

Reading #7 – From Augustus to Marcus Aurelius

The Martyrdom of Ignatius of Antioch

Chapter I. Desire of Ignatius for martyrdom.

When Trajan, not long since, succeeded to the empire of the Romans, Ignatius, the disciple of John the apostle, a man in all respects of an apostolic character, governed the Church of the Antiochians with great care, having with difficulty escaped the former storms of the many persecutions under Domitian, inasmuch as, like a good pilot, by the helm of prayer and fasting, by the earnestness of his teaching, and by his [constant] spiritual labour, he resisted the flood that rolled against him, fearing [only] lest he should lose any of those who were deficient in courage, or apt to suffer from their simplicity. Wherefore he rejoiced over the tranquil state of the Church, when the persecution ceased for a little time, but was grieved as to himself, that he had not yet attained to a true love to Christ, nor reached the perfect rank of a disciple. For he inwardly reflected, that the confession which is made by martyrdom, would bring him into a yet more intimate relation to the Lord. Wherefore, continuing a few years longer with the Church, and, like a divine lamp, enlightening every one's understanding by his expositions of the [Holy] Scriptures, he [at length] attained the object of his desire.

Chapter II. Ignatius is condemned by Trajan.

For Trajan, in the ninth year of his reign, being lifted up [with pride], after the victory he had gained over the Scythians and Dacians, and many other nations, and thinking that the religious body of the Christians were yet wanting to complete the subjugation of all things to himself, and [thereupon] threatening them with persecution unless they should agree to worship dæmons, as did all other nations, thus compelled all who were living godly lives either to sacrifice [to idols] or die. Wherefore the noble soldier of Christ [Ignatius], being in fear for the Church of the Antiochians, was, in accordance with his own desire, brought before Trajan, who was at that time staying at Antioch, but was in haste [to set forth] against Armenia and the Parthians. And when he was set before the emperor Trajan, [that prince] said unto him, "Who art thou, wicked wretch, who settest thyself to transgress our commands, and persuadest others to do the same, so that they should miserably perish?" Ignatius replied, "No one ought to call Theophorus wicked; for all evil spirits have departed from the servants of God. But if, because I am an enemy to these [spirits], you call me wicked in respect to them, I quite agree with you; for inasmuch as I have Christ the King of heaven [within me], I destroy all the devices of these [evil spirits]." Trajan answered, "And

who is Theophorus?" Ignatius replied, "He who has Christ within his breast." Trajan said, "Do we not then seem to you to have the gods in our mind, whose assistance we enjoy in fighting against our enemies?" Ignatius answered, "Thou art in error when thou callest the dæmons of the nations gods. For there is but one God, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that are in them; and one Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, whose kingdom may I enjoy." Trajan said, "Do you mean Him who was crucified under Pontius Pilate?" Ignatius replied, "I mean Him who crucified my sin, with him who was the inventor of it, and who has condemned [and cast down] all the deceit and malice of the devil under the feet of those who carry Him in their heart." Trajan said, "Dost thou then carry within thee Him that was crucified?" Ignatius replied, "Truly so; for it is written, I will dwell in them, and walk in them. " Then Trajan pronounced sentence as follows: "We command that Ignatius, who affirms that he carries about within him Him that was crucified, be bound by soldiers, and carried to the great [city] Rome, there to be devoured by the beasts, for the gratification of the people." When the holy martyr heard this sentence, he cried out with joy, "I thank thee, O Lord, that Thou hast vouchsafed to honour me with a perfect love towards Thee, and hast made me to be bound with iron chains, like Thy Apostle Paul." Having spoken thus, he then, with delight, clasped the chains about him; and when he had first prayed for the Church, and commended it with tears to the Lord, he was hurried away by the savage cruelty of the soldiers, like a distinguished ram the leader of a goodly flock, that he might be carried to Rome, there to furnish food to the bloodthirsty beasts.

Chapter III. Ignatius sails to Smyrna.

Wherefore, with great alacrity and joy, through his desire to suffer, he came down from Antioch to Seleucia, from which place he set sail. And after a great deal of suffering he came to Smyrna, where he disembarked with great joy, and hastened to see the holy Polycarp, [formerly] his fellow-disciple, and [now] bishop of Smyrna. For they had both, in old times, been disciples of St. John the Apostle. Being then brought to him, and having communicated to him some spiritual gifts, and glorying in his bonds, he entreated of him to labour along with him for the fulfilment of his desire; earnestly indeed asking this of the whole Church (for the cities and Churches of Asia had welcomed the holy man through their bishops, and presbyters, and deacons, all hastening to meet him, if by any means they might receive from him some spiritual gift), but above all, the holy Polycarp, that, by means of the wild beasts, he soon disappearing from this world, might be manifested before the face of Christ.

Chapter IV. Ignatius writes to the churches.

And these things he thus spake, and thus testified, extending his love to Christ so far as one who was about to secure heaven through his good confession, and the earnestness of those who joined their prayers to his in regard to his [approaching] conflict; and to give a recompense to the Churches, who came to meet him through their rulers, sending letters of thanksgiving to them, which dropped spiritual grace, along with prayer and exhortation. Wherefore, seeing all men so kindly affected towards him, and fearing lest the love of the brotherhood should hinder his zeal towards the Lord, while a fair door of suffering martyrdom was opened to him, he wrote to the Church of the Romans the Epistle which is here subjoined.

Chapter V. Ignatius is brought to Rome.

Having therefore, by means of this Epistle, settled, as he wished, those of the brethren at Rome who were unwilling [for his martyrdom]; and setting sail from Smyrna (for Christophorus was pressed by the soldiers to hasten to the public spectacles in the mighty [city] Rome, that, being given up to the wild beasts in the sight of the Roman people, he might attain to the crown for which he strove), he [next] landed at Troas. Then, going on from that place to Neapolis, he went [on foot] by Philippi through Macedonia, and on to that part of Epirus which is near Epidamnus; and finding a ship in one of the seaports, he sailed over the Adriatic Sea, and entering from it on the Tyrrhene, he passed by the various islands and cities, until, when Puteoli came in sight, he was eager there to disembark, having a desire to tread in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul. But a violent wind arising did not suffer him to do so, the ship being driven rapidly forwards; and, simply expressing his delight over the love of the brethren in that place, he sailed by. Wherefore, continuing to enjoy fair winds, we were reluctantly hurried on in one day and a night, mourning [as we did] over the coming departure from us of this righteous man. But to him this happened just as he wished, since he was in haste as soon as possible to leave this world, that he might attain to the Lord whom he loved. Sailing then into the Romanharbour, and the unhallowed sports being just about to close, the soldiers began to be annoyed at our slowness, but the bishop rejoicingly yielded to their urgency.

Chapter VI. Ignatius is devoured by the beasts at Rome.

They pushed forth therefore from the place which is called Portus; and (the fame of all relating to the holy martyr being already spread abroad) we met the brethren full of fear and joy; rejoicing indeed because they were thought worthy to meet with Theophorus, but struck with fear because so eminent a man was being led to death. Now he enjoined some

to keep silence who, in their fervent zeal, were saying that they would appease the people, so that they should not demand the destruction of this just one. He being immediately aware of this through the Spirit, and having saluted them all, and begged of them to show a true affection towards him, and having dwelt [on this point] at greater length than in his Epistle, and having persuaded them not to envy him hastening to the Lord, he then, after he had, with all the brethren kneeling [beside him], entreated the Son of God in behalf of the Churches, that a stop might be put to the persecution, and that mutual love might continue among the brethren, was led with all haste into the amphitheatre. Then, being immediately thrown in, according to the command of Cæsar given some time ago, the public spectacles being just about to close (for it was then a solemn day, as they deemed it, being that which is called the thirteenth in the Roman tongue, on which the people were wont to assemble in more than ordinary numbers), he was thus cast to the wild beasts close beside the temple, that so by them the desire of the holy martyr Ignatius should be fulfilled, according to that which is written, "The desire of the righteous is acceptable [to God]," to the effect that he might not be troublesome to any of the brethren by the gathering of his remains, even as he had in his Epistle expressed a wish beforehand that so his end might be. For only the harder portions of his holy remains were left, which were conveyed to Antioch and wrapped in linen, as an inestimable treasure left to the holy Church by the grace which was in the martyr.

