Course Outline

Class 1. INTRODUCTION; OVERVIEW:
Purpose and plan; Contributions to general philosophical education, both theoretical and practical; Summary of the contributions of the most influential philosophers.

Class 2. SOME PRELIMINARIES:
A. How to analyze and classify the historical record.
B. To what extent this entails a reconstruction of that record.
C. What philosophy has to do with this.
D. How “philosophy of history” is related to other areas of philosophy: (man, knowledge, culture, religion; moral, social and political).
E. What philosophical approaches and methods are most appropriate: (ontological, phenomenological, aesthetic, analytical).
F. The relation between philosophical and empirical studies of history.

Class 3. DYNAMICS OF HISTORY:
A. Examining the historical record from outside (what happened) and inside (how and why it happened).
B. Internal regularities in history (“laws,” moving forces, patterns, trends).
C. Causes and mechanisms of historical change (linear, cyclical; progressive, regressive; evolutionary, static).
D. Evaluation of leading theories (free agency, determinism, providence).

Classes 4 and 5. STRUCTURE IN HISTORY:
A. The impact of temporal and non-temporal mechanisms.
B. The temporal structure of history (periods; phases; eras; epochs; stages).

C. The beginnings (genesis, starting point) of human history.

D. Whether history as a whole and each stage has a center or axis.

E. Whether an “end” of history is conceivable; what it might mean.

F. The non-temporal dimensions of history (cultural, religious, national, ethnic, geographical, climatic, economic, political, technological).

G. Non-temporal units and categories pertinent to history (civilizations, national states, continental masses).

Classes 6 and 7. MEANING IN HISTORY:

A. The real nature (ontological status) of historical events, trends, “laws.”

B. Whether there could be “principles” of meaning beyond specific facts that could provide true meaning (the interior regularities).

C. Whether the causes and mechanisms of change correspond to any discernible principle of meaning.

D. Whether the non-temporal dimensions are governed by such principles.

E. The larger question of whether meanings assigned by philosophers have any objective basis in reality (the question whether historical meaning could be truly discerned by human beings immersed in time).

E. Without such meanings, whether people and societies could have any way of relating to historical events, changes, processes (in brief, whether historical meaning is a “necessary fabrication”).

F. If history does have meaning, would there necessarily be only one absolute and unchanging meaning (the possibility of a plurality of disparate and evolving meanings).

G. The underlying question of the relation between objectivity and subjectivity in trying to make history intelligible to us.

Class 8. SELF-DETERMINATION IN HISTORY:

A. The question of an individual or a group having a “place,” role, or status within history (whether we are historical agents or patients).

B. The possibility of assigning moral responsibility (merit or guilt) for actions within and in response to historical developments and opportunities.

C. Whether the present generation is “responsible” for what was done in
the past (i.e. to atone for past faults; to take pride in past achievements).
D. The possibility of defining one’s identity in terms of past, present, future.
E. The question of an on-going tradition from which every generation draws and to which it has an obligation to contribute.

Class 9. MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF HISTORY:
A. Philosophy of history as a possible source of individual and social values, ideals, attitudes, norms, tasks (the question of its practical usefulness).
B. Whether such values inform every attempt to find meaning in history (the possibility of value neutrality in learning from history).
C. Whether moral judgments we make about historical events and agents are defensible (can we know enough of the relevant facts).
D. Accessibility of objective standards for making such judgments.

Class 10. CONCLUSIONS; FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Syntopicon Outline for The Philosophy of History

I. Theories of causation in the historical process.
   City of God: I (pref, 36); II (2-3); IV (33); V (1, 11-26); XI (18); XII (21); XIV (28 to XV 1); XV (21-22); XVIII (1-2)
   Philosophy of History: Intro
I-1. Fate or freedom; necessity or chance.
   City of God: V (1, 11-26)
   Philosophy of History: Intro
I-2. Material forces (economic, physical, geographical factors)
   History: II
   Peloponnesian War: I
   Laws: III
   Philosophy of History: Intro
I-3. Spiritual forces (dialectical stages)
   Philosophy of History: Intro
I-4. Role of the individual (great man, hero, leader)
   Philosophy of History: Intro
II. Laws and patterns of historical change (cycles, progress, evolution).

