poorly. *Others indeed*, namely, of them, *received not strangers unknown to them*, contrary to what Job, chapter 31:32, did: 'The stranger did not stay outside'. Similar to these were the people of Gibeah, near Benjamin, who would not receive a Levite with his wife as guests, *But these brought*, or received, *their guests*, already received, *into bondage that had deserved well of them*, such as the children of Israel, oppressing them in slavery 'in clay and bricks', Exodus 1:14.

(Verse 14). *And not only so*, add: did they do, *but another in another respect*, that is, their intention was perverse, *for the others against their will received the strangers*, when requested as in the example of Abraham saying: 'Lord, if I have found favour in your sight pass not away from your servant', Genesis 18:3. Not only asking but also compelling as in the example of the two disciples of whom Luke 24:29 says: 'And they constrained him'; Saint Gregory says on this text: 'That travelers are not only to be invited to hospitality but are also to be attracted'.

(Verse 15). *However, these most grievously afflicted them whom they had received with joy, and who lived under the same laws*; the text is to be understood as follows: I have said that some received strangers but unwillingly; *however* for but; *who lived under the same laws*, detestable for inhospitality, similar to the preceding; *most grievously afflicted*, he says most grievous because grievous is sorrow over an evil inflicted on an external possession; more grievous when inflicted on a person close to another, namely, on one's wife; most grievous when on one's own person. *They afflicted them whom they had received with joy*, namely, guests, just as the people of Sodom wanted to afflict Lot as is clear in Genesis 19:4ff., and the old man of the tribe of Benjamin of whom Judges 19:22 speaks.

(Verse 9). I say, *seeing your miracles and wonders, for*, that is, certainly, *they fed on their food*, namely, in the overthrow or destruction of their opponents. Or he says this in this situation because they are delighted at their destruction, like horses when they eat or consume food. *Like horses*, namely, on which the Lord was seated according to Habakkuk 3:15: 'You made a way in the sea for your horses'. *Like horses*, namely, by neighing at the overthrow of their enemies, according to Isaiah 24:14: 'These shall lift their voice and shall give praise; when the Lord shall be glorified, they shall make a joyful shout from the sea'. *And like lambs*, namely, simple and meek; Psalm 113:4: 'The mountains skipped like rams and the hills like the lambs of the flock', that is, both their greater and lesser; *they skipped*, not only within the heart, but also externally by rejoicing. *Praising you, O Lord*, that is, by proclaiming that you are great or by praising wondrously; Exodus 15:1: 'Let us sing to the Lord for he is gloriously magnified'. *Who had delivered them*, namely, by leading them across the sea; Isaiah 63:13-14: 'The Lord led them out through the deep as a horse that does not stumble in the wilderness, as a beast that goes down in the field', and rightly did they magnify you.

(Verse 10). *For they were yet mindful of those things*, namely, the signs, *which had been done in the time of the sojourning of these people*, that is, when they were yet residents in Egypt. *How the ground produced flies*, instead of cattle, and this miraculously, as is clear in Exodus 8:16; and also in Psalm 104:31: 'The Lord spoke and there came divers sorts of flies and gnats in all their coasts'. *And how the river*, namely, the Nile, *cast up a multitude of frogs*, for frogs came up from the aforementioned river as stated in Exodus 8:6, *instead of fishes*, that is, in place of fish. Nor is this contrary to what is said in Psalm 104:30: 'Their land brought forth frogs in the inner chambers of their kings', because the Psalm states the container for what is contained, namely, the channel of the earth for the water of the river.

(Verse 11). *And at length*, that is, after what has been said above; new indeed or first was the striking of the Egyptians, newer was the bringing out of the Hebrews from Egypt, most recent was their refreshment in the desert. *They saw*, namely, with their own eyes, *a new generation of birds*, namely, of quail, Exodus 16:13 and Numbers 11:31.

But contra: Because there is said in Genesis 2:2: 'On the seventh day God ended the work that God had done, and God rested on the seventh day from the work God had done', that is, from creating new kinds and species of creatures, also Ecclesiastes 1:10: 'Nothing under the sun is new': therefore, he is not correct in saying here: *They saw a new generation of birds*.

It must be said that it was not simply new but new to them because they had not seen them previously; also, new in that place, namely, in the desert, and new in such numbers, for it is a place to which birds do not normally go but rather flee from.

When being led, that is, led far away by God, *by their appetite*; James 1:14: 'All are tempted by their own concupiscence, being drawn away and allured'. On their concupiscence is said in Psalm 105:14: 'They coveted their desire in the desert'; so 'that place is called the graves of concupiscence', Numbers 11:3. *They asked for*, namely, from Moses, *delicate meats*, that is, fine and superfluous, not necessary or for nourishment.

(Verse 12). *For to satisfy their desires*, that is, by comfort and mitigation, *they came up to them*, namely, to the Hebrews, *from the sea*. Or in this way: *To satisfy their desire*, or wishes, while they were speaking, namely, words of murmuring, from a desire for meats; *they came up to them from the sea*, this does not mean because of this that they originate from the sea but because they were brought from beyond the sea or from some island of the sea, according to Numbers 11:31: 'A wind going out from the Lord, taking quails beyond the sea, brought them and cast them into the camp', or sent an ortygometa, that is, quail. It is called ortygometa from orthos which means right, and gogos which means leading, and metros which means a measure, as if the food was brought to them in a measure; or as stated above in Wisdom 16:2, it is called ortygometa from the island Ortygia in which it was thought the birds were first, according to Saint Isidore: 'Note that, the earth brings forth flies for the enemies of God, and the river frogs; but for the worshippers of God the earth gives fruit and the sea the nourishment of flesh'.

And punishments. Here he treats of thanksgiving for the punishment of the Egyptians or for their trouble; and he treats, firstly, of their punishment; secondly, the justice of the punishment: *for they suffered justly according to their own wickedness*; thirdly, the blindness of those punished: *But they were struck with blindness*.

The justice of the punishment is clear from the fact that they treated badly strangers living among them, or those wanting to live there, namely, the children of Israel and by not receiving them in any way, or by reducing to slavery those whom they did receive: *But these brought their guests into bondage that had deserved well of them*; or by taking those who were unwilling to come: *And not only so, but in another respect also they were worse: for the others against their will received the strangers*; or by joyfully gravely afflicting those they did receive: *But these grievously afflicted them whom they had received with joy, and who lived under the same laws*.

And punishments etc., came upon the sinners, as if to say: not only were the abovementioned good things done to the Hebrews, but the punishments, that is, the afflictions of body and soul, *came upon the sinners*, according to Psalm 31:10: 'Many are the scourges of the sinner'. *Upon the sinners*, I say, that is, upon the Egyptians who here are called sinners by antonomasia, and this because of the sin of idolatry which flourished there so that Cicero could say that Egypt was a temple of the whole world. I say, *came upon*, that is, came upon the things that had been endured in Egypt; so he continues: *Not without*, indeed with and beyond those *foregoing signs*, that is, signs of divine providence and illustrating their hardness, according to Ephesians 5:13: 'All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light'. *Foregoing signs by the force of rivers*, namely, when they were turned into blood, and when frogs came up from the river. Or in this way: *they came up*, I say, *by the force of the rivers*, that is, by the violence of the rivers collected in the Red Sea that turned back and suffocated them; Exodus 15:10: 'They sank as lead in the mighty waters'. And rightly: *for they suffered justly*, namely, for what they merited for their sins; so he adds: *according to their own wickedness*, that is, for what they merited for their wickedness; Deuteronomy 25:2: 'According to the merit of the sin shall the measure also of the stripes be'.