Chapter VII. Ignatius appears in a vision after his death.

Now these things took place on the thirteenth day before the Kalends of January, that is, on the twentieth of December, Sura and Senecio being then the consuls of the Romans for the second time. Having ourselves been eye-witnesses of these things, and having spent the whole night in tears within the house, and having entreated the Lord, with bended knees and much prayer, that He would give us weak men full assurance respecting the things which were done, it came to pass, on our falling into a brief slumber, that some of us saw the blessed Ignatius suddenly standing by us and embracing us, while others beheld him again praying for us, and others still saw him dropping with sweat, as if he had just come from his great labour, and standing by the Lord. When, therefore, we had with great joy witnessed these things, and had compared our several visions together, we sang praise to God, the giver of all good things, and expressed our sense of the happiness of the holy [martyr]; and now we have made known to you both the day and the time [when these things happened], that, assembling ourselves together according to the time of his martyrdom, we may have fellowship with the champion and noble martyr of Christ, who trod underfoot the devil, and perfected the course which, out of love to Christ, he had

desired, in Christ Jesus our Lord; by whom, and with whom, be glory and power to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, for evermore! Amen.

Pliny the Younger (selected letters)

10.96. -- Pliny to the Emperor Trajan

It is my practice, my lord, to refer to you all matters concerning which I am in doubt. For who can better give guidance to my hesitation or inform my ignorance? I have never participated in trials of Christians. I therefore do not know what offenses it is the practice to punish or investigate, and to what extent. And I have been not a little hesitant as to whether there should be any distinction on account of age or no difference between the very young and the more mature; whether pardon is to be granted for repentance, or, if a man has once been a Christian, it does him no good to have ceased to be one; whether the name itself, even without offenses, or only the offenses associated with the name are to be punished.

Meanwhile, in the case of those who were denounced to me as Christians, I have observed the following procedure: I interrogated these as to whether they were Christians; those who confessed I interrogated a second and a third time, threatening them with punishment; those who persisted I ordered executed. For I had no doubt that, whatever the nature of their creed, stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy surely deserve to be punished. There were others possessed of the same folly; but because they were Roman citizens, I signed an order for them to be transferred to Rome.

Soon accusations spread, as usually happens, because of the proceedings going on, and several incidents occurred. An anonymous document was published containing the names of many persons. Those who denied that they were or had been Christians, when they invoked the gods in words dictated by me, offered prayer with incense and wine to your image, which I had ordered to be brought for this purpose together with statues of the gods, and moreover cursed Christ--none of which those who are really Christians, it is said, can be forced to do--these I thought should be discharged. Others named by the informer declared that they were Christians, but then denied it, asserting that they had been but had ceased to be, some three years before, others many years, some as much as twenty-five years. They all worshipped your image and the statues of the gods, and cursed Christ.

They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called

upon to do so. When this was over, it was their custom to depart and to assemble again to partake of food--but ordinary and innocent food. Even this, they affirmed, they had ceased to do after my edict by which, in accordance with your instructions, I had forbidden political associations. Accordingly, I judged it all the more necessary to find out what the truth was by torturing two female slaves who were called deaconesses. But I discovered nothing else but depraved, excessive superstition.

I therefore postponed the investigation and hastened to consult you. For the matter seemed to me to warrant consulting you, especially because of the number involved. For many persons of every age, every rank, and also of both sexes are and will be endangered. For the contagion of this superstition has spread not only to the cities but also to the villages and farms. But it seems possible to check and cure it. It is certainly quite clear that the temples, which had been almost deserted, have begun to be frequented, that the established religious rites, long neglected, are being resumed, and that from everywhere sacrificial animals are coming, for which until now very few purchasers could be found. Hence it is easy to imagine what a multitude of people can be reformed if an opportunity for repentance is afforded.

10.97. – Trajan to Pliny

You observed proper procedure, my dear Pliny, in sifting the cases of those who had been denounced to you as Christians. For it is not possible to lay down any general rule to serve as a kind of fixed standard. They are not to be sought out; if they are denounced and proved guilty, they are to be punished, with this reservation, that whoever denies that he is a Christian and really proves it--that is, by worshiping our gods--even though he was under suspicion in the past, shall obtain pardon through repentance. But anonymously posted accusations ought to have no place in any prosecution. For this is both a dangerous kind of precedent and out of keeping with the spirit of our age.

1.13. -- To Sosius Senecio.

This year has brought us a fine crop of poets: right through April hardly a day passed without some recital or other. I am delighted that literature is so flourishing and that men are giving such open proofs of brains, even though audiences are found so slow in coming together. People as a rule lounge in the squares and waste the time in gossip when they should be listening to the recital. They get some one to come and tell them whether the reciter has entered the hall yet, whether he has got through his introduction, or whether he has nearly reached the end of his reading. Not until then do they enter the room, and even then they come in slowly and languidly. Nor do they sit it out; no, before the close of

the recital they slip away, some sidling out so as not to attract attention, others rising openly and walking out boldly. And yet, by Hercules, our fathers tell a story of how Claudius Caesar one day, while walking up and down in the palace, happened to hear some clapping of hands, and on inquiring the cause and being told that Nonianus was giving a reading, he suddenly joined the company to every one's surprise. But nowadays even those who have most time on their hands, after receiving early notices and frequent reminders, either fail to put in an appearance, or if they do come they complain that they have wasted a day just because they have not wasted it. All the more praise and credit, therefore, is due to those who do not allow their love of writing and reciting to be damped either by the laziness or the fastidiousness of their audiences. For my own part, I have hardly ever failed to attend. True, the authors are mostly my friends, for almost all the literary people are also friends of mine, and for this reason I have spent more time in Rome than I had intended. But now I can betake myself to my country retreat and compose something, though not for a public recital, lest those whose readings I attended should think I went not so much to hear their works as to get a claim on them to come and hear mine. As in everything else, if you lend a man your ears, all the grace of the act vanishes if you ask for his in return. Farewell.

1.9. -- To Minutius Fundanus.

It is surprising how if you take each day singly here in the city you pass or seem to pass your time reasonably enough when you take stock thereof, but how, when you put the days together, you are dissatisfied with yourself. If you ask any one, "What have you been doing to-day?" he will say, "Oh, I have been attending a coming-of-age function; I was at a betrothal or a wedding; so-and-so asked me to witness the signing of a will; I have been acting as witness to A, or I have been in consultation with B." All these occupations appear of paramount importance on the day in question, but if you remember that you repeat the round day after day, they seem a sheer waste of time, especially when you have got away from them into the country; for then the thought occurs to you, "What a number of days I have frittered away in these chilly formalities!" That is how I feel when I am at my Laurentine Villa and busy reading or writing, or even when I am giving my body a thorough rest and so repairing the pillars of my mind. I hear nothing and say nothing to give me vexation; no one comes backbiting a third party, and I myself have no fault to find with any one except it be with myself when my pen does not run to my liking. I have no hopes and fears to worry me, no rumours to disturb my rest. I hold converse with myself and with my books. 'Tis a genuine and honest life; such leisure is delicious and honourable, and one might say that it is much more attractive than any business. The sea, the shore,

these are the true secret haunts of the Muses, and how many inspirations they give me, how they prompt my musings! Do, I beg of you, as soon as ever you can, turn your back on the din, the idle chatter, and the frivolous occupations of Rome, and give yourself up to study or recreation. It is better, as our friend Attilius once very wittily and very truly said, to have no occupation than to be occupied with nothingness. Farewell.