*Peloponnesian War*: I

*Laws*: III

*City of God*: X (14); XI (18); XV-XVIII; XXII (30)

*Philosophy of History*: Intro

III. How the spirit of the age conditions culture and politics.

*Philosophy of History*: Intro; I, II, III

IV. Divine causation in history (providence)

*Persians; Prometheus Bound*

*History*: VII

*Laws*: X

*City of God*: I (pref, 36); II (2-3); IV (33-34); V (11-26); X (14); XI (1. 18); XII (21); XV (1, 21-22; XVII (1-3); XVIII (1-2); XXII (30)

*Philosophy of History*: Intro; (III)

**Great Books Bibliography**

Aeschylus – *Persians; Prometheus Bound*

Herodotus – *History* – II

Thucydides – *Peloponnesian War* – I

+Plato – *Laws* – III

+St. Augustine – *City of God* – I (preface, 36); II (2-3); IV (33-34); V (1, 11-26); X (14); XI (1, 18); XII (21); XIV (28 to XV, 1); XV-XVIII (esp: XV, 21-22; XVII (1-3); XVIII, 1-2); XXII (30).

+Hegel – *The Philosophy of History* – Introduction; Part III.

**In addition:**

+J.-B. Bossuet – *Discourse on Universal History* (1681)

G. Vico – *Principles of the New Science concerning the Common Nature of Nations* (1725)

Voltaire – *Philosophy of History* (1768); “History,” *A Philosophical Dictionary*

[I. Kant – *The Idea of a Universal History on a Cosmo-Political Plan* (1784)

A-N. de Condorcet – *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* (1793)
T. Carlyle – *On History* (1830); *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1840) [Stern]
K. Marx, F. Engels – *The German Ideology* (1846) [Stern]
J. Burckhardt – *Fortune and Misfortune in History* (1871) [Meyerhoff]
+F. Nietzsche – *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life* (1874)
O. Spengler – *The Decline of the West: I--Form and Actuality; II--Perspectives of World History* (1918)
B. Croce – *History, Its Theory and Practice* (1921) [Meyerhoff]; *History as the Story of Liberty* (1941)
N. Bukharin – *Historical Materialism* (1924)
J. Huizinga – *The Idea of History* (1934) [Stern]
*N. Berdyaev – *The Meaning of History* (1936)
J. Ortega y Gasset – *History as a System and Other Essays Toward a Philosophy of History* (1941) [Meyerhoff]
*R. Aron – *Introduction to the Philosophy of History* (1948) [Meyerhoff]
+H. Butterfield – *History and Human Relations* (1931) [Meyerhoff]; *Christianity and History* (1949)
K. Jaspers – *The Origin and Goal of History* (1953) [Meyerhoff]
*J. Maritain – *On the Philosophy of History* (1957)
*K. Löwith – *Meaning in History: The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (1959)
—British edition title: *The Sense of History: Secular and Sacred*
PLATO’S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY
Excerpts from Laws III (T. Pangle translation)
[the speaker is the Athenian Stranger, unless otherwise noted]

Do you think you could ever conceive how long a time there have been cities, and human beings engaged in politics?...Surely you see that it would be an immense and immeasurable time?...Don’t we suppose that tens upon tens of thousands of cities have come into being during that time, and that just as many, in the same proportions, have been destroyed? And hasn’t each place
been governed often by every kind of regime? And haven’t they at one time gotten bigger from being smaller, and then smaller from being bigger, and haven’t they gone from better to worse and from worse to better?...

Let us grasp, if we can, the cause of this change. For this might perhaps show us the first origin and transformation of political regimes....Do you believe that there’s some truth in the ancient sayings...that tell of many disasters—floods and plagues and many other things—which have destroyed human beings and left only a tiny remnant of the human race? [Kleίnias: This sort of thing seems entirely credible to everyone.] Of the many disasters let’s focus our minds on one that occurred once on account of a flood...How those who then escaped the destruction would almost all be mountain herdsmen—little sparks of the human race saved on the peaks somewhere...Presumably men such as these, at least, necessarily lack experience in the arts, and especially in the contrivances that city dwellers use against one another, motivated by the desire to have more, the love of victory, and all the other mischief they think up against each other...Shall we assume that the cities settled in the plains and along the sea were utterly destroyed at that time?...Won’t we assert that all tools were destroyed, and that if some serious and important part of an art—whether politics or some other sort of wisdom—had been discovered, all these things would have perished at that time? For otherwise, if these things had remained through all time as thoroughly ordered as they are today, how could anything new ever have been discovered? [Kleίnias: In other words, for tens upon tens of thousands of years these things were unknown to the men at that time, and only within the past one or two thousand years have they been brought to light....]

