

were dazzled. To the right or left, to whatever side I turned my looks, they met with angelic spirits, engaged in devotion. I said: 'O Jabrîl, who are this class of beings?' He answered: 'these know of no other fixed business but praying, counting their beads, and visiting churches.'"

"There is for him, on the other side, but one place known."

By "the eighth heaven" is understood the heaven of the fixed stars, and there are the constellations; "the churches" mean the twelve signs of the zodiac; each community of them inhabits a determined side; they do not combat each other, as the southern have no business with the northern, and each has his fixed situation: some of the constellations are in the zodiac, some to the south, and others to the north.

Besides, the prophet said: "I saw five mansions greater than anything else, which spread their shade over earth and heaven." He denotes here the great heaven, which in its interior incloses all the other heavens, and is the greatest of all spaces.

Again, saying: "When I proceeded, I saw four seas, the waters of each being of a different color," he implies an account of essentiality, corporeity, materiality, and exteriority; inasmuch as this account is generally perplexing, the idea of every one being conceived in a different way, and each way interpreted by every one.

And what the prophet said: "I saw angels much occupied with beads and prayers and all taken up with the precious sentence, *There is no God but one God*": this refers to pure spirits who are free from matters of desire, and spotless; and every man who is remote from the world, wise, pure, and disengaged from all ties, when he separates from the body, is transported by God Almighty to the place and mansion of angels, and invested with everlasting beatitude. And the prophet assimilated him with angels, because they are seats of purity and devotion; that is, remote from corruption and perdition, and from the disturbance of sensuality, intent upon avoiding anger, and raised to the dignity of angels, perpetually engaged in the exploration of secret knowledge; they likewise never look upon