1.3. -- To Caninius Rufus.

How is Comum looking, your darling spot and mine? And that most charming villa of yours, what of it, and its portico where it is always spring, its shady clumps of plane trees, its fresh crystal canal, and the lake below that gives such a charming view? How is the exercise ground, so soft yet firm to the foot; how goes the bath that gets the sun's rays so plentifully as he journeys round it? What too of the big banqueting halls and the little rooms just for a few, and the retiring rooms for night and day? Have they full possession of you, and do they share your company in turn? or are you, as usual, continually being called away to attend to private family business? You are indeed a lucky man if you can spend all your leisure there; if you cannot, your case is that of most of us. But really it is time that you passed on your unimportant and petty duties for others to look after, and buried yourself among your books in that secluded yet beautiful retreat. Make this at once the business and the leisure of your life, your occupation and your rest; let your waking hours be spent among your books, and your hours of sleep as well. Mould something, hammer out something that shall be known as yours for all time. Your other property will find a succession of heirs when you are gone; what I speak of will continue yours for ever -- if once it begins to be. I know the capacity and inventive wit that I am spurring on. You have only to think of yourself as the able man others will think you when you have realised your ability. Farewell.

1.15. -- To Septicius Clarus.

What a fellow you are! You promise to come to dinner and then fail to turn up! Well, here is my magisterial sentence upon you. You must pay the money I am out of pocket to the last farthing, and you will find the sum no small one. I had provided for each guest one lettuce, three snails, two eggs, spelt mixed with honey and snow (you will please reckon up the cost of the latter as among the costly of all, since it melts away in the dish), olives from Baetica, cucumbers, onions, and a thousand other equally expensive dainties. You would have listened to a comedian, or a reciter, or a harp-player, or perhaps to all, as I am such a lavish host. But you preferred to dine elsewhere, -- where I know not -- off oysters, sow's matrices,

sea-urchins, and to watch Spanish dancing girls! You will be paid out for it, though how I decline to say. You have done violence to yourself. You have grudged, possibly yourself, but certainly me, a fine treat. Yes, yourself! For how we should have enjoyed ourselves, how we should have laughed together, how we should have applied ourselves! You can dine at many houses in better style than at mine, but nowhere will you have a better time, or such a simple and free and easy entertainment. In short, give me a trial, and if afterwards you do not prefer to excuse yourself to others rather than to me, why then I give you leave to decline my invitations always. Farewell.

1.10. -- To Attius Clemens.

If ever there was a time when this Rome of ours was devoted to learning, it is now. There are many shining lights, of whom it will be enough to mention but one. I refer to Euphrates the philosopher. I saw a great deal of him, even in the privacy of his home life, during my young soldiering days in Syria, and I did my best to win his affection, though that was not a hard task, for he is ever easy of access, frank, and full of the humanities that he teaches. I only wish that I had been as successful in fulfilling the hopes he then formed of me as he has been increasing his large stock of virtues, though possibly it is I who now admire them the more because I can appreciate them the better. Even now my appreciation is not as complete as it might be. It is only an artist who can thoroughly judge another painter, sculptor, or image-maker, and so too it needs a philosopher to estimate another philosopher at his full merit. But so far as I can judge, Euphrates has many qualities so conspicuously brilliant that they arrest the eyes and attention even of those who have but modest pretensions to learning. His reasoning is acute, weighty, and elegant, often attaining to the breadth and loftiness that we find in Plato. His conversation flows in a copious yet varied stream, strikingly pleasant to the ear, and with a charm that seizes and carries away even the reluctant hearer. Add to this a tall, commanding presence, a handsome face, long flowing hair, a streaming white beard -- all of which may be thought accidental adjuncts and without significance, but they do wonderfully increase the veneration he inspires. There is no studied negligence in his dress, it is severely plain but not austere; when you meet him you revere him without shrinking away in awe. His life is purity itself, but he is just as genial; his lash is not for men but for their vices; for the erring he has gentle words of correction rather than sharp rebuke. When he gives advice you cannot help listening in rapt attention, and you hope he will go on persuading you even when the persuasion is complete. He has three children, two of them sons, whom he has brought up with the strictest care. His father-in-law is Pompeius Julianus, a man of great distinction, but whose chief title to fame is that though, as ruler of a province, he might have chosen a son-in-law

of the highest social rank, he preferred one who was distinguished not for social dignities but for wisdom.

Yet why describe at greater length a man whose society I can no longer enjoy? Is it to make myself feel my loss the more? For my time is all taken up by the duties of an office -- important, no doubt, but tedious in the extreme. I sit at my magisterial desk; I countersign petitions, I make out the public accounts; I write hosts of letters, but what illiterary productions they are! Sometimes -- but how seldom I get the opportunity -- I complain to Euphrates about these uncongenial duties. He consoles me and even assures me that there is no more noble part in the whole of philosophy than to be a public official, to hear cases, pass judgment, explain the laws and administer justice, and so practise in short what the philosophers do but teach. But he never can persuade me of this, that it is better to be busy as I am than to spend whole days in listening to and acquiring knowledge from him. That makes me the readier to urge you, whose time is your own, to let him put a finish and polish upon you when you come to town, and I hope you will come all the sooner on that account. I am not one of those -- and there are many of them -- who grudge to others the happiness they are debarred from themselves; on the contrary, I feel a very lively sense of pleasure in seeing my friends abounding in joys that are denied to me. Farewell.

2.6. -- To Avitus.

It would be a long story -- and it is of no importance -- to tell you how I came to be dining -- for I am no particular friend of his -- with a man who thought he combined elegance with economy, but who appeared to me to be both mean and lavish, for he set the best dishes before himself and a few others and treated the rest to cheap and scrappy food. He had apportioned the wine in small decanters of three different kinds, not in order to give his guests their choice but so that they might not refuse. He had one kind for himself and us, another for his less distinguished friends -- for he is a man who classifies his acquaintances -- and a third for his own freedmen and those of his guests. The man who sat next to me noticed this and asked me if I approved of it. I said no. "Then how do you arrange matters?" he asked. "I set the same before all," I answered, "for I invite my friends to dine not to grade them one above the other, and those whom I have set at equal places at my board and on my couches I treat as equals in every respect." What! even the freedmen?" he said. "Yes," I replied, "for then I regard them as my guests at table, not as freedmen." He went on: "It must cost you a lot." "Not at all," said I. "Then how do you manage it?" "It's easily done; because my freedmen do not drink the same wine as I do, but I drink the same that they do." And, by Jove, the fact is that if you keep off gluttony it is not at all ruinously expensive

to entertain a number of people to the fare you have yourself. It is this gluttony which is to be put down, to be reduced as it were to the ranks, if you wish to cut down expenses, and you will find it better to consult your own moderate living than to care about the nasty things people may say of you. What then is my point? Just this, that I don't want you, who are a young man of great promise, to be taken in by the extravagance with which some people load their tables under the guise of economy. Whenever such a concrete instance comes in my way it becomes the affection I bear you to warn you of what you ought to avoid by giving you an example. So remember that there is nothing you should eschew more than this new association of extravagance and meanness; they are abominable qualities when separated and single, and still more so when you get a combination of them. Farewell.

2.20. -- To Calvisius.

Get ready your penny and I will tell you a golden story, nay, more than one, for the new one has reminded me of some old tales, and it does not matter with which I begin. Verania, the wife of Piso, was lying very ill -- I mean the Piso who was adopted by Galba. Regulus paid her a visit. First mark the impudence of the man in coming to see the invalid, for he had been her husband's bitter enemy and she loathed and detested him. However, that might pass if he had only called, but he actually sat down beside her on the couch and asked her on what day and at what hour she had been born. On being told he puts on a grave look, fixes his eyes hard, moves his lips, works his fingers and makes his reckoning, but says nothing. Then after keeping the poor lady on the tenter-hooks, wondering what he would say, he exclaims: "You are passing through a critical time, but you will pull through. Still, just to reassure you, I will go and consult a soothsayer with whom I have often had dealings." He goes off at once; offers the sacrifice and swears that the appearance of the entrails corresponds with the warning of the stars. She, with all the credulity of an invalid, calls for her tablets and writes down a legacy for Regulus; subsequently she grows worse and exclaims as she dies, "What a rascal, what a lying and worse than perjured wretch, thus to have sworn falsely on the head of his son!"