So what shall we say human affairs were like after the destruction? Wasn’t there a vast and frightening desolation, but a great mass of abundant land? Won’t we say the other animals were destroyed, while the cattle, and the remnant of the stock of goats that might have happened to remain somewhere barely supported the life of the herdsmen at the beginning? [Kleίnias: How else could it have been?] With regard to the city and the political regime and law-giving...do we suppose that there was, so to speak, any memory at all?...So from those men, in that situation, have developed all the things we possess now: cities and political regimes and arts and laws, and much wickedness—but much virtue as well....Then as time went on, and as our race multiplied, everything arrived at the state it’s in now?...Not straightaway though, it’s likely, but rather little by little over a very long period of time....[Kleίnias: How could it be otherwise?]...
Shouldn’t we go on to say that the many generations who passed their lives this way were less practiced and less knowledgeable in the arts generally than those who lived before the flood or those who live now…. Isn’t it the case that they didn’t yet need lawgivers, and that such a thing wasn’t yet likely to occur in those times? For writing doesn’t yet exist among those born in that part of the cycle, and their lives are guided by habits and by what are called ancestral laws…. After this, larger numbers come together in bigger communities, making cities. Those who live in the foothills are the first to turn to farming…. [Kleinias: It seems likely, at any rate, that it happened this way]…. It’s likely that we’ve stumbled unawares, as it were, upon the origin of legislation…. [Kleinias: Things would turn out just this way, though step by step.]

[at this point in the conversation, the old men add to their conjecture what the earliest poets (primarily Homer) tell us about the origins]

Somehow Homer speaks according to God, as well as according to nature. For the race of poets is divine, and becomes inspired when it sings…in the company of certain Graces and Muses; they hit upon many things that truly happened. [The myth about the founding of Troy is summarized] Don’t we suppose that this came to pass many ages after the flood? [Kleinias: It had to be many ages.] It’s likely that they were possessed by an amazing degree of forgetfulness regarding the disaster just now discussed, when they thus set up a city close to a lot of rivers flowing down from the heights, putting their trust in some hills that were not very high. [Kleinias: This makes it completely clear that they were separated by a great interval of time from such suffering.]

[finally the three strangers arrive at the first historical accounts of the founding of their own cities, and first, Sparta]

We’ve gained this much by the meanderings of the argument, by going through certain regimes and settlements; we have seen the first, the second, and the third city, settled one after the other, as we believe, over immense stretches of time. And here this fourth city—or nation, if you will—comes before us, having been settled in an earlier time and now being settled once again…. Let’s put ourselves in thought back into that time…. For it’s likely that the deeds we chanced upon [in the earlier conjectures] lead us to the same
argument [which now we can place] on the basis of something that really happened and possesses truth. Now, what happened was this:....[Megillos: Yes, that’s the way it was.]

[there follows an extended discussion of the historical vicissitudes of the Spartan regime; why did it turn out so badly, given its promising start?]

Don’t we suppose that the men of those days organized themselves this way and with this intention? [Megillos: Certainly] ...Then it looks as though we have somehow been fortunate enough to come across an adequate investigation....But look here; haven’t we now fallen into the same error that affects all of us human beings? We are always supposing, whenever we see some fine object, that it would achieve amazing things if only someone knew the way to put it to a fine use. But maybe we aren’t yet thinking about this particular matter correctly, or according to nature—and maybe this is true of everything that everyone thinks of in this way. [Megillos: What are you talking about?]

[the Athenian means that when we see things “according to nature” (i.e. philosophically) we are seeing them with greater correctness than when we merely look at the historical record; while history reports successes and failures, philosophy moves on to the best way to do things; for example:]

If those who arranged affairs in those days had known how to order the army properly, what would they have done to make the best of their opportunity...so that one might gain all, or most—and the worthiest part—of what one desires? [Megillos: That’s likely, anyway, but which desire?] To have things happen in accordance with the commands of one’s own soul.... [Megillos: But of course....I understand what you mean, I think, that one shouldn’t pray or be eager to have everything follow his own wish, but rather to have his wish follow his prudence. This is what a city and each one of us should pray and strive for—to possess intelligence.]....The argument has arrived again at the same place.