That is Regulus's trick, and he has recourse to the scandalous device constantly, for he calls down the anger of the gods, whom he daily outrages, upon the head of his luckless son. Velleius Blaesus, the rich Consular, was stricken with the illness which carried him off, and was desirous of changing his will. Regulus, who was capable of hoping for anything from an alteration of the will because he had lately begun to haunt him on the chance of a legacy, begged and prayed of the doctors to prolong Blaesus's life by hook or by crook. But when the will was signed he took quite a different line. He changed his tone and said to the

same doctors: "How long do you intend to torture the poor man? Why do you grudge him an easy death when you cannot give him life?" Blaesus dies, and, as though he had heard every word, he leaves Regulus not a brass farthing. Two stories are quite enough. Or do you ask for a third, on the rhetoricians' principle? Well, I have one for you. When Aurelia, a lady of great means, was about to make her will, she put on for the occasion her most handsome tunics. When Regulus came to witness the signing he said, "I beg you to leave me these." Aurelia thought the man was joking, but he was serious and pressed the matter. Well, to cut the story short, he compelled the poor woman to open the tablets and leave to him the tunics she was wearing at the time. He watched her as she wrote, and looked to see whether she had written it rightly. Aurelia still lives, but he forced her to make that legacy as if she had been on the point of death. Yet this is the fellow who receives inheritances and legacies as though he deserved them.

But why do I worry myself when I live in a country where villainy and rascality have long been getting not less but far more handsome rewards than modesty and virtue? Look at Regulus, for example, who, from being a pauper and without a shilling, has now become such a rich man by sheer villainy that he once told me that, when he was consulting the omens as to how soon he would be worth sixty millions of sesterces, he found double sets of entrails, which were a token that he would be worth 120 millions. So he will too, if only he goes on, as he has begun, dictating wills which are not their own to the very people who are making their wills, which is about the most disgraceful kind of forgery imaginable. Farewell.

9.6. -- To Calvisius.

I have spent these several days past among my papers with the most pleasing tranquillity imaginable. You will ask how that can possibly be in the midst of Rome? Why, the Circensian Games were taking place; a kind of entertainment for which I have not the least taste. They have no novelty, no variety, nothing, in short, one would wish to see twice. I am the more astonished that so many thousands of grown men should be possessed again and again with a childish passion to look at galloping horses, and men standing upright in their chariots. If, indeed, they were attracted by the swiftness of the horses or the skill of the men, one could account for this enthusiasm. But in fact it is a bit of cloth they favour, a bit of cloth that captivates them. And if during the running the racers were to exchange colours, their partisans would change sides, and instantly forsake the very drivers and horses whom they were just before recognizing from afar, and clamorously saluting by name.

Such favour, such weighty influence, hath one cheap tunic (never mind it with the vulgar herd who are more worthless than the tunics they wear) but with certain grave personages. When I observe such men thus insatiably fond of so silly, so low, so uninteresting, so common an entertainment, I congratulate myself that I am insensible to these pleasures: and am glad to devote the leisure of this season to literature, which others throw away upon the most idle employment. Farewell.

3.14. -- To Acilius.

A shocking affair, worthy of more publicity than a letter can bestow, has befallen Largius Macedo, a man of praetorian rank, at the hands of his own slaves. He was known to be an overbearing and cruel master, and one who forgot -- or rather remembered too keenly -- that his own father had been a slave. He was bathing at his villa near Formiae, when he was suddenly surrounded by his slaves. One seized him by the throat, another struck him on the forehead, and others smote him in the chest, belly, and even -- I am shocked to say -- in the private parts. When they thought the breath had left his body they flung him on to the hot tiled floor to see if he was still alive. Whether he was insensible, or merely pretended to be so, he certainly did not move, and lying there at full length, he made them think that he was actually dead. At length they carried him out as though he had been overcome by the heat and handed him over to his more trusty servants, while his mistresses ran shrieking and wailing to his side. Aroused by their cries and restored by the coolness of the room where he lay, he opened his eyes and moved his limbs, betraying thereby that he was still alive, as it was then safe to do so. His slaves took to flight; most of them have been captured, but some are still being hunted for. Thanks to the attentions he received, Macedo was kept alive for a few days and had the satisfaction of full vengeance before he died, for he exacted the same punishment while he still lived as is usually taken when the victim of a murder dies. You see the dangers, the affronts and insults we are exposed to, and no one can feel at all secure because he is an easy and mild-tempered master, for villainy not deliberation murders masters.

But enough of that subject! Have I any other news to tell you? Let me see! No, there is nothing. If there were, I would tell you, for I have room enough on this sheet, and, as to-day is a holiday, I should have plenty of time to write more. But I will just add an incident which I chance to recall that happened to the same Macedo. When he was in one of the public baths in Rome, a curious and -- the event has shown -- an ominous accident happened to him. Macedo's servant lightly tapped a Roman knight with his hand to induce

him to make room for them to pass, and the knight turned round and struck, not the slave who had touched him but Macedo himself, such a heavy blow with his fist that he almost felled him. So one may say that the bath has been by certain stages the scene first of humiliation to him and then of death. Farewell.

1.6. -- To Cornelius Tacitus.

You will laugh, and I give you leave to. You know what sort of sportsman I am, but I, even I, have bagged three boars, each one of them a perfect beauty. "What!" you will say, "YOU!" Yes, I, and that too without any violent departure from my usual lazy ways. I was sitting by the nets; I had by my side not a hunting spear and a dart, but my pen and writing tablets. I was engaged in some composition and jotting down notes, so that I might have full tablets to take home with me, even though my hands were empty. You need not shrug your shoulders at study under such conditions. It is really surprising how the mind is stimulated by bodily movement and exercise. I find the most powerful incentive to thought in having the woods all about me, in the solitude and the silence which is observed in hunting. So when next you go hunting, take my advice and carry your writing tablets with you as well as your luncheon basket and your flask. You will find that Minerva loves to wander on the mountains quite as much as Diana. Farewell.

Justin Martyr – The First Apology (selections)

CHAPTER I -- ADDRESS.

To the Emperor Titus Ælius Adrianus Antoninus Pius Augustus Caesar, and to his son Verissimus the Philosopher, and to Lucius the Philosopher, the natural son of Caesar, and the adopted son of Pius, a lover of learning, and to the sacred Senate, with the whole People of the Romans, I, Justin, the son of Priscus and grandson of Bacchius, natives of Flavia Neapolis in Palestine, present this address and petition in behalf of those of all nations who are unjustly hated and wantonly abused, myself being one of them.

CHAPTER II -- JUSTICE DEMANDED.

Reason directs those who are truly pious and philosophical to honour and love only what is true, declining to follow traditional opinions, if these be worthless. For not only does sound reason direct us to refuse the guidance of those who did or taught anything wrong, but it is incumbent on the lover of truth, by all means, and if death be threatened, even before his own life, to choose to do and say what is right. Do you, then, since ye are called pious and

philosophers, guardians of justice and lovers of learning, give good heed, and hearken to my address; and if ye are indeed such, it will be manifested. For we have come, not to flatter you by this writing, nor please you by our address, but to beg that you pass judgment, after an accurate and searching investigation, not flattered by prejudice or by a desire of pleasing superstitious men, nor induced by irrational impulse or evil rumours which have long been prevalent, to give a decision which will prove to be against yourselves. For as for us, we reckon that no evil can be done us, unless we be convicted as evil-doers or be proved to be wicked men; and you, you can kill, but not hurt us.

CHAPTER III -- CLAIM OF JUDICIAL INVESTIGATION.

But lest anyone think that this is an unreasonable and reckless utterance, we demand that the charges against the Christians be investigated, and that, if these be substantiated, they be punished as they deserve; [or rather, indeed, we ourselves will punish them.] But if no one can convict us of anything, true reason forbids you, for the sake of a wicked rumour, to wrong blameless men, and indeed rather yourselves, who think fit to direct affairs, not by judgment, but by passion. And every sober-minded person will declare this to be the only fair and equitable adjustment, namely, that the subjects render an unexceptional account of their own life and doctrine; and that, on the other hand, the rulers should give their decision in obedience, not to violence and tyranny, but to piety and philosophy. For thus would both rulers and ruled reap benefit. For even one of the ancients somewhere said, "Unless both rulers and ruled philosophize, it is impossible to make states blessed." It is our task, therefore, to afford to all an opportunity of inspecting our life and teachings, lest, on account of those who are accustomed to be ignorant of our affairs, we should incur the penalty due to them for mental blindness; and it is your business, when you hear us, to be found, as reason demands, good judges. For if, when ye have learned the truth, you do not what is just, you will be before God without excuse.

CHAPTER IV -- CHRISTIANS UNJUSTLY CONDEMNED FOR THEIR MERE NAME.

By the mere application of a name, nothing is decided, either good or evil, apart from the actions implied in the name; and indeed, so far at least as one may judge from the name we are accused of, we are most excellent people. But as we do not think it just to beg to be acquitted on account of the name, if we be convicted as evildoers, so, on the other hand, if we be found to have committed no offence, either in the matter of thus naming ourselves, or of our conduct as citizens, it is your part very earnestly to guard against incurring just punishment, by unjustly punishing those who are not convicted. For from a name neither praise nor punishment could reasonably spring, unless something excellent or base in action be proved. And those among yourselves who are accused you do not punish before

they are convicted; but in our case you receive the name as proof against us, and this although, so far as the name goes, you ought rather to punish our accusers. For we are accused of being Christians, and to hate what is excellent (Christian) is unjust. Again, if any of the accused deny the name, and say that he is not a Christian, you acquit him, as having no evidence against him as a wrong-doer; but if any one acknowledge that he is a Christian, you punish him on account of this acknowledgment. Justice requires that you inquire into the life both of him who confesses and of him who denies, that by his deeds it may be apparent what kind of man each is. For as some who have been taught by the Master, Christ, not to deny Him, give encouragement to others when they are put to the question, so in all probability do those who lead wicked lives give occasion to those who, without consideration, take upon them to accuse all the Christians of impiety and wickedness. And this also is not right. For of philosophy, too, some assume the name and the garb who do nothing worthy of their profession; and you are well aware, that those of the ancients whose opinions and teachings were quite diverse, are yet all called by the one name of philosophers. And of these some taught atheism; and the poets who have flourished among you raise a laugh out of the uncleanness of Jupiter with his own children. And those who now adopt such instruction are not restrained by you; but, on the contrary, you bestow prizes and honours upon those who euphoniously insult the gods.

CHAPTER V -- CHRISTIANS CHARGED WITH ATHEISM.

Why, then, should this be? In our case, who pledge ourselves to do no wickedness, nor to hold these atheistic opinions, you do not examine the charges made against us; but, yielding to unreasoning passion, and to the instigation of evil demons, you punish us without consideration or judgment. For the truth shall be spoken; since of old these evil demons, effecting apparitions of themselves, both defiled women and corrupted boys, and showed such fearful sights to men, that those who did not use their reason in judging of the actions that were done, were struck with terror; and being carried away by fear, and not knowing that these were demons, they called them gods, and gave to each the name which each of the demons chose for himself. And when Socrates endeavoured, by true reason and examination, to bring these things to light, and deliver men from the demons, then the demons themselves, by means of men who rejoiced in iniquity, compassed his death, as an atheist and a profane person, on the charge that "he was introducing new divinities;" and in our case they display a similar activity. For not only among the Greeks did reason (Logos) prevail to condemn these things through Socrates, but also among the Barbarians were they condemned by Reason (or the Word, the Logos) Himself, who took shape, and became man, and was called Jesus Christ; and in obedience to Him, we not only deny that they who did such things as these are gods, but assert that they are wicked and impious demons, whose actions will not bear comparison with those even of men desirous of virtue.

CHAPTER VI -- CHARGE OF ATHEISM REFUTED.

Hence are we called atheists. And we confess that we are atheists, so far as gods of this sort are concerned, but not with respect to the most true God, the Father of righteousness and temperance and the other virtues, who is free from all impurity. But both Him, and the Son (who came forth from Him and taught us these things, and the host of the other good angels who follow and are made like to Him), and the prophetic Spirit, we worship and adore, knowing them in reason and truth, and declaring without grudging to everyone who wishes to learn, as we have been taught.

CHAPTER VII -- EACH CHRISTIAN MUST BE TRIED BY HIS OWN LIFE.

But someone will say, Some have ere now been arrested and convicted as evil-doers. For you condemn many, many a time, after inquiring into the life of each of the accused severally, but not on account of those of whom we have been speaking. And this we acknowledge, that as among the Greeks those who teach such theories as please themselves are all called by the one name "Philosopher," though their doctrines be diverse, so also among the Barbarians this name on which accusations are accumulated is the common property of those who are and those who seem wise. For all are called Christians. Wherefore we demand that the deeds of all those who are accused to you be judged, in order that each one who is convicted may be punished as an evil-doer, and not as a Christian; and if it is clear that any one is blameless, that he may be acquitted, since by the mere fact of his being a Christian he does no wrong. For we will not require that you punish our accusers; they being sufficiently punished by their present wickedness and ignorance of what is right.

CHAPTER VIII -- CHRISTIANS CONFESS THEIR FAITH IN GOD.

And reckon ye that it is for your sakes we have been saying these things; for it is in our power, when we are examined, to deny that we are Christians; but we would not live by telling a lie. For, impelled by the desire of the eternal and pure life, we seek the abode that is with God, the Father and Creator of all, and hasten to confess our faith, persuaded and convinced as we are that they who have proved to God by their works that they followed Him, and loved to abide with Him where there is no sin to cause disturbance, can obtain these things. This, then, to speak shortly, is what we expect and have learned from Christ, and teach. And Plato, in like manner, used to say that Rhadamanthus and Minos would punish the wicked who came before them; and we say that the same thing will be done, but at the hand of Christ, and upon the wicked in the same bodies united again to their spirits which are now to undergo everlasting punishment; and not only, as Plato said, for a period of a thousand years. And if anyone say that this is incredible or impossible, this error of

ours is one which concerns ourselves only, and no other person, so long as you cannot convict us of doing any harm.

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CHAPTER XX -- HEATHEN ANALOGIES TO CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

And the Sibyl and Hystaspes said that there should be a dissolution by God of things corruptible. And the philosophers called Stoics teach that even God Himself shall be resolved into fire, and they say that the world is to be formed anew by this revolution; but we understand that God, the Creator of all things, is superior to the things that are to be changed. If, therefore, on some points we teach the same things as the poets and philosophers whom you honour, and on other points are fuller and more divine in our teaching, and if we alone afford proof of what we assert, why are we unjustly hated more than all others? For while we say that all things have been produced and arranged into a world by God, we shall seem to utter the doctrine of Plato; and while we say that there will be a burning up of all, we shall seem to utter the doctrine of the Stoics: and while we affirm that the souls of the wicked, being endowed with sensation even after death, are punished, and that those of the good being delivered from punishment spend a blessed existence, we shall seem to say the same things as the poets and philosophers; and while we maintain that men ought not to worship the works of their hands, we say the very things which have been said by the comic poet Menander, and other similar writers, for they have declared that the workman is greater than the work.