[we are now able to see that the true cause of the corruption of the Spartan regime was a lack of intelligence, and the other vices that followed:]
The corruption was caused especially by ignorance regarding the greatest of human affairs. That this is how things happened then, and still can happen now in similar circumstances, and will happen again in times to come, I will try my best—since we’re friends—to discover and show you, if you’re willing, by proceeding along the course of the argument....What then would justly be called the greatest sort of ignorance?....: When someone doesn’t like, but rather hates, what in his opinion is noble or good, and likes and welcomes what in his opinion is wicked and unjust. This dissonance between pleasure and pain on the one hand, and the opinion that is according to reason on the other, I assert to be the ultimate and greatest ignorance, because it belongs to the major part of the soul....And the finest and greatest of consonances would most justly be called the greatest wisdom, and whoever partakes of this evidently lives according to reason....Now, Megillos, by looking at what has happened to your people [that is, at the historical record], it is possible to know and knowing, easy to say what should have happened back in that time...and always [will happen when what should happen fails.] So a very well measured guess to make now is that such a thing did occur in those days.

[in the remainder of Book III the argument concludes that what happened and should have happened in Sparta yields a principle that can now be applied to Persia and to all cities in all times; this is precisely the knowledge that any would-be lawgiver must possess above all if he is to practice his art correctly and for the well-being of his city:]

All these things have been discussed for the sake of understanding how a city might best be established sometime, and how, in private, someone might best lead his own life.

John Gueguen

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ST. AUGUSTINE’S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY
Excerpts from The City of God, Dods translation

[first, his response to Plato’s cyclical view:]

BOOK XII – Chapters 10-15

Let us omit the conjectures of men who know not what they say when they speak of the nature and origin of the human race. Some hold the same
opinion regarding men that they hold regarding the world itself, that they have always been .... When they are asked, if the human race has always been, how they vindicate the truth of their history, which narrates who were the inventors and what they invented, and who first instituted the liberal studies and the other arts, and who first inhabited this or that region, this or that island, they reply that most, if not all lands, were so desolated at intervals by fire and flood that men were greatly reduced in numbers, and from these, again the population was restored to its former numbers, and that thus there was at intervals a new beginning, and though those things which had been interrupted and checked by the severe devastations were only renewed, yet they seemed to be originated then; but that man could not exist at all save as produced by man. Here they say what they think, not what they know. They are deceived, too, by those highly mendacious documents which profess to give the history of many thousand years, though reckoning by the sacred writings, we find that not 6000 years have yet passed....How much less can we believe those documents [when the chronologies differ widely from each other].

There are also some who do not suppose that this world is eternal, but who hold the opinion either that this is not the only world, but that there are numberless worlds, or that indeed it is the only one, but that it dies and is reborn at fixed intervals, and this, time without number. [If that were the case] they must acknowledge that the human race existed before there were other men to beget them. For they cannot suppose that if the whole world perishes, some men would be left alive in the world, as they might survive floods and conflagrations which those other speculators suppose to be partial, and from which they can therefore reasonably argue that a few men survived whose posterity would renew the population....

...If it offends them that the time that has elapsed since the creation of man is so short, and his years [on earth] so few according to our authorities, let them take this into consideration: nothing that has a limit is long, and all the ages of time being finite, are very little, or indeed nothing at all, when compared to the interminable eternity. Consequently, if there had elapsed since the creation of man, I do not say five or six, but even sixty or six hundred thousand years, or sixty times as many, or six hundred or six hundred thousand times as many, or this sum multiplied until it could no longer be expressed in numbers, the same question could still be put: Why was he not made before? For the past and boundless eternity during which God abstained from creating man is so great, that, compare it with what vast and untold number of ages you please, so long as there is a definite conclusion to this term
of time, it is not even as if you compared the minutest drop of water with the ocean that everywhere flows around the globe. For of these two, one indeed is very small, the other incomparably vast, yet both are finite. But that space of time which starts from some beginning and is limited by some termination, be it of what extent it may, if you compare it with that which has no beginning, I know not whether to say we should count it the very minutest thing, or nothing it all....

This controversy [about the beginnings of the world’s history] some philosophers have seen no other approved means of solving than by introducing cycles of time in which there should be a constant renewal and repetition of the order of nature. They have therefore asserted that these cycles will ceaselessly recur, one passing away and another coming, though they are not agreed as to whether one permanent world shall pass through all these cycles, or whether the world shall at fixed intervals die out and be renewed so as to exhibit a recurrence of the same phenomena....But how can that be truly called blessed which has no assurance of being so eternally, and is either in ignorance of the truth and blind to the misery that is approaching, or, knowing it, is in misery and fear?...So by following the straight path of sound doctrine, we escape, I know not what circuitous paths discovered by deceiving and deceived sages....At all events, far be it from any true believer to suppose that...the same periods and events of time are repeated—as if, for example, the philosopher Plato taught...numberless ages before, at long intervals,...and [will teach again] during the countless cycles that are still to come....

What wonder is it if, entangled in these cycles, they find neither entrance nor egress? For they know not how the human race and this mortal condition of ours took its origin, nor how it will be brought to an end, since they cannot penetrate the inscrutable wisdom of God. For though Himself eternal and without beginning, yet He caused time to have a beginning; and man, whom He had not previously made, He made in time, not from a new and sudden resolution, but by His unchangeable and eternal design. Who can search out the unsearchable depth of this purpose, who can scrutinize the inscrutable wisdom wherewith God, without change of will, created man, who had never been before, and gave him an existence in time, and increased the human race from one individual?...

...Similarly, we will not deny that time itself was created, though no one doubts that time has been in all time....We can reasonably say there was a time when Rome was not [just as we can say] there was a time when man was
not...and there was a time when the world was not. But to say that there was a time when time was not is absurd....I have thought it right to discuss these matters.... that those who read...may not deem themselves fit for every question....

[Augustine pursued the nature of time in general in Book XI of The Confessions; here he deals specifically with his view of human history:]

BOOK I – Preface

The glorious City of God is my theme...a city surprisingly glorious, whether we view it as it still lives by faith in this fleeting course of time, and sojourns as a stranger in the midst of the ungodly, or as it shall dwell in the fixed stability of its eternal seat, which it now with patience waits for....

BOOK II – Chapters 2 and 3

...Now I go on to speak of those calamities which Rome itself, or its subject provinces, have suffered since its foundation....

...In recounting these things, I still have to address myself to ignorant men .... who are thoroughly well educated, and have a taste for history, in which the things I speak of are open to their observation; but in order to irritate the uneducated masses against us, they feign ignorance of these events, and do what they can to make the vulgar believe that Rome’s disasters...are the result of Christianity, which is being everywhere diffused, and is possessed of a renown and brilliance which quite eclipse their own gods. Let them, then, along with us, call to mind with what various and repeated disasters the prosperity of Rome was blighted before Christ had ....come in the flesh....

BOOK IV – Chapters 33 and 34

God Himself gives earthly kingdoms both to good and bad. Neither does He do this rashly, and, as it were, fortuitously...but according to the order of things and times, which lie hidden from us, but thoroughly known to Himself; which same order He does not serve as subject, but Himself rules....

Therefore....these earthly good things...remain in the power of the one God Himself, not of the many false gods whom the Romans formerly believed worthy of worship....And if they had not sinned against Him with impious curiosity, which seduced and drew them to strange gods, and at last led them to kill Christ, their kingdom would have remained to them, and would have
been, if not more spacious, yet more happy than Rome was. And now that they are dispersed through almost all lands and nations, it is through the providence of that one true God.

BOOK V – Chapters, 1, 11, 12, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24, and 26

The cause, then, of the greatness of the Roman Empire is neither fortuitous nor fated [that it had no causes at all, or causes which proceed from no intelligible order; or happened independently of divine or human will by a certain necessity]. In a word, human kingdoms are established by divine providence.

God, supreme and true...who gave to flesh its origin, beauty, health, reproductive fruitfulness, disposition of members, and the salutary concord of its parts ... can never be believed to have left the kingdoms of men, their dominations and servitudes, outside the laws of His providence.

Wherefore, let us go on to consider what virtues of the Romans they were which the true God, in whose power are also the kingdoms of the earth, condescended to help in order to raise the empire, and also for what reason He did so.

...It was not only for the sake of recompensing the citizens of Rome that her empire and glory had been so signally extended, but also that the citizens of that eternal city, during their pilgrimage here, might diligently and soberly contemplate these examples, and see what a love they owe to the supernal country on account of life eternal, if the terrestrial country was so much beloved by its citizens on account of human glory.