CHAPTER XXI -- ANALOGIES TO THE HISTORY OF CHRIST.

And when we say also that the Word, who is the first-birth of God, was produced without sexual union, and that He, Jesus Christ, our Teacher, was crucified and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, we propound nothing different from what you believe regarding those whom you esteem sons of Jupiter. For you know how many sons your esteemed writers ascribed to Jupiter: Mercury, the interpreting word and teacher of all; AEsculapius, who, though he was a great physician, was struck by a thunderbolt, and so ascended to heaven; and Bacchus too, after he had been torn limb from limb; and Hercules, when he had committed himself to the flames to escape his toils; and the sons of Leda, and Dioscuri; and Perseus, son of Danae; and Bellerophon, who, though sprung from mortals, rose to heaven on the horse Pegasus. For what shall I say of Ariadne, and those who, like her, have been declared to be set among the stars? And what of the emperors who die among yourselves, whom you deem worthy of deification, and in whose behalf you produce some one who swears he has seen the burning Caesar rise to heaven from the funeral pyre? And what kind of deeds are recorded of each of these reputed sons of Jupiter,

it is needless to tell to those who already know. This only shall be said, that they are written for the advantage and encouragement of youthful scholars; for all reckon it an honourable thing to imitate the gods. But far be such a thought concerning the gods from every well-conditioned soul, as to believe that Jupiter himself, the governor and creator of all things, was both a parricide and the son of a parricide, and that being overcome by the love of base and shameful pleasures, he came in to Ganymede and those many women whom he had violated and that his sons did like actions. But, as we said above, wicked devils perpetrated these things. And we have learned that those only are deified who have lived near to God in holiness and virtue; and we believe that those who live wickedly and do not repent are punished in everlasting fire.

CHAPTER XXII -- ANALOGIES TO THE SONSHIP OF CHRIST.

Moreover, the Son of God called Jesus, even if only a man by ordinary generation, yet, on account of His wisdom, is worthy to be called the Son of God; for all writers call God the Father of men and gods. And if we assert that the Word of God was born of God in a peculiar manner, different from ordinary generation, let this, as said above, be no extraordinary thing to you, who say that Mercury is the angelic word of God. But if any one objects that He was crucified, in this also He is on a par with those reputed sons of Jupiter of yours, who suffered as we have now enumerated. For their sufferings at death are recorded to have been not all alike, but diverse; so that not even by the peculiarity of His sufferings does He seem to be inferior to them; but, on the contrary, as we promised in the preceding part of this discourse, we will now prove Him superior--or rather have already proved Him to be so--for the superior is revealed by His actions. And if we even affirm that He was born of a virgin, accept this in common with what you accept of Ferseus. And in that we say that He made whole the lame, the paralytic, and those born blind, we seem to say what is very similar to the deeds said to have been done by AEsculapius.

CHAPTER XXIII -- THE ARGUMENT.

And that this may now become evident to you--(firstly) that whatever we assert in conformity with what has been taught us by Christ, and by the prophets who preceded Him, are alone true, and are older than all the writers who have existed; that we claim to be acknowledged, not because we say the same things as these writers said, but because we say true things: and (secondly) that Jesus Christ is the only proper Son who has been begotten by God, being His Word and first-begotten, and power; and, becoming man according to His will, He taught us these things for the conversion and restoration of the human race: and (thirdly) that before He became a man among men, some, influenced by the demons before mentioned, related beforehand, through the instrumentality of the poets, those circumstances as having really happened, which, having fictitiously devised, they

narrated, in the same manner as they have caused to be fabricated the scandalous reports against us of infamous and impious actions, of which there is neither witness nor proof--we shall bring forward the following proof.

CHAPTER XXIV -- VARIETIES OF HEATHEN WORSHIP.

In the first place [we furnish proof], because, though we say things similar to what the Greeks say, we only are hated on account of the name of Christ, and though we do no wrong, are put to death as sinners; other men in other places worshipping trees and rivers, and mice and cats and crocodiles, and many irrational animals. Nor are the same animals esteemed by all; but in one place one is worshipped, and another in another, so that all are profane in the judgment of one another, on account of their not worshipping the same objects. And this is the sole accusation you bring against us, that we do not reverence the same gods as you do, nor offer to the dead libations and the savour of fat, and crowns for their statues, and sacrifices. For you very well know that the same animals are with some esteemed gods, with others wild beasts, and with others sacrificial victims.

CHAPTER XXV -- FALSE GODS ABANDONED BY CHRISTIANS.

And, secondly, because we--who, out of every race of men, used to worship Bacchus the son of Semele, and Apollo the son of Latona (who in their loves with men did such things as it is shameful even to mention), and Proserpine and Venus (who were maddened with love of Adonis, and whose mysteries also you celebrate), or AEsculapius, or some one or other of those who are called gods--have now, through Jesus Christ, learned to despise these, though we be threatened with death for it, and have dedicated ourselves to the unbegotten and impossible God; of whom we are persuaded that never was he goaded by lust of Antiope, or such other women, or of Ganymede, nor was rescued by that hundred-handed giant whose aid was obtained through Thetis, nor was anxious on this account that her son Achilles should destroy many of the Greeks because of his concubine Briseis. Those who believe these things we pity, and those who invented them we know to be devils.

CHAPTER XXVI -- MAGICIANS NOT TRUSTED BY CHRISTIANS.

And, thirdly, because after Christ's ascension into heaven the devils put forward certain men who said that they themselves were gods; and they were not only not persecuted by you, but even deemed worthy of honours. There was a Samaritan, Simon, a native of the village called Gitto, who in the reign of Claudius Caesar, and in your royal city of Rome, did mighty acts of magic, by virtue of the art of the devils operating in him. He was considered a god, and as a god was honoured by you with a statue, which statue was

erected on the river Tiber, between the two bridges, and bore this inscription, in the language of Rome:--

"Simoni Deo Sancto,"

"To Simon the holy God." And almost all the Samaritans, and a few even of other nations, worship him, and acknowledge him as the first god; and a woman, Helena, who went about with him at that time, and had formerly been a prostitute, they say is the first idea generated by him. And a man, Meander, also a Samaritan, of the town Capparetaea, a disciple of Simon, and inspired by devils, we know to have deceived many while he was in Antioch by his magical art. He persuaded those who adhered to him that they should never die, and even now there are some living who hold this opinion of his. And there is Marcion, a man of Pontus, who is even at this day alive, and teaching his disciples to believe in some other god greater than the Creator. And he, by the aid of the devils, has caused many of every nation to speak blasphemies, and to deny that God is the maker of this universe, and to assert that some other being, greater than He, has done greater works. All who take their opinions from these men, are, as we before said, called Christians; just as also those who do not agree with the philosophers in their doctrines, have yet in common with them the name of philosophers given to them. And whether they perpetrate those fabulous and shameful deeds--the upsetting of the lamp, and promiscuous intercourse, and eating human flesh--we know not; but we do know that they are neither persecuted nor put to death by you, at least on account of their opinions. But I have a treatise against all the heresies that have existed already composed, which, if you wish to read it, I will give you.

CHAPTER XXVII -- GUILT OF EXPOSING CHILDREN.

But as for us, we have been taught that to expose newly-born children is the part of wicked men; and this we have been taught lest we should do any one an injury, and lest we should sin against God, first, because we see that almost all so exposed (not only the girls, but also the males) are brought up to prostitution. And as the ancients are said to have reared herds of oxen, or goats, or sheep, or grazing horses, so now we see you rear children only for this shameful use; and for this pollution a multitude of females and hermaphrodites, and those who commit unmentionable iniquities, are found in every nation. And you receive the hire of these, and duty and taxes from them, whom you ought to exterminate from your realm. And anyone who uses such persons, besides the godless and infamous and impure intercourse, may possibly be having intercourse with his own child, or relative, or brother. And there are some who prostitute even their own children and wives, and some are openly mutilated for the purpose of sodomy; and they refer these mysteries to the mother of the gods, and along with each of those whom you esteem gods there is painted a serpent, a great symbol and mystery. Indeed, the things which you do openly and with applause, as if

the divine light were overturned and extinguished, these you lay to our charge; which, in truth, does no harm to us who shrink from doing any such things, but only to those who do them and bear false witness against us.