For, as far as this life of mortals is concerned, which is spent and ended in a few days, what does it matter under whose government a dying man lives, if they who govern do not force him to impiety and iniquity?...

...It is not in view of terrestrial and temporal benefits which divine providence grants promiscuously to good and evil men that God is to be worshipped, but in view of eternal life, everlasting gifts, and the society of the heavenly city itself....

These things being so, we do not attribute the power of giving kingdoms and empires to any save to the true God, who gives happiness in the kingdom of heaven to the pious alone, but gives kingly power on earth both to the pious and the impious, as it may please Him, whose good pleasure is always just. For though we have said something about the principles which guide His administration, in so far as it has seemed good to Him to explain them, nevertheless it is too much for us, and far surpasses our strength, to discuss
the hidden things of men’s hearts, and by a clear examination to determine the
merits of various kingdoms. He, therefore, who is the one true God, who never
leaves the human race without just judgment and help, gave a kingdom to the
Romans when He would, and as great as He would, as He did also to the
Assyrians, and even the Persians....Manifestly these things are ruled and
governed by the one God according as He pleases....

Thus also the duration of wars is determined by Him as He may see
fit, according to His righteous will and pleasure and mercy, to afflict or to
console the human race, so that they are sometimes of longer, sometimes of
shorter duration....

...These and other gifts or comforts of this sorrowful life even certain
worshippers of demons have merited to receive...; and this is to be traced to the
mercy of God, who would not have those who believe in Him desire such things
as though they were the highest good....

...All blessings and privileges of this life, as the world itself...and the soul
of man himself, his body, senses, mind, life, He lavishes on good and bad alike.
And among these blessings is also to be reckoned the possession of an empire,
whose extent He regulates according to the requirements of His
providential government at various times.

Book X – Chapter 14

The education of the human race, represented by the people of God, has
advanced, like that of an individual, through certain epochs, or, as it
were ages, so that it might gradually rise from earthly to heavenly things, and
from the visible to the invisible. This object was kept so clearly in view, that even
in the period when temporal rewards were promised, the one God was presented
as the object of worship, that men might not acknowledge any other than the true
Creator and Lord of the spirit, even in connection with the earthly blessings of
this transitory life. For he who denies that all things which either angels or men
can give us are in the hand of the one Almighty, is a madman....

[in the first ten books, Augustine has shown why Rome’s pagan gods could not
provide human happiness, either here below or in the future; in the remaining
twelve he deals with the origin, development, and ends of the earthly and
heavenly cities]
BOOK XI – Chapters 1, 18

...To the enemies of this [heavenly] city we have replied in the ten preceding books, according to our ability and the help afforded by our Lord and King. Now, recognizing what is expected of me and not unmindful of my promise, and relying, too, on the same assistance, I will endeavor to treat of the origin, the progress, and deserved destinies of the two cities, which, as we said, are in this present world commingled, and as it were entangled together. And first, I will explain how the foundations of these two cities were originally laid in the difference that arose among the angels.

God would never have created any angel or man whose future wickedness He foreknew unless He had equally known to what uses in behalf of the good He could turn him, thus embellishing the course of the ages, as it were an exquisite poem set off with antitheses....

BOOK XIV, Chapter 28

Two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord. For the one seeks glory from men; but the greatest glory of the other is God, the witness of conscience....And therefore the wise men of the one city, living according to man, have sought for profit to their own bodies or souls, or both,...glorying in their own wisdom, and being possessed by pride....For they were either leaders or followers of the people in adoring images....But in the other city there is no human wisdom, but only godliness, which offers due worship to the true God, and looks for its reward in the society of the saints....

BOOK XV, Chapters 1 and 21

...I trust we have already done justice to these great and difficult questions regarding the beginning of the world, or of the soul, or of the human race itself. This race we have distributed into two parts, the one consisting of those who live according to man, the other of those who live according to God. And these we also mystically call the two cities, or the two communities of men, of which the one is predestined to reign eternally with God, and the other to suffer eternal punishment with the devil....At present, as we have said enough about their origin...it seems suitable to attempt an account of their career from the time when our two first parents began to propagate the race until all human generation shall cease. For this whole time or world-age, in which the dying depart and those who are born succeed
them, is the career of these two cities....Each man, being derived from a condemned stock, is first of all born of Adam, evil and carnal, and becomes good and spiritual only afterwards, when he is grafted into Christ by regeneration. So was it in the human race as a whole when these two cities began to run their course by a series of deaths and births....Not that every wicked man shall be good, but that no one will be good who was not first of all wicked....Accordingly, it is recorded of Cain that he built a city, but Abel, being a sojourner, built none. For the city of the saints is above, although here below it begets citizens, in whom it sojourns until the time of its reign arrives, when it shall gather all together in the day of the resurrection; and then shall the promised kingdom be given to them, in which they shall reign with their Prince, King of the ages, time without end.

...After having presented the two cities, the one founded on the material things of this world [in re], the other on hope in God [in spe], but both starting from a common gate opened in Adam into this mortal state, and both running on and running out to their proper and merited ends, Scripture begins to reckon the times, and in this reckoning includes other generations,....some vessels of wrath to dishonor and others vessels of mercy to honor....

BOOK XVII, Chapter 1

By the favor of God we have treated of God’s promises...and of the city of God, proceeding according to the order of time, pointing out how they were fulfilled .... We shall now treat of what remains, so far as may seem sufficient....

BOOK XVIII, Chapters 1 and 2

I promised to write of the rise, progress, and appointed end of the two cities, one of which is God’s, the other this world’s, in which, so far as mankind is concerned, the former is now a stranger. But first of all I undertook, so far as His grace should enable me, to refute the enemies of the city of God, who prefer their gods to Christ its founder, and fiercely hate Christians with the most deadly malice. And this I have done in the first ten books. Then, as regards my three-fold promise, I have treated distinctly, in the four books which follow the tenth, of the rise of both cities. After that, I have proceeded from the first man down to...the advent of Christ Himself in the flesh. The city of God appears from my way of writing to have run its course alone [but this is not the case], for both cities, in their course amid mankind certainly experienced chequered times together just as from the beginning. I did this in
order that...the course of that city which is God's might be made more distinctly apparent, without interpolation of foreign matter from the history of the other city, although down to the revelation of the new covenant it ran its course, not in light but in shadow. Now, therefore, I think fit to do what I passed over and show, so far as seems necessary, how that other city ran its course...so that attentive readers may compare the two.

The society of mortals spread abroad through the earth everywhere, and in the most diverse places, although bound together by a certain fellowship of our common nature. It is still for the most part divided against itself, and the strongest oppress the others, because all follow after their own interests and lusts....The vanquished succumb to the victorious, preferring any sort of peace and safety to freedom itself....For in almost all nations the very voice of nature somehow proclaims that those who happen to be conquered should choose rather to be subject to their conquerors than to be killed by all kinds of warlike destruction. This does not take place without the providence of God, in whose power it lies that anyone either subdues or is subdued in war; that some are endowed with kingdoms, others made subject to kings. Now among the very many kingdoms of the earth into which, by earthly interest or lust, society is divided (which we call by the general name of the city of this world), we see that two...have grown far more famous than the rest, first that of the Assyrians, then that of the Romans. First came the one, then the other. The former arose in the east, and, immediately on its close, the latter in the west....Babylon, like a first Rome, ran its course along with the city of God, which is a stranger in this world....Rome herself is like a second Babylon.

BOOK XXII, Chaper 30

...The [final] Sabbath [of eternal life] shall appear still more clearly if we count the ages as days, in accordance with the periods of time defined in Scripture, for that period will be found to be the seventh. The first age, as the first day, extends from Adam to the deluge; the second from the deluge to Abraham, equalling the first not in length of time, but in the number of generations, there being ten in each. From Abraham to the advent of Christ there are...three periods, in each of which are fourteen generations [Abraham to David, David to the Captivity, the Captivity to Christ]. The sixth age is now passing [the age of the Church] and cannot be measured by any number of generations....After this period God shall rest, as on the seventh day, when He shall give us rest in Himself. But there is not now space to treat of these ages; suffice it to say that the seventh shall be our Sabbath, which shall be brought
to a close not by an evening, but by the Lord’s day, as an eighth and eternal day....Therein we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise. This is what shall be in the end without end. For what other end do we propose to ourselves than to attain to the kingdom of which there is no end? I think I have now, by God’s help, discharged my obligation in writing this large work [which he began thirteen years earlier]. Let those who think I have said too little, or those who think I have said too much, forgive me; and let those who think I have said just enough join me in giving thanks to God. Amen.