CHAPTER XXVIII -- GOD'S CARE FOR MEN.

For among us the prince of the wicked spirits is called the serpent, and Satan, and the devil, as you can learn by looking into our writings. And that he would be sent into the fire with his host, and the men who follow him, and would be punished for an endless duration, Christ foretold. For the reason why God has delayed to do this, is His regard for the human race. For He fore-knows that some are to be saved by repentance, some even that are perhaps not yet born. In the beginning He made the human race with the power of thought and of choosing the truth and doing right, so that all men are without excuse before God; for they have been born rational and contemplative. And if any one disbelieves that God cares for these things, he will thereby either insinuate that God does not exist, or he will assert that though He exists He delights in vice, or exists like a stone, and that neither virtue nor vice are anything, but only in the opinion of men these things are reckoned good or evil. And this is the greatest profanity and wickedness.

CHAPTER XXIX -- CONTINENCE OF CHRISTIANS.

And again [we fear to expose children], lest some of them be not picked up, but die, and we become murderers. But whether we marry, it is only that we may bring up children; or whether we decline marriage, we live continently. And that you may understand that promiscuous intercourse is not one of our mysteries, one of our number a short time ago presented to Felix the governor in Alexandria a petition, craving that permission might be given to a surgeon to make him an eunuch. For the surgeons there said that they were forbidden to do this without the permission of the governor. And when Felix absolutely refused to sign such a permission, the youth remained single, and was satisfied with his own approving conscience, and the approval of those who thought as he did. And it is not out of place, we think, to mention here Antinous, who was alive but lately, and whom all were prompt, through fear, to worship as a god, though they knew both who he was and what was his origin.

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CHAPTER XLIV -- NOT NULLIFIED BY PROPHECY.

And the holy Spirit of prophecy taught us this, telling us by Moses that God spoke thus to the man first created: "Behold, before thy face are good and evil: choose the good." And again, by the other prophet Isaiah, that the following utterance was made as if from God the

Father and Lord of all: "Wash you, make you clean; put away evils from your souls; learn to do well; judge the orphan, and plead for the widow: and come and let us reason together, saith the Lord: And if your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as wool; and if they be red like as crimson, I will make them white as snow. And if ye be willing and obey Me, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye do not obey Me, the sword shall devour you: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." And that expression, "The sword shall devour you," does not mean that the disobedient shall be slain by the sword, but the sword of God is fire, of which they who choose to do wickedly become the fuel. Wherefore He says, "The sword shall devour you: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." And if He had spoken concerning a sword that cuts and at once despatches, He would not have said, shall devour. And so, too, Plato, when he says, "The blame is his who chooses, and God is blameless," took this from the prophet Moses and uttered it. For Moses is more ancient than all the Greek writers. And whatever both philosophers and poets have said concerning the immortality of the soul, or punishments after death, or contemplation of things heavenly, or doctrines of the like kind, they have received such suggestions from the prophets as have enabled them to understand and interpret these things. And hence there seem to be seeds of truth among all men; but they are charged with not accurately understanding [the truth] when they assert contradictories. So that what we say about future events being foretold, we do not say it as if they came about by a fatal necessity; but God foreknowing all that shall be done by all men, and it being His decree that the future actions of men shall all be recompensed according to their several value, He foretells by the Spirit of prophecy that He will bestow meet rewards according to the merit of the actions done, always urging the human race to effort and recollection, showing that He cares and provides for men. But by the agency of the devils death has been decreed against those who read the books of Hystaspes, or of the Sibyl, or of the prophets, that through fear they may prevent men who read them from receiving the knowledge of the good, and may retain them in slavery to themselves; which, however, they could not always effect. For not only do we fearlessly read them, but, as you see, bring them for your inspection, knowing that their contents will be pleasing to all. And if we persuade even a few, our gain will be very great; for, as good husbandmen, we shall receive the reward from the Master.

CHAPTER XLV -- CHRIST'S SESSION IN HEAVEN FORETOLD.

And that God the Father of all would bring Christ to heaven after He had raised Him from the dead, and would keep Him there until He has subdued His enemies the devils, and until the number of those who are foreknown by Him as good and virtuous is complete, on whose account He has still delayed the consummation--hear what was said by the prophet David. These are his words: "The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send to Thee the rod of power out

of Jerusalem; and rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies. With Thee is the government in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of Thy saints: from the womb of morning hare I begotten Thee." That which he says, "He shall send to Thee the rod of power out of Jerusalem," is predictive of the mighty, word, which His apostles, going forth from Jerusalem, preached everywhere; and though death is decreed against those who teach or at all confess the name of Christ, we everywhere both embrace and teach it. And if you also read these words in a hostile spirit, ye can do no more, as I said before, than kill us; which indeed does no harm to us, but to you and all who unjustly hate us, and do not repent, brings eternal punishment by tire.

CHAPTER XLVI -- THE WORD IN THE WORLD BEFORE CHRIST.

But lest some should, without reason, and for the perversion of what we teach, maintain that we say that Christ was born one hundred and fifty years ago under Cyrenius, and subsequently, in the time of Pontius Pilate, taught what we say He taught; and should cry out against us as though all men who were born before Him were irresponsible--let us anticipate and solve the difficulty. We have been taught that Christ is the first-born of God, and we have declared above that He is the Word of whom every race of men were partakers; and those who lived reasonably are Christians, even though they have been thought atheists; as, among the Greeks, Socrates and Heraclitus, and men like them; and among the barbarians, Abraham, and Ananias, and Azarias, and Misael, and Elias, and many others whose actions and names we now decline to recount, because we know it would be tedious. So that even they who lived before Christ, and lived without reason, were wicked and hostile to Christ, and slew those who lived reasonably. But who, through the power of the Word, according to the will of God the Father and Lord of all, He was born of a virgin as a man, and was named Jesus, and was crucified, and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, an intelligent man will be able to comprehend from what has been already so largely said. And we, since the proof of this subject is less needful now, will pass for the present to the proof of those things which are urgent.

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CHAPTER LIV -- ORIGIN OF HEATHEN MYTHOLOGY.

But those who hand down the myths which the poets have made, adduce no proof to the youths who learn them; and we proceed to demonstrate that they have been uttered by the influence of the wicked demons, to deceive and lead astray the human race. For having heard it proclaimed through the prophets that the Christ was to come, and that the ungodly among men were to be punished by fire, they put forward many to be called sons of Jupiter, under the impression that they would be able to produce in men the idea that the things

which were said with regard to Christ were mere marvellous tales, like the things which were said by the poets. And these things were said both among the Greeks and among all nations where they [the demons] heard the prophets foretelling that Christ would specially be believed in; but that in hearing what was said by the prophets they did not accurately understand it, but imitated what was said of our Christ, like men who are in error, we will make plain. The prophet Moses, then, Was, as we have already said, older than all writers; and by him, as we have also said before, it was thus predicted: "There shall not fail a prince from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until He come for whom it is reserved; and He shall be the desire of the Gentiles, binding His foal to the vine, washing His robe in the blood of the grape." The devils, accordingly, when they heard these prophetic words, said that Bacchus was the son of Jupiter, and gave out that he was the discoverer of the vine, and they number wine [or, the ass] among his mysteries; and they taught that, having been torn in pieces, he ascended into heaven. And because in the prophecy of Moses it had not been expressly intimated whether He who was to come was the Son of God, and whether He would, riding on the foal, remain on earth or ascend into heaven, and because the name of "foal" could mean either the foal of an ass or the foal of a horse, they, not knowing whether He who was foretold would bring the foal of an ass or of a horse as the sign of His coming, nor whether He was the Son of God, as we said above, or of man, gave out that Bellerophon, a man born of man, himself ascended to heaven on his horse Pegasus. And when they heard it said by the other prophet Isaiah, that He should be born of a virgin, and by His own means ascend into heaven, they pretended that Perseus was spoken of. And when they knew what was said, as has been cited above, in the prophecies written aforetime, "Strong as a giant to run his course," they said that Hercules was strong, and had journeyed over the whole earth. And when, again, they learned that it had been foretold that He should heal every sickness, and raise the dead, they produced Aesculapius.

CHAPTER LV -- SYMBOLS OF THE CROSS.

But in no instance, not even in any of those called sons of Jupiter, did they imitate the being crucified; for it was not understood by them, all the things said of it having been put symbolically. And this, as the prophet foretold, is the greatest symbol of His power and role; as is also proved by the things which fall under our observation. For consider all the things in the world, whether without this form they could be administered or have any community. For the sea is not traversed except that trophy which is called a sail abide safe in the ship; and the earth is not ploughed without it: diggers and mechanics do not their work, except with tools which have this shape. And the human form differs from that of the irrational animals in nothing else than in its being erect and having the hands extended, and having on the face extending from the forehead what is called the nose, through which there is respiration for the living creature; and this shows no other form than that of the

cross. And so it was said by the prophet, "The breath before our face is the Lord Christ." And the power of this form is shown by your own symbols on what are called "vexilla" [banners] and trophies, with which all your state possessions are made, using these as the insignia of your power and government, even though you do so unwittingly. And with this form you consecrate the images of your emperors when they die, and you name them gods by inscriptions. Since, therefore, we have urged you both by reason and by an evident form, and to the utmost of our ability, we know that now we are blameless even though you disbelieve; for our part is done and finished.

CHAPTER LVI -- THE DEMONS STILL MISLEAD MEN.

But the evil spirits were not satisfied with saying, before Christ's appearance, that those who were said to be sons of Jupiter were born of him; but after He had appeared, and been born among men, and when they learned how He had been foretold by the prophets, and knew that He should be believed on and looked for by every nation, they again, as was said above, put forward other men, the Samaritans Simon and Menander, who did many mighty works by magic, and deceived many, and still keep them deceived. For even among yourselves, as we said before, Simon was in the royal city Rome in the reign of Claudius Caesar, and so greatly astonished the sacred senate and people of the Romans, that he was considered a god, and honoured, like the others whom you honour as gods, with a statue. Wherefore we pray that the sacred senate and your people may, along with yourselves, be arbiters of this our memorial, in order that if anyone be entangled by that man's doctrines, he may learn the truth, and so be able to escape error; and as for the statue, if you please, destroy it.

CHAPTER LVII -- AND CAUSE PERSECUTION.

Nor can the devils persuade men that there will be no conflagration for the punishment of the wicked; as they were unable to effect that Christ should be hidden after He came. But this only can they effect, that they who live irrationally, and were brought up licentiously in wicked customs, and are prejudiced in their own opinions, should kill and hate us; whom we not only do not hate, but, as is proved, pity and endeavour to lead to repentance. For we do not fear death, since it is acknowledged we must surely die; and there is nothing new, but all things continue the same in this administration of things; and if satiety overtakes those who enjoy even one year of these things, they ought to give heed to our doctrines, that they may live eternally free both from suffering and from want. But if they believe that there is nothing after death, but declare that those who die pass into insensibility, then they become our benefactors when they set us free from sufferings and necessities of this life, and prove themselves to be wicked, and inhuman, and bigoted. For they kill us with no intention of delivering us, but cut us off that we may be deprived of life and pleasure.

CHAPTER LVIII -- AND RAISE UP HERETICS.

And, as we said before, the devils put forward Marcion of Pontus, who is even now teaching men to deny that God is the maker of all things in heaven and on earth, and that the Christ predicted by the prophets is His Son, and preaches another god besides the Creator of all, and likewise another son. And this man many have believed, as if he alone knew the truth, and laugh at us, though they have no proof of what they say, but are carried away irrationally as lambs by a wolf, and become the prey of atheistical doctrines, and of devils. For they who are called devils attempt nothing else than to seduce men from God who made them, and from Christ His first-begotten; and those who are unable to raise themselves above the earth they have riveted, and do now rivet, to things earthly, and to the works of their own hands; but those who devote themselves to the contemplation of things divine, they secretly beat back; and if they have not a wise sober-mindedness, and a pure and passionless life, they drive them into godlessness.

CHAPTER LIX -- PLATO'S OBLIGATION TO MOSES.

And that you may learn that it was from our teachers--we mean the account given through the prophets--that Plato borrowed his statement that God, having altered matter which was shapeless, made the world, hear the very words spoken through Moses, who, as above shown, was the first prophet, and of greater antiquity than the Greek writers; and through whom the Spirit of prophecy, signifying how and from what materials God at first formed the world, spakethus: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was invisible and unfurnished, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved over the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and it was so." So that both Plato and they who agree with him, and we ourselves, have learned, and you also can be convinced, that by the word of God the whole world was made out of the substance spoken of before by Moses. And that which the poets call Erebus, we know was spoken of formerly by Moses.

CHAPTER LX -- PLATO'S DOCTRINE OF THE CROSS.

And the physiological discussion concerning the Son of God in the Timoeus of Plato, where he says, "He placed him crosswise in the universe," he borrowed in like manner from Moses; for in the writings of Moses it is related how at that time, when the Israelites went out of Egypt and were in the wilderness, they fell in with poisonous beasts, both vipers and asps, and every kind of serpent, which slew the people; and that Moses, by the inspiration and influence of God, took brass, and made it into the figure of a cross, and set it in the holy tabernacle, and said to the people, "If ye look to this figure, and believe, ye shall be saved thereby." And when this was done, it is recorded that the serpents died, and it is handed

down that the people thus escaped death. Which things Plato reading, and not accurately understanding, and not apprehending that it was the figure of the cross, but taking it to be a placing crosswise, he said that the power next to the first God was placed crosswise in the universe. And as to his speaking of a third, he did this because he read, as we said above, that which was spoken by Moses, "that the Spirit of God moved over the waters." For he gives the second place to the Logos which is with God, who he said was placed crosswise in the universe; and the third place to the Spirit who was said to be borne upon the water, saying, "And the third around the third." And hear how the Spirit of prophecy signified through Moses that there should be a conflagration. He spoke thus: "Everlasting fire shall descend, and shall devour to the pit beneath." It is not, then, that we hold the same opinions as others, but that all speak in imitation of ours. Among us these things can be heard and learned from persons who do not even know the forms of the letters, who are uneducated and barbarous in speech, though wise and believing in mind; some, indeed, even maimed and deprived of eyesight; so that you may understand that these things are not the effect of human wisdom, but are uttered by the power of God.

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CHAPTER LXV -- ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

But we, after we have thus washed him who has been convinced and has assented to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called brethren are assembled, in order that we may offer hearty prayers in common for ourselves and for the baptized [illuminated] person, and for all others in every place, that we may be counted worthy, now that we have learned the truth, by our works also to be found good citizens and keepers of the commandments, so that we may be saved with an everlasting salvation. Having ended the prayers, we salute one another with a kiss. There is then brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands. And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their assent by saying Amen. This word Amen answers in the Hebrew language to genoito [so be it]. And when the president has given thanks, and all the people have expressed their assent, those who are called by us deacons give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion.

CHAPTER LXVI -- OF THE EUCHARIST.

And this food is called among us Eukaristia [the Eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said, "This do ye in remembrance of Me, this is My body;" and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, "This is My blood;" and gave it to them alone. Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn.