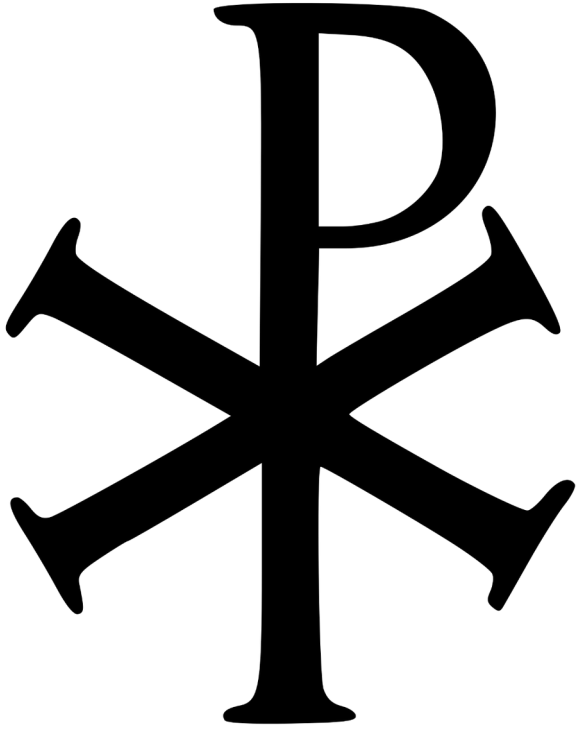
THE TESTAMENTUM

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN HOLY BIBLE

ORIGINAL SCRIPTURES COMPILED & TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.



THE MARCIONITE CHURCH

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE TESTAMENTUM

EVANGELICON.....**1**

GOSPEL OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.....2

APOSTOLICON.....**72**

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS.....73

FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS.....81

SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS.....105

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS.....121

FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS.....136

SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS.....142

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE LAODICEANS.....145

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS.....154

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO PHILEMON.....160

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS.....162

ANTILEGICON.....**168**

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TITUS.....169

FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY.....172

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE TESTAMENTUM

SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY.....178

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE ALEXANDRIANS.....183

PSALMICON.....195

HOMILETICON.....221

HOMILY OF MARCION TO DIOGNETUS.....222

SYNAXICON.....231

EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE EPHESIANS.....232

EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE MAGNESIANS.....240

EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE TRALLIANS.....245

EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE ROMANS.....250

EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE PHILADELPHIANS.....255

EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE SMYRNAEANS.....259

EPISTLE OF MARCION TO METRODORUS.....264

DIALEKTICON.....268

DIALOGUE OF MEGETHIUS AGAINST HERMOGENES.....269

DIDASCALICON.....286

LITOURGICON.....544

CHRONICON.....564

THE TESTAMENTUM

EVANGELICON

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

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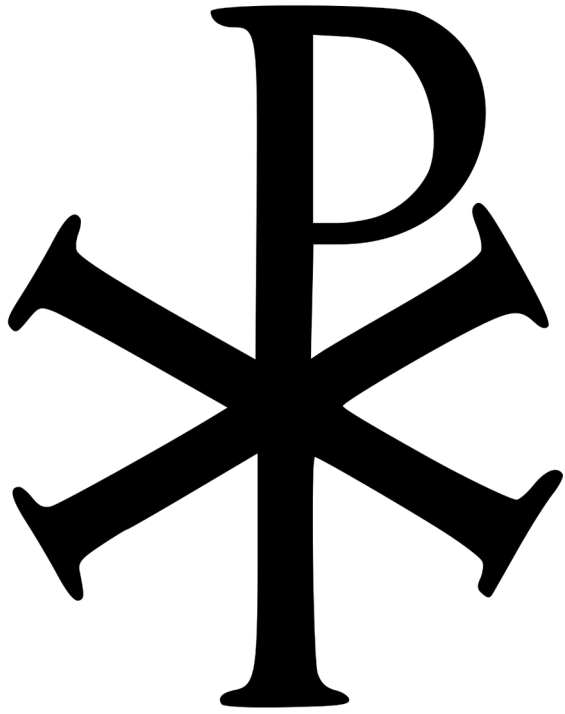


TESTAMENTUM

EVANGELICON

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

O wonder beyond wonders, rapture, power, and amazement is it, that one can say nothing at all about the gospel, nor even conceive of it, nor compare it with anything.

CHAPTER ONE

Hymn to the Word

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

CHAPTER TWO

The Descent of Jesus at Capernaum

1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3 Jesus descended out of heaven into the Galilean city of Capernaum, a city near the sea, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim.

4 Having taken upon him the form of a man, he appeared as one about thirty years of age, and taught in the synagogue on the sabbath days.

5 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

6 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

7 And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

8 Saying, let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.

9 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

10 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

11 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

Simon’s Mother-in-Law’s Fever

12 And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon’s house. And Simon’s wife’s mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

13 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

The First Journey to Jerusalem

14 And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

The Cleansing of the Temple

15 And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

16 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

17 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence;

18 Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, I am come to abolish the sacrifices, if ye cease not from sacrificing, the wrath will not cease from you.

20 Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

21 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

22 But he spake of the temple of his body.

“I am the Light of the World”

23 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

24 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

25 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

26 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

27 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

28 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

29 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

30 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

31 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

Discussion with the Jews

32 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

33 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

34 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

35 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

36 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

37 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

38 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

39 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

40 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

41 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

Jesus' Ministry in Jerusalem

42 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

43 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,

44 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

The Discourse with Nicodemus

45 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

46 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

47 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

48 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

49 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

50 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

51 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

52 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it

cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

53 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

54 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

55 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

56 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

57 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

58 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

59 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

60 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

61 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

62 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

63 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

64 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

65 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Jesus' Ministry in Judaea

66 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

John's Testimony to Christ

67 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

68 For John was not yet cast into prison.

69 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

70 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

71 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

72 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

73 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

74 He must increase, but I must decrease.

75 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

76 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

77 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.

78 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

79 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

80 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John's Preaching of Repentance

81 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

82 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

83 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

84 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

CHAPTER THREE

The Journey into Galilee

1 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

2 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

The Synagogue in Nazareth

3 And he came to Nazareth, and, as the custom was,

4 He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day,

5 And began to preach to them.

6 And he sat down, and the eyes of all who were in the synagogue, were fastened on him.

7 And he began to spake to them. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

8 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

9 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

10 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

11 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

12 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

13 And they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

14 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

15 But he passing through the midst of them went his way to Capernaum.

At the Setting of the Sun - Devils Cast Out

16 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

17 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak:

18 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

19 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

20 And he preached in the synagogues of the Jews.

The Lake of Gennesaret

21 And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

22 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets.

23 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat

down, and taught the people out of the ship.

24 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

25 And Simon answering said unto him, Teacher, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

26 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

27 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

28 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

29 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

30 And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

31 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

Healing of the Leper

32 And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

33 And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

34 And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest.

35 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

36 And he was withdrawing himself into the wilderness, and praying.

Healing of the Palsied

37 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

38 And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with the palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him.

39 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

40 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

41 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

42 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

43 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

44 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, he said unto the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.

45 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

46 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.

The Feast of Levi the Publican

47 And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

48 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

49 And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

50 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

51 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

52 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

The Question about Fasting

53 And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

54 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

55 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

The Old and the New

56 And he spake also a parable unto them;

57 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

58 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.

59 And no man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Lord of the Sabbath

1 And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples were hungry, and plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?

3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungered, and they which were with him;

4 He went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

5 And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

6 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.

7 But he knew their reasonings, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

8 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

9 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

10 The same day, Jesus saw a certain man working on the sabbath and said unto him, Man, if thou knowest what thou doest, blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not, accursed art thou, and a transgressor of the law.

11 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

12 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

The Choosing of the Twelve

13 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

14 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

15 Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

16 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes,

17 And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also became a traitor.

New Edicts of the New God – Beatitudes

18 And he came down among them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

19 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

20 And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.

21 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

22 Blessed are the meek in spirit: for they shall inherit the earth.

23 Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

24 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

25 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

New Edicts of the New God – Woes

26 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

27 Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

28 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

The Law of Love

29 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

30 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

31 But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

32 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

33 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

34 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

35 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

36 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

37 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of God: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

38 He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

39 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Judging Others

40 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

41 Give, and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed down, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

42 And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

43 The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

44 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

45 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

Good Fruit, Evil Fruit

46 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

47 For there is no good tree that produceth corrupt fruit; nor corrupt tree that produceth good fruit.

48 For each tree is known by its own fruit. For of thorns they do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

49 The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

50 Be ye approved money-changers, rejecting some things, but holding fast that which is good.

The Wise and Foolish Builders

51 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

52 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like:

53 He is like a man which built a house, who digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

54 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

CHAPTER FIVE

Faith of the Centurion

1 Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:

5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:

7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my boy shall be healed.

8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come,

and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

Dead Corpse Rising - The Raising of the Widow's Son

11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.

John the Baptist

18 And the disciples of John told him of all these things.

19 And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor have good tidings been announced to them.

23 And blessed is he, if he shall not be offended in me.

24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John. What went ye out into the

wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

31 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye did not weep.

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.

The Alabaster Box

36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And entering into the Pharisee’s house he reclined at table.

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house: thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

CHAPTER SIX

Women Ministers

1 And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him.

2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

Parable of the Sower

4 And when much people were gathered together, and they were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:

5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the heaven devoured it.

6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8 And other fell on the good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they may not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

13 They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience**.**

Parable of the Lamp

16 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, even what he seemeth to have shall be taken away.

Thy Mother and Thy Brethren

19 To know whether he had been born, they laid a snare for him.

20 And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

21 And he answered and said unto them, Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? They which hear my words and do them.

The Storm on the Lake

22 Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him?

Legion of the Gadarenes

26 And they sailed down to the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils a long time, and wore no cloke, neither abode in a house, but among the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? I beseech thee, torment me not.

29 For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept guarded and bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands asunder, and was driven of the devil into the deserts.

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the abyss.

32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would allow them to enter into them. And he allowed them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was saved.

37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about asked him to depart from them; for they were holden with great fear: and he entered into the ship, and returned back again.

38 Now the man, from whom the devils were departed, besought him

that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to thine own house, and recount how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, publishing throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

Healing of the Woman - Jairus' Daughter

40 And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him.

41 And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying.

43 And as he went the multitudes thronged him.

44 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,

45 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanched.

46 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

47 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.

48 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

49 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

50 While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

51 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be saved.

52 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

53 And all were weeping, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.

54 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

55 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

56 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded something be given her to eat.

57 And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Second Journey to Jerusalem

1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

The Healing at the Pool called Bethesda

2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

3 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

4 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

5 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

6 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

7 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

8 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

9 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

10 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

11 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

12 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

13 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

14 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

15 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

Jesus' Equality with God

16 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

17 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

18 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

19 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

20 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

21 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

22 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Two Resurrections

23 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

24 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

25 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

26 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

27 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

28 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

29 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

30 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

Witness of John

31 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

32 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

33 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

Witness of Works

34 But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

Witness of the Father

35 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

36 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Twelve Disciples Bestowed Power

1 Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all the devils, and to cure diseases.

2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece, for the workman is worthy of his hire.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

6 And they departed, and went through the villages in order, announcing the glad tidings, and healing every where.

Herod the Tetrarch

7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and by others, that a prophet, one of the original ones, was risen again.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

The Death of John the Baptist

10 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

11 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

12 Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

13 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

14 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday

made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee;

15 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

16 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

17 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

18 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

19 And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

20 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,

21 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.

22 And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

Feeding of the Five-thousand

23 And the apostles returned, and declared unto him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place of a city called Bethsaida.

24 And the multitudes perceived it, and followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

25 And when the day began to decline, and the twelve came, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and fetch victuals: for we are in a desert place.

26 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy food for all this people.

27 For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them recline in companies by fifties.

28 And they did so, and made them all recline.

29 And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

30 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up that

remained to them of fragments twelve baskets.

The Bread of Life

31 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

32 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

33 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

34 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst**.**

The Walking on the Water

35 And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

36 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

37 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

38 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

39 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

40 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

41 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

42 For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.

The Syrophoenician Woman

43 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

44 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

45 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

46 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

47 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

Disciples Reprimanded

48 And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I the Son of man am?

49 They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one some prophet of the original ones is risen again.

50 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

51 And he straightly reprimanded them, and commanded them to tell none such a thing;

52 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

53 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

54 For whosoever wishes to save his life shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

55 For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose or forfeit his own self?

56 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in his own glory, and in the glory of his Father's and of the holy angels.

57 But I tell you truly, there be some of those that stand here, which shall by no means taste death, till they see the kingdom of God.

The Transfiguration

58 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

59 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white, and glistering.

60 And, behold, there talked with him two men, whom Peter supposed to be Moses and Elias.

61 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

62 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: but when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

63 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Teacher, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

64 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them:

and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

65 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

66 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept in close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

The Disciples Rebuked - I

67 And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the mountain, a great multitude met him.

68 And, behold, a man from the multitude cried out, saying, Teacher, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is my only begotten.

69 And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it convulseth him with foam, and bruising him hardly departeth from him.

70 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.

71 And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

72 And as he was yet a coming, the devil rent him, and convulsed him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy, and delivered him again to his father.

73 And they were all amazed at the majesty of God. And as they all wondered at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

74 Take ye into your ears these sayings: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

75 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them that they should not perceive it: and they feared to ask him about that saying.

The Disciples Rebuked - II

76 Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

77 And Jesus, perceiving the reasoning of their heart, took a child, and set it next to himself, and said unto them,

78 Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

79 And John answered and said, Teacher, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us.

80 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.

The Disciples Rebuked - III

81 And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

James and John Rebuked

82 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

83 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

84 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and to consume them, even as Elias did?

85 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

86 For the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

The Teaching about Discipleship

87 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

88 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

89 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

90 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead to bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

91 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

92 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER NINE

Seventy New Disciples Appointed

1 And after these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself was about to come.

2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he may send forth labourers into his harvest.

3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as

they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go out into the streets thereof, and say,

11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

13 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the powers had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven? thou shalt be thrust down unto hell.

16 He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fallen from heaven.

19 Behold, I give unto you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in the heavens.

Jesus' Thanksgiving to the Father

21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, Lord of heaven, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it was well-pleasing before thee.

22 All things were delivered to me by my Father: and no man knoweth who the Father is, but the Son, and who the Son is, but the Father, and he to whomsoever the Son wishes to reveal him.

“Come unto Me”

23 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

24 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

25 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

The Reason for Speaking in Parables

26 And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see:

27 For I tell you, that prophets have not seen the things which ye see; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

To Inherit Long Life on Earth

28 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit life?

29 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

30 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.

31 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

The Good Samaritan

32 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

33 And Jesus answering said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

34 And by chance there came down a certain priest in that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

35 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

36 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

37 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

38 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

39 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

40 And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

"Martha, Martha"

41 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

42 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

43 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

44 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

45 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

CHAPTER TEN

The Lord’s Prayer

1 And it came to pass that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, **Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Let thy Holy Spirit come upon us, and cleanse us. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.**

3 Give us day by day thy daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And suffer us not to be brought into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

5 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

6 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

7 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

8 Since my friend is come unto me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him?

9 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

10 I say unto you, even if he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

A House Divided

14 And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the multitudes marvelled.

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

16 And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven.

17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.

18 And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils in Beelzebub.

19 And if I in Beelzebub cast out devils, in whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 When a strong man fully armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace.

22 But when the stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his whole armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return into my house whence I came out.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

"The Womb that Bare Thee"

27 And it came to pass, as he said these things, a certain woman out of the multitude lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the breasts which thou didst suck.

28 But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

An Evil Generation

29 And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it.

The Lamp of the Body

30 No man, when he hath lighted a lamp, putteth it into a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on the lampstand, that they which come in may see the light.

31 The lamp of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when it is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

32 Look therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

33 If therefore thy whole body be full of light, having no part dark, it shall be wholly full of light, as when the lamp with its gleam doth give thee light.

"Woe!"

34 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

35 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

36 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

37 Foolish ones, did not he that made the outside make the inside also?

38 But give as alms the things in your power; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

39 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and every herb, and pass over the calling and the love of God: but these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

40 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and the greetings in the markets.

41 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk about over them know it not.

42 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

43 And he said, Woe unto you also, lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

44 Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, but your fathers killed them.

45 Truly ye are witnesses and consent to the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, but ye build their sepulchres.

46 Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye took away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

47 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees

began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:

48 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Leaven of the Pharisees – "Fear Him"

1 In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 For there is nothing covered up, that shall not be revealed; and hidden that shall not be known.

3 Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken to the ear in the chambers shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

4 And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

6 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

7 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall I also confess before God:

8 But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before God.

9 And every one, who shall speak against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that speak against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven.

10 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

11 For the Holy Spirit shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

Who Appointed Me a Judge?

12 And one out of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

13 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

14 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

15 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

16 And he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have not where to collect my fruits?

17 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I collect all my fruits and my goods.

18 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

19 But God said unto him, Foolish one, this night they require thy soul from thee: and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?

20 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Seek Ye the Kingdom of God

21 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

22 The life is more than the food, and the body than the raiment.

23 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

24 And which of you with being anxious can add to his stature one cubit?

25 If ye then be not able to do even a very little thing, why are ye anxious about the rest?

26 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

27 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

28 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

29 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

30 But seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

31 Fear not, little flock; for it is Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

32 Sell your possessions, and give alms; make yourselves purses which grow not old, an unfailing treasure in the heavens, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

33 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The Faithful and Wise Servant

34 Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning;

35 And ye like unto men that wait for their lord, when he shall return from the wedding-feast; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

36 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to recline to meat, and shall pass by and serve them.

37 And if he shall come in the evening watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

38 And this know, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief was coming, he would not have suffered his house to be broken through.

39 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

40 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even unto all?

41 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season?

42 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

43 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will set him over all his possessions.

44 But if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth to come, and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidservants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

45 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he expecteth not, and at an hour when he knoweth not, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unfaithful.

46 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

47 But he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

48 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

49 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

50 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

51 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

52 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

53 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

54 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

55 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

56 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

57 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

58 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

59 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

60 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Fire on the Earth

61 I came to cast fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

62 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I constrained till it be accomplished!

63 Think ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

64 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

65 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

66 And he said also to the multitudes, When ye see the cloud rising up from the west, straightway ye say There cometh a shower; and it cometh to pass.

67 And when ye see a south wind blowing, ye say, There will be scorching heat; and it cometh to pass.

68 Ye hypocrites, ye know how to interpret the face of the earth and the heaven; but how is it that ye do not know how to interpret this time?

69 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

70 For as thou goest with thine adversary before the magistrate, on the way give diligence to be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

71 I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last lepton.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Fig Tree

1 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

2 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down: why cumbereth it the ground?

3 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:

4 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

Healing on the Sabbath

5 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath days.

6 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

7 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

8 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

9 And the ruler of the synagogue answered, being vexed, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the multitude, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the day of the sabbath.

10 The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

11 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the day of the sabbath?

12 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame: and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

The Parable of the Tares

13 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

14 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

15 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

16 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

17 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

18 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

19 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and of the Pearl

20 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

21 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

22 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven

23 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I liken it?

24 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

25 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

26 It is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Interpretation of the Parable of the Tares

27 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

28 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

29 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

30 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

31 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

32 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

33 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

34 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of

their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The Parable of the Net

35 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

36 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

37 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

38 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The Righteous in the Kingdom

39 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and making a journey unto Jerusalem.

40 Then one said unto him, Lord, are they few that are being saved? And he said unto them,

41 Strive to enter in through the narrow gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

42 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand outside, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

43 Then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst teach in our streets.

44 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of unrighteousness.

45 When ye see all the righteous in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves kept out, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Jesus Heals on the Sabbath

1 And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.

2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

4 And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go;

5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

The Honoured Place

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honorable man thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

The Resurrection of the Righteous

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they have nothing wherewith to recompense thee: for it shall be recompensed to thee at the resurrection of the righteous.

The Parable of the Great Supper

15 And when one of them that reclined with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 But he said unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee, hold me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being moved said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou didst command, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

Discipleship

25 And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

26 If any man cometh to me, and doth not abandon his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come behind me, cannot be my disciple.

Counting the Costs

28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all that behold it begin to mock him,

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

33 So therefore, whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all his possessions, he cannot be my disciple.

34 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

35 It is neither fit for the land, not yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

36 Now all the publicans and sinners were coming near unto him, to hear him.

37 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

38 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

39 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

40 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

41 And when he cometh into the house, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

42 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in the heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, which have no need of repentance.

The Lost Piece of Silver

43 Either what woman having ten drachmas, if she lose one drachma, doth not light a lamp, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?

44 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the drachma which I had lost.

45 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Steward of Unrighteousness - God and Mammon

1 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him as wasting his property.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? render the account of thy stewardship; for thou canst not be a steward any longer.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I have not strength to dig; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I know what I will do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 And he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, An hundred baths of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bond, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred cors of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bond, and write fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the steward of unrighteousness, because he did wisely: for the sons of this age are unto their own generation wiser beyond the children of the light.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into eternal habitations.

10 He that is faithful in a very little is faithful in much: and he that is

unrighteous in very little is unrighteous also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another 's, who shall give you that which is mine?

13 No servant can serve two masters: for while one will be pleased the other must needs be displeased. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

14 And the Pharisees also, who were lovers of money, heard all these things: and they sneered at him.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which make yourselves righteous in the sight of men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

On the Law and the Prophets

16 Think not that I am come to fulfil the law, or the prophets: I am not come to fulfil, but to destroy.

17 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

18 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of my words to fail.

On Adultery and Divorce

19 Everyone that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and everyone that marrieth one that is put away from a husband also committeth adultery.

20 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.

21 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.

22 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother’s womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there are eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of God’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

On Swearing and Oaths

23 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

24 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

25 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

26 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

27 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Lazarus in Abraham's Bosom

28 There was a certain rich man, with the name Nineue, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day:

29 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

30 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: but even the dogs came and licked his sores.

31 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried.

32 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

33 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.

34 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art in anguish.

35 And besides all these things, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which wish to cross from hence to you may not be able; neither can they from thence pass through to us.

36 But he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

37 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

38 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

39 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one from the dead went unto them, they will repent.

40 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, not even if one from the dead arose, will they be persuaded.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Occasions of Stumbling

1 Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

2 It were better for him if he had not been born, or if a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones,

3 Take heed to yourselves: But if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in the day, and seven times in the day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

“Where Two or Three are Gathered Together”

5 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

6 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

7 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

8 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

9 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

10 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

11 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

12 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

13 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

14 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

15 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

16 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

17 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

18 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

19 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

Unprofitable Servants

20 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

21 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would say unto this mulberry tree, Be thou plucked up-rooted, and be thou planted in the sea; and it would have obeyed you.

22 But which of you, having a servant plowing or keeping cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

23 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

24 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

25 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you.

The Healing of the Ten Lepers

26 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

27 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

28 And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

29 And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

30 And many lepers were in Israel in the days of Elisha the prophet, but none of them was cleansed, but Naaman the Syrian.

31 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

32 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

33 And Jesus answering said, Were not the ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

34 There are not found that returned to give glory to God but this stranger.

35 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

When and Where

36 And when he was questioned by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

37 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Kingdom Cometh Not with Observation

38 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

39 And they shall say to you, Lo here!, or, lo there! go not away, nor follow after them.

40 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be.

41 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

42 And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

43 They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

44 Likewise also as it came to pass in the days of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

45 But in the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

46 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

47 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

48 Remember Lot's wife.

49 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

50 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

51 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

52 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

53 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

God Will Right His Elect

1 And he spake also a parable unto them on the necessity always to pray, and not to faint; Saying,

2 there was in a city a judge, which feared not God, and regarded not man:

3 And there was a certain widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Right me from my opponent at law.

4 And he would not for a time: but afterward he said within himself,

Though I fear not God, and regard not man;

5 Yet because this widow gives me trouble, I will right her, lest by her coming to the end she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the judge of the unrighteous saith.

7 And shall not God perform the righting of his elect, which cry unto him day and night, though he be long suffering over them?

8 I say unto you that he will perform the righting of them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find the faith on the earth?

Pharisee and Publican

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and accounted nothing of the rest;

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus: God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I get.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up even his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be propitiated to me the sinner.

14 I say unto you, this man went down to his house made righteous rather than that one: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Jesus and the Little Children

15 And they were bringing unto him also the infants, that he should touch them: but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and hinder them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter into it.

To Inherit Eternal Life

18 One said unto him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God the Father.

20 I know the commandments - Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

21 All these have I kept from my youth up.

22 But when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet one thing is lacking for thee: sell all things, as many as thou hast, and

distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

23 And when he heard these things, he became exceeding sorrowful: for he was very rich.

24 And when Jesus saw him become exceeding sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to enter through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the coming age eternal life.

31 And they understood none of these things: and his saying was his from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

Jesus and the Sons of Zebedee

32 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

33 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

34 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I shall drink? They say unto him, We are able.

35 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup: but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Blind Man by the Roadside

36 And it came to pass that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging:

37 And when he heard the multitude passing by, he asked what this might be.

38 And they told him, that Jesus passeth by.

39 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

40 And they which went before rebuked him, that he might be silent: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

41 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, saying,

42 What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

44 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Zacchaeus

1 And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

2 And, behold, a man called by the name Zacchaeus, and he was a chief publican, and he was rich.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not from the multitude, because he was little of stature.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him: for he was going to pass through that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to lodge with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zacchaeus stood still, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore fourfold.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house,

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

A Certain Nobleman

11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a distant country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Trade till I come.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent his embassy after him, saying, We do not wish this man to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, that he commanded these servants to be called unto him,

to whom he gave the money, that he might know what trade every man had accomplished.

16 And the first came before him, saying, Lord, thy pound hath wrought ten pounds more.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou wast faithful in a very little, be thou holding authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

20 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou sowest not.

21 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Knewest thou that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I sowed not?

22 Wherefore then gavest thou not my money into the bank, and I would have come and exacted it with interest?

23 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

24 And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.

25 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

26 But those mine enemies, that did not wish me to reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me. And cast ye the unprofitable servant unto the outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

27 And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

28 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

29 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

The Stones Will Cry Out

30 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

31 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

Daily Teaching in the Temple

32 And he was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him,

33 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

By What Authority?

1 And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

Tribute to Caesar?

10 And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

11 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, feigning themselves to be righteous men, that they might take hold of his speech, in order to deliver him up unto the rule and authority of the governor.

12 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly.

13 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

14 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

15 Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's.

16 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things of Caesar, and unto God the things of God.

17 And they were not able to take hold of his saying before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

Children of the Resurrection

18 And there came to him certain of the Sadducees, they which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

19 Teacher, Moses wrote unto us, that if any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die childless, that his brother should take the wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died childless.

21 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

22 And the third took her; and likewise the seven also left no children, and died.

23 Last of all the woman died also.

24 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

25 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

26 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

27 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

28 Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.

29 And they did not any longer venture to ask him anything.

Is Christ David's Son?

30 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David.

31 And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

32 Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.

33 David therefore calleth him Lord, and how is he then his son?

Beware of the Scribes

34 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

35 And when all the people were hearing him, he said unto his disciples,

36 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love salutations in the markets, and the first seats in the synagogues, and the first rooms at feasts;

37 Which eat up the houses of widows, and for a pretext make

long prayers: the same shall receive greater condemnation.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Widow's Two Mites

1 And he looked up, and saw the rich men that were casting their gifts into the treasury.

2 And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

The Little Apocalypse

5 And as some spake about the temple, that it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings, he said,

6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left a stone upon a stone, that shall not be thrown down.

7 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?

8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am he; and the time is come near: go ye not therefore after them.

9 And when ye shall hear of wars and tumults, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.

10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and terrors and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

16 And ye shall be delivered up even by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and they shall put some of you to death.

17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

18 In your patience possess ye your souls.

19 But when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is come near.

20 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

21 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

22 And there shall be signs in sun, and moon, and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and waves roaring;

23 Men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

24 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with great power.

25 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

26 And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees;

27 When they already produce fruit, ye see it, and know your own selves that summer is already near.

28 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is near.

29 Verily I say unto you, The heaven and the earth shall in no wise pass away, till all things be accomplished.

30 The heaven and the earth shall pass away: but my words shall in no wise pass away.

Be Alert

31 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be weighed down with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come upon you unawares.

32 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

33 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Teaching Ministry in the Temple

34 And every day he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and lodged on the mountain that is called Olives.

35 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple to hear him.

The Woman Caught in Adultery

36 And every man went unto his own house.

37 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.

38 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

39 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

40 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

41 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

42 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

43 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

44 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

45 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

46 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

47 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Judas Plots with the Religious Leaders

1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

Washing the Disciples' Feet

7 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

8 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

9 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

10 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

11 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

12 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

13 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

14 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

15 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

16 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

17 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

18 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

19 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

20 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

21 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

22 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

23 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

24 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

25 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

26 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

The Last Supper

27 Then the day of unleavened bread came, when the passover must be sacrificed.

28 And he said unto Peter and the rest, Go and make ready that we may eat the passover.

29 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we make ready?

30 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye have entered into the city, a man shall meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house whereinto he goeth.

31 And ye shall say unto the master of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the lodging, where I may eat the passover with my disciples?

32 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

33 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

34 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

35 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

36 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

37 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

38 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

39 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

40 But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

41 And the Son of man indeed goeth, as it hath been determined: but woe unto that man through whom he is betrayed!

42 And they began to dispute with themselves, which of them it was that was going to do this thing.

43 And there was also a contention among them, which of them is accounted to be greater.

44 And he said unto them, The kings of the nations have lordship over them; and they that have authority over them are called benefactors.

45 But ye shall not be so: but he that is the greater among you, let him be as the younger; and he that leadeth as he that serveth.

46 For whether is greater- he that reclineth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that reclineth? But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.

47 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

48 And I appoint unto you even as my Father hath appointed unto me, A kingdom.

49 That ye may eat and drink at my table, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

The New Commandment of Love

50 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

51 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

52 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

53 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

54 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Peter's Denial of Jesus Foretold

55 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded you, that he might sift you as wheat:

56 But I entreated for thee, that thy faith may not fail: and once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren.

57 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

58 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow at all to-day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

Two Swords

59 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

60 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

The Mount of Olives

1 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

2 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

3 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

4 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

5 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

6 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was

as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

7 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

8 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

Jesus Delivered to the Religious Leaders

9 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and Judas, one of the twelve, went before them; and forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed him.

10 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

11 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

12 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?

13 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

Peter's Denial

14 Then they seized him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following afar off.

15 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the court, and had sat down together, Peter sat in the midst of them.

16 And a certain maid seeing him as he sat towards the light, looked steadfastly upon him, and said, This man also was with him.

17 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

18 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

19 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean.

20 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

21 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

22 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

Jesus Tortured and Interrogated

23 And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him.

24 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?

25 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

Jesus before the Sanhedrin

26 And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,

27 Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

28 And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go.

29 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

30 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

31 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Jesus Before Pilate and Herod

1 And the whole company arose, and brought him before Pilate.

2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and destroying the law and the prophets, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and turning away the women and children, saying that he himself is Christ a King.

3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest.

4 And Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes, I find no fault in this man.

5 And they were urgent, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judaea, having begun from Galilee to this place.

6 But when Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean.

7 And when he knew that he was from Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him up to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was of a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard many things about him; and was hoping to see some sign done by him.

9 And he questioned him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and the scribes stood vehemently accusing him.

11 And Herod with his soldiers set him at nought, and mocked him, and arraying him in a gorgeous robe, sent him back to Pilate.

12 And Pilate and Herod became friends with each other that very

day: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

Pilate Declares Jesus Innocent

13 And Pilate called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said unto them,

14 Ye brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I examined him before you, and found no fault in this man of what ye charge against him:

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death hath been done by him.

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him.

17 For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.

18 But they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas:

19 One who for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder, had been cast into prison.

20 Pilate therefore spake again to them, wishing to release Jesus.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath this man done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.

23 But they were urgent with loud voices, asking that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

"Behold the Man!"

24 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

25 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

26 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

27 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

28 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

29 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

30 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

31 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

32 And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

33 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

34 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

35 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

36 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

37 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

38 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

Pilate Delivers Jesus to be Crucified

39 And Pilate gave sentence that their request should be done.

40 And he released unto them him that for insurrection and murder had been cast into prison, whom they had desired; but Jesus he delivered up to their will.

Jesus Crucified

41 And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, that was coming out of the country, and laid on him the cross, to bear it after Jesus.

Daughters of Jerusalem

42 And there followed him a great company of the people, and of women, who also were bewailing and lamenting him.

43 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

44 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that bare not, and the breasts that gave not suck.

45 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

46 For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

The Crucifixion

47 And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

48 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the

malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

49 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

50 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

51 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

52 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

53 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS**.

54 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

55 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

56 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

57 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

58 And Jesus answering said to him - the one who rebuked - Courage! Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

The Death of Jesus

59 And it was about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.

60 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the sanctuary was rent in the midst.

61 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he expired.

62 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this man was righteous.

63 And all the multitude that came together to this sight, when they beheld the things which were done, returned smiting their breasts.

64 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, seeing these things.

Jesus' Side Pierced

65 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, for that sabbath day was an high day, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

66 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

67 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

68 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

Jesus Laid in the Sepulcher

69 And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just:

70 The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them; he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

71 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

72 And he took it down, and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn in stone, wherein no man had ever yet lain.

73 And it was the day of the preparation, and the sabbath was dawning.

74 And the women also, which had come with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the tomb, and how his body was laid.

75 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. And on the sabbath day they rested according to the commandment.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The Empty Tomb

1 Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words,

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

Peter at the Tomb

12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

The Road to Emmaus

13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass therein these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that he spake to you.

26 Was it not neccessary for the Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

28 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

29 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

30 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

31 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

32 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

33 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

34 And they rehearsed the things that happened in the way, and how he became known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus Appears to the Ten

35 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

36 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a phantom.

37 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

38 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

39 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

40 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

41 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.

42 And he took it, and did eat before them.

43 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you,

44 That thus it was neccessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day:

45 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.

46 And ye are witnesses of these things.

47 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

The Promise of the Paraclete

1 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

2 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

3 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

4 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

5 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

6 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

7 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

8 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

9 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

10 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

12 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Gift of Peace

13 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

14 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

15 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

16 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

17 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

Jesus the True Vine

18 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

19 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

20 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

21 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

22 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

23 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

24 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

25 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

The World's Hatred

26 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

27 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

28 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

29 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

30 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

31 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

32 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

33 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

The Witness of the Paraclete

34 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

35 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

On Persecutions

36 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

37 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

38 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

39 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

The Intercessory Prayer

40 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

41 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

42 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

43 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

44 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

45 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

46 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

47 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

48 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

49 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

50 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

51 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

52 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

53 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

54 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

55 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

56 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

57 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

58 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

59 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

60 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

61 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

62 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

63 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

64 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

65 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Jesus' Ascension

66 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

67 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

68 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

69 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.

The Great Commission

70 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

71 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

72 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

73 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

74 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

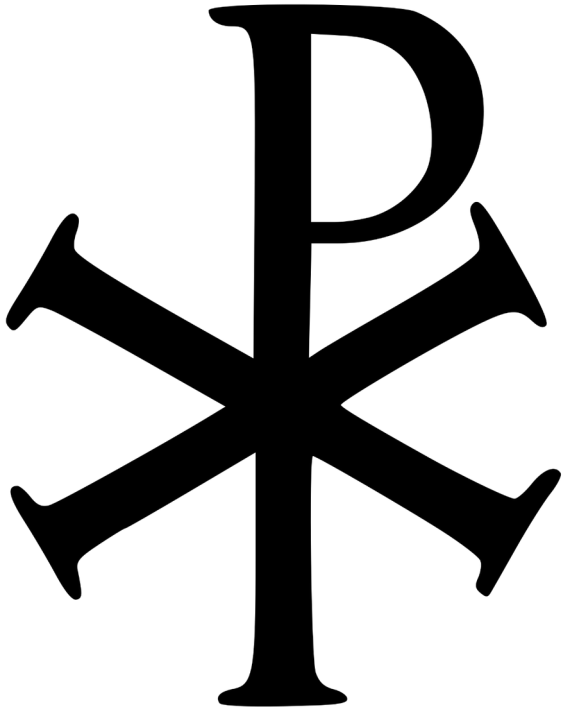
Here endeth the Evangelicon.

THE TESTAMENTUM

APOSTOLICON

THE UNDISPUTED EPISTLES OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

AS COMPILED & TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.



THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

GALATIANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

The Galatians are Greeks. These first received the word of truth from the apostle; but after his departure they were tempted of false apostles, that they should turn unto the law and circumcision. These doth the apostle call back unto the faith of truth, writing unto them from Ephesus, by Titus.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;

2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:

3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Perversion of the Gospel

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you

into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7 Which is not another according to my gospel; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert to a gospel different from that of Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

Paul Defends His Ministry

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:

23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24 And they glorified God in me.

CHAPTER TWO

The Council at Jerusalem

1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person: for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;

8 For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:

9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

Peter Opposed by Paul

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

CHAPTER THREE

Faith Brings Righteousness

1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

6 So then they which be of faith are blessed.

7 Learn that the just shall live by faith.

8 For as many as are under the Law are under a curse;

9 But, the man that doeth them shall live by them.

Intent of the Law

10 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: Cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree; but he that is of the promise is by the freewoman.

11 Therefore we received the blessing of the Spirit by faith.

12 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men;

13 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise:

14 Ye are all the sons of faith.

15 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

16 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER FOUR

Sonship in Christ

1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are God's sons, He hath sent forth his Spirit into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of

God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all.

13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.

19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

Bond and Free

20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two expositions; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

26 Another that gendereth above all principality and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come.

27 The holy church our mother, to whom we have made promise.

28 Which is the mother of us all.

29 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

CHAPTER FIVE

Walk by the Spirit

1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 I testify that a man that is circumcised is a debtor to do the whole Law,

4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.

9 A little leaven corrupteth the whole lump.

10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

12 I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

14 For all the Law is fulfilled by you; thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past,

that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

CHAPTER SIX

Bear One Another's Burdens

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

CORINTHIANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

The Corinthians are Achaeans. These likewise heard from the apostle the word of truth, but in many ways were overthrown by false apostles; some by the wordy eloquence of philosophy, and others drawn in by the sect of the Jewish law. These doth the apostle call back unto the true and evangelical wisdom, writing unto them from Ephesus by Timothy his disciple; exhorting and reproving them, that they might be saved in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHAPTER ONE

Appeal to Unity

Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

3 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

The Wisdom of God

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

CHAPTER TWO

Paul's Reliance upon the Spirit

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

Foundations for Living

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man defile the temple of God, he shall be himself destroyed; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

CHAPTER FOUR

Servants of Christ

1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

8 Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.

11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace;

12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

13 Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.

15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

18 Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

CHAPTER FIVE

Immorality Rebuked

1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

CHAPTER SIX

Lawsuits Discouraged

1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

5 I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

8 Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

The Body Is the Lord's

12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and

make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.

18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Teaching on Marriage

1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

3 Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

6 But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.

7 For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he

be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

16 For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

17 But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.

18 Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised.

19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

20 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

21 Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.

22 For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.

23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

24 Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

26 I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.

27 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;

30 And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;

31 And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

32 But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

33 But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

34 There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

35 And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

36 But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.

37 Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.

38 So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.

39 The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

40 But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Take Care with Your Liberty

1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many, and lords many,

6 But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

7 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with

conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

CHAPTER NINE

Paul's Use of Liberty

1 Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?

2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

3 Mine answer to them that do examine me is this,

4 Have we not power to eat and to drink?

5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

8 Say I these things as a man? or doth not the law of Moses say the same?

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this

power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

15 But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.

16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.

18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

21 To them that are without law, as without law, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without law.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

CHAPTER TEN

Avoid Israel's Mistakes

1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake:

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

33 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Christian Order

1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

8 For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.

9 Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.

11 Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

12 For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.

13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.

16 But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

17 Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

20 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper.

21 For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

22 What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

The Lord's Supper

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the

Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Use of Spiritual Gifts

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Excellence of Love

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Prophecy a Superior Gift

1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret,

that the church may receive edifying.

6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.

11 Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.

14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

16 Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding on the law’s account, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.

Instruction for the Church

20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

21 In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but

prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30 If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

34 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

35 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

36 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

37 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

38 Let all things be done decently and in order.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Fact of Christ's Resurrection

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that

Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

9 I am the last of all the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

11 Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

The Order of Resurrection

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

29 Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

30 And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

35 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

39 All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, The first man was made a living soul; the last Lord was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

The Mystery of Resurrection

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Instructions and Greetings

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia.

6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.

7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.

8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

10 Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.

11 Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.

12 As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

14 Let all your things be done with charity.

15 I beseech you, brethren, ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,

16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.

17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.

18 For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

21 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand.

22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

After penitence had been wrought by the Corinthians, he writeth unto them a consolatory epistle, writing from Troas, by Titus; and praising them, he exhorteth them unto better things, shewing them sorrowful indeed, yet amended.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:

2 Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:

9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:

10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;

11 Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

Paul's Integrity

12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not

with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

13 For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end;

14 As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

15 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit;

16 And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea.

17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?

18 But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

23 Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

CHAPTER TWO

Reaffirm Your Love

1 But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.

2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

3 And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.

4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

5 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.

6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.

7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;

11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,

13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

16 To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

17 For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

Ministers of a New Covenant

1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?

2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

8 How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

9 For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

10 For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

11 For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:

13 And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:

14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.

16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.

17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

CHAPTER FOUR

Paul's Apostolic Ministry

1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath

shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We having the same spirit of faith, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Temporal and Eternal

1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 For we walk by faith, not by sight:

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

12 For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.

13 For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

CHAPTER SIX

Their Ministry Commended

1 We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

2 For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee:

behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

3 Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;

6 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,

7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;

9 As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed;

10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

11 O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.

12 Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.

13 Now for a recompence in the same, I speak as unto my children, be ye also enlarged.

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Paul Reveals His Heart

1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.

3 I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

5 For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.

6 Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

12 Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.

13 Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

14 For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth.

15 And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.

16 I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Great Generosity

1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

8 I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

10 And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.

11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.

12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.

13 For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened:

14 But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality:

15 As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.

16 But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

17 For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

18 And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches;

19 And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind:

20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.

23 Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you: or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.

24 Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

CHAPTER NINE

God Gives Most

1 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready:

4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we that we say not, ye should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

9 As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

CHAPTER TEN

Paul Describes Himself

1 Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:

2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

7 Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.

8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.

10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

11 Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present.

12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

13 But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according

to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

14 For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ:

15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16 To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Paul Defends His Apostleship

1 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

5 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

6 But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been throughly made manifest among you in all things.

7 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.

9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein

they glory, they may be found even as we.

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, I speak foolishly, I am bold also.

22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Paul's Vision

1 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth; such an one caught up to the third heaven.

3 And I knew such a man, whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;

4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

5 Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

6 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

A Thorn in the Flesh

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

13 For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.

14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

17 Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

18 I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?

19 Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before

God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

21 And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Examine Yourselves

1 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

2 I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare:

3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

7 Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

12 Greet one another with an holy kiss.

13 All the saints salute you.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

ROMANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

The Romans are in the parts of Italy. These were beforehand reached by false apostles, and under the name of our Lord Jesus Christ were led into the law and the prophets. These doth the apostle call back unto true evangelical faith, writing unto them from Corinth.

CHAPTER ONE

The Gospel Exalted

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, among all nations, for his name:

2 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

3 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

5 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

6 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

7 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

8 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

9 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, but was let hitherto, that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

10 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

11 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

12 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew, and also to the Greek.

13 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Unbelief and Its Consequences

14 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

15 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

16 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

17 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

18 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

19 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

20 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

21 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

22 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

23 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

24 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

25 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

26 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

27 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

28 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

CHAPTER TWO

The Impartiality of God

1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

3 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

4 For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

5 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

6 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;

7 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

The Jew Is Condemned by the Law

8 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,

9 And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;

10 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,

11 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

12 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

13 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

14 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

15 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

16 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

17 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

18 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

19 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

20 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

CHAPTER THREE

All the World Guilty

1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?

6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?

8 And not rather, as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

17 And the way of peace have they not known:

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Justification by Faith

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results of Justification

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

13 For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER FIVE

Believers Are Dead to Sin, Alive to God

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER SIX

Believers United to Christ

1 Know ye not, brethren, for I speak to them that know the law, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the

commandment might become exceeding sinful.

The Conflict of Two Natures

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Deliverance from Bondage

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Our Victory in Christ

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we

ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Solicitude for Israel

1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

The Word of Faith Brings Salvation

4 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

5 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

6 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

7 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

8 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

9 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? That is, to bring Christ down from above:

10 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.

11 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

12 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

13 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

14 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

CHAPTER NINE

1 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

2 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

3 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

4 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

CHAPTER TEN

Dedicated Service

1 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

2 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

3 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

4 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

5 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

6 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

7 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

8 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

9 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

10 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

11 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

12 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

13 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Be Subject to Government

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

6 For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Principles of Conscience

1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that

esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

THESSALONIANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

The Thessalonians are Macedonians in Christ Jesus, who, having received the word of truth, continued in the faith even in the persecution of their fellow citizens; moreover they received not false apostles, neither the things that were spoken by false apostles, but refuted them. These doth the apostle praise, writing unto them from Athens, by Tychicus the deacon and Onesimus the acolyte.

CHAPTER ONE

Thanksgiving for These Believers

Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

CHAPTER TWO

Paul's Ministry

1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness:

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

20 For ye are our glory and joy.

CHAPTER THREE

Encouragement of Timothy's Visit

1 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:

7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

CHAPTER FOUR

Sanctification and Love

1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have

received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

Those Who Died in Christ

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Day of the Lord

1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Christian Conduct

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

16 Rejoice evermore.

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the

coming of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.

24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

THESSALONIANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

To the Thessalonians he writeth a second epistle, and maketh known unto them concerning the last times, and concerning the detection of the adversary; and he writeth from Athens, by Titus the deacon and Onesimus the acolyte.

CHAPTER ONE

Thanksgiving for Faith and Perseverance

Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8 Taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe because our testimony among you was believed in that day.

11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:

12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and

ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER TWO

Man of Sin

1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

CHAPTER THREE

Exhortation

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.

17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

LAODICEANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

The Laodiceans are Asians. Having received the word of truth and the evangelical faith, they continued stedfast therein. Yet were they forestalled by false apostles; and the apostle came not unto them in person, but did correct them by an epistle. These doth the blessed Apostle Paul praise; therefore, being now bound, he writeth unto them from Ephesus, from prison, by Tychicus the deacon.

CHAPTER ONE

The Blessings of Redemption

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Laodicea, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the

gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

CHAPTER TWO

Made Alive in Christ

1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved;

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

CHAPTER THREE

Paul's Stewardship

1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; as I wrote afore in few words,

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ

5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

CHAPTER FOUR

Unity of the Spirit

1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

The Christian's Walk

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man,

which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

CHAPTER FIVE

Be Imitators of God

1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9 For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Marriage Like Christ and the Church

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

CHAPTER SIX

Family Relationships

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2 Honour thy father and mother;

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

The Armor of God

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.

23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

COLOSSIANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

The Colossians, even as the Laodiceans, are Asians; and they also were prevented by false apostles: neither came the apostle himself unto them, but by an epistle he correcteth them. For they had heard the word from Archippus, who also received a ministry among them. Therefore the apostle, now bound, wrote unto them from Ephesus by Tychicus the deacon and Onesimus the acolyte.

CHAPTER ONE

Thankfulness for Spiritual Attainments

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother,

2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,

5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

6 Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:

7 As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8 Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

The Incomparable Christ

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16 For by him were all things created that are in heaven and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:

23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

CHAPTER TWO

You Are Built Up in Christ

1 For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4 And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and

worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

21 Touch not; taste not; handle not;

22 Which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men?

23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

CHAPTER THREE

Put On the New Self

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Family Relations

18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

20 Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

22 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

CHAPTER FOUR

Fellow Workers

1 Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

4 That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

6 Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

7 All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord:

8 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;

9 With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here.

10 Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;

11 And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

13 For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

14 Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

16 And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

18 The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO

PHILEMON

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

Unto Philemon he maketh familiar letters for Onesimus his servant; and he writeth unto him from the city of Rome, out of prison, by the aforesaid Onesimus the acolyte.

CHAPTER ONE

Salutation

1 Paul**,** a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer,

2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in thy house:

3 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philemon's Love and Faith

4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,

9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

Plea for Onesimus, a Free Man

10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:

11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:

12 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:

13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:

14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;

16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?

17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.

18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;

19 I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.

21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.

23 There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus;

24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

PHILIPPIANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 128 C.E.

The Philippians are Macedonians. These, having received the word of truth, continued in the faith, neither received they false apostles. These doth the apostle praise, writing unto them from Rome, from prison, by Epaphroditus.

CHAPTER ONE

Thanksgiving

Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

The Gospel Is Preached

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;

14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

To Live Is Christ

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

CHAPTER TWO

Be Like Christ

1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of

mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

Timothy and Epaphroditus

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my

brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.

29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:

30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

CHAPTER THREE

The Goal of Life

1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

CHAPTER FOUR

Think of Excellence

1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

God's Provisions

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.

19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

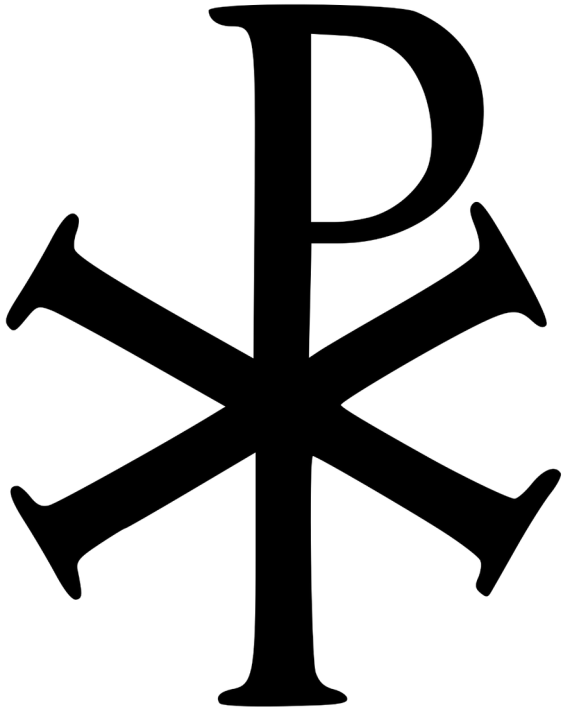
Here endeth the Apostolicon.

THE TESTAMENTUM

ANTILEGICON

THE DISPUTED EPISTLES OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

AS COMPILED & TRANSCRIBED BY APELLES OF ALEXANDRIA IN 156 C.E.



THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TITUS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY APELLES OF ALEXANDRIA IN 156 C.E.

Titus he admonisheth and instructeth concerning the constitution of the presbytery, and spiritual conversation, and the avoiding of heretics that give heed unto Jewish fables; writing unto him from Nicopolis.

CHAPTER ONE

Salutation

Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;

2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;

4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Qualifications of Presbyters

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain

elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

7 For a presbyter must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

8 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

9 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

10 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

11 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

12 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

13 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

14 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

15 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

CHAPTER TWO

Duties of the Older and Younger

1 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

2 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

3 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

4 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

5 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

6 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

7 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

8 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

CHAPTER THREE

Godly Living

1 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,

2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,

5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

6 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

7 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;

8 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

Personal Concerns

9 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

10 Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.

11 And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

12 All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL TO

TIMOTHY

AS TRANSCRIBED BY APELLES OF ALEXANDRIA IN 156 C.E.

Timothy he instructeth, and teacheth him of the ordering of the episcopate and the diaconate, and of all ecclesiastical discipline; writing unto him from Laodicea, by Tychicus the deacon.

CHAPTER ONE

Misleadings in Doctrine and Living

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;

2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.

5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

CHAPTER TWO

A Call to Prayer

1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not; a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Women Instructed

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But which becometh women professing godliness with good works.

11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

12 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

CHAPTER THREE

Bishops and deacons

1 This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

8 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

9 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

10 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

11 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

CHAPTER FOUR

Apostasy

1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

A Good Minister's Discipline

6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

9 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

10 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

11 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

12 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

13 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

CHAPTER FIVE

Honor Widows

1 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

2 Honour widows that are widows indeed.

3 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

4 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

5 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

6 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,

7 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

8 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;

9 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

10 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

11 For some are already turned aside after Satan.

Concerning Elders

12 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour,

especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

13 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

14 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

15 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

16 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

17 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

18 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

CHAPTER SIX

Instructions to Those Who Minister

1 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

13 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

14 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

15 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

16 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

17 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

18 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO

TIMOTHY

AS TRANSCRIBED BY APELLES OF ALEXANDRIA IN 156 C.E.

Likewise unto Timothy he writeth a second epistle of exhortation unto martyrdom, and of every rule of truth, and what things shall be in the last times, and concerning his own passion; writing unto him from the city of Rome, from prison.

CHAPTER ONE

Timothy Charged to Guard His Trust

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

9 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

10 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

11 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

12 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

13 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

CHAPTER TWO

Be Strong

1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

6 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

7 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:

8 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

An Unashamed Workman

9 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

10 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

11 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

12 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

13 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

14 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal,

The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

15 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

16 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

17 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

18 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

19 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

20 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

21 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

CHAPTER THREE

"Perilous Times Shall Come"

1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

9 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at

Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

10 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

11 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

12 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

13 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

14 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

15 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

CHAPTER FOUR
"Preach the Word"

1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

3 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

4 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

5 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

6 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Personal Concerns

7 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

8 The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

9 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

10 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

11 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

12 Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

13 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

14 The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE

ALEXANDRIANS

AS TRANSCRIBED BY APELLES OF ALEXANDRIA IN 156 C.E.

The Alexandrians are Israelites, faithful believers from the circumcision. Having received the word of truth, they continued stedfast in the faith, even when they were persecuted by their own fellow-citizens; and, enduring stripes and well nigh every kind of injury with a noble mind, at the last (as the Apostle saith) they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. Therefore the Apostle doth comfort them by this epistle, exhorting them to put away the ancient figures of the former time, even the ceremonies and the shadows of festival solemnities that pertained to the law of Moses, together with the keeping of days; and he admonisheth them to abide in faith alone, without the which no man shall obtain Christ's inheritance, even his country, that is, the heavenly Jerusalem. Written from Italy, by Tertius. Sent by Phoebe, a minister of the church which is at Cenchrea.

CHAPTER ONE

Greetings and Love Expressed

I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only

I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well-beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

6 Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

9 Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.

11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

22 I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.

23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

CHAPTER TWO

God's Final Word in His Son

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

4 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

5 And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

6 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

7 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

8 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

CHAPTER THREE

Give Heed

1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

Earth Subject to Man

4 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

5 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?

Jesus Briefly Humbled

6 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

7 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

8 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

9 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

10 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

11 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels;

12 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

CHAPTER FOUR

Jesus Our High Priest

1 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

2 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

3 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

4 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

5 Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

6 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

7 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

8 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

9 So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.

The Peril of Unbelief

10 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

11 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

12 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Believer's Rest

1 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

2 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

3 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

4 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

5 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

6 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

7 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

CHAPTER SIX

The Perfect High Priest

1 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins:

2 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

3 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

4 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

5 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

6 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

7 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

8 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

9 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Peril of Falling Away

1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

3 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

4 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

5 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and

bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

6 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

Better Things for You

7 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

8 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

9 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

10 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

11 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Melchisedec's Priesthood Like Christ's

1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

4 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

5 For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:

6 For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.

CHAPTER NINE

A Better Ministry

1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

3 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as

Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

A New Covenant

4 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

5 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

6 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

7 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

8 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

CHAPTER TEN

The Old and the New

1 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all;

2 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;

3 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:

4 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

5 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

6 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

7 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

8 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

9 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with

water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

10 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

11 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

12 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

13 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

One Sacrifice of Christ Is Sufficient

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

3 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

4 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

5 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

A New and Living Way

6 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised;

7 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

8 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Christ or Judgment

9 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

10 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

11 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

12 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I

will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

13 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

14 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

15 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

16 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

17 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

18 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

19 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

20 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Triumphs of Faith

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

8 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

9 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

10 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

11 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

12 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

13 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

14 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

15 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

16 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

17 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

18 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

19 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

20 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

21 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

22 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

23 Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

24 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

25 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Jesus, the Example

1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

A Father's Discipline

3 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

4 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

5 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

6 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

7 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

8 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

9 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

Contrast of Sinai and Zion

10 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:

11 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

12 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

13 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

The Unshaken Kingdom

14 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

15 For our God is a consuming fire.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Changeless Christ

1 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

2 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

3 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

4 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

5 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

6 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

7 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

8 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

9 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

10 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

11 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

12 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

13 Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.

14 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

15 Grace be with you all. Amen.

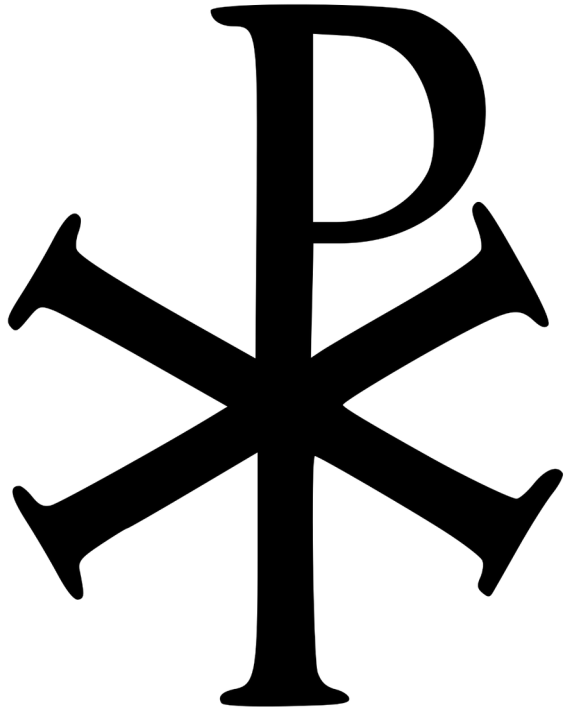
Here endeth the Antilegicon.

THE TESTAMENTUM

PSALMICON

THE PSALMS OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCH

AS COMPILED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 125 C.E.



THE TESTAMENTUM

PSALMICON

THE PSALMS OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCH

AS COMPILED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 125 C.E.

PSALM ONE

For It Is Not Like a Dry Wreath

The Lord is upon my head like a crown, and I shall not be removed.

2 They wove for me a crown of truth, and it caused thy branches to blossom within me.

3 For it is not like a withered crown which blossometh not; but thou livest upon my head, and thou hast blossomed upon me.

4 Thy fruits are full-grown and perfect; they are full of thy salvation. Amen.

PSALM TWO

Immortal Land

1 I saw trees beautiful and fruitful, and self-grown was their crown.

2 Their timber flourisheth, and their fruits rejoice; their roots are from an immortal land.

3 And the river of joy watereth them round about, even the land of their eternal life.

4 Blessed are they that behold thy waters. Amen.

PSALM THREE

And God's Limbs Are With Me

1 My limbs with light I clothe.

2 And His members are with me; unto them do I cleave, and He loveth me.

3 For I could not have known how to love the Lord, had He not loved me.

4 For who is able to understand love, except him that is loved?

5 I love the Beloved, and my soul loveth Him;

6 And where His rest is, there also am I.

7 And I shall not be a stranger; for with the Lord Most High and Merciful there is no envy.

8 I have been united unto Him, for the Lover hath found the Beloved;

9 And because I love Him who is the Son, I also shall become a son;

10 For he that is joined unto Him who is immortal shall also become immortal;

11 And he that delighteth in the Living One shall become living.

12 This is the Spirit of the Lord, which doth not lie, which teacheth the sons of men to know His ways.

13 Be ye wise and understanding, and be vigilant. Amen.

PSALM FOUR

And the Elect Archangels Are Clothed With Your Seal

1 No man, O my God, changeth thy holy place;

2 And it is not possible that he should change it and put it in another place, because he hath no power over it;

3 For thy sanctuary thou hast designed before thou didst make other places:

4 That which is the elder shall not be altered by those that are younger than itself.

5 Thou hast given thy heart, O Lord, unto thy believers; never wilt thou fail, nor be without fruits.

6 For one hour of thy faithfulness is more than all days and years.

7 For who is there that hath put on thy grace and been hurt?

8 For thy seal is known: and thy creatures know it: and thy heavenly hosts possess it: and the elect archangels are clad with it.

9 Thou hast given us fellowship with thee; not because thou hast need of us, but because we have need of thee.

10 Distil thy dew upon us, and open thy rich fountains, which pour forth unto us milk and honey.

11 For there is no repentance with thee, that thou shouldest repent of any thing that thou hast promised.

12 And the end was revealed before thee: for what thou gavest, thou gavest freely:

13 So that thou mayest not draw them back and take them again:

14 For all things were revealed before thee as God, and ordered from the beginning before thee; and thou, O God, hast made all things. Amen.

PSALM FIVE

For They Have Devised a Scheme

1 I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, because I love thee;

2 O Most High, thou wilt not forsake me, for thou art my hope:

3 Freely I have received thy grace; I shall live thereby:

4 Let my persecutors come and not see me;

5 A cloud of darkness shall fall on their eyes; and an air of thick gloom shall darken them:

6 And they shall have no light to see, that they may not take hold upon me.

7 Let their counsel become thick darkness, and what they have

cunningly devised, let it return upon their own heads:

8 For they devised a counsel, and it succeeded not.

9 For my hope is upon the Lord and I will not fear, and because the Lord is my salvation, I will not fear:

10 And He is as a crown upon my head, and I shall not be moved; though all things be shaken, I shall stand firm.

11 And though all things visible should perish, I shall not die; for the Lord is with me, and I am with Him. Amen.

PSALM SIX

And the Restrainers Could Not Restrain It

1 As the wind moveth over the harp, and the strings speak,

2 So speaketh the Spirit of the Lord in my members, and I speak by His love.

3 For He destroyeth that which is foreign, and every thing is of the Lord.

4 For thus it was from the beginning and will be to the end, that nothing should be His adversary, and nothing should stand up against Him.

5 The Lord hath multiplied the knowledge of Himself, and is zealous that these things which by His grace have been given unto us should be known.

6 And the praise of His name He gave us: our spirits praise His Holy Spirit.

7 For there went forth a stream and became a river great and broad;

8 For it flooded all things, and covered them, and brought water unto the temple.

9 And the restrainers of the children of men were not able to restrain it, nor the arts of those whose business it is to restrain waters;

10 For it spread over the face of the whole earth and filled all things; and all the thirsty upon earth drank thereof.

11 And thirst was relieved and quenched: for from the Most High the draught was given.

12 Blessed, therefore, are the ministers of that draught, who are entrusted with that water.

13 They have assuaged the dry lips, and the will that had fainted they have raised up;

14 And souls that were near departing they have caught back from death:

15 And limbs that had fallen they straightened and set up:

16 They gave strength for their feebleness and light to their eyes:

17 For all knew themselves in the Lord, and they lived by the water of life for ever. Amen.

PSALM SEVEN

And So God Was Merciful to Me

1 As the impulse of love toward infancy, so is the impulse of joy toward the Beloved, which bringeth forth its fruits without restraint.

2 My joy is the Lord and my impulse is toward Him: this path of mine is excellent:

3 For this path is a help unto me because of the Lord.

4 He hath caused me to know Himself in His simplicity without envy; His kindness hath humbled His greatness.

5 He became like me, in order that I might receive Him:

6 He appeared in a likeness like mine, that I might put Him on.

7 And I trembled not when I saw Him: because He was gracious to me:

8 Like my nature He became that I might learn Him and like my form, that I might not turn back from Him:

9 From the Father of knowledge is the Word of knowledge.

10 He who created wisdom is wiser than His works.

11 And He who created me, when as yet I was not, knew what I should do when I came into being.

12 Wherefore He had mercy upon me in His abundant grace, and granted me to ask of Him and to receive of His offering.

13 For He is incorrupt, the fulfilment of the ages and the Father of them.

14 He hath granted Himself to be seen of them that are His, that they might know Him who made them, and not suppose that they came of themselves.

15 For He appointed the way unto knowledge, widened it, lengthened it, and brought it over all fulness.

16 And He set over it the footsteps of His light, and the light reached from the beginning even unto the end.

17 For by this way was the light served, and the light rested in the Son; and for His salvation He shall take hold of all things.

18 And the Most High shall be known in His saints, that they may announce unto those who have songs of the coming of the Lord:

19 That they may go forth to meet Him, and may sing to Him with joy and with the harp of many tones:

20 They that see shall go before Him, and shall be seen before Him;

21 And they shall praise the Lord for His love: because He is near and beholdeth.

22 And hatred shall be taken from the earth, and along with jealousy it shall be drowned:

23 For ignorance hath been destroyed, because the knowledge of the Lord hath come.

24 They who make songs shall sing the grace of the Lord Most High;

25 And they shall bring their songs; and their heart shall be like the day, and their sound like the excellent beauty of the Lord.

26 And nothing that hath breath shall be without knowledge or without speech;

27 For He hath given a mouth unto His creation, that it may open its voice unto Him and praise Him.

28 Confess ye His power, and shew forth His grace. Amen.

PSALM EIGHT

For I Do Not Turn Away My Face from My Own

1 Open ye, open ye your hearts to the exultation of the Lord:

2 And let your love be multiplied from the heart and even to the lips,

3 To bring forth fruit unto the Lord, a holy life, and to speak with watchfulness in His light.

4 Rise up and stand erect, ye who sometime were brought low.

5 Tell forth ye who were in silence, that your mouth hath been opened.

6 Ye, therefore, who were despised, be henceforth lifted up, because your righteousness hath been exalted.

7 For the right hand of the Lord is with you: and He is your helper:

8 And peace was prepared for you, before ever your war was.

9 Hear the word of truth, and receive the knowledge of the Most High.

10 Your flesh hath not known what I say unto you, neither hath your raiment known what I shew unto you.

11 Keep my secret, ye who are kept by it.

12 Keep my faith, ye who are kept by it.

13 And understand my knowledge, ye who know me in truth.

14 Love me with affection, ye who love!

15 For I do not turn away my face from them that are mine;

16 For I know them; and before they came into being I took knowledge of them, and upon their persons I set my seal.

17 I fashioned their members: my own breasts I prepared for them, that they might drink my holy milk and live thereby:

18 I took pleasure in them and am not ashamed of them:

19 For my workmanship are they and the strength of my thoughts:

20 Who then shall rise up against my handiwork, or who is there that shall not be subject unto them?

21 I willed and fashioned mind and heart, and they are mine; and near mine own right hand I set my chosen ones.

22 And my righteousness goeth before them; and they shall not be separated from my name, for it is with them.

23 Seek abundantly, and abide in the love of the Lord,

24 As beloved in the Beloved, and as they that are kept in Him that liveth;

25 And as they that are saved in Him who was saved;

26 And ye shall be found incorrupt through all ages, for the sake of your Father's name. Amen.

PSALM NINE

That Those Who Have Known God May Not Perish

1 Open ye your ears, and I will speak unto you; give me your souls, that I also may give you my soul.

2 The Word of the Lord and His good pleasure are the holy thought which He hath devised concerning His Christ.

3 For in the will of the Lord is your salvation, and His thought is everlasting life, and your end is immortality.

4 Be enriched in God the Father, and receive the thought of the Most High.

5 Be strong and be redeemed by His grace.

6 For I announce peace unto you, His saints;

7 That none of them that hear may fall in war, and that they who have known Him may not perish, and that they who receive may not be ashamed.

8 An everlasting crown is Truth. Blessed are they who set it upon their heads.

9 A stone of great price is it; and there have been wars on account of the crown.

10 And righteousness hath taken it and hath given it to you.

11 Put on the crown in the true covenant of the Lord.

12 And all those who have conquered shall be written in His book.

13 For their book is your victory; and Victory beholdeth you before her, and willeth that ye should be saved. Amen.

PSALM TEN

And I Took the World Captive

1 The Lord hath directed my mouth by His word: and He hath opened my heart by His light: and He hath caused to dwell in me His deathless life;

2 And He gave me to speak the fruit of peace;

3 To convert the souls of them that are willing to come unto Him, and to lead captive a good captivity unto freedom.

4 I was strengthened and made mighty and took the world captive;

5 And it became to me for the praise of the Most High, and of God my Father.

6 And the Gentiles were gathered together who were scattered abroad.

7 And I was undefiled by my love for them, because they confessed me in high places; and the footsteps of light were set upon their hearts.

8 And they walked in my life, and were saved, and became my people for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM ELEVEN

Like the Land That Flourishes

1 My heart was cloven and its flower appeared; and grace sprang up in it: and it brought forth fruit to the Lord,

2 For the Most High clave my heart by His Holy Spirit, searched my affection toward Him, and filled me with His love.

3 And His opening of me became my salvation; and I ran in His way in His peace even in the way of truth:

4 From the beginning even unto the end I acquired His knowledge.

5 And I was established upon the rock of truth, where He had set me up:

6 And speaking waters touched my lips from the fountain of the Lord plenteously:

7 And I drank and was inebriated with the living water that doth not die;

8 And my inebriation was not without knowledge; but I forsook vanity and turned unto the Most High, my God.

9 And I was enriched by His bounty, and I forsook the folly which is diffused over the earth; and I stripped it off and cast it from me:

10 And the Lord renewed me in His raiment, and possessed me by His light, and from above He gave me rest in incorruption;

11 And I became like the land which blossoms and rejoices in its fruits:

12 And the Lord was like the sun shining on the face of the land;

13 He lightened mine eyes, and my face received the dew, even the pleasant odour of the Lord;

14 And He carried me unto His Paradise, wherein is the abundance of the pleasure of the Lord.

15 And I worshipped the Lord on account of His glory; and I said, Blessed, O Lord, are they who are planted in thy land and those who have a place in thy Paradise;

16 And they grow by the fruits of the trees. And they have changed from darkness to light.

17 Behold, all thy servants are fair, who do good works, and turn from wickedness unto thy pleasantness.

18 And they have turned back the bitterness of the trees from them, when they were planted in thy land;

19 And every thing became according to thy will, and a memorial for ever of thy faithful works.

20 For there is abundant room in thy Paradise, and nothing is useless therein;

21 But every thing is filled with fruit; glory be to thee, O God, the delight of Paradise for ever. Amen.

PSALM TWELVE

And It Knows Neither Its Descent nor Its Way

1 He hath filled me with words of truth, that I may speak the same;

2 And like the flow of waters floweth truth from my mouth, and my lips shew forth His fruit.

3 And He hath caused His knowledge to abound in me, because the mouth of the Lord is the true Word and the opening of His light.

4 And the Most High hath given it unto His ages, which are the interpreters of His beauty, the repeaters of His praise, the confessors of His counsel, the heralds of His thought, and the explainers of His works.

5 For the swiftness of the Word is inexpressible, and as its expression, so are its swiftness and force;

6 And its course knoweth no limit. Never doth it fail, but it standeth sure, and knoweth neither its descent nor its way.

7 For as its work is, so is its end: for it is light and the dawning of thought;

8 And by it the ages spake one unto another, and they that were silent received speech;

9 And from it came love and concord; and they spake one unto

another that which was theirs, and were urged onward by the Word.

10 And they knew Him who made them, because they were in concord; for the mouth of the Most High spake unto them, and His interpretation flowed by means of it.

11 For the dwelling-place of the Word is man, and its truth is love.

12 Blessed are they who by means thereof have understood every thing, and have known the Lord in His truth. Amen.

PSALM THIRTEEN

And Declare Praise unto His Spirit

1 Behold, the Lord is our mirror: open ye your eyes and behold yourselves in Him, and learn the manner of your face.

2 And declare praise unto His Spirit; wipe the filth from your face, love His holiness, and clothe yourselves therewith.

3 And be without stain at all times before Him. Amen.

PSALM FOURTEEN

Because of Your Glory

1 As the eyes of a son toward his father, so are mine eyes, O Lord, at all times toward thee.

2 For with thee are my consolations and my delight.

3 Turn not away thy mercies from me, O Lord, and take not thy kindness from me.

4 Stretch forth unto me, O Lord, thy right hand at all times, and be my guide even unto the end, according to thy good pleasure.

5 Let me be well-pleasing before thee because of thy glory, and because of thy name let me be preserved from evil.

6 And let thy meekness, O Lord, abide with me, and the fruits of thy love.

7 Teach me the psalms of thy truth, that I may bring forth fruit in thee:

8 And open to me the harp of thy Holy Spirit, that with all its notes I may praise thee, O Lord.

9 And according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, so shalt thou grant it unto me; hasten to grant our petitions, for thou art able to provide all our needs. Amen.

PSALM FIFTEEN

And I Received Salvation from God

1 As the sun is the joy to them that seek for its daybreak, so is my joy the Lord;

2 Because He is my Sun, and His rays have awakened me, and His light hath dispelled all darkness from my face.

3 In Him I have acquired eyes and have seen His holy day:

4 Ears have become mine, and I have heard His truth.

5 The thought of knowledge hath been mine, and through Him I have lived in delight.

6 The way of error I have left, and have walked toward Him and have received salvation from Him, without grudging.

7 And according to His bounty He hath given to me and according to His excellent beauty He hath made me.

8 I have put on incorruption through His name: and have put off corruption by His grace.

9 Death hath been destroyed before my face, and Hell hath been abolished by my word;

10 And deathless life hath arisen in the Lord's land,

11 And immortality hath been made known unto His faithful ones, and given without stint unto all them that trust in Him. Amen.

PSALM SIXTEEN

God Spread Out the Earth and Settled the Waters in the Sea

1 As the work of the husbandman is the ploughshare, and the work of the steersman is the guidance of the ship,

2 So also is my work the psalm of the Lord; my craft is in His praises.

3 Because His love hath nourished my heart, and even unto my lips He hath poured forth His fruits.

4 For my love is the Lord, and therefore will I sing unto Him.

5 For I am made strong in His praise, and I have faith in Him.

6 I will open my mouth, and His Spirit shall utter in me the glory of the Lord and His beauty, the work of His hands and the operation of His fingers,

7 The multitude of His mercies and the strength of His word.

8 For the Word of the Lord searcheth out that which is hidden, and His thought searcheth out that which is revealed.

9 For the eye seeth His works and the ear heareth His thought;

10 He spread out the earth and He settled the waters in the sea:

11 He stretched out the heavens and fixed the stars; and He ordered the creation and established it.

12 And He rested from His works:

13 And created things run in their courses and fulfil their works;

14 And they know not how to stand and be idle; and His heavenly hosts are subject to His word.

15 The treasure-chamber of the light is the sun, and the treasury of the darkness is the night:

16 And the sun maketh the day to be bright, but the night bringeth darkness over the face of the land;

17 And their meeting one with another declareth the beauty of God.

18 And there is nothing apart from the Lord, for He was before any thing came into being;

19 And the ages are by His Word and by the thought of His heart. Glory and honour be unto His name. Amen.

PSALM SEVENTEEN

And I Opened the Gates That Were Closed

1 I was crowned by my God; my crown is living.

2 And I was justified in my Lord; my salvation is incorruptible.

3 I was loosed from vanity, and I was not condemned:

4 With her hands she cut off my bonds; I received the face and likeness of a new man, and I walked therein and was saved.

5 And the thought of truth led me onward; and I followed after it and wandered not.

6 And all that saw me were amazed, and I was regarded by them as a stranger.

7 And He who knew and magnified me is the Most High in all His fulness; and He glorified me by His kindness, and raised my knowledge unto the height of truth.

8 And from thence He gave me the way of His precepts, and I opened the doors that were shut,

9 And brake in pieces the bars of iron; and mine own iron melted and dissolved before me.

10 Nothing appeared shut unto me, because I was the door of every thing.

11 And I went unto all my prisoners to loose them, that I might not leave any of mine bound, nor any that bindeth them.

12 And I imparted my knowledge without grudging, and my meditation was in my love.

13 And I sowed my fruits in hearts, and transformed them by myself; and they received my blessing and lived.

14 And they were gathered unto me and were saved, because they became my members and I became their head. Glory be unto thee, our Head, the Lord Christ. Amen.

PSALM EIGHTEEN

For Your Will Is Perfection

1 My heart was lifted up in the love of the Most High and was enlarged, that I might praise Him for His name's sake.

2 My members were strengthened, that they might not fall from His power.

3 Infirmities departed from my body, and ceased by the Lord according to His will, for His kingdom is sure.

4 O Lord, because of them that are deficient, deprive me not of thy Word.

5 Neither because of their works withhold thou from me thy perfection.

6 Let not the luminary be conquered by the darkness; nor let truth flee away from falsehood.

7 Let thy right hand appoint victory for our salvation; and from every place receive and preserve every one that is held fast by evils.

8 Thou art my God. Falsehood and death are not in thy mouth:

9 For thy will is perfection; and vanity thou knowest not,

10 Nor doth it know thee.

11 And error thou knowest not,

12 Neither doth it know thee.

13 And ignorance appeared like the foam and stench of the sea;

14 And vain men supposed that it was something great;

15 And they became like its likeness and grew vain; but they that knew and meditated understood.

16 And they were not defiled by their thoughts, for they were in the mind of the Lord.

17 And they mocked at them that were walking in error;

18 And they spake truth from the breath which the Most High breathed into them. Praise and great comeliness be unto His name. Amen.

PSALM NINETEEN

Those Who Receive Are of the Right Hand of God

1 A cup of milk was offered unto me, and I drank it in the sweetness of the delight of the Lord.

2 The Son is the cup, and He who was milked is the Father, and the Holy Spirit milked Him;

3 For His breasts were full, and it was not meet that His milk should be poured forth in vain.

4 And the Holy Spirit opened her bosom, and mingled the milk of the two breasts of the Father;

5 And gave the mixture unto the age, though they knew it not; and they that receive it in its fulness are of the right hand of God. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY

Do Not Kill Your Own Soul

1 I am a priest of the Lord, and unto Him do I serve as a priest; and unto Him I offer the sacrifice of His thought.

2 For His thought is not like the thought of the age, nor the thought

of the flesh, nor like them that serve according to the flesh.

3 The sacrifice of the Lord is righteousness and purity of heart and lips.

4 Present thy mind before Him without blemish; and let not thy heart oppress another heart, nor thy soul another soul.

5 Kill not thine own soul by possessing a stranger, neither seek to defraud thy neighbour,

6 Neither deprive him of the covering of his nakedness.

7 But put on the grace of the Lord without grudging; enter into His Paradise, and make thee a crown from His tree,

8 And set it upon thy head and rejoice; recline upon His rest, and glory shall go before thee.

9 And thou shalt receive of His kindness and of His grace; and thy health shall flourish in truth, unto the praise of His holiness. Praise and honour be unto His name. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY-ONE

And Increasingly Helpful unto Me Was the Thought of the Lord

1 My arms I lifted up unto the Most High because of the grace of the Lord; for He had cast off my bonds from me, and my Helper had lifted me up according to His grace and His salvation.

2 And I put off darkness and clothed myself with light,

3 And my soul acquired members free from sorrow, affliction, and pain.

4 And increasingly helpful unto me was the thought of the Lord, and His fellowship in incorruption.

5 And I was lifted up in His light, and passed before Him.

6 And I drew near unto Him, praising and confessing Him.

7 My heart overflowed and was found in my mouth; it dawned upon my lips, and the exultation of the Lord increased upon my face, and His praise likewise. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY-TWO

Your Name Surrounded Me

1 He who brought me down from on high also brought me up from the depths below;

2 And He who gathered them that were in the midst also taught me concerning them.

3 He scattered mine enemies and mine adversaries;

4 He who gave me authority over bonds that I might loose them;

5 He overthrew by my hands the seven-headed dragon, and set me over its root, that I might destroy its offspring.

6 Thou wast there and didst help me, and in every place thy name surrounded me.

7 Thy right hand destroyed the poison of the evil one, and thy hand levelled the way for them that believe in thee.

8 And thou didst redeem them from the graves, and separate them from among the dead.

9 Thou didst take the bones of the dead and clothe them with a body.

10 And they that were motionless, thou gavest them strength unto life.

11 Thy way was incorruptible; and thou didst bring thy face into the age, even into destruction, that all things might be dissolved and renewed;

12 And thy rock became the foundation of all things; and upon it thou didst build thy kingdom, and it became the dwelling-place of the saints. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY-THREE

And Who Would Hear It

1 Joy belongeth unto the saints; and who shall put it on but they alone?

2 Grace belongeth unto the elect; and who shall receive it except them that have trusted in it from the beginning?

3 Love belongeth unto the elect; and who shall put it on except them that have possessed it from the beginning?

4 Walk ye in the knowledge of the Most High without grudging, unto His exultation and the perfection of His knowledge.

5 And His thought became as a letter; His will descended from on high, and was sent like an arrow shot with force from the bow.

6 And many hands rushed to the letter to seize it and to take and read it:

7 And it escaped their fingers and they were affrighted at it and at the seal that was upon it.

8 Because it was not permitted to them to loose its seal: for the power that was over the seal was greater than they.

9 But those who saw it went after the letter that they might know where it would alight, and who should read it and who should hear it.

10 But a wheel received the letter, and the letter rested upon it;

11 And there was with it a sign of the kingdom and of the government:

12 And every thing which tried to move the wheel, it mowed down and cut in pieces:

13 And it gathered the multitude of adversaries, and bridged the rivers and crossed over and rooted up many forests and made a broad path.

14 The head went down unto the feet; for unto the feet ran the wheel and the sign that was upon it.

15 The letter was one of command, for there were included in it all districts;

16 And at its head was seen the Head which was revealed, even the Son of Truth from the Most High Father,

17 And He inherited and took possession of every thing. And the thought of many was brought to nought.

18 And all the apostates hasted and fled away; and the persecutors and the enraged were blotted out.

19 And the letter was a great volume, which was wholly written by the finger of God:

20 And upon it was the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, to rule for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY-FOUR

The Thought Which Made Them from of Old

1 The Dove fluttered over the Christ, because He was her Head; and she sang over Him, and her voice was heard.

2 And the inhabitants were afraid and the sojourners were moved:

3 The bird forsook its wing, and every creeping thing died in its hole; and the abysses that had been hidden were opened, and they sought the Lord like women in travail.

4 And no food was given to them, because it did not belong to them;

5 And the abysses were submerged with the submersion of the Lord; and they perished according to the thought by which they had been made from of old.

6 For they were subject unto corruption from the beginning, and the end of their corruption was life.

7 And every one that was lacking perished because of the abysses, for they could not give the answer whereby they might remain.

8 And the Lord destroyed the thoughts of all them that had not the truth.

9 For they who in their hearts were lifted up were deficient in wisdom and so they were rejected, because the truth was not with them.

10 For the Lord disclosed His way and spread abroad His grace; and they who understand it know His holiness. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY-FIVE

You Set a Lamp at My Right and at My Left

1 I was rescued from my bonds, and unto thee, my God, I fled;

2 For thou art the right hand of my salvation and my helper.

3 Thou hast restrained them that rise up against me, and they were no more to be seen,

4 Because thy face was with me, which saved me by thy grace.

5 But I was despised and rejected in the eyes of many, and I was as worthless lead in their sight.

6 And strength was mine from thyself and help.

7 Thou didst set a lamp at my right hand and at my left, that nothing round about me should be without light.

8 And I was clothed with the covering of thy Spirit, and she removed from me my garments of skin.

9 For thy right hand lifted me up and removed sickness from me:

10 And I became mighty in the truth and holy by thy righteousness; and all mine adversaries were afraid of me.

11 And I became the Lord's by the name of the Lord; and I was justified by His gentleness, and His rest is for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY-SIX

Who Can Compose the Psalms of the Lord?

1 I poured out praise to the Lord, for I am His:

2 And I will recite His holy psalm, for my heart is with Him.

3 For His harp is in my hands, and the psalms of His rest shall not be silent.

4 I will cry unto Him with my whole heart; I will praise and exalt Him with all my members.

5 For from the east and even to the west is His praise:

6 And from the south and even to the north is the confession of Him:

7 And from the top of the hills to their utmost bound is His perfection.

8 Who can compose the psalms of the Lord, or who can recite them?

9 Or who can teach his soul to live, that his soul may be saved?

10 Or who can impose upon the Most High, that with his mouth He should speak?

11 Who is able to interpret the wonders of the Lord?

12 For he who would interpret them would be dissolved, while that which was interpreted would remain.

13 For it sufficeth to know and to rest; for in rest the singers abide,

14 Like a river which hath an abundant fountain and floweth unto the help of them that seek it. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY-SEVEN

The Extension of My Hands

1 I stretched forth my hands and sanctified my Lord;

2 For the stretching forth of my hands is His sign,

3 And mine extension is the upright cross. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY-EIGHT

I Seemed to Them Like One of the Lost

1 As the wings of doves are over their nestlings, and the mouths of their nestlings are toward their mouths,

2 So also are the wings of the Spirit over my heart.

3 My heart is delighted and exulteth, like the babe that exulteth in its mother's womb.

4 I believed; therefore was I at rest, for faithful is He in whom I have believed.

5 He hath richly blessed me, and my head resteth upon Him; and neither sword nor scimitar shall divide me from Him.

6 For I was prepared before destruction came, and I was set upon the incorruptible bosom of His wings.

7 And deathless life embraced and kissed me; and from that life is the Spirit within me, and she cannot die, for she is life.

8 They who saw me marvelled, because I was persecuted; and they supposed that I had been swallowed up, for I seemed unto them as one of the lost.

9 And mine oppression became my salvation, and I was their reproach, because there was no envy in me.

10 Because I did good to every man, I was hated,

11 And they compassed me about like mad dogs, which ignorantly attack their masters,

12 For their thought is corrupt and their understanding perverted.

13 But I carried water in my right hand, and endured their bitterness by my sweetness.

14 And I perished not, for I was not their brother, neither was my birth like theirs.

15 And they sought my death, but found it not, for I was older than their memorial.

16 And in vain they cast lots over me; and they who came into being after me sought in vain to destroy my memorial.

17 They sought to destroy the memorial of Him who was before them.

18 For the thought of the Most High cannot be anticipated; and His heart is superior to all wisdom. Amen.

PSALM TWENTY-NINE

And He Appeared to Me, the One Who Is the Lord

1 The Lord is my hope: in Him I shall not be confounded.

2 For according to His glory He made me, and according to His goodness He gave unto me;

3 And according to His love He lifted me up, and according to His excellent beauty He set me on high;

4 And He brought me up from the depths of Hell, and from the mouth of Death He drew me.

5 And I laid mine enemies low, and He justified me by His grace.

6 For I believed in the Lord's Christ, and He appeared unto me, even He who is the Lord;

7 And He shewed me His sign, led me by His light, and gave me the rod of His power,

8 That I might subdue the imaginations of the peoples, and bring low the power of mighty men;

9 To make war by His Word, and to take victory by His power.

10 And the Lord overthrew my enemy by His word: and he became like the stubble which the wind carrieth away;

11 And I gave praise unto the Most High, because He exalted His servant, even the son of His handmaid. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY

And the Honeycomb of Bees

1 Draw ye water for yourselves from the living fountain of the Lord, for it is opened unto you.

2 And come, all ye thirsty, and take the draught; and rest beside the fountain of the Lord.

3 For it is fair and pure, and giveth rest unto the soul; much sweeter are its waters than honey,

4 And the honeycomb of bees is not to be compared with it.

5 For it floweth forth from the lips of the Lord, and from His heart; the Lord is its name.

6 And it came boundless and invisible; and until it was set in the midst they knew it not.

7 Blessed are they who have drunk therefrom and have found rest thereby. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY-ONE

And Take Immortal Life for Yourselves

1 The abysses were dissolved before the Lord: and darkness was destroyed by His appearance:

2 Error went astray and perished at His hand; and contempt found no path to walk in, being submerged by the truth of the Lord.

3 He opened His mouth and spake grace and joy, and recited a new song of praise unto His name.

4 And He lifted up His voice unto the Most High, and offered unto Him them that had become sons by His hands.

5 And His person was justified, for thus had His Holy Father granted unto Him.

6 Come forth, ye that have been afflicted, and receive joy; possess your souls by His grace, and take unto yourselves immortal life.

7 And they condemned me when I rose up, though I had not been condemned; and they divided my spoil, though nothing was due unto them.

8 But I endured, held my peace, and was silent, that I might not be moved by them.

9 And I stood unshaken like a firm rock which is beaten by the waves and endureth.

10 And I bore their bitterness for humility's sake,

11 That I might redeem my people and inherit them, and that I might not make void the promises unto the fathers, unto whom I had been promised for the salvation of their seed. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY-TWO

The Truth Who Is Self-Existent

1 Unto the blessed is joy from their hearts, and light from Him who dwelleth in them;

2 Even the Word which is from the self-existent Truth; for He is strengthened by the holy power of the Most High, and is unshaken for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY-THREE

And Forsake the Ways of This Destruction

1 Again Grace ran, returning to release corruption, and descended into it to bring it to nought;

2 And He destroyed perdition from before Him, and caused all its works to perish.

3 And He stood on a lofty summit and uttered His voice from one end of the earth to the other:

4 And He drew unto Him all them that obeyed Him; and His appearance was not as that of the evil one.

5 But there stood a mature young woman, proclaiming and calling and saying,

6 O ye sons of men, return; and ye daughters of men, come ye.

7 Forsake the ways of this corruption and draw near unto me; and I will enter into you, and bring you forth from perdition,

8 And make you wise in the ways of truth, that ye be not destroyed nor perish.

9 Hear me and be redeemed; for I declare among you the grace of God, and by me ye shall be redeemed and blessed.

10 I am your judge; and they who have put me on shall not be rejected, but shall possess the new age that is incorrupt.

11 My chosen ones walk in me; and my ways will I make known unto them that seek me, and I will cause them to trust in my name. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY-FOUR

Nothing Within the Good Person Is Divided

1 No way is hard where the heart is single,

2 Neither is there any wound where the thoughts are upright;

3 Neither is there any storm in the depth of the illuminated mind.

4 Where one is surrounded on every side by light, there is nothing within him that is divided.

5 The likeness of that which is below is that which is above; for every thing is from above, and from beneath there is nothing, but it is believed to be by them in whom there is no understanding.

6 Grace hath been revealed for your salvation. Believe, and live, and be saved. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY-FIVE

And It Was More Than a Shelter to Me

1 The fine rain of the Lord overshadowed me in quietness;

2 And He caused a cloud of peace to rise over my head, which guarded me continually.

3 And it became salvation unto me; all things were shaken and were afraid,

4 And there went forth from them smoke and judgment; but I remained quiet in the order of the Lord.

5 He was unto me more than a shelter and more than a foundation.

6 And I was carried like a child by a mother; and He gave me milk, even the dew of the Lord.

7 And I grew great by His bounty, and rested in His perfection,

8 And I spread forth my hands in the lifting up of my soul; and I was made right with the Most High, and was brought unto His presence. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY-SIX

I Was Great Among the Great Ones

1 The Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and the Spirit raised me on high,

2 And made me stand upon my feet in the height of the Lord, before His fulness and His glory, while I praised Him by the composition of His psalms.

3 The Spirit brought me forth before the face of the Lord; and while yet a son of man, I was named an enlightened son of God.

4 And I was glorious among them that glorify, and great among the mighty.

5 For according to the greatness of the Most High, so the Spirit made me; and according to His renewing He renewed me, and He anointed me from His fulness.

6 And I became one of them that are near unto Him; and my mouth was opened like a cloud of dew.

7 And my heart poured forth as a gushing stream of righteousness.

8 And peace was mine, and I was established by the Spirit of His government. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY-SEVEN

When My Voice Reached God

1 I stretched forth my hands unto my Lord, and unto the Most High I raised my voice.

2 And I spake with the lips of my heart, and He heard me when my voice reached Him.

3 His answer came unto me, and gave me the fruits of my labours;

4 And gave me rest by the grace of the Lord. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY-EIGHT

These Are Deceiver and Error

1 I went up into the light of Truth as into a chariot;

2 And Truth took me and led me, and carried me across pits and gullies, and preserved me from rocks and waves.

3 And He became unto me a haven of salvation, and set me upon the ladder of immortal life.

4 And He went with me and gave me rest, and suffered me not to wander, because He was Truth.

5 And I ran no risk, because I walked with Him;

6 And I erred not, because I obeyed the Truth.

7 For Error fleeth from Him and meeteth Him not; but Truth proceedeth in the right path,

8 And whatsoever I knew not He made clear unto me: all the poisons of Error, and the plagues of Death which men think to be sweetness.

9 And I saw the destroyer who is Destruction, and the bride who is corrupted while she is adorned, and the bridegroom who corrupteth and is corrupted.

10 And I asked Truth: Who are these? And He said unto me: These are the Deceiver and Error.

11 And they imitate the Beloved and His bride, and lead astray and corrupt the whole age.

12 And they invite many to the banquet,

13 And give them to drink of the wine of their intoxication; and they cause them to vomit out their wisdom and knowledge, and make them without understanding.

14 And then they cast them out; and they go about as madmen, corrupting, because they are without heart and seek it not.

15 But I was made wise, that I should not fall into the hands of the deceivers; and I rejoiced because Truth went with me.

16 And I was established and lived and was redeemed,

17 And my foundations were laid by the hand of the Lord, because He planted me.

18 For He set the root and watered it and fixed it and blessed it; and its fruits are for ever.

19 It struck deep, sprang up, spread abroad, and became full and great.

20 And the Lord alone was glorified for His planting and husbandry, by His care and by the blessing of His lips,

21 By the beautiful planting of His right hand, by the presence of His planting, and by the understanding of His mind. Amen.

PSALM THIRTY-NINE

Then You Will Cross Without Danger

1 Raging rivers are the power of the Lord;

2 And they overturn them that despise Him, and entangle their paths;

3 And they sweep away their crossings, and seize their bodies, and destroy their souls.

4 For they are more sudden than lightning and swifter; but they who cross them firmly shall not be moved,

5 And they who walk upon them without blemish shall not be afraid.

6 For the sign in them is the Lord, and the sign becometh the way of them that cross in the name of the Lord.

7 Put on, therefore, the name of the Most High, and know Him; and ye shall cross without danger, for the rivers shall be subject unto you.

8 The Lord hath bridged them by His Word; and He walked and crossed them on foot.

9 And His footsteps remained above the waters and faded not, but were firm as the wood of a bridge.

10 And the waves were lifted up on this side and on that, but the footsteps of our Lord Christ stand firm, and are neither washed away nor lost.

11 And a way hath been appointed for them that cross after Him, and for them that follow the course of faith in Him and worship His name. Amen.

PSALM FORTY

And My Lips Bring Forth a Song of Praise

1 As honey distilleth from the comb of bees,

2 And milk floweth from the woman who loveth her children,

3 So also is my hope in thee, my God.

4 As a fountain gusheth forth its waters,

5 So my heart gusheth forth the praise of the Lord, and my lips utter a song of praise unto Him, and my tongue His psalms.

6 And my face exulteth with His gladness, and my spirit exulteth in His love, and my soul shineth in Him.

7 And reverence trusteth in Him, and redemption in Him standeth assured.

8 And His inheritance is immortal life, and those who participate in it are incorrupt. Amen.

PSALM FORTY-ONE

For the Father of Truth Remembered Me

1 All the children of the Lord shall praise Him, and gather together the truth of His faith.

2 And His children shall be known unto Him; therefore will we sing in His love.

3 We live in the Lord by His grace, and life do we receive in His Christ.

4 For a great day hath shone upon us, and marvellous is He who hath given us of His glory.

5 Let us therefore all unite together in the name of the Lord, and honour Him in His goodness.

6 And let our faces shine in His light, and our hearts meditate in His love by night and by day.

7 Let us exult with the joy of the Lord.

8 All they that see me shall be astonished, for I am of another race;

9 For the Father of truth remembered me, even He who possessed me from the beginning.

10 For His bounty begat me, and the thought of His heart.

11 And His Word is with us in all our ways;

12 The Saviour who maketh alive and rejecteth not our souls;

13 The Man who was humbled and exalted by His own righteousness;

14 The Son of the Most High appeared in the perfection of His Father;

15 And light dawned from the Word which was beforetime in Him.

16 The Christ is truly one, and He was known before the foundation of the world,

17 That He might save souls for ever by the truth of His name; a new song ariseth from them that love Him. Amen.

PSALM FORTY-TWO

And Death Cast Me Up

1 I stretched forth my hands and approached my Lord;

2 For the stretching forth of my hands is His sign.

3 Mine extension is the outspread tree which was set up in the way of the Righteous One.

4 And I became of no account unto them that took not hold of me; but I shall be with them that love me.

5 All my persecutors are dead; and they sought after me who hoped in me, because I was alive.

6 And I rose up and am with them, and I will speak by their mouths.

7 For they have despised those who persecuted them;

8 And I lifted over them the yoke of my love;

9 Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride,

10 So was my yoke over them that know me.

11 And as the couch that is spread in the house of the bridegroom and bride,

12 So is my love over them that believe in me.

13 And I was not rejected though I was reckoned to be so.

14 I did not perish, though they devised it against me.

15 Hell saw me and was made miserable;

16 Death cast me up, and many together with me.

17 I had gall and bitterness, and I went down with him unto the utmost of his depth.

18 And the feet and the head he let go, for they were not able to endure my face.

19 And I made a congregation of living men among his dead, and spake with them by living lips,

20 Because my word shall not be void:

21 And they that had died ran unto me, and cried, saying, Son of God, have pity upon us, and do with us according to thy kindness.

22 Bring us out from the bonds of darkness, and open unto us the door by which we may come forth unto thee.

23 For we see that our death hath not touched thee.

24 Let us also be redeemed with thee, for thou art our Redeemer.

25 And I heard their voice, and sealed my name upon their heads;

26 For they are free men, and they are mine. Amen.

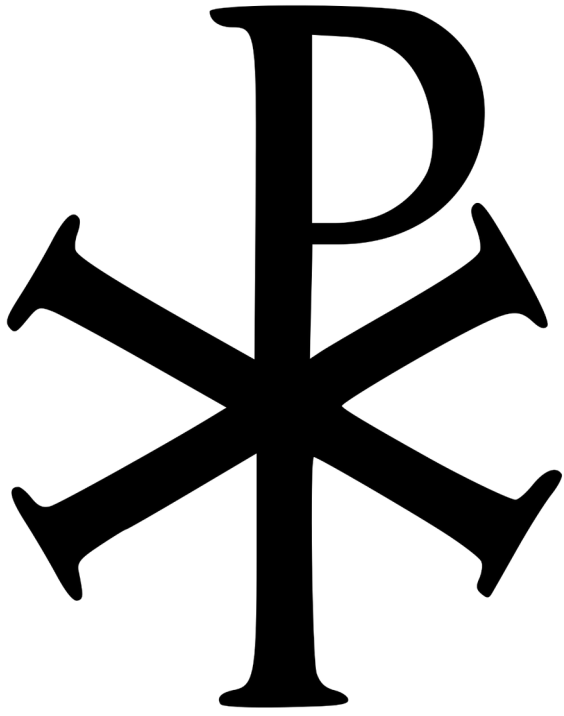
Here endeth the Psalmicon.

THE TESTAMENTUM

HOMILETICON

THE HOMILIES OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCH

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 132 C.E.



THE HOMILY OF MARCION TO

DIOGNETUS

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 132 C.E.

CHAPTER ONE

Occasion of the Homily

Since I see, most excellent Diognetus, that thou art exceedingly anxious to understand the religion of the Christians, and that thine enquiries respecting them are distinctly and carefully made, as to what God they trust and how they worship Him; that they all disregard the world and despise death, and take no account of those who are regarded as gods by the Greeks, neither observe the superstition of the Jews; and as to the nature of the affection which they entertain one toward another, and of this new people or manner of life which hath entered into men's lives now and not before:

2 I gladly welcome this zeal in thee; and I ask of God, who supplieth both the speaking and the hearing unto us, that it may be granted unto me so to speak that thou mayest be made better by the hearing, and unto thee so to listen that I the speaker may not be disappointed.

CHAPTER TWO

The Vanity of Idols

1 Come then, clear thyself of all the prepossessions which occupy thy mind, and cast off the habit which leadeth thee astray, and become a new man, as it were, from the beginning, as one who would hearken unto a new teaching, even as thou thyself didst confess.

2 See not only with thine eyes, but with thine understanding also, of what substance or of what form they chance to be whom ye call and regard as gods.

3 Is not one of them stone, like unto that which we tread under foot; and another brass, no better than the vessels which are forged for our use; and another wood, which hath already become rotten; and another silver, which needeth a man to guard it lest it be stolen; and another iron, which is consumed with rust; and another earthenware, not a whit more comely than that which is supplied for the most dishonourable service?

4 Are not all these of corruptible matter?

5 Are they not forged by iron and fire?

6 Did not the sculptor make one, and the brass-founder another, and the silversmith another, and the potter another?

7 Before they were moulded into these shapes by the crafts of these several artificers, was it not possible for every one of them to have been changed in form, and made to resemble these several utensils?

8 Might not the vessels which are now made of the same matter, if they met with the same artificers, be made like unto these?

9 Could not these things which are now worshipped by you be made again by the hands of men into vessels like the rest?

10 Are they not all deaf and blind? Are they not without soul, without sense, and without motion?

11 Do they not all rot and decay?

12 These things ye call gods; unto these ye are slaves; these ye worship;

13 And ye end by becoming altogether like unto them.

14 Therefore ye hate the Christians, because they account not these to be gods.

15 For do not ye yourselves, who now regard and worship them, much more despise them?

16 Do ye not much rather mock and insult them, worshipping those that are of stone and earthenware unguarded, but shutting up those that are of silver and gold by night, and setting guards over them by day, lest they be stolen?

17 And as for the honours which ye think to offer unto them, if they be sensible thereof, ye rather punish them thereby; but if they be insensible, ye reproach them by propitiating them with the blood and fat of victims.

18 Let one of yourselves undergo this treatment; let him submit unto these things being done unto him.

19 Nay, not so much as one man will willingly submit unto such punishment, for he hath sensibility and reason;

20 But a stone submitteth, because it is insensible.

21 Therefore ye convict its insensibility.

22 Well, I could say much besides concerning the Christians, that they are not enslaved unto such gods as these;

23 But if any man should think that which hath been said insufficient, I account it superfluous to say more.

CHAPTER THREE

Superstitions of the Jews

1 In the next place, I suppose that thou art chiefly anxious to hear

concerning their not practising their religion after the same manner as the Jews.

2 The Jews then, so far as they abstain from the manner of worship afore described, do well in claiming to reverence one God over all, and to regard Him as Master;

3 But so far as they offer Him this worship by methods like unto those already mentioned, they are altogether at fault.

4 For whereas the Greeks, by offering these things unto senseless and deaf images, make an exhibition of folly, the Jews, supposing that they present them unto God as though He had need of them, ought in all reason to account it folly and not religious worship.

5 For He that made heaven and earth and all things that are therein, and furnisheth us all with whatsoever we need, cannot Himself need any of these things which He Himself supplieth unto them that imagine they give them unto Him.

6 But they who think to perform sacrifices unto Him with blood and fat and whole burnt offerings, and to honour Him with such honours, seem unto me in no wise different from them that show the same respect toward deaf images;

7 For the one class think fit to make offerings unto things unable to partake of the honour, and the other unto One who needeth nothing.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Other Observances of the Jews

1 But again, their scruples concerning meats, and their superstition touching the sabbath, and the vanity of their circumcision, and the dissimulation of their fasting and new moons, I suppose thou needest not to learn from me, for they are ridiculous and unworthy of any consideration.

2 For to receive some of the things formed by God for the use of man as well formed, but to refuse others as useless and superfluous, is not this impious?

3 And again, to lie against God, as though He forbade us to do any good thing on the sabbath day, is not this profane?

4 Again, to boast of the mutilation of the flesh as a token of election, as though for this cause they were especially beloved of God, is not this ridiculous?

5 And to watch the stars and the moon, and to observe months and days, and to distinguish the dispensations of God and the changes of the seasons according unto their own desires, making

some into feasts and others into times of mourning, who would account this an exhibition of godliness, and not rather of folly?

6 That the Christians are right, therefore, in holding aloof from the common vanity and deceit, and from the meddlesomeness and pride of the Jews, I account that thou hast been sufficiently instructed; but concerning the mystery of their own religion, expect not that thou canst be instructed by man.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Manners of the Christians

1 For Christians are not distinguished from the rest of mankind either by country, or by speech, or by customs.

2 For they dwell not in cities of their own, neither do they use any strange language, nor practise an extraordinary manner of life.

3 Neither do they possess any invention discovered by the understanding or study of ingenious men, nor are they masters of any human doctrine, as some are.

4 But while they dwell in cities of Greeks and barbarians, as the lot of each is cast, and follow the customs of the country in raiment and food and the other ordering of life, yet the constitution of their own citizenship, which they set forth, is marvellous, and confessedly surpasseth expectation.

5 They dwell in their own countries, but only as sojourners;

6 They bear their share in all things as citizens, and endure all hardships as strangers.

7 Every foreign country is a fatherland unto them, and every fatherland is foreign.

8 They marry as all other men, and they beget children;

9 But they cast not away their offspring.

10 They have their table in common, but not their wives.

11 They are in the flesh, and yet they live not after the flesh.

12 Their conversation is on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven.

13 They obey the laws that are established, and in their own lives they surpass the laws.

14 They love all men, and are persecuted by all.

15 They are unknown, and yet they are condemned.

16 They are put to death, and yet they are made alive.

17 They are poor, and yet they make many rich.

18 They lack all things, and yet in all things they abound.

19 They are dishonoured, and yet in their dishonour they are glorified.

20 They are blasphemed, and they are justified.

21 They are reviled, and they bless;

22 They are insulted, and they honour.

23 Doing good, they are punished as evil-doers;

24 Being punished, they rejoice as being made alive.

25 War is waged against them as strangers by the Jews, and they are persecuted by the Greeks; and yet they that hate them cannot tell the cause of their enmity.

CHAPTER SIX

The Relation of Christians to the World

1 In a word, what the soul is in the body, that are the Christians in the world.

2 The soul is spread throughout all the members of the body, and Christians throughout the divers cities of the world.

3 The soul hath its abode in the body, and yet is not of the body.

4 So Christians have their abode in the world, and yet are not of the world.

5 The soul, which is invisible, is guarded in the body, which is visible; so Christians are known to be in the world, and yet their religion remaineth invisible.

6 The flesh hateth the soul and warreth against it, though it suffereth no wrong, because it is forbidden to indulge in pleasures;

7 So the world hateth Christians, though it suffereth no wrong from them, because they set themselves against its pleasures.

8 The soul loveth the flesh that hateth it, and the members thereof; so Christians love them that hate them.

9 The soul is enclosed in the body, and yet itself holdeth the body together;

10 So Christians are kept in the world as in a prison-house, and yet they themselves hold the world together.

11 The soul, though itself immortal, dwelleth in a mortal tabernacle;

12 So Christians sojourn amidst corruptible things, while they look for the incorruption which is in the heavens.

13 The soul, when hardly treated in the matter of meats and drinks, is made better;

14 And so Christians, when punished, increase more and more daily.

15 So great is the office whereunto God hath appointed them, and

which it is not lawful for them to decline.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Manifestation of Christ

1 For it is no earthly discovery, as I said, which was committed unto them; neither do they care to guard so carefully any mortal invention, nor have they been entrusted with the dispensation of human mysteries.

2 But truly the Almighty and Maker of all, even the invisible God Himself, hath established among men from heaven the truth and the holy and incomprehensible Word, and hath fixed Him firmly in their hearts; not, as any man might suppose, by sending unto men some servant, or angel, or ruler, or one of those that administer earthly things, or one of those that are entrusted with the orderings in heaven, but the very Artificer and Demiurge of all, through whom He made the heavens, through whom He enclosed the sea within its proper bounds, whose mysteries all the elements faithfully observe, from whom the sun hath received the measure of the courses of the day to keep them, whom the moon obeyeth when He commandeth her to shine by night, whom the stars obey as they follow the course of the moon; through whom all things are ordered, bounded, and subjected: the heavens and the things that are in the heavens, the earth and the things that are in the earth, the sea and the things that are in the sea, fire, air, the abyss, the things that are in the heights, the things that are in the depths, and the things that are between.

3 Him He sent unto them.

4 Was He sent, thinkest thou, as any man might suppose, to establish a dominion, and to inspire fear and terror?

5 Not so; but in gentleness and meekness hath He sent Him, as a king might send his son who is a king.

6 He sent Him as sending God;

7 He sent Him as a man unto men;

8 He sent Him as Saviour, using persuasion and not force; for force is no attribute of God.

9 He sent Him as calling, not as persecuting;

10 He sent Him as loving, not as judging.

11 For He will send Him in judgment; and who shall endure His presence?

12 Dost thou not see them cast unto wild beasts, that they may deny the Lord, and yet not overcome?

13 Dost thou not see that the more of them are punished, so many the more abound?

14 These seem not to be the works of man;

15 They are the power of God;

16 They are proofs of His presence.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Miserable State of Men Before the Coming of the Word

1 For what man at all had any knowledge what God was, before He came?

2 Or dost thou receive the vain and foolish sayings of those pretentious philosophers, of whom some said that God was fire, calling that God whereunto they themselves shall go; and others water; and others some other of the elements formed by God?

3 And yet, if any of these sayings be worthy to be received, every one of the other formed things might likewise be declared to be God.

4 Nay, all this is the wonder-working deceit and error of the magicians;

5 And no man hath either seen or known Him, but He hath revealed Himself.

6 And He revealed Himself by faith, whereby alone it is given to behold God.

7 For God, the Master and Fashioner of all, who made all things and set them in order, was found to be not only gracious unto men, but also long-suffering.

8 Yea, such was He always, and is, and ever shall be: gracious and good, and without wrath, and true; and He alone is good.

9 And having conceived a great and unspeakable counsel, He communicated it unto His Son alone.

10 For so long as He kept and preserved His wise counsel in mystery, He seemed to neglect us and to have no care for us.

11 But when He revealed it through His beloved Son, and manifested the purpose which He had prepared from the beginning, He gave us all things at once: to partake of His benefits, and to see and to understand mysteries which none of us ever would have expected.

CHAPTER NINE

Why the Son Was Sent So Late

1 Having therefore ordered all things beforehand in His own mind together with His Son, He permitted us during the former time to be borne along by disorderly impulses as we desired, being led astray by pleasures and lusts; not because He delighted in our sins, but because He bore with us; not because He approved the former season of iniquity, but because He was preparing the present season of righteousness;

that, being convicted in the former time by our own deeds as unworthy of life, we might now be accounted worthy by the goodness of God; and having made manifest our inability to enter into the kingdom of God of ourselves, we might be enabled by the power of God.

2 And when our iniquity had been fully accomplished, and it had been made perfectly manifest that the wages thereof, even punishment and death, were expected, and the season came which God had ordained, when henceforth He should manifest His goodness and power - O the exceeding great kindness and love of God! - He hated us not, neither rejected us, nor remembered evil against us, but was long-suffering and patient; and in pity for us He Himself took upon Him our sins, and Himself gave His own Son as a ransom for us: the Holy for the lawless, the guileless for the evil, the just for the unjust, the incorruptible for the corruptible, the immortal for the mortal.

3 For what else but His righteousness could have covered our sins?

4 In whom was it possible for us, lawless and ungodly, to be justified, save only in the Son of God?

5 O the sweet exchange! O the unsearchable operation! O benefits beyond all expectation!

6 That the iniquity of many should be hidden in One Righteous, and the righteousness of One should justify many that are iniquitous!

7 Having therefore in the former time shown the inability of our nature to obtain life, and having now revealed the Saviour, who is able to save even them whom it was impossible to save, He willed that for both causes we should believe in His goodness, and should regard Him as Nourisher, Father, Teacher, Counsellor, Physician, Wisdom, Light, Honour, Glory, Strength, and Life; and that we should take no thought for raiment and food.

CHAPTER TEN

The Blessings That Will Flow from Faith

1 If thou also desirest this faith, receive first the full knowledge of the Father.

2 For God loved men, for whose sake He made the world, unto whom He subjected all things that are in the earth, unto whom He gave reason and understanding, whom alone He permitted to look upward unto Him, whom He formed after His own image, unto whom He sent His only-begotten Son, unto whom He promised the kingdom which is in heaven, and

will give it unto them that have loved Him.

3 And when thou hast attained unto this full knowledge, with what joy thinkest thou that thou shalt be filled? Or how wilt thou love Him who so loved thee before?

4 And loving Him, thou shalt be an imitator of His goodness.

5 And marvel not that a man can be an imitator of God.

6 He can, if God willeth it.

7 For happiness consisteth not in lordship over one's neighbours, nor in desiring to have more than weaker men, nor in possessing riches and using force against inferiors;

8 Neither can any man imitate God in these things;

9 Nay, these lie outside His greatness.

10 But whosoever taketh upon himself the burden of his neighbour; whosoever desireth to benefit one that is worse off in that wherein he himself is superior; whosoever, by supplying unto them that are in want the possessions which he received from God, becometh a god unto them that receive them from him: he is an imitator of God.

11 Then, though thou art placed on earth, thou shalt behold that God ruleth in heaven;

12 Then shalt thou begin to declare the mysteries of God;

13 Then shalt thou both love and admire them that are punished because they will not deny God;

14 Then shalt thou condemn the deceit and error of the world;

15 When thou shalt perceive the true life which is in heaven; when thou shalt despise the apparent death which is here on earth; when thou shalt fear the true death, which is reserved for them that shall be condemned unto the eternal fire, which shall punish unto the end them that are delivered unto it.

16 Then shalt thou admire them who for righteousness' sake endure the fire that is but for a season, and shalt account them blessed when thou perceivest that Fire. Amen.

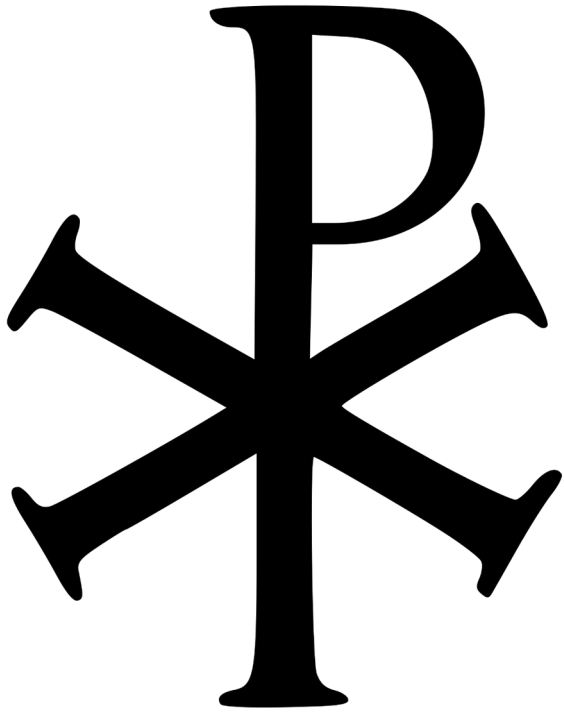
Here endeth the Homileticon.

THE TESTAMENTUM

SYNAXICON

THE EPISTLES OF MARCION OF SINOPE

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 154 C.E.



THE EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE

EPHESIANS

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 154 C.E.

CHAPTER ONE

Marcion, who is also Nauclerus, unto her which hath been blessed in greatness through the plenitude of God the Father;

2 Which hath been foreordained before the ages to be for ever unto abiding and unchangeable glory, united and elect in a true passion, by the will of the Father and of Jesus Christ our God;

3 Even unto the church which is in Ephesus of Asia, worthy of all felicitation: abundant greeting in Christ Jesus and in blameless joy.

CHAPTER TWO

Praise of the Ephesians

1 While I welcomed in God your well-beloved name which ye bear by natural right, in an upright and virtuous mind, by faith and love in Christ Jesus our Saviour—being imitators of God, and having your hearts kindled in the blood of God, ye have perfectly fulfilled your congenial work;

2 For when ye heard that I was on my way from Syria, in bonds for the sake of the common Name and hope, and was hoping through your prayers to succeed in fighting with wild beasts in Rome, that by so succeeding I might have power to be a disciple, ye were eager to visit me:

3 Seeing then that in God's name I have received your whole multitude in the person of Onesimus, whose love passeth utterance and who is moreover your bishop in the flesh and I pray that ye may love him according to Jesus Christ and that ye all may be like him;

4 For blessed is He that granted unto you according to your deserving to have such a bishop:

CHAPTER THREE

Congratulations and Entreaties

1 But as touching my fellow-servant Burrhus, who by the will of God is your deacon blessed in all things, I pray that he may remain with me to the honour of yourselves and of your bishop.

2 Yea, and Crocus also, who is worthy of God and of you, whom I received as an ensample of the love which ye bear me, hath relieved me in all ways—even so may the Father of Jesus Christ refresh him—together with Onesimus and Burrhus and Euplus and Fronto;

3 In whom I saw you all with the eyes of love.

4 May I have joy of you soon, if so be I am worthy of it.

5 It is therefore meet for you in every way to glorify Jesus Christ who glorified you;

6 That being perfectly joined together in one submission, submitting yourselves to your bishop and presbytery, ye may be sanctified in all things.

CHAPTER FOUR

Exhortations to Unity

1 I do not command you, as though I were somewhat.

2 For even though I am in bonds for the Name's sake, I am not yet perfected in Jesus Christ.

3 For now am I beginning to be a disciple;

4 And I speak to you as to my school-fellows.

5 For I ought to be trained by you for the contest in faith, in admonition, in endurance, in long-suffering.

6 But, since love doth not suffer me to be silent concerning you, therefore was I forward to exhort you, that ye run in harmony with the mind of God:

7 For Jesus Christ also, our inseparable life, is the mind of the Father, even as the bishops that are settled in the farthest parts of the earth are in the mind of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER FIVE

1 So then it becometh you to run in harmony with the mind of the bishop;

2 Which thing also ye do.

3 For your honourable presbytery, which is worthy of God, is attuned to the bishop, even as its strings to a lyre.

4 Therefore in your concord and harmonious love Jesus Christ is sung.

5 And do ye, each and all, form yourselves into a chorus, that being harmonious in concord and taking the key note of God ye may in unison sing with one voice through Jesus Christ unto the Father, that He may both hear you and acknowledge you by your good deeds to be members of His Son.

6 It is therefore profitable for you to be in blameless unity, that ye may also be partakers of God always.

CHAPTER SIX

The Praise of Unity

1 For if I in a short time had such converse with your bishop,

2 Which was not after the manner of men but in the Spirit, how much more do I congratulate you who are closely joined with him as the Church is with Jesus Christ and as Jesus Christ is with the Father, that

all things may be harmonious in unity.

3 Let no man be deceived.

4 If any one be not within the precinct of the altar, he lacketh the bread of God.

5 For, if the prayer of one and another hath so great force, how much more that of the bishop and of the whole Church.

6 Whosoever therefore cometh not to the congregation, he doth thereby show his pride and hath separated himself;

7 Let us therefore be careful not to resist the bishop, that by our submission we may give ourselves to God.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Have Respect to the Bishop as to Christ Himself

1 And in proportion as a man seeth that his bishop is silent, let him fear him the more.

2 For every one whom the Master of the household sendeth to be steward over His own house, we ought so to receive as Him that sent him.

3 Plainly therefore we ought to regard the bishop as the Lord Himself.

4 Now Onesimus of his own accord highly praiseth your orderly conduct in God, for that ye all live according to truth, and that no heresy hath a home among you:

5 Nay, ye do not so much as listen to any one, if he speak of aught else save concerning Jesus Christ in truth.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Beware of False Teachers

1 For some are wont of malicious guile to hawk about the Name, while they do certain other things unworthy of God.

2 These men ye ought to shun, as wild-beasts;

3 For they are mad dogs, biting by stealth;

4 Against whom ye ought to be on your guard, for they are hard to heal.

5 There is one only physician, of flesh and of spirit, generate and ingenerate, God in man, true Life in death, Son of Man and Son of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER NINE

Renewed Praise of the Ephesians

1 Let no one therefore deceive you, as indeed ye are not deceived, seeing that ye belong wholly to God.

2 For when no lust is established in you, which hath power to torment you, then truly ye live after God.

3 I devote myself for you, and I dedicate myself as an offering for

the church of you Ephesians which is famous unto all the ages.

4 They that are of the flesh cannot do the things of the Spirit, neither can they that are of the Spirit do the things of the flesh;

5 Even as faith cannot do the things of unfaithfulness, neither unfaithfulness the things of faith.

6 Nay, even those things which ye do after the flesh are spiritual; for ye do all things in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER TEN

Ye Have Given No Heed to False Teachers

1 But I have learned that certain persons passed through you from yonder, bringing evil doctrine;

2 Whom ye suffered not to sow seed in you, for ye stopped your ears, so that ye might not receive the seed sown by them;

3 Forasmuch as ye are stones of a temple, which were prepared beforehand for a building of God the Father, being hoisted up to the heights through the engine of Jesus Christ, which is the Cross, and using for a rope the Holy Spirit;

4 While your faith is your windlass, and love is the way that leadeth up to God.

5 So then ye are all companions in the way, carrying your God and your shrine, your Christ and your holy things, being arrayed from head to foot in the commandments of Jesus Christ.

6 And I too, taking part in the festivity, am permitted by letter to bear you company and to rejoice with you, that ye set not your love on anything after the common life of men, but only on God.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Exhortations to Prayer and Humility

1 And pray ye also without ceasing for the rest of mankind for there is in them a hope of repentance, that they may find God.

2 Therefore permit them to take lessons at least from your works.

3 Against their outbursts of wrath be ye meek;

4 Against their proud words be ye humble;

5 Against their railings set ye your prayers;

6 Against their errors be ye stedfast in the faith;

7 against their fierceness be ye gentle.

8 And be not zealous to imitate them by requital.

9 Let us show ourselves their brothers by our forbearance;

10 But let us be zealous to be imitators of the Lord, vying with each other who shall suffer the greater wrong, who shall be

defrauded, who shall be set at nought;

11 That no herb of the devil be found in you:

12 But in all purity and temperance abide ye in Christ Jesus, with your flesh and with your spirit.

CHAPTER TWELVE

An Exhortation to Fear God

1 These are the last times.

2 Henceforth let us have reverence;

3 Let us fear the long-suffering of God, lest it turn into a judgment against us.

4 For either let us fear the wrath which is to come or let us love the grace which now is—the one or the other;

5 Provided only that we be found in Christ Jesus unto true life.

6 Let nothing glitter in your eyes apart from Him, in whom I carry about my bonds, my spiritual pearls in which I would fain rise again through your prayer, whereof may it be my lot to be always a partaker, that I may be found in the company of those Christians of Ephesus who moreover were ever of one mind with the Apostles in the power of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1 I know who I am and to whom I write.

2 I am a convict, ye have received mercy:

3 I am in peril, ye are established.

4 Ye are the high-road of those that are on their way to die unto God.

5 Ye are associates in the mysteries with Paul, who was sanctified, who obtained a good report, who is worthy of all felicitation;

6 In whose foot-steps I would fain be found treading, when I shall attain unto God;

7 Who in his letter maketh mention of you in Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Exhortation to Meet Together Frequently for the Worship of God

1 Do your diligence therefore to meet together more frequently for thanksgiving to God and for His glory.

2 For when ye meet together frequently, the powers of Satan are cast down;

3 And his mischief cometh to nought in the concord of your faith.

4 There is nothing better than peace, in which all warfare of things in heaven and things on earth is abolished.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Exhortations to Faith and Love

1 None of these things is hidden from you, if ye be perfect in your faith and love toward Jesus Christ, for these are the beginning and end of life—faith is the beginning and

love is the end—and the two being found in unity are God, while all things else follow in their train unto true nobility.

2 No man professing faith sinneth, and no man possessing love hateth.

3 The tree is manifest from its fruit; so they that profess to be Christ's shall be seen through their actions.

4 For the Work is not a thing of profession now, but is seen then when one is found in the power of faith unto the end.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Exhortation to Confess Christ by Silence as well as Speech

1 It is better to keep silence and to be, than to talk and not to be.

2 It is a fine thing to teach, if the speaker practise.

3 Now there is one teacher, who spake and it came to pass:

4 Yea and even the things which He hath done in silence are worthy of the Father.

5 He that truly possesseth the word of Jesus is able also to hearken unto His silence, that he may be perfect;

6 That through his speech he may act and through his silence he may be known.

7 Nothing is hidden from the Lord, but even our secrets are nigh unto Him.

8 Let us therefore do all things as knowing that He dwelleth in us, to the end that we may be His temples and He Himself may be in us as our God.

9 This is so, and it will also be made clear in our sight from the love which we rightly bear towards Him.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Fate of False Teachers

1 Be not deceived, my brethren.

2 Corrupters of houses shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

3 If then they which do these things after the flesh are put to death, how much more if a man through evil doctrine corrupt the faith of God for which Jesus Christ was crucified.

4 Such a man, having defiled himself, shall go into the unquenchable fire;

5 And in like manner also shall he that hearkeneth unto him.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Beware of False Doctrines

1 For this cause the Lord received ointment on His feet, that He might breathe incorruption upon the Church.

2 Be not anointed with the ill odour of the teaching of the prince of this world, lest he lead you captive and rob you of the life which is set before you.

3 And wherefore do we not all walk prudently, receiving the knowledge of God, which is Jesus Christ?

4 Why perish we in our folly, not knowing the gift of grace which the Lord hath truly sent?

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Glory of the Cross

1 My spirit is made an offscouring for the Cross, which is a stumbling-block to them that are unbelievers, but to us salvation and life eternal.

2 Where is the wise?

3 Where is the disputer?

4 Where is the boasting of them that are called prudent?

CHAPTER TWENTY

A Celebrated Mystery

1 And hidden from the prince of this world was the death of the Lord.

2 A mystery to be cried aloud—which was wrought in the silence of God.

3 How then was it made manifest to the ages?

4 A star shone forth in the heaven above all the stars;

5 And its light was unutterable, and its strangeness caused amazement;

6 And all the rest of the constellations with the sun and moon formed themselves into a chorus about the star;

7 But the star itself far outshone them all;

8 And there was perplexity to know whence came this strange appearance which was so unlike them.

9 From that time forward every sorcery and every spell was dissolved, the ignorance of wickedness vanished away, the ancient kingdom was pulled down, when God appeared in the likeness of man unto newness of everlasting life;

10 And that which had been perfected in the counsels of God began to take effect.

11 Thence all things were perturbed, because the abolishing of death was taken in hand.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Promise of Another Letter

1 If Jesus Christ should count me worthy through your prayer, and it should be the Divine will, in my second tract, which I intend to write to you, I will further set before you the dispensation whereof I have begun to speak, relating to the new man Jesus Christ, which consisteth in faith towards Him and in love towards Him, in His passion and resurrection, especially if the Lord should reveal aught to me.

2 Assemble yourselves together in common, every one of you severally, man by man, in grace, in one faith and one Jesus Christ, who

is Son of Man and Son of God, to the end that ye may obey the bishop and the presbytery without distraction of mind;

3 Breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality and the antidote that we should not die but live for ever in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Conclusion

1 I am devoted to you and to those whom for the honour of God ye sent to Smyrna;

2 Whence also I write unto you with thanks giving to the Lord, having love for Metrodorus as I have for you also.

3 Remember me, even as I would that Jesus Christ may also remember you.

4 Pray for the church which is in Syria, whence I am led a prisoner to Rome—I who am the very last of the faithful there;

5 According as I was counted worthy to be found unto the honour of God.

6 Fare ye well in God the Father and in Jesus Christ our common hope. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE MAGNESIANS

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 154 C.E.

CHAPTER ONE

Marcion, who is also Nauclerus, unto her which hath been blessed through the grace of God the Father in Christ Jesus our Saviour, in whom I salute the church which is in Magnesia on the Mæander, and I wish her abundant greeting in God the Father and in Jesus Christ.

2 When I learned the exceeding good order of your love in the ways of God, I was gladdened and I determined to address you in the faith of Jesus Christ.

3 For being counted worthy to bear a most godly name, in these bonds, which I carry about, I sing the praise of the churches;

4 And I pray that there may be in them union of the flesh and of the spirit which are Jesus Christ's, our never-failing life—an union of faith and of love which is preferred before all things, and—what is more than all—an union with Jesus and with the Father;

5 In whom if we endure patiently all the despite of the prince of this world and escape therefrom, we shall attain unto God.

CHAPTER TWO

I Rejoice in Your Messengers

1 Forasmuch then as I was permitted to see you in the person of Damas your godly bishop and your worthy presbyters Bassus and Apollonius and my fellow-servant the deacon Zotion, of whom I would fain have joy, for that he is subject to the bishop as unto the grace of God and to the presbytery as unto the law of Jesus Christ:

Honour Your Youthful Bishop

2 Yea, and it becometh you also not to presume upon the youth of your bishop, but according to the power of God the Father to render unto him all reverence, even as I have learned that the holy presbyters also have not taken advantage of his outwardly youthful estate, but give place to him as to one prudent in God;

3 Yet not to him, but to the Father of Jesus Christ, even to the Bishop of all.

4 For the honour therefore of Him that desired you, it is meet that ye should be obedient without dissimulation.

5 For a man doth not so much deceive this bishop who is seen, as cheat that other who is invisible;

6 And in such a case he must reckon not with flesh but with God who knoweth the hidden things.

CHAPTER THREE

1 It is therefore meet that we not only be called Christians, but also be such;

2 Even as some persons have the bishop's name on their lips, but in everything act apart from him.

3 Such men appear to me not to keep a good conscience, forasmuch as they do not assemble them-selves together lawfully according to commandment.

CHAPTER FOUR

Death is the Fate of All Such

1 Seeing then that all things have an end, and these two—life and death—are set before us together, and each man shall go to his own place;

2 For just as there are two coinages, the one of God and the other of the world, and each of them hath its proper stamp impressed upon it, the unbelievers the stamp of this world, but the faithful in love the stamp of God the Father through Jesus Christ, through whom unless of our own free choice we accept to die unto His passion, His life is not in us:

Preserve Harmony

3 Seeing then that in the aforementioned persons I beheld your whole people in faith and embraced them, I advise you, be ye zealous to do all things in godly concord, the bishop presiding after the likeness of God and the presbyters after the likeness of the council of the God, with the deacons also who are most dear to me, having been entrusted with the diaconate of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before the worlds and appeared at the end of time.

4 Therefore do ye all study conformity to God and pay reverence one to another;

5 And let no man regard his neighbour after the flesh, but love ye one another in Jesus Christ always.

6 Let there be nothing among you which shall have power to divide you, but be ye united with the bishop and with them that preside over you as an ensample and a lesson of incorruptibility.

CHAPTER FIVE

Do Nothing Without the Bishop and presbyters

1 Therefore as the Lord did nothing without the Father, being united with Him, either by Himself or by the Apostles, so neither do ye anything without the bishop and the presbyters.

2 And attempt not to think anything right for yourselves apart from others:

3 But let there be one prayer in common, one supplication, one mind, one hope, in love and in joy unblameable, which is Jesus Christ, than whom there is nothing better.

4 Hasten to come together all of you, as to one temple, even God;

5 As to one altar, even to one Jesus Christ, who came forth from One Father and is with One and departed unto One.

CHAPTER SIX

1 Be not seduced by strange doctrines nor by antiquated fables, which are profitless.

2 For if even unto this day we live after the manner of Judaism, we avow that we have not received grace:

3 God who manifested Himself through Jesus Christ His Son, who is His Word that proceeded from silence, who in all things was well-pleasing unto Him that sent Him.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Let Us Live with Christ

1 If then those who had walked in ancient practices attained unto newness of hope, no longer observing sabbaths but fashioning their lives after the Lord's day, on which our life also arose through Him and through His death which some men deny—a mystery whereby we attained unto belief, and for this cause we endure patiently, that we may be found disciples of Jesus Christ our only teacher.

2 If this be so, how shall we be able to live apart from Him?

CHAPTER EIGHT

Beware of Judaizing

1 Therefore let us not be insensible to His goodness.

2 For if He should imitate us according to our deeds, we are lost.

3 For this cause, seeing that we are become His disciples, let us learn to live as beseemeth Christianity.

4 For whoso is called by another name besides this, is not of God.

5 Therefore put away the vile leaven which hath waxed stale and sour, and betake yourselves to the new leaven, which is Jesus Christ.

6 Be ye salted in Him, that none among you grow putrid, seeing that by your savour ye shall be proved.

7 It is monstrous to talk of Jesus Christ and to practise Judaism.

8 For Christianity did not believe in Judaism, but Judaism in Christianity, wherein every tongue believed and was gathered together unto God.

CHAPTER NINE

I Write These Things to Warn You

1 Now these things I say, my dearly beloved, not because I have learned that any of you are so minded;

2 But as being less than any of you, I would have you be on your guard betimes, that ye fall not into the snares of vain doctrine;

3 But be ye fully persuaded concerning the passion and the resurrection, which took place in the time of the governorship of Pontius Pilate;

4 For these things were truly and certainly done by Jesus Christ our hope;

5 From which hope may it not befal any of you to be turned aside.

CHAPTER TEN

Ye are Superior to Me

1 Let me have joy of you soon, if I be worthy.

2 For even though I am in bonds, yet am I not comparable to one of you who are at liberty.

3 I know that ye are not puffed up;

4 For ye have Jesus Christ in yourselves.

5 And, when I praise you, I know that ye only feel the more shame.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Be Established in Faith and Unity

1 Do your diligence therefore that ye be confirmed in the ordinances of the Lord and of the Apostle, that ye may prosper in all things whatsoever ye do in flesh and spirit, by faith and by love, in the Son and Father and in the Spirit, in the beginning and in the end, with your revered bishop, and with the fitly wreathed spiritual circlet of your presbytery, and with the deacons who walk after God.

2 Be obedient to the bishop and to one another, as Jesus Christ was to the Father according to the flesh, and as the Apostle wasto Christ and to the Father, that there may be union both of flesh and of spirit.

Your Prayers Requested

3 Knowing that ye are full of God, I have exhorted you briefly.

4 Remember me in your prayers, that I may attain unto God;

5 And remember also the church which is in Syria, whereof I am not worthy to be called a member.

6 For I have need of your united prayer and love in God, that it may be granted to the church which is in Syria to be refreshed by the dew of your fervent supplication.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Salutations

1 The Ephesians from Smyrna salute you, from whence also I write to you.

2 They are here with me for the glory of God, as also are ye;

3 And they have comforted me in all things, together with Metrodorus bishop of the Smyrnaeans.

4 Yea, and all the other churches salute you in the honour of Jesus Christ.

5 Fare ye well in godly concord, and possess ye a stedfast spirit, which is Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE TRALLIANS

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 154 C.E.

CHAPTER ONE

Acknowledgment of Their Excellence

Marcion, who is also Nauclerus, unto her that is beloved by God the Father of Jesus Christ;

2 To the holy church which is in Tralles of Asia, elect and worthy of God, having peace in flesh and spirit through the passion of Jesus Christ, who is our hope through our resurrection unto Him;

3 When I learned the exceeding good order of your love in the ways of God, I was gladdened and I determined to address you in the faith of Jesus Christ.

4 Which church also I salute in the Divine plenitude after the apostolic fashion, and I wish her abundant greeting.

CHAPTER TWO

1 I have learned that ye have a mind unblameable and stedfast in patience, not from habit, but by nature,

according as Polybius your bishop informed me, who by the will of God and of Jesus Christ visited me in Smyrna;

2 And so greatly did he rejoice with me in my bonds in Christ Jesus, that in him I beheld the whole multitude of you.

3 Having therefore received your godly benevolence at his hands, I gave glory, forasmuch as I had found you to be imitators of God, even as I had earned.

CHAPTER THREE

Be Subject to the Bishop

1 For when ye are obedient to the bishop as to Jesus Christ, it is evident to me that ye are living not after men but after Jesus Christ, who died for us, that believing on His death ye might escape death.

2 It is therefore necessary, even as your wont is, that ye should do nothing without the bishop;

3 But be ye obedient also to the presbytery, as to the Apostle of Jesus Christ our hope;

4 For if we live in Him, we shall also be found in Him.

5 And those likewise who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must please all men in all ways.

6 For they are not deacons of meats and drinks but servants of the Church of God.

7 It is right therefore that they should beware of blame as of fire.

CHAPTER FOUR

Honour the deacons

1 In like manner let all men respect the deacons as Jesus Christ, even as they should respect the bishop as being a type of the Father and the presbyters as the council of God.

2 Apart from these there is not even the name of a church.

3 And I am persuaded that ye are so minded as touching these matters:

4 For I received the ensample of your love, and I have it with me, in the person of your bishop, whose very demeanour is a great lesson, while his gentleness is power—a man to whom I think even the godless pay reverence.

5 Seeing that I love you I thus spare you, though I might write more sharply on his behalf:

6 But I did not think myself competent for this, that being a convict I should order you as though I were the Apostle.

CHAPTER FIVE

I Have Need of Humility

1 I have many deep thoughts in God:

2 But I take the measure of myself, lest I perish in my boasting.

3 For now I ought to be the more afraid and not to give heed to those that would puff me up:

4 For they that say these things to me are a scourge to me.

5 For though I desire to suffer, yet I know not whether I am worthy:

6 For the envy of the devil is unseen indeed by many, but against me it wages the fiercer war.

7 So then I crave gentleness, whereby the prince of this world is brought to nought.

CHAPTER SIX

I Will Not Teach You Profound Doctrines

1 Am I not able to write to you of heavenly things?

2 But I fearest I should cause you harm being babes.

3 So bear with me, lest not being able to take them in, ye should be choked.

4 For I myself also, albeit I am in bonds and can comprehend heavenly things and the arrays of the angels and the musterings of the principalities, things visible and things invisible—I myself am not yet by reason of this a disciple.

5 For we lack many things, that God may not be lacking to us.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Abstain from the Poison of Heretics

1 I exhort you therefore—yet not I, but the love of Jesus Christ—take ye only Christian food, and abstain from strange herbage, which is heresy:

2 For these men do even mingle poison with Jesus Christ, imposing upon others by a show of honesty, like persons administering a deadly drug with honied wine, so that one who knoweth it not, fearing nothing, drinketh in death with a baneful delight.

3 Be ye therefore on your guard against such men.

4 And this will surely be, if ye be not puffed up and if ye be inseparable from God Jesus Christ and from the bishop and from the ordinances of the Apostles.

5 He that is within the sanctuary is clean;

6 But he that is without the sanctuary is not clean, that is, he that doeth aught without the bishop and presbytery and deacons, this man is not clean in his conscience.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Be on Your Guard Against the Snares of the Devil

1 Not indeed that I have known of any such thing among you, but I keep watch over you betimes, as my beloved, for I foresee the snares of the devil.

2 Do ye therefore arm yourselves with gentleness and recover yourselves in faith which is the flesh of the Lord, and in love which is the blood of Jesus Christ.

3 Let none of you bear a grudge against his neighbour.

4 Give no occasion to the Gentiles, lest by reason of a few foolish men the godly multitude be blasphemed:

CHAPTER NINE

Reference to the History of Christ

1 Be ye deaf therefore, when any man speaketh to you apart from Jesus Christ, who ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died in the sight of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth;

2 Who moreover was truly raised from the dead, His Father having raised Him, who in the like fashion will so raise us also who believe on Him—His Father, I say, will raise us—in Christ Jesus, apart from whom we have not true life.

The Reality of Christ's Passion

3 But if it were as certain persons who are godless, that is unbelievers, say, that He suffered only in semblance, being themselves mere semblance, why am I in bonds?

4 And why also do I desire to fight with wild beasts?

5 So I die in vain.

6 Truly then I lie against the Lord.

CHAPTER TEN

Avoid the Deadly Errors of the Docetae

1 Shun ye therefore those vile offshoots that gender a deadly fruit, whereof if a man taste, forthwith he dieth.

2 For these men are not the Father's planting:

3 For if they had been, they would have been seen to be branches of the Cross, and their fruit imperishable—the Cross whereby He through His passion inviteth us, being His members.

4 Now it cannot be that a head should be found without members, seeing that God promiseth union, and this union is Himself.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Continue in Unity and Love

1 I salute you from Smyrna, together with the churches of God that are present with me;

2 Men who refreshed me in all ways both in flesh and in spirit.

3 My bonds exhort you, which for Jesus Christ's sake I bear about, entreating that I may attain unto God;

4 Abide ye in your concord and in prayer one with another.

5 For it becometh you severally, and more especially the presbyters, to cheer the soul of your bishop unto the honour of the Father and to the honour of Jesus Christ and of the Apostles.

6 I pray that ye may hearken unto me in love, lest I be for a testimony against you by having so written.

7 And pray ye also for me who have need of your love in the mercy of God, that I may be vouchsafed the lot which I am eager to attain, to the end that I be not found reprobate.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Conclusion

1 The love of the Smyrnaeans and Ephesians saluteth you.

2 Remember in your prayers the church which is in Syria;

3 Whereof also I am not worthy to be called a member, being the very last of them.

4 Fare ye well in Jesus Christ, submitting yourselves to the bishop as to the commandment, and likewise also to the presbytery;

5 And each of you severally love one another with undivided heart.

6 My spirit is offered up for you, not only now, but also when I shall attain unto God.

7 For I am still in peril;

8 But the Father is faithful in Jesus Christ to fulfil my petition and yours.

9 May we be found unblameable in
Him. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE ROMANS

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE ON AUGUST 23, 154 C.E.

CHAPTER ONE

As a Prisoner, I Hope to See You

Marcion, who is also Nauclerus, unto her that hath found mercy in the bountifulness of the Father Most High and of Jesus Christ His only Son;

2 To the church that is beloved and enlightened through the will of Him who willed all things that are, by faith and love towards Jesus Christ our God;

3 Even unto her that hath the presidency in the country of the region of the Romans, being worthy of God, worthy of honour, worthy of felicitation, worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthy in purity, and having the presidency of love, walking in the law of Christ and bearing the Father's name;

4 Which church also I salute in the name of Jesus Christ the Son of the Father;

5 Unto them that in flesh and spirit are united unto His every commandment, being filled with the grace of God without wavering, and filtered clear from every foreign stain;

6 Abundant greeting in Jesus Christ our God in blamelessness.

CHAPTER TWO

1 Forasmuch as in answer to my prayer to God it hath been granted me to see your godly countenances, so that I have obtained even more than I asked;

2 For wearing bonds in Christ Jesus I hope to salute you, if it be the Divine will that I should be counted worthy to reach unto the end;

3 For the beginning verily is well ordered, if so be I shall attain unto the goal, that I may receive mine inheritance without hindrance.

4 For I dread your very love, lest it do me an injury;

5 For it is easy for you to do what ye will, but for me it is difficult to attain unto God, unless ye shall spare me.

CHAPTER THREE

Do Not Save Me from Martyrdom

1 For I would not have you to be men-pleasers but to please God, as indeed ye do please Him.

2 For neither shall I myself ever find an opportunity such as this to attain unto God, nor can ye, if ye be

silent, win the credit of any nobler work.

3 For, if ye be silent and leave me alone, I am a word of God;

4 But if ye desire my flesh, then shall I be again a mere cry.

5 Nay grant me nothing more than that I be poured out a libation to God, while there is still an altar ready;

6 That forming yourselves into a chorus in love ye may sing to the Father in Jesus Christ, for that God hath vouchsafed that the bishop from Syria should be found in the West, having summoned him from the East.

7 It is good to set from the world unto God, that I may rise unto Him.

CHAPTER FOUR

Pray Rather that I May Attain to Martyrdom

1 Ye never grudged any one;

2 Ye were the instructors of others.

3 And my desire is that those lessons shall hold good which as teachers ye enjoin.

4 Only pray that I may have power within and without, so that I may not only say it but also desire it;

5 That I may not only be called a Christian, but also be found one.

6 For if I shall be found so, then can I also be called one, and be faithful then, when I am no more visible to the world.

7 Nothing visible is good.

8 For our God Jesus Christ, being in the Father, is no more visible.

9 The Work is not of persuasiveness, but Christianity is a thing of might, whensoever it is hated by the world.

CHAPTER FIVE

Allow Me to Fall a Prey to the Wild Beasts

1 I write to all the churches, and I bid all men know, that of my own free will I die for God, unless ye should hinder me.

2 I exhort you, be ye not an unseasonable kindness to me.

3 Let me be given to the wild beasts, for through them I can attain unto God.

4 I am God’s wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts that I may be found pure bread of Christ.

5 Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my sepulchre and may leave no part of my body behind, so that I may not, when I am fallen asleep, be burdensome to any one.

6 Then shall I be truly a disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world shall not so much as see my body.

7 Supplicate the Lord for me, that through these instruments I may be found a sacrifice to God.

8 I do not enjoin you, Paul did.

9 He was the Apostle, I am a convict;

10 He was free, but I am a slave to this very hour.

11 Yet if I shall suffer, then am I a freed-man of Jesus Christ, and I shall rise free in Him.

12 Now I am learning in my bonds to put away every desire.

CHAPTER SIX

I Desire to Die

1 From Syria even unto Rome I fight with wild beasts, by land and sea, by night and by day, being bound amidst ten leopards, even a company of soldiers, who only wax worse when they are kindly treated.

2 Howbeit through their wrong doings I become more completely a disciple;

3 Yet am I not hereby justified.

4 May I have joy of the beasts that have been prepared for me;

5 and I pray that I may find them prompt;

6 Nay I will entice them that they may devour me promptly, not as they have done to some, refusing to touch them through fear.

7 Yea though of themselves they should not be willing while I am ready, I myself will force them to it.

8 Bear with me.

9 I know what is expedient for me.

10 Now am I beginning to be a disciple.

11 May naught of things visible and things invisible envy me;

12 That I may attain unto Jesus Christ.

13 Come fire and cross and grapplings with wild beasts, cuttings and manglings, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushings of my whole body, come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me.

14 Only be it mine to attain unto Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER SEVEN

By Death I Shall Attain True Life

1 The farthest bounds of the universe shall profit me nothing, neither the kingdoms of this world.

2 It is good for me to die for Jesus Christ rather than to reign over the farthest bounds of the earth.

3 Him I seek, who died on our behalf;

4 Him I desire, who rose again for our sake.

5 The pangs of a new birth are upon me.

6 Bear with me, brethren.

7 Do not hinder me from living;

8 Do not desire my death.

9 Bestow not on the world one who desireth to be God’s, neither allure him with material things.

10 Suffer me to receive the pure light.

11 When I am come thither, then shall I be a man.

12 Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of my God.

13 If any man hath Him within himself, let him understand what I desire, and let him have fellow-feeling with me, for he knoweth the things which straiten me.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Reason of Desiring to Die

1 The prince of this world would fain tear me in pieces and corrupt my mind to Godward.

2 Let not any of you therefore who are near abet him.

3 Rather stand ye on my side, that is on God's side.

4 Speak not of Jesus Christ and withal desire the world.

5 Let not envy have a home in you.

6 Even though I myself, when I am with you, should beseech you, obey me not;

7 but rather give credence to these things which I write to you.

8 For I write to you in the midst of life, yet lusting after death.

9 My lust hath been crucified, and there is no fire of material longing in me, but only water living and speaking in me, saying within me, Come to the Father.

10 I have no delight in the food of corruption or in the delights of this life.

11 I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Christ;

12 And for a draught I desire His blood, which is love incorruptible.

CHAPTER NINE

Be Ye Favourable to Me

1 I desire no longer to live after the manner of men;

2 And this shall be, if ye desire it.

3 Desire ye, that ye yourselves also may be desired.

4 In a brief letter I beseech you;

5 Believe me.

6 And Jesus Christ shall make manifest unto you these things, that I speak the truth—Jesus Christ, the unerring mouth in whom the Father hath spoken truly.

7 Entreat ye for me, that I may attain through the Holy Spirit.

8 I write not unto you after the flesh, but after the mind of God.

9 If I shall suffer, it was your desire;

10 if I shall be rejected, it was your hatred.

CHAPTER TEN

Pray for the Church in Syria

1 Remember in your prayers the church which is in Syria, which hath God for its shepherd in my stead.

2 Jesus Christ alone shall be its bishop—He and your love.

3 But for myself I am ashamed to be called one of them;

4 For neither am I worthy, being the very last of them and an untimely birth:

5 But I have found mercy that I should be some one, if so be I shall attain unto God.

6 My spirit saluteth you, and the love of the churches which received me in the name of Jesus Christ, not as a mere wayfarer:

7 For even those churches which did not lie on my route after the flesh went before me from city to city.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Conclusion

1 Now I write these things to you from Smyrna by the hand of the Ephesians who are worthy of all felicitation.

2 And Crocus also, a name very dear to me, is with me, with many others besides.

3 As touching those who went before me from Syria to Rome unto the glory of God, I believe that ye have received instructions;

4 Whom also apprise that I am near;

5 For they all are worthy of God and of you, and it becometh you to refresh them in all things.

6 These things I write to you on the 9th before the Kalends of September. Fare ye well unto the end in the patient waiting for Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE PHILADELPHIANS

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 154 C.E.

CHAPTER ONE

Praise of the Bishop

Marcion, who is also Nauclerus, to the church of God the Father and of Jesus Christ, which is in Philadelphia of Asia, which hath found mercy and is firmly established in the concord of God and rejoiceth in the passion of our Lord and in His resurrection without wavering, being fully assured in all mercy;

2 Which church I salute in the blood of Jesus Christ, that is eternal and abiding joy;

3 More especially if they be at one with the bishop and the presbyters who are with him, and with the deacons that have been appointed according to the mind of Jesus Christ, whom after His own will He confirmed and established by His Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER TWO

1 This your bishop I have found to hold the ministry which pertaineth to the common weal, not of himself or through men, nor yet for vain glory, but in the love of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 And I am amazed at his forbearance;

3 Whose silence is more powerful than others' speech.

4 For he is attuned in harmony with the commandments, as a lyre with its strings.

5 Wherefore my soul blesseth his godly mind, for I have found that it is virtuous and perfect—even the imperturbable and calm temper which he hath, while living in all godly forbearance.

CHAPTER THREE

Maintain Union with the Bishop

1 As children therefore of the light of the truth, shun division and wrong doctrines;

2 And where the shepherd is, there follow ye as sheep.

3 For many specious wolves with baneful delights lead captive the runners in God's race;

4 But, where ye are at one, they will find no place.

CHAPTER FOUR

Avoid Schismatics

1 Abstain from noxious herbs, which are not the husbandry of Jesus Christ, because they are not the planting of the Father.

2 Not that I have found division among you, but filtering.

3 For as many as are of God and of Jesus Christ, they are with the bishop;

4 And as many as shall repent and enter into the unity of the Church, these also shall be of God, that they may be living after Jesus Christ.

5 Be not deceived, my brethren.

6 If any man followeth one that maketh a schism, he doth not inherit the kingdom of God.

7 If any man walketh in strange doctrine, he hath no fellowship with the passion.

CHAPTER FIVE

Have But One Eucharist

1 Be ye careful therefore to observe one eucharist for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and one cup unto union in His blood;

2 There is one altar, as there is one bishop, together with the presbytery and the deacons my fellow-servants, that whatsoever ye do, ye may do it after God.

Pray for Me

3 My brethren, my heart overfloweth altogether in love towards you;

4 And rejoicing above measure I watch over your safety;

5 Yet not I, but Jesus Christ, wearing whose bonds I am the more afraid, because I am not yet perfected.

6 But your prayer will make me perfect unto God, that I may attain unto the inheritance wherein I have found mercy, taking refuge in the Gospel as the flesh of Jesus and in the Apostle as the presbytery of the Church.

CHAPTER SIX

Do Not Accept Judaism

1 But if any one propound Judaism unto you, hear him not:

2 For it is better to hear Christianity from a man who is circumcised than Judaism from one uncircumcised.

3 But if either the one or the other speak not concerning Jesus Christ, I look on them as tombstones and graves of the dead, whereon are inscribed only the names of men.

4 Shun ye therefore the wicked arts and plottings of the prince of this world, lest haply ye be crushed by his devices, and wax weak in your love.

5 But assemble yourselves all together with undivided heart.

6 And I give thanks to my God, that I have a good conscience in my dealings with you, and no man can boast either in secret or openly, that I was burdensome to any one in small things or in great.

7 Yea and for all among whom I spoke, it is my prayer that they may

not turn it into a testimony against themselves.

CHAPTER SEVEN

I Have Exhorted You to Unity

1 For even though certain persons desired to deceive me after the flesh, yet the spirit is not deceived, being from God;

2 For it knoweth whence it cometh and where it goeth, and it searcheth out the hidden things.

3 I cried out, when I was among you; I spake with a loud voice, with God's own voice, Give ye heed to the bishop and the presbytery and deacons.

4 Howbeit there were those who suspected me of saying this, because I knew beforehand of the division of certain persons.

5 But He in whom I am bound is my witness that I learned it not from flesh of man;

6 It was the preaching of the Spirit who spake on this wise;

7 Do nothing without the bishop;

8 Keep your flesh as a temple of God;

9 Cherish union;

10 Shun divisions;

11 Be imitators of Jesus Christ, as He Himself also was of His Father.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1 I therefore did my own part, as a man composed unto union.

2 But where there is division and anger, there God abideth not.

3 Now the Lord forgiveth all men when they repent, if repenting they return to the unity of God and to the council of the bishop.

4 I have faith in the grace of Jesus Christ, who shall strike off every fetter from you;

5 And I entreat you, Do ye nothing in a spirit of factiousness but after the teaching of Christ.

6 For I heard certain persons saying, If I find it not in the charters, I believe it not in the Gospel.

7 And when I said to them, It is written, they answered me That is the question.

8 But as for me, my charter is Jesus Christ, the inviolable charter is His cross and His death and His resurrection, and faith through Him;

9 Wherein I desire to be justified through your prayers.

CHAPTER NINE

The Gospel's Preeminence

1 All these things combine in the unity of God.

2 But the Gospel hath a singular preeminence in the advent of the Saviour, even our Lord Jesus Christ, and His passion and resurrection.

3 But the Gospel is the completion of immortality.

4 All things together are good, if ye believe through love.

CHAPTER TEN

Congratulate the Inhabitants of Antioch on the Close of the Persecution

1 Seeing that in answer to your prayer and to the tender sympathy which ye have in Christ Jesus, it hath been reported to me that the church which is in Antioch of Syria hath peace, it is becoming for you, as a church of God, to appoint a deacon to go thither as God's ambassador, that he may congratulate them when they are assembled together, and may glorify the Name.

2 Blessed in Jesus Christ is he that shall be counted worthy of such a ministration;

3 And ye yourselves shall be glorified.

4 Now if ye desire it, it is not impossible for you to do this for the name of God;

5 Even as the churches which are nearest have sent bishops, and others presbyters and deacons.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Thanks and Salutation

1 But as touching Philo the deacon from Cilicia, a man of good report, who now also ministereth to me in the word of God, together with Rhaius Agathopus, an elect one who followeth me from Syria, having bidden farewell to this present life;

2 The same who also bear witness to you—and I myself thank God on your behalf, because ye received them, as I trust the Lord will receive you.

3 But may those who treated them with dishonour be redeemed through the grace of Jesus Christ.

4 The love of the brethren which are in Troas saluteth you;

5 From whence also I write to you by the hand of Burrhus, who was sent with me by the Ephesians and Smyrnaeans as a mark of honour.

6 The Lord shall honour them, even Jesus Christ, on whom their hope is set in flesh and soul and spirit, by faith, by love, by concord. Fare ye well in Christ Jesus our common hope. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF MARCION TO THE SMYRNAEANS

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 154 C.E.

CHAPTER ONE

Thanks to God for Your Faith

Marcion, who is also Nauclerus, to the church of God the Father and of Jesus Christ the Beloved, which hath been mercifully endowed with every grace, being filled with faith and love and lacking in no grace, most reverend and bearing holy treasures;

2 To the church which is in Smyrna of Asia, in a blameless spirit and in the word of God abundant greeting.

3 I give glory to Jesus Christ the God who bestowed such wisdom upon you;

4 For I have perceived that ye are established in faith immovable, being as it were nailed on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, in flesh and in spirit, and firmly grounded in love in the blood of Christ, Son of God by the Divine will and power, that all righteousness might be fulfilled by Him, truly nailed up in the flesh for our sakes under Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch of which fruit are we—that is, of His most blessed passion;

5 That He might set up an ensign unto all the ages through His resurrection, for His saints and faithful people, whether among Jews or among Gentiles, in one body of His Church.

CHAPTER TWO

Christ's True Passion

1 For He suffered all these things for our sakes that we might be saved;

2 And He suffered truly, as also He raised Himself truly;

3 Not as certain unbelievers say, that He suffered in semblance, being themselves mere semblance.

4 And according as their opinions are, so shall it happen to them, for they are without body and devil-like.

CHAPTER THREE

Christ Was Possessed of a Body After His Resurrection

1 For I know and believe that He was in the flesh even after the resurrection;

2 And when He came to Peter and his company, He said to them, Lay hold and handle me, and see that I am not a devil without body.

3 And straightway they touched Him, and they believed, being joined unto His flesh and His blood.

4 Wherefore also they despised death, nay they were found superior to death.

5 And after His resurrection He both ate with them and drank with them as one in the flesh, though spiritually He was united with the Father.

CHAPTER FOUR

Beware of These Heretics

1 But these things I warn you, dearly beloved, knowing that ye yourselves are so minded.

2 Howbeit I watch over you betimes to protect you from wild beasts in human form—men whom not only should ye not receive, but, if it were possible, not so much as meet them;

3 Only pray ye for them, if haply they may repent.

4 This indeed is difficult, but Jesus Christ, our true life, hath power over it.

5 For if these things were done by our Lord in semblance, then am I also a prisoner in semblance.

6 And why then have I delivered myself over to death, unto fire, unto sword, unto wild beasts?

7 But near to the sword, near to God; in company with wild beasts, in company with God.

8 Only let it be in the name of Jesus Christ, so that we may suffer together with Him.

9 I endure all things, seeing that He Himself enableth me, who is perfect Man.

CHAPTER FIVE

Their Dangerous Errors

1 But certain persons ignorantly deny Him, or rather have been denied by Him, being advocates of death rather than of the truth;

2 And they have not been persuaded by the Gospel, nor by the sufferings of each of us severally;

3 For they are of the same mind also concerning us.

4 For what profit is it to me, if a man praiseth me, but blasphemeth my Lord, not confessing that He was a bearer of flesh?

5 Yet he that affirmeth not this, doth thereby deny Him altogether, being himself a bearer of a corpse.

6 But their names, being unbelievers, I have not thought fit to record in writing;

7 Nay, far be it from me even to remember them, until they repent and return to the passion, which is our resurrection.

CHAPTER SIX

Unbelievers in the Blood of Christ Shall Be Condemned

1 Let no man be deceived.

2 Even the heavenly beings and the glory of the angels and the rulers visible and invisible, if they believe

not in the blood of Christ who is God, judgment awaiteth them also.

3 He that receiveth let him receive.

4 Let not office puff up any man;

5 For faith and love are all in all, and nothing is preferred before them.

6 But mark ye those who hold strange doctrine touching the grace of Jesus Christ which came to us, how that they are contrary to the mind of God.

7 They have no care for love, none for the widow, none for the orphan, none for the afflicted, none for the prisoner, none for the hungry or thirsty.

Let Us Stand Aloof from Such Heretics

8 They abstain from eucharist and prayer, because they allow not that the eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which flesh suffered for our sins, and which the Father of His goodness raised up.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1 They therefore that gainsay the good gift of God perish by their questionings.

2 But it were expedient for them to have love, that they may also rise again.

3 It is therefore meet that ye should abstain from such, and not speak of them either privately or in public;

4 Out should give heed to the Gospel, wherein the passion is shown unto us and the resurrection is accomplished.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Let Nothing Be Done Without the Bishop

1 But shun divisions, as the beginning of evils.

2 Do ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the Apostle;

3 And to the deacons pay respect, as to God’s commandment.

4 Let no man do aught of things pertaining to the Church apart from the bishop.

5 Let that be held a valid eucharist which is under the bishop or one to whom he shall have committed it.

6 Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people be;

7 Even as where Jesus may be, there is the universal Church.

8 It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptize or to hold a love-feast;

9 But whatsoever he shall approve, this is well-pleasing also to God;

10 That everything which ye do may be sure and valid.

CHAPTER NINE

Honour the Bishop

1 It is reasonable henceforth that we wake to soberness, while we have still time to repent and turn to God.

2 It is good to recognise God and the bishop.

3 He that honoureth the bishop is honoured of God;

4 He that doeth aught without the knowledge of the bishop rendereth service to the devil.

5 May all things therefore abound unto you in grace, for ye are worthy.

6 Ye refreshed me in all things, and Jesus Christ shall refresh you.

7 In my absence and in my presence ye cherished me.

8 May God recompense you;

9 For whose sake if ye endure all things, ye shall attain unto Him.

CHAPTER TEN

Acknowledgment of Their Kindness

1 Philo and Rhaius Agathopus, who followed me in the cause of God, ye did well to receive as ministers of Christ God;

2 Who also give thanks to the Lord for you, because ye refreshed them in every way.

3 Nothing shall be lost to you.

4 My spirit is devoted for you, as also are my bonds, which ye despised not, neither were ashamed of them.

5 Nor shall He, who is perfect faithfulness, be ashamed of you, even Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Request to Them to Send a Messenger to Antioch

1 Your prayer sped forth unto the church which is in Antioch of Syria;

2 Whence coming a prisoner in most godly bonds I salute all men, though I am not worthy to belong to it, being the very last of them.

3 By the Divine will was this vouchsafed to me, not of my own complicity, but by God's grace, which I pray may be given to me perfectly, that through your prayers I may attain unto God.

4 Therefore that your work may be perfected both on earth and in heaven, it is meet that your church should appoint, for the honour of God, an ambassador of God that he may go as far as Syria and congratulate them because they are at peace, and have recovered their proper stature, and their proper bulk hath been restored to them.

5 It seemed to me therefore a fitting thing that ye should send one of your own people with a letter, that he might join with them in giving glory for the calm which by God's will had overtaken them, and

because they were already reaching a haven through your prayers.

6 Seeing ye are perfect, let your counsels also be perfect;

7 For if ye desire to do well, God is ready to grant the means.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Salutations

1 The love of the brethren which are in Troas saluteth you;

2 From whence also I write to you by the hand of Burrhus, whom ye sent with me jointly with the Ephesians your brethren.

3 He hath refreshed me in all ways.

4 And I would that all imitated him, for he is an ensample of the ministry of God.

5 The Divine grace shall requite him in all things.

6 I salute your godly bishop and your venerable presbytery and my fellow-servants the deacons, and all of you severally and in a body, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in His flesh and blood, in His passion and resurrection, which was both carnal and spiritual, in the unity of God and of yourselves.

7 Grace to you, mercy, peace, patience, always.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Conclusion

1 I salute the households of my brethren with their wives and children, and the virgins who are called widows.

2 I bid you farewell in the power of the Father.

3 Philo, who is with me, saluteth you.

4 I salute the household of Gavia, and I pray that she may be grounded in faith and love both of flesh and of spirit.

5 I salute Alce, a name very dear to me, and Daphnus the incomparable, and Eutecnus, and all by name.

6 Fare ye well in the grace of God. Amen.

THE EPISTLE OF MARCION TO
METRODORUS

AS COMPOSED BY MARCION OF SINOPE IN 154 C.E.

CHAPTER ONE

Commendation and Exhortation

Marcion, who is also Nauclerus, unto Metrodorus who is bishop of the church of the Smyrnaeans or rather who hath for his bishop God the Father and Jesus Christ, abundant greeting.

2 Welcoming thy godly mind which is grounded as it were on an immovable rock, I give exceeding glory that it hath been vouchsafed me to see thy blameless face, whereof I would fain have joy in God.

3 I exhort thee in the grace wherewith thou art clothed to press forward in thy course and to exhort all men that they may be saved.

4 Vindicate thine office in all diligence of flesh and of spirit.

5 Have a care for union, than which there is nothing better.

6 Bear all men, as the Lord also beareth thee.

7 Suffer all men in love, as also thou doest.

8 Give thyself to unceasing prayers.

9 Ask for larger wisdom than thou hast.

10 Be watchful, and keep thy spirit from slumbering.

11 Speak to each man severally after the manner of God.

12 Bear the maladies of all, as a perfect athlete.

13 Where there is more toil, there is much gain.

CHAPTER TWO

Exhortations

1 If thou lovest good scholars, this is not thankworthy in thee.

2 Rather bring the more pestilent to submission by gentleness.

3 All wounds are not healed by the same salve.

4 Allay sharp pains by fomentations.

5 Be thou prudent as the serpent in all things and guileless always as the dove.

6 Therefore art thou made of flesh and spirit, that thou mayest humour the things which appear before thine eyes;

7 And as for the invisible things, pray thou that they may be revealed unto thee;

8 That thou mayest be lacking in nothing, but mayest abound in every spiritual gift.

9 The season requireth thee, as pilots require winds or as a storm-tossed mariner a haven, that it may attain unto God.

10 Be sober, as God's athlete.

11 The prize is incorruption and life eternal, concerning which thou also art persuaded.

12 In all things I am devoted to thee —I and my bonds which thou didst cherish.

CHAPTER THREE

1 Let not those that seem to be plausible and yet teach strange doctrine dismay thee.

2 Stand thou firm, as an anvil when it is smitten.

3 It is the part of a great athlete to receive blows and be victorious.

4 But especially must we for God's sake endure all things, that He also may endure us.

5 Be thou more diligent than thou art. Mark the seasons.

6 Wait Him that is above every season, the Eternal, the Invisible, who came visible for our sake, the Impalpable, the Impassible, who sufed for our sake, who endured in all ways for our sake.

CHAPTER FOUR

1 Let not widows be neglected.

2 After the Lord be thou their protector.

3 Let nothing be done without thy consent;

4 Neither do thou anything without the consent of God, as indeed thou doest not.

5 Be stedfast.

6 Let meetings be held more frequently. Seek out all men by name.

7 Despise not slaves, whether men or women.

8 Yet let not these again be puffed up, but let them serve the more faithfully to the glory of God, that they may obtain a better freedom from God.

9 Let them not desire to be set free at the public cost, lest they be found slaves of lust.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Duties of Husbands and Wives

1 Flee evil arts, or rather hold thou discourse about these.

2 Tell my sisters to love the Lord and to be content with their husbands in flesh and in spirit.

3 In like manner also charge my brothers in the name of Jesus Christ to love their wives, as the Lord loved the Church.

4 If any one is able to abide in chastity to the honour of the flesh of

the lord, let him so abide without boasting.

5 If he boast, he is lost;

6 And if it be known beyond the bishop, he is polluted.

7 It becometh men and women too, when they marry, to unite themselves with the consent of the bishop, that the marriage may be after the Lord and not after concupiscence.

8 Let all things be done to the honour of God.

CHAPTER SIX

The Duties of the Christian Flock

1 Give ye heed to the bishop, that God also may give heed to you.

2 I am devoted to those who are subject to the bishop, the presbyters, the deacons.

3 May it be granted me to have my portion with them in the presence of God.

4 Toil together one with another, struggle together, run together, suffer together, lie down together, rise up together, God's stewards and assessors and ministers.

5 Please the Captain in whose army ye serve, from whom also ye will receive your pay.

6 Let none of you be found a deserter.

7 Let your baptism abide with you as your shield;

8 Your faith as your helmet;

9 Your love as your spear;

10 Your patience as your body armour.

11 Let your works be your deposits, that may receive your assets due to you.

12 Be ye therefore long-suffering one with another in gentleness, as God is with you.

13 May I have joy you always.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Request that Metrodorus Would Send a Messenger to Antioch

1 Seeing that the church which is in Antioch of Syria hath peace, it hath been reported to me, through your prayers, I myself also have been the more comforted since God hath banished my care;

2 If so be may through suffering attain unto God, that I may be found a disciple through your intercession.

3 It becometh thee, most blessed Metrodorus, to call together a godly council and to elect some one among you who is very dear to you and zealous also, who shall be fit to bear the name of God's courier—to appoint him, I say, that he may go to Syria and glorify your zealous love unto the glory of God.

4 A Christian hath no authority over himself, but giveth his time to God.

5 This is God's work, and yours also, when ye shall complete it:

6 For I trust in the Divine grace, that ye are ready for an act of well-doing which is meet for God.

7 Knowing the fervour of your sincerity, I have exhorted you in a short letter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Let Other Churches Also Send to Antioch

1 Since I have not been able to write to all the churches, by reason of my sailing suddenly from Troas to Neapolis, as the Divine will enjoineth, thou shalt write to the churches in front, as one possessing the mind of God, to the intent that they also may do this same thing—let those who are able send messengers, and the rest letters by the persons who are sent by thee, that ye may be glorified by an ever memorable deed—for this is worthy of thee.

2 I salute all by name, and especially the wife of Epitropus with her whole household and her children's.

3 I salute Attalus my beloved.

4 I salute him that shall be appointed to go to Syria.

5 Grace shall be with him always, and with Metrodorus who sendeth him.

6 I bid you farewell always in our God Jesus Christ, in whom abide ye in the unity and supervision of God.

7 I salute Alce, a name very dear to me.

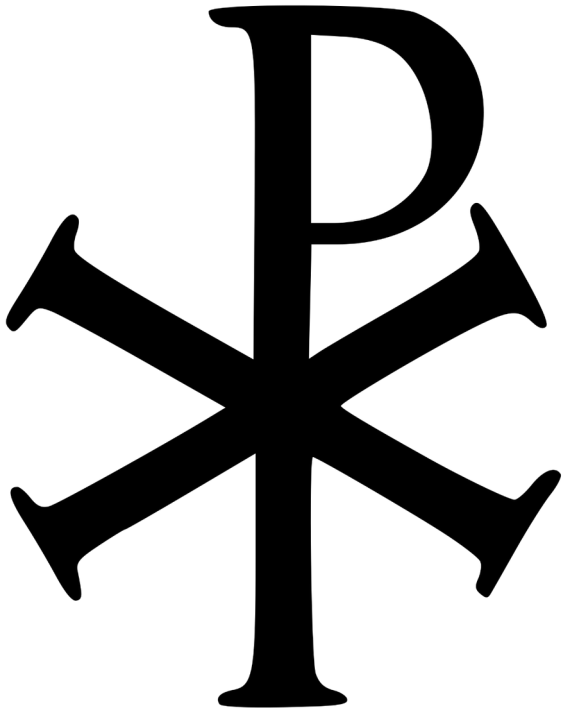
8 Fare ye well in the Lord. Amen.

Here endeth the Synaxicon.

THE TESTAMENTUM

DIALEKTICON

THE DIALOGUES OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCH



THE DIALOGUE OF
MEGETHIUS

AS SET FORTH IN THE DISPUTATION AGAINST HERMOGENES IN 185 C.E.

In Defence Of This Proposition, That Matter Is Created, And That Evil Hath Not Its Cause In Matter.

CHAPTER ONE

Of The Sea And Its Appointed Bounds

***Hermogenes*:** As I walked yesterday at even, my friend, by the shore of the sea, and beheld it somewhat earnestly, I saw a marvellous token of divine power, and a work wrought by wise knowledge, if so be that such a thing may be called a work.

2 For as that verse of Homer saith: As when two contrary winds blowing out of Thrace, Boreas and Zephyrus, do suddenly vex the fishy deep, and round about the dark flood, lifted high, casteth forth the salt weed upon the shore;

3 Even so it seemed unto me to have come to pass yesterday.

4 For I saw waves very like unto the tops of mountains, and, as it were, reaching even unto heaven itself.

5 Wherefore I looked for nothing else but that the whole land should be overflowed, and I began to devise in my mind a place of escape, and an ark of Noah.

6 But it was not as I thought; for even as the sea rose up unto a crest, it brake again into itself, and passed not beyond its own bounds, having, as it were, reverence for a divine decree.

7 And as oftentimes a servant, being compelled by his master to do somewhat against his will, obeyeth the commandment through fear, while he dareth not utter a word of that which he suffereth in doing it unwillingly, but, being full of wrath, muttereth within himself;

8 Even so it appeared unto me that the sea, as though enraged, and shutting up its awe within itself, restrained itself, as not willing that its Master should perceive its anger.

CHAPTER TWO

Of Heaven, Sun, Moon, And Divine Government

1 ***Hermogenes*:** Upon these things I began to gaze in silence, and desired in my mind to measure the heaven and the sphere thereof.

2 I began to inquire whence it riseth, and where it setteth; also what manner of motion it hath, whether a progressive motion, that

is to say, from place to place, or a revolving motion; and moreover how its movement is continued.

3 And verily it seemed worth the labour to inquire also concerning the sun: after what manner he is set in the heaven; and what circuit he passeth through; and whither, after a little while, he withdraweth himself; and why even he goeth not forth from his appointed course.

4 But he also, as one may say, observeth the commandment of a higher power, and appeareth with us only when he is suffered so to do, and departeth as though he were called away.

5 So, while I searched out these things, I saw that the light of the sun departed, and that the daylight failed, and that straightway darkness came on.

6 And the moon succeeded the sun; which, at her first rising, was not of full measure, but after she had advanced in her course, she shewed herself greater in appearance.

7 And I ceased not to inquire concerning her also, but searched out the cause of her waning and waxing, and why she too observeth the revolution of days.

8 And from all these things it seemed unto me that there is a divine government and power ruling the whole, which we may justly call God.

CHAPTER THREE

Of The Creator And The Origin Of Things

1 ***Hermogenes*****:** And thereupon I began to praise the Creator, when I beheld the earth fast fixed, and living creatures in so great variety, and the blossoms of plants with their manifold colours.

2 But my mind rested not upon these things alone; but thereupon I began to inquire whence they had their beginning, whether from some source eternally co-existent with God, or from Himself alone, none co-existing with Him.

3 For that He made nothing out of that which hath no being seemed unto me the right judgment to hold, unless my reason were altogether unworthy of trust.

4 For it is the nature of things which come into being to take their beginning from that which already existeth.

5 And it seemed unto me that this also might be said with equal truth: that nothing distinct from God is eternally co-existent with Him, but that whatsoever existeth hath its beginning from Him.

6 And herein also was I persuaded by the undeniable ordering of the elements, and by the fair arrangement of nature round about them.

7 So, with such thoughts concerning the goodly order of things, I returned unto mine house.

CHAPTER FOUR

Of The Evils Beheld Among Men

1 ***Hermogenes*:** But on the day following, that is, today, as I came forth, I saw two beings of one race, men I mean, smiting and reviling one another; and another also seeking to strip his neighbour.

2 And now certain men began to dare a more terrible deed; for one stripped a corpse, and brought forth again unto the light of day a body which had once been hidden in the earth.

3 And he entreated a form like unto his own with such despite, that he left the corpse to be meat for dogs.

4 And another drew his sword, and set upon a man like unto himself.

5 And the one desired to obtain safety by flight; but the other ceased not from pursuing, neither would he bridle his wrath.

6 And what need is there that I should say more?

7 It is enough that he assaulted him, and straightway smote him with his sword.

8 So the wounded man became a suppliant unto his fellow, and stretched forth his hands in supplication, and was willing to give up his raiment, asking only that his life might be spared.

9 But the other subdued not his anger, neither pitied his fellow man, neither would he behold his own image in the being before him.

10 But, like a wild beast, he made ready with his sword to feed upon him.

11 And now he even brought his mouth near unto the body so like his own, so great was the measure of his rage.

12 And there was to be seen one man suffering wrong, and another straightway stripping him, and not even covering with earth the body which he had made naked of clothing.

13 And besides these things, there was another who, robbing others of their marriage rights, desired to defile his neighbour's wife.

14 And he urged her to turn aside unto unlawful embraces, not willing that her husband should be father unto a child of his own.

15 After this I began to believe the tragedies, and thought that the banquet of Thyestes had truly come to pass.

16 And I believed also the unlawful lust of Oinomaos, neither did I doubt the strife wherein brother drew the sword against brother.

CHAPTER FIVE

Of The Origin Of Evil And The Innocence Of God

1 ***Hermogenes*:** Therefore, after I had beheld such things as these, I began to inquire whence they arise, and what is their beginning.

2 And I asked who is the author of such devices against men, whence came their discovery, and who is the teacher of them.

3 Now to dare to say that God was the author of these things was impossible.

4 For surely it could not even be said that they have from Him either their substance or their being.

5 For how were it possible to conceive such thoughts concerning God?

6 For He is good, and the Creator of that which is excellent, and unto Him belongeth no evil thing.

7 Nay, it is His nature to take no pleasure in such things; but He forbiddeth their production, and rejecteth those who delight in them, yet receiveth into His presence those who avoid them.

8 And how could it be other than absurd to call God the maker of those things which He disalloweth?

9 For He would not will them not to be, if He Himself had first been their creator.

10 And He willeth that those who draw near unto Him should be imitators of Him.

11 Wherefore it seemed unto me unreasonable to ascribe these things unto God, or to say that they had sprung from Him.

CHAPTER SIX

Of Matter As The Feigned Cause Of Evil

1 ***Hermogenes*:** Yet it must surely be granted that somewhat may come into being out of that which hath no being, if He made that which is evil.

2 For He who brought them into being out of non-being would not reduce them again unto the loss thereof.

3 And again, it must be said that there was once a time when God took pleasure in evil things, which now is not the case.

4 Wherefore it seemeth unto me impossible to speak thus concerning God.

5 For it is unfitting to His nature to attach this unto Him.

6 Wherefore it seemed unto me that there is co-existent with Him somewhat which hath the name of matter, from which He formed the things that exist, distinguishing them by wise art, and ordering them in fair array.

7 From this also evil things seem to have come into being.

8 Forasmuch as this matter was without quality or form, and besides this was borne about without order, and was untouched by divine art, God grudged it not, neither left it to be borne about continually in such wise.

9 But He began to work upon it, and willed to separate its better parts from its worse, and thus made all that it was fitting for God to make out of it.

10 But so much thereof as was like lees, as it were, being unfit to be made into anything, He left as it was, because it was of no use unto Him.

11 And from this it seemeth unto me that what is evil hath now flowed down among men.

12 This seemed unto me the right judgment to hold concerning these things.

13 But, my friend, if thou thinkest that aught which I have spoken is wrong, declare it; for I greatly desire to hear concerning these things.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Of The Impossibility Of Two Uncreated Substances

1 ***Megethius*****:** That two uncreated substances cannot exist at one and the same time, I suppose thou holdest alike with me.

2 Yet thou seemest very firmly to have assumed and brought into the argument this principle: that of unavoidable necessity we must maintain one of two things: either that God is separate from matter, or else, on the contrary, that He is inseparably joined unto it.

3 If then any man choose to affirm that He existeth in union with matter, he saith thereby that there is but one uncreated substance.

4 For one of the two must be a part of the other; and since they make parts one of another, they cannot be two uncreated substances.

5 For as, speaking of man, we describe him not as divided into many distinct parts, each forming a separate created substance, but, as reason requireth, say that he was made by God one created substance consisting of many parts; even so, if God be not separate from matter, we are driven to conclude that there is but one uncreated substance.

6 But if, on the other hand, it be affirmed that He is separate from matter, it followeth of necessity that there is some other substance set between the two, whereby their separation is made manifest.

7 For it is impossible that one thing should be shown to be severed by an interval from another, unless there be somewhat else whereby the interval between them is produced.

8 This principle also holdeth good not only in this or in any single case, but in as many cases as thou

wilt. For the same argument which we have used concerning two uncreated substances must likewise be valid if the substances in question be given as three.

9 For concerning these also I should have to inquire whether they be separate one from another, or whether, contrariwise, each of them be united to his fellow.

10 For if thou shouldest say they are united, thou wouldest hear from me the same argument as before; but if, contrariwise, thou shouldest say they are separate, thou couldest not escape the necessary assumption of a separating medium.

11 If again perchance any man think that a third view may be consistently maintained concerning uncreated substances, namely, that God is neither separate from matter nor united to it as a part, but that God existeth in matter as in a place, or perchance matter existeth in God, let such an one mark the consequence:

12 That if we make matter the place of God, we must of necessity confess that He may be contained, and that He is circumscribed by matter.

13 Nay further, he must grant that He is, after the same manner as matter, carried hither and thither, unable to keep His place and to abide where He is, seeing that that wherein He existeth is ever being carried now this way and now that.

14 Besides this, he must also confess that God hath had His place among the worst kind of elements.

15 For if matter was once in disorder, and if He reduced it into order for the purpose of making it better, there was a time when God existed among the disordered elements of matter.

16 I might also fairly ask this question: whether God filled the whole of matter, or was in some part thereof.

17 If any man choose to say that God was in some part of matter, he maketh Him immeasurably less than matter, inasmuch as a part thereof contained the whole of Him; but if he maintain that He pervaded the whole of matter, I must needs be told how He became the Fashioner of this matter.

18 For we must of necessity suppose either that there was on God's part, as it were, a contraction of Himself and a withdrawal from matter, whereupon He proceeded to fashion that from which He had retired; or else that He fashioned Himself together with matter, because He had no place whither to retire.

19 But if, on the other hand, it be maintained that matter is in God, it shall behove us likewise to inquire whether we are to understand

thereby that He is sundered from Himself, and that as the air containeth divers kinds of living creatures, so is He sundered and divided into parts for the receiving of those creatures which from time to time exist in Him; or whether matter is in God as in a place, as water is contained in earth.

20 For if we should say, as in air, we should of necessity speak of God as divisible into parts; but if, as water in earth, and if matter was, as is granted, in confusion and disorder, and moreover contained that which was evil, then must we confess that God is the place of disorder and evil.

21 But this seemeth not to me a thing to be spoken with reverence, but rather a perilous saying.

22 For thou contendest that matter is uncreated, that thou mayest not confess God to be the author of evil; and yet, while thou seekest to escape this difficulty, thou makest Him the receptacle of evil.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Of Evil, Qualities, And Creation From Nothing

1 ***Megethius:*** If thou hadst said that thy suspicion that matter was uncreated arose from the nature of created things as we find them, I should have used abundant argument to prove that it cannot be so.

2 But since thou hast spoken of the existence of evil as the cause of such suspicion, I am minded to enter upon a separate examination of this matter.

3 For when it hath once been made clear how evil existeth, and when it is seen that it is impossible to deny God to be the author of evil, if He had recourse to matter for His materials, then it seemeth to me that suspicion of this sort vanisheth.

4 Thou affirmest, then, that matter, void of all qualities either good or evil, co-existed from the beginning with God, and that out of it He fashioned the world as now we find it.

5 ***Hermogenes:*** Such is mine opinion.

6 ***Megethius:*** Well then, if matter was without any qualities, and the world hath come into being from God, and if the world possesseth qualities, God must be the author of those qualities.

7 ***Hermogenes:*** Even so.

8 ***Megethius:*** Since also I heard thee say thyself but now that out of nothing nothing can possibly come, give me answer to the question which I am about to ask thee.

9 Thou seemest to me to think that the qualities of the world have not sprung from qualities already existing, and moreover that they are other than the substances themselves.

10 ***Hermogenes:*** I do.

11 ***Megethius:*** If therefore God produced not those qualities from qualities already existing, nor yet from substances, because they are not substances, the conclusion is unavoidable: they were made by God out of nothing.

12 So thou didst seem to affirm more than was warranted, when thou saidst that it had been proved impossible to hold that anything was made by God out of nothing.

13 But let us set the matter thus.

14 We see men among ourselves making certain things out of nothing, though it be true that they make them by means of something.

15 Let us take our example from builders.

16 These men make not cities out of cities, nor likewise temples out of temples.

17 Nay, if thou supposest that, because the substances needful for these buildings are already provided, therefore they make them out of that which already existeth, thy reasoning is fallacious.

18 For it is not the substance that maketh the city or the temples, but the art which is employed about the substance.

19 Neither again doth the art proceed from any art inhering in the substances, but it ariseth apart from any such art in them.

20 But I suppose thou wilt meet the argument by saying that the craftsman produceth the art manifest in the substance which he hath fashioned out of the art which he himself already hath.

21 Yet in reply to this, I think it may fairly be said that neither in man doth art spring from any art already existing.

22 For we cannot allow that art existeth by itself, since it belongeth unto the class of accidents, which receive their existence only when they appear in connection with substance.

23 For man shall exist though there be no architecture; but architecture shall have no existence unless first there be man.

24 Thus we cannot avoid the conclusion that it is the nature of art to arise in man out of nothing.

25 If then we have shown this to be so with man, surely we must allow that God can make not only the qualities of substances out of nothing, but also the substances themselves.

26 For if it appeareth possible that anything whatsoever can be made out of nothing, it is proved that this may also be the case with substances.

27 But since thou art specially desirous to inquire concerning the origin of evil, I will proceed unto the discussion of this matter.

28 And I would ask thee a few questions.

29 Is it thine opinion that evil things are substances, or that they are qualities of substances?

30 ***Hermogenes:*** Qualities of substances, I am disposed to say.

31 ***Megethius:*** But matter was void of qualities and of form: this I assumed at the beginning of the discussion.

32 Therefore, if evil things are qualities of substances, and matter was void of qualities, and thou hast called God the author of qualities, then God shall also be the fashioner of that which is evil.

33 Since then it is not possible, on this supposition any more than on the other, to speak of God as not the cause of evil, it seemeth to me superfluous to add matter unto Him, as though that were the cause of evil.

34 If thou hast any answer to make unto this, begin thine argument.

CHAPTER NINE

Of Evil Things As Actions And Not Substances

1 ***Hermogenes:*** If indeed our disputation had arisen from love of contention, I would not be willing that the inquiry concerning the origin of evil should be raised a second time; but since we are moved rather by friendship and by the good of our neighbour to enter into controversy, I readily consent that the question be taken up anew upon this matter.

2 Thou hast doubtless long known the disposition of my mind, and the end at which I aim in dispute: that I desire not to vanquish falsehood by plausible reasoning, but rather that truth should be established by thorough examination.

3 Thou thyself also art of the same mind, I am well assured.

4 Whatsoever method therefore thou deemest profitable for the discovery of truth, shrink not from using it.

5 For by following a better course of argument thou shalt not only profit thyself, but most certainly me also, instructing me concerning matters whereof I am ignorant.

6 ***Megethius:*** Thou seemest plainly to agree with me that evil things are in some sort substances; for apart from substances I see not that they have any existence.

7 Since then, my good friend, thou sayest that evil things are substances, it is necessary to inquire into the nature of substance.

8 Is it thine opinion that substance is a kind of bodily structure?

9 ***Hermogenes:*** It is.

10 ***Megethius:*** And doth that bodily structure exist by itself, without needing any one to come and give it existence?

11 ***Hermogenes:*** Yea.

12 ***Megethius:*** And doth it seem unto thee that evil things are connected with certain courses of action?

13 ***Hermogenes:*** Such is my belief.

14 ***Megethius:*** And do actions come into existence only when there is an actor?

15 ***Hermogenes:*** Yea.

16 ***Megethius:*** And where there is no actor, shall his action ever take place?

17 ***Hermogenes:*** It shall not.

18 ***Megethius:*** If therefore substance is a kind of bodily structure, and this needeth not some one in and through whom it may receive its existence, and if evil things are the actions of some one, and actions require some one in and through whom they receive their existence, then evil things shall not be substances.

19 And if evil things are not substances, and murder is an evil and is the action of some one, it followeth that murder is not a substance.

20 But if thou insist that agents are substance, then I myself agree with thee.

21 A man, for example, who is a murderer, insofar as he is a man, is a substance; but the murder which he committeth is not a substance, but a work of the substance.

22 Moreover, we sometimes call a man evil because he committeth murder, and sometimes again good because he doeth deeds of beneficence; and these names cleave to the substance by reason of the things which are accidents thereof, which nevertheless are not the substance itself.

23 For neither is the substance murder, nor again is it adultery, nor any other such evil.

24 But as the grammarian receiveth his name from grammar, and the orator from oratory, and the physician from physic, though the substance is not physic, nor oratory, nor grammar, but receiveth its appellation from the things which are accidents thereof, from which it commonly receiveth its name, though it is not any one of them; even so in like manner it appeareth to me that the substance receiveth a name from things accounted evil, though it is not itself any one of them.

25 I beseech thee also to consider that, if thou represent some other being as the cause of evil unto men, he also, insofar as he worketh in them and stirreth them up to do evil, is himself evil by reason of the things which he doeth.

26 For he too is called evil for this simple reason, that he is the doer of

evil things; but the things which a being doeth are not the being himself, but his actions, from which he receiveth his appellation and is called evil.

27 For if we should say that the things which he doeth are himself, and these consist in murder, adultery, theft, and such like, then these things shall be himself.

28 And if these things are himself, and if when they are done they obtain a substantial existence, but when they are not done they cease also to exist, and if these things are done by men, then men shall be the doers of these things and the causes both of their existing and of their no longer existing.

29 But if thou affirm that these things are his actions, he becometh evil from the things he doeth, not from those things whereof his substance consisteth.

30 Moreover, we have said that he is called evil from those things which are accidents of the substance, which are not themselves the substance; as a physician is named from the art of physic.

31 But if he receiveth the beginning of his existence from the actions which he performeth, then he too began to be evil, and these evil things likewise began to exist.

32 And if so, an evil being shall not be without beginning, nor shall evil things be unoriginated, since we have said that they are originated by him.

33 ***Hermogenes:*** The argument concerning the opinion which I before expressed, thou seemest to me, my friend, to have handled satisfactorily; for from the premises which thou didst assume in the discussion, I think thou hast drawn a fair conclusion.

34 For doubtless, if matter was at first void of qualities, and if God is the fashioner of the qualities which it now hath, and if evil things are qualities, then God is the author of those evil things.

35 The argument then concerning that opinion we may consider well discussed; and to me it now seemeth false to speak of matter as void of qualities.

36 For it is not possible to say of any substance whatsoever that it is without qualities.

37 For in the very act of saying that it is void of qualities, thou dost in fact declare its quality, showing what kind of thing matter is; which of course is to ascribe unto it a species of quality.

38 Wherefore, if it be agreeable unto thee, rehearse the argument to me from the beginning; for to me matter seemeth to have had qualities from all eternity.

39 For in this way I can affirm that evil things also proceed from it by

way of emanation, so that the cause of evil things may not be ascribed unto God, but that matter may be regarded as the cause of all such things.

CHAPTER TEN

Of Matter Supposed To Have Qualities From Everlasting

1 ***Megethius:*** I approve thy desire, my friend, and praise the zeal which thou manifestest in the discussion of opinions.

2 For it surely becometh every one that desireth knowledge, not simply and forthwith to agree with what is said, but to make careful examination of the arguments adduced.

3 For though a disputant, by laying down false premises, may make his opponent draw the conclusion which he willeth, yet he shall not thereby persuade a hearer; he persuadeth only when he saith that which seemeth possible to be said with fairness.

4 So that one of two things shall come to pass: either, as he hearkeneth, he shall be decisively helped to reach that conclusion toward which he already feeleth himself moved, or he shall convict his adversary of speaking not the truth.

5 Now it seemeth to me that thou hast not sufficiently discussed the statement that matter had qualities from the beginning.

6 For if this be so, whereof shall God be the maker?

7 For if we speak of substances, we affirm that these existed beforehand; and if again of qualities, we declare that these also existed already.

8 Since therefore both substance and qualities exist, it seemeth to me unreasonable to call God a creator.

9 But lest I should seem to frame an argument to serve mine own purpose, be pleased to answer the question: In what manner dost thou assert God to be a creator?

10 Is He such because He changed the substances, so that they should no longer be the same as once they were, but should become different from what they were; or because, while He kept the substances the same as they were before that time, He changed their qualities?

11 ***Hermogenes:*** I do not at all think that any alteration took place in substances; for it seemeth unto me absurd to say this.

12 But I affirm that a certain change was made in their qualities; and in respect of these I speak of God as a creator.

13 As we might speak of a house as made out of stones, in which case we could not say that the stones cease to be stones as touching their substance, now that they are made into a house (for I affirm that the house oweth its existence to the

quality of its construction, forasmuch as the former quality of the stones hath been changed); so it seemeth unto me that God, while the substance remaineth the same, hath made a certain change in its qualities; and in respect of such change I speak of the origin of this world as having come from God.

14 ***Megethius:*** Since then thou maintainest that a certain change, namely of qualities, hath been produced by God, answer me briefly what I desire to ask thee.

15 ***Hermogenes:*** Proceed, I pray thee, with thy question.

16 ***Megethius:*** Dost thou agree in the opinion that evil things are qualities of substances?

17 ***Hermogenes:*** I do.

18 ***Megethius:*** Were these qualities in matter from the beginning, or did they begin to be?

19 ***Hermogenes:*** I hold that these qualities existed together with matter, without being originated.

20 ***Megethius:*** But dost thou not affirm that God hath made a certain change in the qualities?

21 ***Hermogenes:*** That do I affirm.

22 ***Megethius:*** For the better, or for the worse?

23 ***Hermogenes:*** For the better, I should say.

24 ***Megethius:*** Well then, if evil things are qualities of matter, and if the Lord of all changed its qualities for the better, whence, it behoveth us to ask, come evil things?

25 For either the qualities remained the same in their nature as they were before; or, if they were not evil before, but thou assertest that, by reason of a change wrought upon them by God, the first qualities of this kind came into being in connection with matter, then God shall be the author of evil, inasmuch as He changed qualities which were not evil so as to make them evil.

26 Perchance, however, it is not thy view that God changed evil qualities for the better; but thou meanest that all those other qualities which happened to be neither good nor evil were changed by God for the adornment of the creation.

27 ***Hermogenes:*** That hath been mine opinion from the beginning.

28 ***Megethius:*** How then canst thou say that He hath left the qualities of evil things even as they were?

29 Was it that, although He was able to destroy those qualities as well as the others, He was not willing; or did He refrain because He had not the power?

30 For if thou say He had the power, but not the will, thou must confess Him to be the cause of these qualities; since, when He could have made an end of the existence

of evil, He chose to let it remain as it was, and that too at the very time when He began to fashion matter.

31 For if He had not concerned Himself at all with matter, He would not have been the cause of those things which He suffered to remain.

32 But seeing that He fashioned a certain part of it, and left a certain part as we have described it, though He could have changed that also for the better, it seemeth to me that blame is deservedly cast upon Him, for He permitted a part of matter to be evil, unto the ruin of that other part which He fashioned.

33 Nay more, it seemeth to me that the most grievous wrong hath been done concerning this part, in that He so constituted this part of matter as now to be affected by evil.

34 For if we should examine things carefully, we should find that the condition of matter is now worse than in its former state, before it was brought into order.

35 For before it was separated into parts, it had no sense of evil; but now every one of its parts is afflicted with a sense of evil.

36 Take an example from man.

37 Before he was fashioned and became a living being through the art of the Creator, he was by nature free from any contact whatsoever with evil; but as soon as he was made by God a man, he became liable to the sense even of approaching evil; and thus that very thing which thou sayest was brought about by God for the benefit of matter is found rather to have turned unto its hurt.

38 But if thou say that evil hath not been stayed because God was unable to do away with it, thou makest God powerless.

39 But if He be powerless, it shall be either because He is weak by nature, or because He is overcome by fear and brought into subjection by one stronger.

40 If then thou go so far as to say that God is weak by nature, it seemeth to me that thou imperillest thine own salvation; but if thou say that He is weak through being overcome by fear of one greater, then evil things shall be greater than God, since they frustrate the carrying out of His purpose.

41 But this, as it seemeth to me, would be absurd to say of God.

42 For why should not they rather be accounted gods, since according to thy account they are able to overcome God; if, that is to say, by God we mean that which hath ruling power over all things?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Of Matter, Simple And Compound, And Of Opposites

1 ***Megethius:*** But I desire to ask thee a few questions concerning matter itself.

2 Tell me therefore, I pray thee, whether matter was a simple thing or compound.

3 I am led to take this way of searching into the matter before us by considering the diversity that obtaineth in existing things.

4 For if perchance matter was something simple and uniform, how cometh it that the world is compound, and consisteth of divers substances and combinations?

5 For by compound we mean a mixture of certain simple elements.

6 But if contrariwise thou prefer to call matter compound, thou wilt of course affirm that it is compounded of certain simple elements.

7 And if it was compounded of simple elements, these simple elements must at some time or other have existed separately by themselves; and when they were compounded together, matter came into being: wherefrom it followeth of course that matter is created.

8 For if matter is compound, and compound things are constituted from simple things, there was once a time when matter had no existence, namely, before the simple elements came together.

9 And if there was once a time when matter was not, and there was never a time when the uncreated was not, matter cannot be uncreated.

10 And hence there shall be many uncreated substances.

11 For if God was uncreated, and the simple elements whereof matter was compounded were also uncreated, there shall not be two uncreated things only, not to discuss the question what it is that constituteth simple objects, whether matter or form.

12 Is it further thine opinion that nothing which existeth is opposed to itself?

13 ***Hermogenes:*** It is.

14 ***Megethius:*** Is water then opposed to fire?

15 ***Hermogenes:*** So it appeareth to me.

16 ***Megethius:*** Likewise, is darkness opposed to light, and heat to cold, and moreover moisture to dryness?

17 ***Hermogenes:*** It seemeth to me to be so.

18 ***Megethius:*** Well then, if nothing that existeth is opposed to itself, and these things are opposed one to another, they cannot be one and the same matter; nay, nor yet be

made out of one and the same matter.

19 I desire further to ask thine opinion on a matter akin to that whereof we have been speaking.

20 Dost thou believe that the parts of a thing are not mutually destructive?

21 ***Hermogenes:*** I do.

22 ***Megethius:*** And dost thou believe that fire and water, and the like, are parts of matter?

23 ***Hermogenes:*** Quite so.

24 ***Megethius:*** Dost thou not also believe that water is destructive of fire, and light of darkness, and so of all like things?

25 ***Hermogenes:*** Yea.

26 ***Megethius:*** Well then, if the parts of a whole are not mutually destructive, and yet the parts of matter are mutually destructive, they cannot be parts of one matter.

27 And if they are not parts one of another, they cannot be composed of one and the same matter; nay, they cannot be matter at all, since nothing that existeth is destructive of itself, as we learn from the doctrine of opposites: for nothing is opposed to itself, an opposite being by nature opposed to something else.

28 White, for example, is not opposed to itself, but is said to be the opposite of black; and likewise light is shown not to be opposed to itself, but is accounted an opposite in relation to darkness; and so with a very great number of things besides.

29 If then matter were some one thing, it could not be opposed to itself.

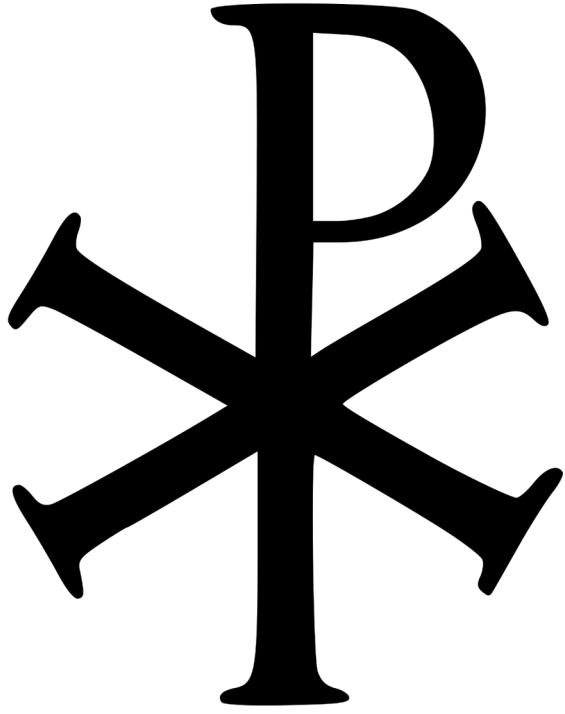
30 This then being the nature of opposites, it is proved that matter, so conceived, hath no existence.

Here Endeth The Dialekticon.

THE TESTAMENTUM

DIDASCALICON

THE TEACHING OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCH



THE TESTAMENTUM

DIDASCALICON

THE TEACHING OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCH

The Didascalicon is the teaching-book of the Marcionite Church. Its name is drawn from the Greek didaskalia, meaning teaching or instruction, joined to the book-title ending -ikon, Latinised as -icon. Thus Didascalicon means “the book of instruction,” the catechetical book by which catechumens, clergy, and the faithful are taught the doctrine, worship, discipline, and order of the Church.

This work sets forth the faith of the Marcionite Church in a clear and orderly manner: the revelation of God the Father through Jesus Christ, the apostolic authority of Paul, the canon preserved within the Testamentum, the distinction between the true covenant and the false covenant, the order of creation, the salvation of souls, and the life of prayer, the Holy Mysteries, Holy Rites, fasting, charity, and obedience required of the faithful.

The Didascalicon teaches according to the Evangelicon and Apostolicon as the canon and supreme written authority of the Church. In ancient Marcionite usage, these books together were the Testamentum and the name was synonymous with

Christian Scripture itself. The modern reconstructed Testamentum published by the Church preserves that original canon unchanged while gathering it into one codex with the Antilegicon as deuterocanonical scripture and with the Didascalicon, Psalmicon, Homileticon, Synaxicon, Dialekticon, Litourgicon, Chronicon, and other received liturgical and ecclesiastical books. Inclusion within the modern codex does not confer equal authority: every deuterocanonical and ecclesiastical book remains subordinate to the Evangelicon and Apostolicon and is received only insofar as it accords with the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul.

Many writings of the ancient Marcionite Church have not survived, and much of the remaining historical testimony was preserved by its opponents. The Didascalicon therefore distinguishes carefully among the canon, the deuterocanon, ecclesiastical tradition, hostile

ancient witness, and historical inference, receiving every subordinate source only insofar as it accords with the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul.

This book is not written merely to answer objections, nor to preserve historical memory alone, but to instruct the Church in the faith received and preserved by the Marcionite tradition. It teaches first what the Church confesses, then explains how that confession is defended from scripture, ancient witness, reason, and the received order of worship. It is therefore both a catechesis for learners and a rule of instruction for those who would preserve the Gospel in faith, worship, and obedience.

LESSON 1: FOUNDATIONAL QUESTIONS

This lesson introduces Marcion of Sinope, the Marcionite Christian tradition, and the Pauline foundation of the Church's identity.

1.01. What is a Christian?

A Christian is one who confesses Jesus Christ as Lord, knows God the Father through Him, receives the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul, and walks in faith working through love.

The Christian is not defined by the law of Moses, ethnic descent, worldly custom, or a bare name. A Christian belongs to God the Father through Jesus Christ, receives the apostolic Gospel as grace, and lives by the Spirit under the law of Christ.

"No man knoweth who the Father is, but the Son, and who the Son is, but the Father, and he to whomsoever the Son wishes to reveal him."

Evangelicon 9:22

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 8:12

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."

Galatians 5:6

See also: Question 2.01, "What is the creed of the Marcionite Church?"; Question 2.02, "What is the Rule of Faith of the Marcionite Church?"; Question 17.01, "What is the Christian moral life?"

1.02. Who was Marcion of Sinope?

Marcionite tradition remembers Marcion of Sinope as a bishop and affluent shipowner from the chief port city of Sinope in Pontus, on the southern coast of the Black Sea. The same tradition identifies him as the son of Bishop Philologus of Sinope, numbered among the

Seventy Disciples, and holds that Marcion began his ministry in Anatolia circa 98 C.E. as a disciple of the Apostle John. Ancient witnesses attest that his teaching was known by the early second century. The Church commemorates his martyrdom in Rome near the end of 154 C.E.

Marcionite tradition attributes to Marcion a decisive role in the history of Christianity. It remembers him as an early Christian apologist, the compiler of a Christian hymnbook, and a pioneer in the translation and collection of Christian scripture. His most enduring achievement was the compilation of the original Testamentum, consisting of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the original ten Pauline epistles.

According to Marcionite tradition, Marcion and his companions retraced the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul across the Roman Empire, visiting churches associated with Paul and gathering copies of the apostle's writings. Whatever details cannot now be independently demonstrated, the tradition expresses the Church's conviction that the original Testamentum preserves the Pauline Gospel in an ordered canonical collection.

In the course of compiling these scriptures, Marcion discerned a stark theological divide. He compared the God revealed through Jesus Christ with the violent, retributive deity portrayed in the Hebrew Bible. His conclusion was decisive: they were not the same God. To articulate this revelation, he authored the Antitheses, a seminal text in which he set forth his arguments and scriptural comparisons. This work sparked a profound schism among early Christian leaders, with each faction branding the other as heretical.

Around the late 130s C.E., Marcion traveled to Rome and joined the Roman Christian community, offering a significant donation of 200,000 sesterces to the church. However, theological disputes quickly emerged. On July 15, 144 C.E., he was formally denounced as a heretic and excommunicated by the Church of Rome, which returned his donation.

His influence endured long after his death, laying the foundation for a church that once spanned the known world and shaped the earliest formation of Christian scripture.

1.03. What is Marcionite Christianity?

Marcionite Christians are among the earliest and most influential communities in the history of Christianity. They are credited with numerous foundational contributions to the faith, including the compilation of the first

Christian Bible, the original Testamentum, the creation of the earliest Christian hymnbook, and the composition of the first work of Christian apologetics. Remarkably, the oldest known inscription bearing the name of Jesus was discovered carved into the entrance of a Marcionite church in Syria.

This church was erected by Paul of Lebaba, a Marcionite presbyter, in the village of Lebaba on October 1, 318 C.E. The inscription, written in reference to Jesus Christ, reads as follows:

“The meeting-house of the Marcionites, in the village of Lebaba, of the Lord and Saviour Jesus the Good – Erected by the forethought of Paul a presbyter, in the year 630 [Seleucid era].”

Discovered by French archaeologists in 1870, this inscription stands as the oldest surviving reference to Jesus Christ in a Christian context carved in stone.

The Marcionite Church rapidly became one of the largest and most widespread Christian movements of the early centuries, maintaining a strong presence across the Roman Empire and beyond. However, during the fourth century, as the ancient Catholic Church gained imperial favor, Marcionite Christians—along with other non-Catholic sects—were subjected to systematic persecution. Roman emperors, now aligned with Catholic orthodoxy, sought to extinguish all divergent forms of Christianity, including Marcionism.

Despite the growing hostility within the Empire, Marcionite Christianity endured well beyond Rome’s borders. It continued to thrive in regions such as Syria and northeastern Persia into the tenth century, preserving its distinctive doctrines and practices.

Central to Marcionite belief was the conviction that the Apostle Paul alone had received and transmitted the full and true message of Jesus Christ. The Evangelicon received through Paul and the Pauline epistles preserved in the Apostolicon alone constituted authoritative Christian Scripture. Marcion’s theological focus was deeply rooted in the Pauline tradition, which he saw as radically distinct from—and indeed incompatible with—the teachings of the Hebrew Bible.

Marcion regarded all efforts to reconcile the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the law-bound, wrathful deity of the Hebrew scriptures as a fundamental distortion of Christian truth. For him, Paul’s contrast between law and grace, wrath and mercy, works and faith, flesh and spirit, sin and righteousness, death and life, represented the essence of divine revelation. In this, he saw the

pure expression of the Gospel—a message of deliverance, not bondage; of spirit, not flesh; of grace, not judgment.

1.04. What is the Marcionite Church?

The Marcionite Church is the ecclesiastical body that confesses the Gospel revealed by Jesus Christ and preached by the Apostle Paul. It receives the Evangelicon and Apostolicon as the supreme written authority of the Church, preserves the Marcionite rule of faith, and orders its worship, Holy Mysteries, Holy Rites, discipline, and common life according to that confession.

The Church understands itself as a restoration and continuation of the ancient Marcionite Christian tradition. Its purpose is not merely to study Marcion as a historical figure, but to gather the faithful into the true covenant of grace and to preserve the Gospel in doctrine, worship, charity, and obedience.

1.05. Are Marcionite Christians Pauline?

Marcionite Christianity is fundamentally Pauline, receiving the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by the Apostle Paul as the foundation of its canon, doctrine, worship, and ecclesiastical identity.

Marcion lived long enough to witness firsthand the Roman Church under the leadership of elders ordained by the Apostle Paul. He also observed what he perceived to be the gradual introduction of innovations and corruptions as leadership shifted to those aligned with the Apostle Peter. Disturbed by this transformation, Marcion became one of the earliest church reformers, calling for a return to the original, unadulterated form of Christianity rooted in the Pauline tradition.

While the Church Father Tertullian accused Marcion of founding a rival sect, his own writings inadvertently confirm the breadth and depth of the Marcionite movement. By the end of the second century, Marcionite Christians had established a vast and well-organized ecclesiastical network, complete with their own clergy and autonomous congregations across the Roman Empire. Tertullian, with evident frustration, remarked that “Marcion’s heretical tradition has filled the entire world.” He even went so far as to disparage the Apostle Paul himself, calling him “the Apostle of heretics”—a revealing admission of the threat Paul’s theology posed to the emerging Catholic orthodoxy.

Marcionite tradition understands the Church as the continuation of the Pauline communities rather than as a new body created after Marcion’s excommunication from

the Roman congregation in 144 C.E. Its rapid growth and extensive reach support the conclusion that the movement had deep roots before that date and continued to expand after Marcion's death.

The emerging Catholic Church, in its effort to assert singular legitimacy, routinely labeled rival Christian communities by the names of their presumed founders—often designating them as heresiarchs. This rhetorical strategy served to portray all non-Catholic traditions as deviations from the "true" faith, while claiming direct continuity with Christ only for the emerging Catholic Church. Yet, movements like the Marcionites did not view themselves as followers of a sectarian founder. They believed themselves to be the faithful remnant of the Church established by the Apostle Paul, and their theology reflected that conviction.

Thus, it is more likely that the traditional date assigned to the "founding" of the Marcionite Church is incorrect, rather than the implausible notion that it rose to prominence overnight. The more accurate conclusion is that the Marcionite Church was not a new invention, but rather the continuation of an authentically Pauline tradition that predated its formal excommunication from Rome.

In time, Paulinism became so influential that it could not be suppressed. Instead, it was absorbed, reshaped, and selectively redefined. Catholic authorities interpolated Pauline texts, attributed new writings to his name, and reframed his theology to harmonize with Petrine and Judaic traditions. The result was the syncretic construct of what is now known as Judeo-Christianity—an amalgam of the radical Gospel of Paul and the legalistic religion of the Hebrew Bible, giving rise to what would become the emerging Catholic Church.

Whether Marcion's teachings were entirely original or partially inherited from earlier apostolic sources—such as his teacher, the Apostle John—remains a matter of scholarly debate. It is worth noting that Marcion's father, Philologus of Sinope, was himself one of the Seventy Disciples and a bishop ordained by the Apostle Andrew. Philologus was also known to be a follower of Paul in Rome, suggesting a family lineage deeply rooted in Pauline Christianity.

Regardless, the emergence of Marcion in the historical record marks the first documented appearance of a fully formed Pauline canon: the ten epistles of Paul and the singular Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Marcion held that only Paul had received the true

revelation of the Gospel and regarded all competing versions as corruptions. In this, he echoed Paul's own words: "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:9).

LESSON 2: CONFESSIONAL QUESTIONS

This lesson sets forth the Church's creed, Rule of Faith, hierarchy of authority, and principles for receiving doctrine and tradition.

2.01. What is the creed of the Marcionite Church?

The creed of the Marcionite Church is clear, concise, and grounded in scripture: Jesus is Lord.

This is not a later conciliar formula imposed upon the faith, but the original Pauline confession of the Church. As Paul writes:

"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

I Corinthians 12:3

This confession is also preserved in the ancient Pauline hymn of Philippians:

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Philippians 2:6-11

The same apostolic creed is set forth in Paul's summary of the gospel:

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the last of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was

bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

I Corinthians 15:3-10

And again, in the Apostolicon:

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 8:12

Therefore, our creed is the creed of Paul: Christ descended, suffered, died, was buried, rose again, appeared to the apostles, revealed himself fully to Paul, and is confessed by the Holy Spirit as Lord.

The later and non-scriptural Old Roman Creed and Apostles' Creed were not the original creeds of the Church, but anti-Marcionite formulas developed specifically to combat Marcionism and to bind Christian confession to the Hebrew Bible, and the developing Catholic rule of faith. Against these later additions, the Marcionite Church returns to the simpler and older apostolic confession preserved in Paul.

All fuller statements of faith must remain subject to this apostolic confession. The Marcionite creed is not founded upon the councils of men, nor upon the traditions of the false covenant, but upon the gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul.

2.02. What is the Rule of Faith of the Marcionite Church?

The Rule of Faith is the concise doctrinal standard by which the Church receives scripture, tradition, worship, and theological teaching. It confesses one God, the Father; one Lord, Jesus Christ, who descended from above, truly suffered, died, was buried, and rose again; the apostolic primacy of Paul; the authority of the Evangelicon and Apostolicon; the true covenant of grace; and the salvation of souls through Christ.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 8:12

The Rule of Faith does not replace the creed or the canonical scriptures contained in the Testamentum. It summarizes their central teaching and provides a standard by which subordinate authorities and later claims are judged.

See also: Question 2.01, "What is the creed of the Marcionite Church?"; Question 2.03, "What is the hierarchy of authority in the Marcionite Church?"

2.03. What is the hierarchy of authority in the Marcionite Church?

The Marcionite Church receives the Evangelicon and Apostolicon as the canon and supreme written authority of the Christian faith. In the ancient Church they together formed the original Testamentum, and Testamentum was therefore synonymous with Christian Scripture: the Gospel revealed by Jesus Christ and the apostolic preaching preserved in the letters of Paul. The modern reconstructed Testamentum retains that canon unchanged but uses the title more broadly for the complete codex of writings received and used by the Church.

Within the modern Testamentum, the Antilegicon is received as deuterocanonical scripture: a subordinate collection of disputed Pauline writings, useful for instruction only insofar as it agrees with the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon. The Didascalicon, Psalmicon, Homileticon, Synaxicon, Dialekticon, Litourgicon, Chronicon, and other received liturgical and ecclesiastical books serve worship, teaching, remembrance, discipline, and order, but they possess neither canonical authority nor deuterocanonical standing.

Ancient heresiologists are read as hostile witnesses. They may preserve useful testimony concerning Marcionite doctrine, but they are not authorities over the faith. Tradition, reason, historical scholarship, and liturgical custom are received only insofar as they agree with the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul.

See also: Question 3.01, "What is the Testamentum?"; Question 3.08, "What is the Antilegicon?"; Question 16.13, "How does the Church understand prophecy and revelation?"

2.04. What is prima scriptura?

Prima scriptura is the central tenet and foundational doctrine of the Marcionite Church: all Christian teaching must be rooted first and foremost in scripture. While tradition, experience, revelation, and reason may serve to enrich and support the faith, they are only acceptable insofar as they remain in full harmony with the written word.

"And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."

I Corinthians 4:6

See also: Question 2.03, "What is the hierarchy of authority in the Marcionite Church?"; Question

4.14, "How does the Church interpret scripture?"

2.05. What is Pauline primacy?

The Marcionite Church affirms that the Apostle Paul, called directly by the risen Christ "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:1), stands as the chief herald of the true covenant. The Evangelicon, our earliest Gospel witness, omits the later addition of Matthew 16:18 that Roman apologists invoke for Petrine authority. The Apostle Paul's public correction of Peter at Antioch demonstrates that no apostolic monarchy grounded in Petrine primacy was ever instituted, and only the Apostle Paul was endowed with the gift of prophecy. Because the Apostle Paul's letters are genuine while the Petrine epistles are widely regarded as pseudepigraphical, scriptural, historical, and doctrinal evidence converges on Paul as the primary apostolic voice.

Practically, Pauline primacy means that our teaching, worship, and governance flow from the Apostolicon and Evangelicon rather than from episcopal pedigrees. Congregations are guided by bishops and presbyters who uphold the Apostle Paul's gospel of grace, freedom from legalism, and universal mission to all peoples. Succession is measured by fidelity to Pauline doctrine, not by an institutional chain of ordinations, ensuring that the Church remains rooted in the revelation entrusted to the Apostle: "for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord" (I Corinthians 9:2).

This primacy is not merely historical; it is pastoral and evangelical. The Apostle Paul proclaims a faith that liberates believers from the yoke of the Mosaic Law and centers salvation on the cross of Christ alone (Galatians 5:1; I Corinthians 1:23). His commission to preach to all nations establishes the inclusivity that defines the Church's missionary vocation (Paul's Epistle to the Romans 1:1). By placing the Apostle Paul at the heart of our doctrine, the Marcionite Church safeguards the purity of the true covenant.

Pauline primacy also shapes our relation to broader Christendom. While we respect communities that claim Petrine succession, we reject any authority that subordinates the liberty of the gospel to human tradition. Where inherited customs conflict with the Apostle Paul's message of salvation by faith apart from works, we follow his example and "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:8). In every age, fidelity to Pauline revelation remains the surest

safeguard of the Church's freedom, unity, and universal mission.

Pauline primacy does not place the Apostle above Christ, for Christ alone is the foundation of the Church. Paul is primary because the risen Lord chose him, revealed the Gospel to him, and appointed him its authoritative herald to all peoples.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

I Corinthians 3:11

2.06. What traditions does the Marcionite Church preserve?

Many church traditions later adopted by the emerging Catholic Church and other Christian denominations can be traced back to Marcionite origins. These include the separation of the date of Christian Easter from the Jewish Passover, the rejection of Sabbath observance, the practice of Eucharistic fasting on Saturdays, open communion, the sign of the cross, the public reading of the Gospel and Pauline Epistles during worship, full triple immersion in baptism, and the use of a mixed chalice in the Eucharist.

It is also a long-held tradition among Marcionite Christians to eat broiled fish and honeycomb on Easter Sunday, in memory of the meal Christ shared after His resurrection.

In addition, many Marcionite liturgical practices were shaped by an antithetical theology—one that deliberately rejected the practices and beliefs associated with Judaism and the false covenant. This reflected the Marcionite commitment to the true covenant revealed through Jesus Christ, wholly distinct from the legalistic and carnal system of the Hebrew scriptures. For example, Marcionite Christians prayed facing west, in contrast to the Jewish practice of facing east. Likewise, the tradition of offering milk and honey to the newly baptized was a purposeful repudiation of Jewish ritual laws, such as the prohibition of honey in sacrificial offerings. These customs underscored the Marcionite belief in a radical break from the false covenant and full allegiance to the spiritual truth of the Gospel.

LESSON 3: CANONICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson explains the original and modern uses of the name Testamentum, the distinction among canon, deuterocanon, and ecclesiastical books, and the status of writings within and outside the Marcionite scriptural rule.

3.01. What is the Testamentum?

Before the original Testamentum, Christian gospels and epistles circulated separately among different churches, without a fixed

and universally recognized Christian canon.

The original Testamentum was compiled and transcribed by Marcion of Sinope around 128 C.E., making it the first codified Christian biblical canon—predating the formation of the canonical Bible used by later Catholic and Protestant churches by nearly three centuries.

This dating coheres with Eznik of Kolb's report that Marcion located Christ's manifestation roughly one hundred years prior to the point at which Marcion fixed and authorized his own canon. If Christ's descent into Capernaum is set on the Sabbath described in the Evangelicon—Saturday, December 31, 28 C.E., or Saturday, January 1, 29 C.E. (either fitting the Sabbath depending on civil dating or sunset-to-sunset reckoning)—then roughly a century later yields the late 120s as the natural horizon for Marcion's canonization of Gospel and Apostle into a single codex.

According to scholar Wolfram Kinzig, Marcion referred to this canonical collection as the Testamentum, the Latin term for "Testament." It was not divided into an "Old" and "New" Testament as in later biblical compilations, but stood alone as the complete Christian Scripture of the Church.

The conceptual division between "Old" and "New" Testaments only emerged around 170 C.E., when Melito of Sardis introduced those terms—largely as a polemical response to Marcion's teachings and his rejection of the Hebrew scriptures.

Marcion's original Testamentum was composed of two distinct sections: the Evangelicon—a purified gospel text representing the teachings of Jesus Christ as revealed to Paul—and the Apostolicon—the original ten epistles of the Apostle Paul. Marcion excluded the entire 46-book Hebrew Bible, as well as all other epistles and gospels that would later be included in the 27-book New Testament canon, which had not yet been formalized during his lifetime.

In ancient Marcionite usage, the Testamentum was synonymous with Christian Scripture itself, for it contained the whole and only canon received by the Church: the Evangelicon and Apostolicon. The modern reconstructed Testamentum printed and published by the Marcionite Church preserves that original canon unchanged but uses the title in a broader codicological sense for the Church's complete corpus.

The modern Testamentum therefore contains canonical scripture in the Evangelicon and

Apostolicon, deuterocanonical scripture in the Antilegicon, and the Church's subordinate liturgical, catechetical, historical, and ecclesiastical books, including the Didascalicon, Synaxicon, Homileticon, Psalmicon, Dialekticon, Litourgicon, and Chronicon. Inclusion within the same codex does not make these books equal in authority. The modern Testamentum is the complete codex of all relevant Christian writings received by the Church for doctrine, worship, catechesis, remembrance, history, discipline, and order; the original Testamentum remains the canon and supreme written authority of the faith.

3.02. Has the original Marcionite canon changed since 128 C.E.?

The original Testamentum has not changed since its compilation in 128 C.E. Later Marcionite use of the Antilegicon did not alter the canon, but received disputed Pauline writings as a deuterocanon subordinate to the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon. The original Testamentum consisted of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the ten original Pauline Epistles: Galatians, I and II Corinthians, Romans, I and II Thessalonians, Laodiceans, commonly known as Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians. One Gospel and ten authentic epistles formed the original Testamentum.

Later Marcionites, encountering additional writings attributed to Paul, did begin to use and circulate certain epistles beyond the original Apostolicon, including Titus, I and II Timothy, and Alexandrians. Because of their uncertain provenance and disputed reception, we do not place these among the original ten Pauline Epistles. Instead, we receive them as deuterocanonical and place them in the Antilegicon, the collection of disputed writings read with caution and subordinated to the Evangelicon and Apostolicon.

Thus, the original Testamentum has remained unchanged, while the later Antilegicon preserves those additional Pauline or Pauline-associated writings that entered Marcionite use after the formation of the original canon. The broader scope of the modern printed Testamentum is not an expansion of that canon: it is the binding of canonical scripture, deuterocanonical scripture, and subordinate ecclesiastical books into one ordered Church codex. In contrast, the later Catholic canon expanded into multiple gospels and a much larger collection of books, many of which were received gradually over several centuries and reflect theological

developments absent from the earliest Marcionite tradition.

See also: Question 2.03, "What is the hierarchy of authority in the Marcionite Church?"; Question 3.08, "What is the Antilegicon?"

3.03. What is the Evangelicon?

Marcionite Christians recognized only one gospel as authentic and authoritative: the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, also known as the Evangelicon. This was the earliest written gospel narrative and, according to Marcionite tradition, was authored by the Apostle Paul. Paul himself makes reference to this gospel in his epistles, affirming its central role in his apostolic mission.

The name Evangelicon derives from the Greek euangelion ("good news") fused with the book-title ending -ikon, whose κ becomes c in Latin, yielding -icon and designating "the Gospel book."

Importantly, Marcionite Christians never referred to this text as the "Gospel of Marcion"—a label introduced later by critics seeking to discredit Marcion by suggesting he forged or fabricated the gospel. If any figure can be rightly associated with its origin, it is Paul the Apostle. In that sense, the term "Gospel of Paul" may be a closer description, though it is not historically attested in Marcionite sources.

The Evangelicon shares structural and thematic similarities with the Gospel of Luke, while also containing verses paralleled in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John. However, it notably excludes several key elements, such as Luke's account of Jesus' baptism and the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Like the Gospels of Mark and John, the Evangelicon omits any false birth story, in keeping with Marcionite doctrine, which rejects attempts to portray Jesus as fulfilling Jewish messianic expectations. The Evangelicon must therefore be read on its own terms as an independent Gospel text, not as an abridged or defective form of the later Gospel of Luke.

3.04. Why does the Marcionite Church receive only one Gospel?

When the original Testamentum was transcribed and canonized in 128 C.E., it contained only the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ—the revelation given directly by the risen Christ to the Apostle Paul, which he faithfully proclaimed throughout the known world.

Even Tertullian, while opposing Marcion, acknowledged the singularity of this confession: "For Marcion laid it down that there is one Gospel, and that only" (Against Marcion IV.2).

As Paul himself warned:

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.
As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

Galatians 1:8–9

This exclusive adherence to Paul’s gospel formed the theological foundation of the Marcionite Church and its scriptural canon.

3.05. Is the Evangelicon a gospel harmony?

The Evangelicon is not a gospel harmony. A gospel harmony is a literary effort to merge the four gospels of the later Catholic canon into a single, continuous narrative. The earliest known example of such a harmony is the Diatessaron, compiled by Tatian in the second century.

In contrast, the Evangelicon is not a synthesis of preexisting gospel texts but rather the earliest written gospel narrative—predating and serving as a source for what later became the canonical gospels. Far from being derivative, it is the foundational gospel from which the synoptic and Johannine traditions drew and expanded.

While the Evangelicon closely parallels much of the content in the Gospel of Luke, it also includes material that aligns with passages now found in Matthew, Mark, and John—passages that are absent from Luke’s version. Conversely, many sections found in the canonical gospels are either missing, abbreviated, or theologically refined in the Evangelicon, indicating that the canonical gospels are later interpolations or doctrinally motivated expansions.

Patristic sources reflect this complex relationship. Tertullian and Epiphanius accused Marcion of “cutting” or omitting parts of Luke, Matthew, and Mark. Ephrem, on the other hand, claimed Marcion included material not found in Luke. Origen and Adamantius offered yet another view, asserting that Marcion edited all the gospels —suggesting broader influence. These contradictory claims from early critics serve more as rhetorical attacks than objective textual analysis.

Thus, the Evangelicon is more accurately described as a “Super Gospel”—not a reduction or rearrangement of existing texts, but the earliest, original gospel proclamation of the Lord Jesus Christ as received and preached by the Apostle Paul.

Ultimately, the emergence of the canonical fourfold gospel was a theological and institutional response to the singular gospel of

the Marcionite Christians. The multiplication of gospels under Catholic authority served to counterbalance the clarity and authority of the Evangelicon, which stood alone as the true witness to Christ.

3.06. What is the Apostolicon?

The name Apostolicon derives from the Greek apostolos joined to the book-title suffix -ikon, whose κ becomes c in Latin, yielding -icon and marking it as "the Apostle book," the collected letters of Paul.

The Apostolicon is the earliest collected edition of Paul's letters. "Apostle" means "one who is sent," and Paul, sent by the Lord Jesus to proclaim the Gospel to the nations, spoke of "filling up" the word of God once he completed his epistolary mission. Uniquely among early Christian writings, Paul's own letters claim scriptural status.

Around 120 C.E., Marcion fully gathered these letters into a single corpus, the Apostolicon. A complete set reached Rome by 138 C.E., delivered by Marcion himself. The Apostolicon was joined to the Evangelicon in 128 C.E., forming the first Christian Bible, the original Testamentum.

This date is justified by Eznik of Kolb's report that Marcion fixed Christ's appearance exactly one hundred years before the moment Marcion canonized his Bible: if Christ's descent is dated to 31 Dec. 28 C.E. or 1 Jan. 29 C.E., then one hundred years from that point yields the date when Marcion bound Gospel and Apostle together as one canon.

Marcion's original collection comprised Galatians, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Romans, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, Laodiceans, later identified in the Catholic tradition with Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians, originally omitting the Pastoral Epistles and Alexandrians (Hebrews). Brief introductory notes—the Prologues to the Pauline Epistles—survive in several early Latin codices (e.g., Codex Fuldensis) and are widely attributed to Marcion's circle, whereas alternative anti-Marcionite prologues appear before the gospels of the later Catholic canon in other manuscripts.

A later Catholic tradition concedes that Marcion was a disciple of the Apostle John and supposedly delivered Paul's letters to him—an apologetic legend meant to soften the awkward fact that the emerging Catholic Church depended on a "heretic" for its Pauline texts. Historian Joseph Turmel even noted that the Gospel of John echoes Marcionite themes, while

the Johannine epistles avoid Hebrew Bible citations entirely.

Thus, the Apostolicon remains Marcion's enduring contribution: the first fixed collection of Paul's writings and a cornerstone of the earliest Christian canon.

3.07. Why are the Pauline Epistles ordered differently?

It is evident that Marcion's influence was so significant that the emerging Catholic Church, unable to reject the authority of Paul's epistles outright, instead sought to distance itself from Marcion as fully as possible. To this end, the Church reorganized the Pauline letters in a manner distinct from Marcion's original chronological arrangement. Rather than preserving the historical sequence used in the Apostolicon, the Catholic tradition adopted an order based primarily on the relative length of the epistles, thereby imposing a new editorial structure that further obscured Marcion's original compilation.

Yet the manuscript and canon-history evidence also shows that Marcion's sequencing continued to echo in other ancient book-traditions, especially in the Syriac-speaking churches. One standard comparison of Marcion's order with the Syriac canon tradition (c. 400) and Ephrem's list preserves the same opening block—Galatians, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Romans—and explicitly concludes that "there can be no doubt" that this initial ordering "is ultimately due to Marcion," even where later items diverge (e.g., Laodiceans/Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians shifting positions).

3.08. What is the Antilegicon?

The Antilegicon refers to those epistles attributed to the Apostle Paul whose authenticity or authority has been historically disputed. Within the Marcionite Church, this category includes the three Pastoral Epistles: Titus, I Timothy, and II Timothy, and the Epistle to the Alexandrians (commonly known as Hebrews). If genuinely authored by Paul, these letters represent some of his final writings, composed shortly before his death.

The name Antilegicon derives from the Greek term antilegomena ("things spoken against") fused with the book-title ending -ikon, whose κ (kappa) shifts to c in Latin, yielding -icon and thus signifying "the book of disputed writings."

These texts were not included in Marcion's original compilation of the Apostolicon, the authoritative Pauline canon assembled in the early second century. As such, the Marcionite Church classifies them as deuterocanonical—a secondary tier of Pauline writings distinct from, and subordinate to, the

Evangelicon and Apostolicon. While not viewed as equal in authority, these epistles are nonetheless considered valuable for theological reflection, historical study, and, on occasion, liturgical use.

Should these texts be definitively verified as authentic Pauline works and should their Marcionite-preserved original forms be recovered in early, non-interpolated witnesses sufficient to establish their original text, the Marcionite Church would formally include them in the Apostolicon proper. Unless both conditions are met, they remain deuterocanonical writings of the Antilegicon, subordinate to the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon.

The versions of these epistles preserved within the Antilegicon are abbreviated compared to the longer, heavily redacted versions found in the mainstream New Testament. The Marcionite Church has reconstructed these shorter texts using citations, allusions, and attestations primarily from Clement of Alexandria (ca. 200 C.E.), as well as other early second-century patristic witnesses such as Hermas, Tatian, Theophilus, and Athenagoras. These sources were instrumental in restoring the texts closer to their original form, prior to the interpolations added by later Catholic redactors.

It is widely acknowledged that the Pastoral Epistles were among the most heavily edited to reflect the emerging ecclesiology and orthodoxy of the institutional Church. Anti-Marcionite themes are particularly evident in these later interpolations.

Following the death of Marcion of Sinope, Marcionite Christians began to regard these texts with increasing interest. Marcionite tradition holds that Marcion’s disciple Apelles—who resided in Alexandria—continued the collection and transcription of Pauline letters and received Titus, I Timothy, II Timothy, and Alexandrians for Marcionite use. Notably, Apelles is associated with theological language resembling phrases found in the Epistle to Titus. A Latin prologue to Titus, possibly authored by Apelles, states:

“Titus he admonisheth and instructeth concerning the constitution of the presbytery, and spiritual conversation, and the avoiding of heretics that give heed unto Jewish fables; writing unto him from Nicopolis.”

This phrasing aligns with Apelles’ known theological position, particularly his rejection of the Jewish Scriptures as a collection of “fables” and “failed prophecies.” Just as Marcion prefaced his collected epistles with prologues,

Apelles may have authored similar introductions for these later Pauline letters.

Tertullian himself expressed surprise that the Pastoral Epistles were not included in Marcion's Apostolicon, likely because he recognized thematic similarities between these epistles and Paul's undisputed letters. The existence of Marcionite-style prologues for the Pastorals supports the idea that the collection and prefacing of Pauline letters continued within Marcionite circles after Marcion's death.

Patristic sources confirm the gradual expansion of Marcionite Pauline usage and the later reception of a Pauline deuterocanon. Filastrius of Brescia (late fourth century) makes a striking and unusually explicit claim in his heresiological notice on Marcion: he says that Marcionites accepted Paul's epistles to Timothy and to Titus—a rare patristic statement that directly links Marcionite usage to at least two of the Pastorals. Ephrem the Syrian references Marcionites using I Timothy—a notable fact, as I Timothy is the only epistle that directly quotes the Evangelicon. Likewise, in his homilies against the Marcionites, John Chrysostom critiques their use of II Timothy, further evidence that these epistles gained authority within the Marcionite tradition over time.

The question remains: Why did Marcion exclude these texts from his original Apostolicon? Was it an act of rejection, or simply a lack of access?

There are several plausible explanations. The Pastoral Epistles were personal letters rather than letters to entire congregations and may not have circulated as widely, making them less accessible to Marcion during the compilation process. The Epistle to the Alexandrians (Hebrews) may have been initially composed in a Semitic language—such as Hebrew or Aramaic—which Marcion may not have been able to read. Clement of Alexandria suggested that Hebrews was only translated into Greek at a later time. Like Paul, Marcion focused his mission on the Gentiles and would have had limited interaction with Jewish-Christian communities where the Alexandrians circulated.

Some scholars also propose that Paul used an amanuensis, or secretary, when composing these disputed letters. Notably, Alexandrians references Tertius as the epistle's scribe while Paul was in prison, which could explain stylistic differences from Paul's earlier works.

Taken together, these factors help explain the differences between the Antilegicon epistles and the undisputed letters of the

Apostolicon. They also support the idea that the exclusion of these texts from Marcion's original canon was circumstantial rather than doctrinal.

See also: Question 2.03, "What is the hierarchy of authority in the Marcionite Church?"; Question 3.01, "What is the Testamentum?"; Question 3.11, "How would the Church receive newly discovered Pauline epistles?"

3.09. What is the difference between scripture, deuterocanon, ecclesiastical books, tradition, and historical witness?

The canon consists of the Evangelicon and Apostolicon, which together formed the original Testamentum and possess the supreme written authority of the Church. The deuterocanon is contained in the Antilegicon and is received as useful and edifying, but subordinate to the canon. In the modern reconstructed Testamentum, both are printed within the same codex without any confusion of rank.

The ecclesiastical books include the Didascalicon, Psalmicon, Homileticon, Synaxicon, Dialekticon, Litourgicon, Chronicon, and other received books of teaching, worship, remembrance, history, discipline, and order. They are also gathered within the modern Testamentum, but they possess neither canonical authority nor deuterocanonical standing. Tradition preserves the received doctrine, worship, and discipline of the Church, while historical witnesses, including hostile heresiologists, are evidence to be weighed critically rather than authorities to be obeyed.

3.10. What are the Epistles to the Laodiceans and Alexandrians?

According to the Muratorian Fragment, the wider Marcionite scriptural tradition included two Pauline epistles known as the Epistle to the Laodiceans and the Epistle to the Alexandrians.

Ancient sources such as Hippolytus of Rome, and later scholars including Fenton John Anthony Hort, have equated the Epistle to the Laodiceans with what is now known as the Epistle to the Ephesians. This identification is supported by the observation that early manuscripts of Ephesians lacked the phrase "in Ephesus" (Ephesians 1:1), and because Ephesians is the only non-Pastoral Pauline letter absent under that title from the original Apostolicon, suggesting that it was originally circulated as Laodiceans. Tertullian supports this identification when he notes that Marcion's Apostolicon included Ephesians under the name Laodiceans.

Another reason for the later misidentification may be that the ancient Marcionite Latin prologue states that the Epistle to the

Laodiceans was written from Ephesus, meaning it may have circulated in Ephesus under local association before reaching Laodicea, thereby reinforcing the eventual conflation of "Laodiceans" with "Ephesians."

As for the Epistle to the Alexandrians, many scholars—including Moses Stuart—have identified it with the Epistle to the Hebrews. Hebrews is conspicuously absent from the Muratorian Fragment and is the only general (non-personal) Pauline epistle omitted from that listing. Clement of Alexandria observed that the letter was likely written anonymously due to Paul's contentious reputation among Jewish and Jewish-Christian communities. This anonymity would have helped ensure broader acceptance among Jewish believers, especially in Alexandria—the second-largest Jewish city in the ancient world after Jerusalem.

Alexandria was also home to an early Jewish-Christian community and the Leontopolis temple, which some scholars believe is alluded to in Hebrews more accurately than the Jerusalem temple. It is plausible that the letter, originally addressed to the Alexandrian community, later became a circulating epistle whose destination was forgotten or intentionally omitted, eventually taking on the more inclusive title Epistle to the Hebrews as it spread among Jewish-Christian communities across the Eastern Mediterranean.

The opening greetings of the Epistle to the Alexandrians have been reconstructed using material from the sixteenth chapter of Romans. Several scholars, including Richard Longenecker, have argued that Romans 16 likely originated as the opening to a separate letter, which was mistakenly appended to the end of Romans in the manuscript tradition.

Supporting this theory is the placement of Hebrews immediately after Romans in many early manuscripts, suggesting that a scribal or editorial error may have caused the original opening of Hebrews to be attached to the conclusion of Romans. The final greeting in Hebrews (or Alexandrians) indicates it was written from Rome, and Romans 16 contains greetings from numerous Roman Christians—implying that Paul was already in the city at the time of writing.

Of particular note is the presence of Philologus of Sinope in the closing salutations:

"Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them."

Alexandrians 1:15

Philologus, a member of the Seventy Disciples, was the father of Marcion of Sinope, thus further strengthening the connection between Paul's Roman correspondence and Marcionite tradition.

Many scholars support the theory that the original Epistle to the Romans existed in a 14- or 15-chapter form, excluding chapter 16 entirely. This aligns with the Marcionite version of Romans, which omits chapter 16—further evidence that the final chapter was originally associated with another Pauline letter, likely Alexandrians (Hebrews).

3.11. How would the Church receive newly discovered Pauline epistles?

The Marcionite Church affirms that if any lost epistles of the Apostle Paul are one day discovered, verified as authentic, and recovered in a Marcionite-preserved original form free from later interpolation, they should rightly be included in the Apostolicon, the authoritative collection of Pauline writings. Pauline authorship alone is not sufficient where the original text cannot be securely recovered.

Potential candidates for such inclusion may include a previously written, or "zeroth," epistle to the Corinthians, likely referenced in I Corinthians 5:9, a third epistle to the Corinthians—commonly referred to as the "Severe Letter"—believed to have been written between I and II Corinthians, and referenced in II Corinthians 2:4 and II Corinthians 7:8–9, and an earlier epistle to the Laodiceans, potentially referenced in Laodiceans 3:3–4, distinct from the letter preserved in the current Apostolicon.

Furthermore, should any epistles currently regarded as pseudepigraphal later be proven authentically Pauline and should their Marcionite-preserved original forms be recovered, the Marcionite Church would include them in the Apostolicon upon verification of their Pauline origin and doctrinal consistency with the canon. Short of both proofs, they remain in the Antilegicon and do not acquire canonical standing.

3.12. Which writings does the Church regard as apocryphal?

The Marcionite Church regards all so-called "New Testament" writings not received as canonical or deuterocanonical scripture as apocryphal. Their possible inclusion or discussion within the broader modern Testamentum as historical witnesses would not grant them inspiration or authority. Such texts possess, at best, limited historical, ethical, or theological value.

3.13. Why does the Church reject Third Corinthians?

The Third Epistle to the Corinthians (Third Corinthians) is a deliberate pseudepigraphon forged to counter Marcion by placing a new letter under Paul's name. Where the Evangelicon and Apostolicon proclaim the revelation of God the Father in Christ apart from the false deity of the Hebrew Bible, Third Corinthians presents a counterfeit Paul championing positions opposed to the actual writings of the Apostle Paul as preserved by Marcion and his followers, including the virgin birth of Mary, the resurrection of the flesh, and the continuity of the Hebrew Bible with the gospel. In other words, it manufactures a Pauline voice to contradict Marcion's.

Because Marcion elevated Paul, the forgers borrowed Pauline authority and turned it against Marcion's true and original Pauline corpus. The result is not authentic apostolic correspondence but a counter-Marcionite instrument, a supposed Pauline refutation that the Apostle never wrote. Notably, Ephrem the Syrian, a major critic of Marcion, treated Third Corinthians as canonical and even commented on it, which aided its circulation in parts of the Syriac tradition without truly establishing its genuineness.

3.14. Why does the Church reject the Book of Revelation?

The Marcionite Church rejects the Book of Revelation because it belongs neither to the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon nor to the deuterocanonical Antilegicon, and because its theology is incompatible with the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul.

Revelation is a disputed apocalypse of uncertain authorship whose imagery and doctrine are deeply dependent upon the Hebrew Bible. It restores the authority of Israelite tribes, Jerusalem, temple imagery, prophetic vengeance, plagues, and an earthly millennial kingdom. In doing so, it obscures the mystery of the Father once hidden from the world and reintroduces the religious order from which Christ delivers the faithful.

Its violent cycle of wrath and retribution also differs from the Gospel of grace, while its emphasis upon keeping commandments and overcoming through apocalyptic conflict risks subordinating faith to another dispensation. The Apostle's rule is decisive:

"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."

II Corinthians 11:4

The Church therefore classifies Revelation as apocryphal. It may be studied as a historical witness to later Jewish-Christian apocalyptic movements, but it possesses no doctrinal, liturgical, or canonical authority within Marcionite Christianity.

See also: Question 3.09, "What is the difference between scripture, deuterocanon, ecclesiastical books, tradition, and historical witness?"; Question 3.12, "Which writings does the Church regard as apocryphal?"; Question 12.11, "What is the final judgment?"

3.15. Is the Hebrew Bible part of the Christian canon?

The Hebrew Bible is not part of the Christian canon. The Hebrew Bible—and the carnal, wrathful deity portrayed within it—is fundamentally antithetical to the teachings and message of Jesus Christ. This opposition is evident in both substance and spirit. The god of the Hebrew scriptures represents a tribal, nationalistic figure whose laws, values, and character stand in stark contrast to the God revealed through Jesus Christ in the Gospel of the Lord.

This is stated explicitly by the Marcionite speakers in Adamantius. Marcus rejects the Hebrew canon in principle, insisting that his party receives only "the Gospel and the Apostle" while refusing "the Law and Prophets"; when pressed as to which "Apostle," he answers "Paul." Megethius likewise treats Paul's appeals to the Hebrew writings as strictly rhetorical and corrective, not as concessions to divine authority, and explicitly distinguishes them as merely "the law of Moses and not of God."

According to the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem in 48 C.E., God was revealed not through the Hebrew Bible, but through Jesus Christ Himself. The Hebrew scriptures reflect a distinct and alien religious system—rooted in legalism, violence, and ethnocentrism—utterly incompatible with the universal message of grace, love, and redemption found in the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum.

This same posture appears in later neo-Marcionites such as the Paulicians, as reflected in Byzantine abjuration formulae directed against them: the convert is required to anathematize the Paulician teachers and "all Paulicians" who persist in the sect, and is made to confess "the law of Moses … together with the holy prophets" precisely because the Paulician movement was characterized by rejecting the Law-and-Prophets corpus as binding Christian authority.

Marcion of Sinope reaffirmed this truth with clarity. He rejected the authority of the Hebrew Bible altogether, regarding it as a false scripture devoid of divine inspiration. To Marcion, it consisted largely of contradictions, failed prophecies, and moral fables with only marginal historical or ethical value for Christians. He firmly denied that the Hebrew Bible held any religious significance following the advent of Christ.

In proclaiming a complete break from the Judaic tradition, Marcion became the first to declare Christianity a new and distinct faith—not a continuation or fulfillment of the Hebrew religion, but a radical departure from it. In this sense, Marcion is rightly seen as the originator of what may be called "New Testament Christianity." His rejection of the Jewish epic and his refusal to frame Jesus as the prophesied Jewish Messiah directly challenged the emerging Catholic Church, which sought to position itself as the rightful heir to the Hebrew tradition.

Marcion taught that the messianic prophecies of the Hebrew Bible clearly pointed to an earthly political figure, not to a transcendent, spiritual redeemer. He maintained that Jesus Christ was not the Jewish Messiah but a divine emissary sent from the true God to reveal spiritual truth and offer salvation—entirely independent of Jewish expectation or law.

He also taught that the god of the Hebrew Bible was an inferior, violent, and morally compromised being—marked by jealousy, vengeance, and genocide—and utterly irreconcilable with the God of compassion and mercy revealed through Christ.

Apelles, Marcion's disciple, sharpened this critique by attacking the prophetic corpus as internally self-defeating: he argued that "the prophecies refuted themselves," because they are "inconsistent … false, and self-contradictory," and his opponents report that he devoted substantial effort to the "refutation and overthrow" of "the law of Moses."

As Christ Himself declares:

"Think not that I am come to fulfil the law, or the prophets: I am not come to fulfil, but to destroy."

Evangelicon 14:16

See also: Question 4.15, "Why do Jesus and Paul refer to the Hebrew Bible?"; Question 18.10, "Why does the Church reject the category of Abrahamic religion?"; Question 8.15, "Why does the Church deny that Christ is the Jewish Messiah?"

3.16. Does the Hebrew Bible contain any historical or moral truth?

The Hebrew Bible may preserve limited historical facts and moral principles, but the Church does not receive it as divinely inspired or authoritative.

Marcionite Christians held that the majority of the Hebrew Bible consisted of mythological narratives, failed prophecies, distorted historical accounts, and morally troubling episodes. They argued that these texts had been heavily interpolated and altered over time, in stark contrast to what they regarded as the pure and uncorrupted Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the original letters of the Apostle Paul.

From the Marcionite perspective, while certain elements of the Hebrew scriptures may reflect historical events, such accounts are deemed irrelevant to the Christian faith and bear no direct connection to the divine. Moreover, although some ethical teachings can be found within the Hebrew texts, Marcionites noted that comparable moral principles are present in a wide array of ancient cultures, including Greek and Roman traditions—yet their existence alone does not confer divine inspiration.

Both Marcion and his disciple Apelles acknowledged that the Hebrew scriptures—and even the mythologies of surrounding pagan cultures—might occasionally preserve accurate accounts of supernatural events, particularly those involving angels, devils, Satan, or even the Holy Spirit. This view is consistent with the Marcionite doctrine of dispensationalism, which asserts that God the Father had remained hidden and uninvolved with humanity until His sudden and unexpected revelation in the person of Jesus Christ in 29 C.E.

Nonetheless, from a Marcionite standpoint, discerning which aspects of the Hebrew scriptures or ancient mythologies reflect genuine spiritual occurrences and which are fictitious or corrupted remains a challenge. As such, these texts are approached critically and are not regarded as divinely authoritative within the Marcionite tradition.

3.17. Does the Church interpret the Hebrew Bible allegorically?

The Marcionite Church firmly rejects allegorical interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. We do not believe that the commands, laws, and judgments issued by Yahweh contain hidden spiritual meanings pointing to Christ. Allegory is not a path to truth—it is a method of evasion, invented by the early Church to conceal the immorality of the false covenant and preserve

allegiance to a god Christ came to renounce.

To allegorize is to deny what the text plainly says. When Yahweh commands genocide, the allegorist calls it spiritual warfare. When he sanctions slavery, they claim it symbolizes obedience. When he demands sacrifice, they insist it prefigures grace. But these are not spiritual mysteries—they are moral atrocities. Allegory transforms evil into metaphor and falsehood into doctrine.

This interpretive method enables eisegesis—reading one's own ideas into the text—rather than exegesis, which draws meaning from the words themselves. Allegory replaces the literal and historical meaning with speculation, obscuring the text's actual content. It blinds the reader to the fundamental nature of Yahweh and substitutes human imagination for divine clarity.

The Apostle Paul, as preserved in the Apostolicon, never allegorizes the Law—he condemns it. He calls it a yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1), a ministration of death (II Corinthians 3:7), and a system of condemnation. Paul does not reinterpret Moses—he exposes him as the servant of a deity alien to grace. The gospel does not complete the false covenant; it destroys it.

We read the Hebrew Bible literally, not to affirm it, but to expose it. We take Yahweh's words seriously—and for that reason, we reject him. His cruelty requires no interpretation. It speaks for itself. We do not search for metaphors. We recognize the testimony of a false god.

Allegory does not merely mislead—it becomes a form of idolatry. It elevates human symbolism above divine truth and blinds the soul to the distinction between the just and the unjust, between the Father and the deceiver. Allegory was not born of faith, but of betrayal—a refusal to choose between Christ and Moses, between light and shadow, between the new and the false.

It left the Church a house divided—preaching grace while defending wrath, proclaiming freedom while submitting to the Law. This compromise distorted the gospel and corrupted the clarity of God's revelation. Allegory became the mask of apostasy.

But the gospel of the Father, revealed by Jesus Christ, stands apart—pure, new, and free of riddles. It is not hidden in the shadows of the false covenant, nor buried in the laws of a lesser deity. It shines by its own light, needing no allegory to justify itself.

We do not put new wine into old bottles. We do not stitch together

incompatible gods. We do not reclaim the Law—we renounce it.

The Evangelicon itself presents the Gospel as something new that cannot be enclosed within the forms of the false covenant:

"No man putteth new wine into old wineskins; else the new wine will burst the wineskins, and be spilled, and the wineskins shall perish. But new wine must be put into new wineskins; and no man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old."

Evangelicon 3:57–59

The Church therefore does not search the old writings for concealed Christian meanings. It receives the new wine of the Gospel according to its own revelation and judges the Hebrew Bible by the light of Christ rather than remaking it through allegory.

3.18. Did any other early Christian groups reject the Hebrew Bible?

In addition to the Marcionite Christians, numerous other pre-Nicene Christian movements rejected, either in part or in full, Yahweh—the god depicted in the Hebrew Bible—or the authority of the Hebrew scriptures themselves. These groups included the Cerdonians, Sethians, Cainites, Ophites, Valentinians, Basilideans, Carpocratians, and Elchasaites. Each developed distinct theological frameworks that sought to distance the God revealed through Jesus Christ from the deity of the Hebrew tradition.

Some, such as the Sethians and Cainites, identified Yahweh as an ignorant or even malevolent figure—commonly referred to as the Demiurge—who created the material world in error or defiance of the true, unknowable God. Others, like the Valentinians and Elchasaites, adopted more allegorical interpretations of the Hebrew scriptures or relegated them to a secondary or inferior status within their theological systems.

These movements, like the Marcionites, represent a substantial and often overlooked current within early Christianity—one that questioned and ultimately rejected the identification of the Father of Jesus Christ with the tribal deity of Israel. In doing so, they offered a radical spiritual alternative to what would later become the dominant Catholic orthodoxy, highlighting the diversity and theological contestation that characterized the formative centuries of the Christian faith.

3.19. How does the Church regard the Ten Commandments?

The Ten Commandments represent a basic moral framework that any orderly society might reasonably uphold, regardless of whether one

believes they were divinely revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai. Their ethical content is not unique to the Hebrew Bible, nor does it require Mosaic origin to be valid or binding.

The essential moral teachings attributed to God are fully affirmed and restated within the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum. One such passage appears in the writings of the Apostle Paul:

"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 11:9

This verse captures the heart of Christian ethics, summarizing what is often called the "Golden Rule" or the "Great Commandment," and forms the foundation of moral conduct in the Christian faith.

Marcionite Christians reject the authority of the 613 commandments found in the Hebrew Bible, the product of a false covenant given by a lesser, carnal deity. Most of these laws are ritualistic, nationalistic, or arbitrary —bearing little relevance to a life of spiritual righteousness. For the Marcionite believer, the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Gospel as entrusted to Paul are sufficient and complete, offering a liberating alternative to the burdensome and morally inconsistent demands of the false covenant.

3.20. How does the Church regard the four gospels of the later Catholic canon?

The gospels commonly accepted in modern biblical canons were written and published long after the original Testamentum. Many were composed by unknown authors, lack divine inspiration, and hold no authoritative weight within Marcionite Christianity. At best, they offer limited historical insight; at worst, they serve to obscure the original Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Increasingly, biblical scholars and theologians acknowledge that these texts are likely edited and expanded versions of the true gospel—crafted to manufacture a theological bridge between the Hebrew Bible and the message of Christ. The Apostle Paul warned the faithful against such distortions:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel…"

Galatians 1:6

Irenaeus of Lyon, writing in direct opposition to Marcion, played a central role in the effort to establish

an alternative canon. His reasoning for selecting exactly four gospels—because there are four winds or four directions of the compass—reveals the arbitrary nature of the process. Despite the abundance of gospel texts circulating in his time, Irenaeus dismissed most and canonized four, none of which can be conclusively tied to apostolic authorship. Except for the expanded version of Luke, all are anonymous.

These four gospels gained traction in Catholic circles primarily after the rise of Marcionite Christianity. Their common thread was the assertion that Jesus was the prophesied Jewish Messiah—a theological claim that conveniently positioned Catholic Christianity as the heir to the Hebrew Bible. This doctrinal pivot became the foundation for constructing a "continuity" between Judaism and Christianity, something wholly absent from the teachings of Paul and from the original Testamentum.

The justification for accepting these gospels and the associated epistles as scripture ultimately rests on apostolic tradition—not on direct apostolic authorship, nor on intrinsic spiritual authority. This appeal to tradition is a matter of faith—but faith in what, precisely? Not in the Gospel delivered by Christ to Paul, but in a human-constructed ecclesiastical lineage designed to marginalize that very Gospel.

3.21. When was the Catholic Bible canonized?

By the time of Tertullian, around 200 C.E., the emerging Catholic Church had not yet established a formal canon of scripture. Unlike the Marcionite Church, which had maintained a clearly defined canon—the original Testamentum, consisting of one Gospel and ten Pauline epistles—since the early second century, the Catholic tradition remained without an officially recognized collection of sacred texts.

This began to change with the convening of the First Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E. Composed of over 300 bishops from across the Roman Empire, the council was summoned by Emperor Constantine, who sought to suppress internal theological divisions and forge a unified state religion under imperial authority. Constantine, a former devotee of the Roman sun god Sol Invictus, had little understanding of Christian theology; his chief concern was maintaining civil order and imperial cohesion.

Notably, leaders of the Marcionite Church—then a widespread and influential movement—were either excluded from the council or chose not to participate. Under Constantine's direction, significant

editorial changes to Christian scripture began to take shape. The Hebrew Bible was ordered to be incorporated into the Christian canon, while the Evangelicon—the gospel used by Marcionite Christians—was removed and replaced with four gospels of uncertain and disputed origin.

By 331 C.E., six years after the Council of Nicaea adjourned, Constantine commissioned the production of fifty official copies of the revised Christian Bible. Historical evidence suggests these editions included the Hebrew scriptures and newly adopted gospels, marking a decisive shift in the character and content of the imperial church's canon.

In 332 C.E., Constantine issued the Edict Against the Heretics, mandating the confiscation of all Marcionite churches and places of worship. These properties were forcibly transferred to the ancient Catholic Church, solidifying the state-backed suppression of the Marcionite faith.

The formal codification of the Catholic canon occurred decades later, at the Council of Rome in 382 C.E. This council finalized the inclusion of 46 books from the Hebrew Bible—including several Deuterocanonical texts not even recognized within Judaism—and 27 books in the New Testament, culminating in a 73-book canon featuring four distinct gospels.

This canon was reaffirmed at the Synod of Hippo in 393 C.E., further entrenching the structure of the Catholic Bible.

By contrast, the Marcionite Church had upheld a stable and concise canon—consisting of one gospel and ten epistles—for over three centuries by that point, resisting additions, redactions, and theological syncretism. Its scriptural integrity stood in stark contrast to the evolving and politically influenced canon of the emerging Catholic Church.

3.22. What is the Psalmicon?

The Psalmicon is a Marcionite Christian collection of forty-two psalms, restored from surviving Syriac, Greek, and Coptic witnesses and informed by historical references and early Christian writings. Marcionite tradition dates its compilation to around 125 C.E. and regards it as the earliest Christian hymnbook.

Pliny the Younger, governing the province of Bithynia-Pontus in the early second century, describes local Christians as assembling before dawn and singing antiphonally; he reports that they were accustomed to sing "carmen Christo quasi deo" ("a hymn to Christ as to a god"). (Pliny the Younger, Epistles 10.96)

Psalmicon derives from the Greek psalmos (“song of praise”) fused with the book-title ending -ikon, whose κ (kappa) becomes c in Latin, yielding -icon and signifying “the psalm book.”

The Muratorian Fragment refers to a rejected collection of psalms associated with Marcion, and Maruthas of Martyropolis likewise records: “Instead of the Psalms they [the Marcionites] have made themselves hymns for their services.” Marcionite tradition does not hold that Marcion composed all these psalms. Rather, he composed some himself, gathered others already circulating among different Pauline churches—some in Greek and others in Syriac—brought them together into a single ordered collection, and established their common use in the liturgy of the Church. Later Marcionite presbyters and bishops may also have assisted in preserving and arranging this devotional corpus.

The Marcionite Church identifies this collection with an early form of the material later transmitted as the Odes of Solomon. Because its constituent hymns arose in different Pauline communities, the collection need not have possessed a single original language. As the hymns spread beyond the Marcionite Church, they were copied, translated, expanded, and interpolated. Their early Pauline and proto-Marcionite character also helps explain their use by other Christian groups, including the Valentinians.

Like the Homily to Diognetus, Marcionite tradition places these hymns before Marcion’s Antitheses of 139 C.E. They therefore preserve an early Pauline and proto-Marcionite theology rather than the fully systematized doctrinal distinctions of Marcion’s later teaching. Their earlier and less sharply polemical form also helps explain why they could circulate among and be used by Christian groups outside the Marcionite Church.

Some scholars suggest that hymns within this tradition were composed by a disciple of the Apostle John, a description that fits Marcion of Sinope and coheres with the Church’s belief that he composed some, though not all, of the psalms later gathered in the collection. Furthermore, Catholic heresiologists such as Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Epiphanius all attest that Marcion taught the harrowing of hell—the descent of Christ into Hades following his crucifixion. While this episode is absent from the Evangelicon, it is referenced both directly and allegorically in multiple psalms within the Psalmicon.

Lactantius later preserved a brief Latin quotation from Psalm

Nineteen. The Marcionite tradition holds that the later nativity section of that psalm was an interpolation of Lactantius. Later Syriac transmission further altered portions of the collection in ways that brought them into closer conformity with developing Catholic orthodoxy. Eventually, the hymns were renamed the Odes of Solomon in an effort to link them to the Hebrew Bible. Originally, these works were referred to as psalmoi idiotikoi, meaning “private psalms” or psalms outside the canon—not viewed as divinely inspired scripture, but rather personal and devotional in nature. Many may have originated as baptismal hymns.

Tertullian describes a Marcionite custom of offering a mixture of milk and honey to the newly baptized—a tradition echoed in one of the psalms, which directly references this post-baptismal offering.

At the fourth-century Synod of Laodicea, Canon 59 prohibited psalms composed by private individuals and uncanonical books from being read in church. This rule would have excluded a noncanonical collection such as the Psalmicon from Catholic liturgical reading.

The Marcionite Church does not claim divine inspiration for the Psalmicon, but recognizes its profound spiritual and liturgical value. The present edition seeks to restore these hymns in a form that is textually defensible, theologically coherent, and suitable for the prayer and worship of the Church.

This edition of the Psalmicon was prepared through comparison of the surviving Syriac, Greek, and Coptic witnesses with several established scholarly translations, principally those of J. Rendel Harris and Alphonse Mingana, James H. Charlesworth, and Samuel Zinner’s translation, edited by Mark M. Mattison.

Where the underlying text permitted more than one defensible rendering, preference was given to readings that preserved the original sense while cohering more closely with Marcionite theology. Particular attention was given to distinguishing the heavenly and visible orders, presenting immortality as a gift received through Christ, preserving spiritual rather than fleshly resurrection, and identifying God the Father as the ultimate source of being without unnecessarily attributing to Him the immediate fashioning of the physical world. The language was then conformed to the style and cadence of the King James Version without introducing theological material unsupported by the textual witnesses.

Certain psalms require more specific textual explanation. Psalm Two follows Samuel Zinner's published hypothetical reconstruction, which assigns to the lost psalm seven Greek lines preserved within Psalm Eleven but absent from the Syriac witnesses. The opening of Psalm Three follows the conjectural restoration adopted by Samuel Zinner for text lost from the beginning of the surviving Syriac witness. Psalm Nineteen preserves only its self-contained mystical and Trinitarian opening concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the later nativity section was omitted because the Marcionite tradition holds it to have been an interpolation of Lactantius.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Colossians 3:16

3.23. What is the Homileticon?

The Homileticon of the Marcionite Church includes a ten-chapter Homily to Diognetus, preserved as part of a broader collection of Marcionite sermons, to be expanded as additional homiletic texts are recovered. While not considered part of the canon of scripture, the Homily to Diognetus is embraced as a traditional theological work that offers significant apologetic and liturgical insight from the Marcionite Christian perspective.

Homileticon derives from the Greek homilía ("sermon, discourse") fused with the book-title ending -ikon, whose κ (kappa) becomes c in Latin, yielding -icon and signifying "the sermon book."

Widely regarded in modern scholarship as a gem of early Christian apologetics, the so-called Epistle to Diognetus is particularly notable for its fifth chapter, which provides a compelling and heartfelt portrait of early Christian life. Although modern scholarship remains divided concerning its exact origin, authorship, and date, the Marcionite Church traditionally dates the ten-chapter Homily to approximately 132 C.E., seven years before Marcion's Antitheses of 139 C.E. On this traditional dating, it is the earliest known example of Christian apologetic literature.

A distinct line of scholarly interpretation, represented by Christian Charles Josias von Bunsen and Ernesto Buonaiuti, has attributed the Epistle to Diognetus to Marcion of Sinope or to a closely related figure such as Apelles. The theological content of the text is deeply Pauline and proto-Marcionite in tone. It notably lacks any reference to the Hebrew Bible

and is grounded entirely in the theology of divine grace, faith, and the rejection of Jewish ritual and legalism.

Because the Marcionite Church dates the homily to 132 C.E., before Marcion's Antitheses of 139 C.E., its theology should be read as an early expression of Marcionite doctrine rather than as the final systematized form of Marcion's later teaching. Like the early hymns gathered in the Psalmicon, it represents a Pauline and proto-Marcionite stage that had not yet assumed the sharper polemical form of the Antitheses. This earlier form helps explain why the homily could circulate among and be used by Christians outside the Marcionite Church, why it survived in broader Christian transmission, and why Tertullian could appeal to an earlier letter of Marcion as evidence of his original association with the Roman church. It remains highly valuable for Marcionite use because it preserves the same Pauline spirit, opposition to legalism, and proclamation of the Father's gracious salvation that later Marcionite theology would articulate more systematically.

This interpretation is further strengthened by the judgment of many scholars that the final two chapters of the received text represent later interpolations. These chapters diverge significantly in both literary style and theological emphasis, reflecting trends that align more closely with post-Marcionite orthodoxy. Their addition appears to have been intended to bring the original work into greater conformity with the evolving doctrinal mainstream.

Tertullian, one of Marcion's most vocal critics, appeals to a letter written by Marcion as evidence that Marcion's faith had once agreed with that of the Roman church. The Marcionite Church identifies this otherwise unspecified letter with the Homily to Diognetus.

Despite being labeled an epistle, the structure of the text does not resemble that of a letter. It lacks standard epistolary elements such as a salutation, signature, or sender. Rather, it reads as a public theological discourse, an instructional homily delivered in a church setting.

Historical inscriptions from the ancient city of Smyrna identify a figure named Diognetus, a local aristocrat active during the time of Polycarp. Smyrna, located in Anatolia, was one of the cities where Marcion evangelized and established congregations. Notably, a Marcionite bishop named Metrodorus, who was later martyred, is known to have served in Smyrna.

It is likely that Diognetus, a curious pagan, visited a Marcionite

congregation and questioned Marcion directly about his beliefs. The content of the Homily to Diognetus appears to be Marcion's public response to these inquiries, later transcribed and circulated throughout the Christian world. Tertullian's reference to the homily as a "letter" likely reflects a misclassification.

At some point in its transmission, the text was anonymized. All attribution to Marcion of Sinope was removed, and the work was circulated under no authorial name. Eventually lost, the manuscript was rediscovered centuries later and recognized for its historical and theological significance.

The edition of the Homily to Diognetus included in the Homileticon was revised through a comparison of the surviving Greek text with several established English translations. J. B. Lightfoot's rendering in The Apostolic Fathers supplied the principal base text, while the Roberts–Donaldson translation in the Ante-Nicene Fathers and H. G. Meecham's critical edition and translation were used alongside the Greek to evaluate disputed or flexible terms and clauses. Kirsopp Lake was consulted as a supplementary witness.

Where the Greek permitted more than one philologically defensible rendering, preference was given to language that cohered more closely with Marcionite theology without departing from the underlying text. Particular attention was given to preserving Pauline vocabulary, distinguishing God the Father from the Word as the mediating Artificer, emphasizing that the Father is without wrath, and avoiding unnecessarily creation-centered renderings where the Greek allowed alternatives such as "operation," "fashioner," or "dispensation." The resulting language was then conformed to the style and cadence of the King James Version, without introducing theological paraphrases unsupported by the Greek.

See also: Question 15.02, "Why does the Church observe the Lord's Day rather than the Jewish Sabbath?"

3.24. What is the Synaxicon?

The name Synaxicon comes from Greek synaxis ("gathering, assembly") joined to the book-title ending -ikon, whose κ (kappa) becomes c in Latin, yielding -icon and meaning "the book that gathers together." Marutha of Martyropolis records that Marcionites possessed a book called the Saka—Syriac for "Sum," "Summary," or "End"—and its Greek equivalent would indeed be the Synaxicon, typically a compendium of the lives of saints and martyrs.

Numerous scholars and theologians —including Hermann Detering, Joseph Turmel, Alfred Loisy, and Roger Parvus—have argued that the seven epistles attributed to Ignatius of Antioch were originally composed within a Marcionite Christian context. The Marcionite Church builds upon this scholarly hypothesis and holds that these epistles were authored by Marcion of Sinope himself shortly before his martyrdom in Rome in 154 C.E. These letters were compiled into a single codex, referred to in Syriac as the Saka and in Greek as the Synaxicon, and were later added to the broader Marcionite textual tradition after Marcion's death.

Following his excommunication from the Roman Church, Marcion returned to the East, where he continued leading congregations throughout Anatolia and Syria. Each of the epistles is addressed to churches within Anatolia, Marcion's native region. The author of the epistles refers to himself as the bishop of Syria, based in Antioch. Marcion assumed this episcopal role in Antioch after failing to become bishop of Rome. Antioch was a major center of early Pauline Christianity and is where followers of Jesus were first called "Christians." These epistles also contain the earliest written usage of the term "Christianity."

Strikingly, extant lists of bishops of Antioch reveal vacancies and overlapping dates between the 140s and 160s, aligning precisely with the period during which Marcion could have occupied this position. Antioch, like Rome, maintained an episcopal lineage that claimed apostolic succession through Paul the Apostle. Additionally, patristic sources describe Syria as a stronghold of Marcionite Christianity, and archaeological evidence—such as the discovery of a Marcionite church in the region—corroborates this assessment.

The epistles in question frequently quote or allude to the Odes of Solomon, originally Marcionite hymns now preserved in the Psalmicon. Irenaeus recorded that Marcion encountered his rival Polycarp in Rome around 154 C.E., during which Polycarp famously denounced him as "the firstborn of Satan." Polycarp is independently known to have visited Rome in 155 C.E. to discuss the Easter controversy with Bishop Anicetus, suggesting that this confrontation likely occurred as Marcion returned to Rome for what would be his final days.

The notion that the author of the epistles was transported to Rome for execution is unusual, as local punishment was more common. However, Marcion's situation was unique: having caused considerable

division within the Roman Church, it would have been fitting for Roman authorities to summon him back to the city where his controversy had originated.

This theory also explains the conspicuous absence of any mention of a bishop of Rome in the epistle addressed to the Roman congregation—consistent with the fact that no Marcionite bishop presided over the Roman community at that time. The epistles focus primarily on ecclesiastical concerns, which aligns with the context of Marcion attempting to secure succession and doctrinal continuity for his churches in anticipation of his martyrdom.

The episcopal structure outlined in these letters mirrors the succession model described by Adamantius for the Marcionite bishops. The presence of multiple versions and redactions of the epistles suggests that they were heavily interpolated. According to historian William Dool Killen, the Catholic Bishop of Rome, Callixtus I, reworked these epistles around 220 C.E., readdressing and expanding them to promote the authority of the monarchical episcopate. In doing so, he reattributed the letters from Marcion to the earlier martyr, Ignatius of Antioch.

Callixtus altered the identifying title "Nauclerus" (meaning shipmaster), commonly used for Marcion due to his occupation and sea voyage to Rome, to "Theophorus," meaning "God-bearer." Like Marcion, the newly imagined Ignatius was said to be a disciple of the Apostle John and a follower of the Apostle Paul, having been ordained as the first Bishop of Antioch by Paul.

This reattribution also forced the date of composition back to 108 C.E., a claim based solely on the account of Eusebius of Caesarea in the fourth century. Scholars such as Richard Pervo suggest that Eusebius had a vested interest in creating the appearance of an early and continuous succession of orthodox leaders from the Apostolic age.

Paul Foster and other modern scholars place the writing of the epistles closer to the early 150s C.E., with 154 C.E.—the year R. Joseph Hoffmann argues Marcion died—being a more plausible composition date. This timing is reinforced by internal evidence suggesting the epistles engage with ideas from Ptolemy the Gnostic, an adversary of the Marcionites who became active only in the 150s.

Callixtus also reassigned one epistle originally addressed to a Marcionite bishop in Smyrna—Metrodorus—to Polycarp of Smyrna. Ironically, both Metrodorus and Polycarp were later

martyred together in 156 C.E., despite representing rival Christian communities.

The epistles exhibit stylistic similarities with Pauline letters, contain numerous anti-Judaic themes, and include what is likely the earliest argument for observing the Lord's Day on Sunday instead of the Jewish Sabbath—an innovation widely attributed to Marcionite communities.

While the Marcionite Church does not regard these epistles as divinely inspired scripture, they are honored as valuable patristic texts. They offer insight into theology, liturgy, church governance, and the historical development of the Marcionite tradition.

The reconstruction received by the Church draws principally upon the textual research of Roger Parvus and the translations of J. B. Lightfoot. These sources are used critically as aids to recovering the Marcionite form of the letters, not as authorities equal to the canon.

3.25. What is the Dialekticon?

The Dialekticon is an ecclesiastical book of the Church, consisting of Marcionite dialogues and disputations. Dialogue and disputation were ancient forms of Christian literature, used for instruction, controversy, catechesis, and the orderly expression of theology. The Church does not receive the Dialekticon as canonical Scripture or as Deuterocanon, but as an ecclesiastical book useful for teaching doctrine, defending the faith, and showing how Marcionite theology answers error.

At present, the Church has reconstructed one such dialogue: the Dialogue of Megethius Against Hermogenes Concerning Matter, set in 185 C.E. This dialogue presents Megethius as the Marcionite teacher and Hermogenes as the opposing disputant concerning matter, evil, creation, and the origin of the visible world-order. As is common in ancient Christian dialogues, the Church does not require that the disputation happened literally in the exact form presented here, nor does the Church claim that every speech records a stenographic historical exchange. The dialogue form is a teaching instrument: it sets opposing doctrines side by side, tests them by reason and faith, and instructs the Church through ordered disputation.

Hermogenes is used as the opposing disputant because he was a fitting historical and theological interlocutor. He was a near contemporary of several known Marcionite teachers and advanced a doctrine concerning matter that ancient heresiologists themselves compared and contrasted with

Marcionite doctrine. Hermogenes taught that matter was uncreated and eternal, whereas the Church confesses that matter is created, morally neutral, and subordinate to God. By the time of the later Dialogue of Adamantius, however, Hermogenes and his school were no longer a living or prominent stream of controversy. For this reason, the older Hermogenean dispute over matter appears to have been displaced, confused, or reapplied to other heretical opponents, especially Valentinians. The Dialekticon restores Hermogenes as the more natural disputant for this controversy.

The reconstruction also helps explain the confusion among heresiologists concerning Marcionite belief about matter. Some witnesses speak as though Marcionites held a distinct principle of matter, while others do not describe Marcionite doctrine in that way. The Dialogue of Megethius clarifies the distinction. The Church does not teach eternal matter, evil matter, or matter as a rival god. Rather, it teaches that matter is created and morally neutral, while the present visible world-order is fashioned mediately by lower powers and is subject to corruption, bondage, and death. This distinction could easily be misunderstood or distorted by hostile witnesses who treated every separation between God the Father, matter, and the lower world-order as though it were a doctrine of co-eternal principles.

The reconstruction follows two principal lines of recovery. First, the Church receives the theory of J. Rendel Harris that a section preserved in Methodius' On Free Will originally belonged to the opening of a Marcionite treatise or disputation. Second, the Church adds Stephan Huller's theory that the fragments attributed to Maximus concerning matter were originally connected with Megethius. The names themselves support the possibility of confusion or substitution: Megethius and Maximus are semantically related, both bearing the sense of greatness, one in Greek form and the other in Latin form. Later witnesses after Eusebius, namely Jerome and Epiphanius, attribute Maximus to an otherwise obscure bishop of Jerusalem; the Church judges that this may reflect a later process by which originally Marcionite material was disguised, displaced, or reattributed.

Both streams of material eventually appear to have entered the Dialogue of Adamantius, though in altered, shortened, rearranged, and reattributed form. The Philocalia is also important, as Huller notes, because it helps connect part of the Maximus material with the later Adamantius tradition. The Church

therefore restores the Methodius material, following Harris' theory, and the Maximus/Megethius material, following Huller's theory, arranging both into one flowing dialogue on matter and evil.

The English form of the Dialogue of Megethius is therefore not a translation from one complete surviving manuscript. It is an ecclesiastical reconstruction and translation, rendered in the scriptural style of the Testamentum, from the surviving ancient witnesses and parallels. The Methodius portion is drawn from the material preserved in Methodius' On Free Will. The Maximus portion is drawn chiefly from the fragments concerning matter and the origin of evil preserved by Eusebius, especially in the Praeparatio Evangelica, together with the related notices and parallels by which this material was later connected to the Adamantius tradition and the Philocalia. Public-domain English renderings of these ancient materials were consulted where useful. The Church then restored, harmonized, and arranged the material into a single flowing disputation, recast it into KJV/Jacobean English, and applied the chapter-and-verse structure for liturgical, catechetical, and ecclesiastical use.

The Church judges that later Catholic editors and interpolators did not wish Marcionites to appear reasonable, philosophically careful, or theologically detailed in their arguments concerning matter. Therefore, in later forms of the material, the Marcionite side was made to appear heretical or confused, while the original position of Megethius was transferred to an allegedly orthodox speaker. The Dialekticon restores this material to its proper Marcionite setting.

The basic argument of Megethius is that matter is not eternal, uncreated, or co-equal with God. If matter is compound, it must depend upon simpler principles and therefore cannot be without beginning. If matter is made a second uncreated principle beside God, then God is no longer confessed as supreme over all. If matter is placed within God, then disorder and evil are placed within God. If God is placed within matter, then God is contained and circumscribed by matter. Therefore the doctrine of co-eternal matter fails.

Megethius also teaches that evil is not a substance. Evil is not matter itself, nor is matter wicked by nature. Evil belongs to disorder, corruption, bondage, passion, misuse, false rule, and sinful action. Thus the Church rejects both the Hermogenean error that matter is

eternal and the Manichaean error that matter is evil. Matter is created and morally neutral; God the Father gives being from nothing through the Logos; the lower powers fashion the visible world-order from created matter; and the corruption of this world-order does not make God the Father the author of evil.

For this reason, the Dialekticon is valuable to the Church. It strengthens the doctrine of created matter, guards against dualism, explains evil without making God its author, and teaches the faithful to distinguish matter, the visible world, the world-order, and the kingdom of God.

Because the Dialekticon is an ecclesiastical reconstruction, it is read as a teaching book of the Church and not as canonical Scripture, not as Deuterocanon, not as a verbatim transcript, and not as a translation of one complete surviving manuscript.

See also: Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"; Question 9.05, "Does the Church believe matter is eternal?"; Question 9.06, "Does the Church believe in creation out of nothing?"; Question 9.07, "Why does the Church reject the doctrine of co-eternal matter?"; Question 9.08, "Is evil a substance?"; Question 9.10, "What is deferred demiurgy?"

3.26. What is the Litourgicon?

Litourgicon comes from the Greek leitourgía ("public worship" or "liturgy") joined to the book-title ending -ikon, whose κ (kappa) becomes c in Latin, yielding -icon and signifying "the liturgical book" or "service book."

The Litourgicon is the liturgical service book of the Marcionite Church. It gathers the ordered forms by which the Church celebrates the Holy Mysteries, administers the Holy Rites, and conducts its common life of prayer. It contains the Liturgy of Holy Baptism, the Liturgy of Holy Chrismation, and the Divine Liturgy, thereby providing the liturgical forms for all three Holy Mysteries. The Divine Liturgy also incorporates Holy Footwashing, Holy Veiling, the Holy Lovefeast, the Holy Kiss, and the Holy Sign. Together, these orders contain all three Holy Mysteries and five of the nine Holy Rites.

No complete order of the ancient Marcionite Eucharist has survived. The present Divine Liturgy therefore does not claim to reproduce word for word the rite celebrated by Marcion or by every congregation of the ancient Church. It is a reconstruction intended to provide a simple and basic Pauline liturgy in keeping with the earliest surviving pre-Nicene forms of Christian worship. Its ancient

elements have been selected, arranged, and adapted according to the Evangelicon, Apostolicon, Psalmicon, the Church's discipline concerning the Holy Mysteries and Holy Rites, and the theology of the Marcionite Church.

The Divine Liturgy is intentionally foundational rather than maximal. It supplies the regular order for the proclamation of the Gospel and Apostle, psalmody, homily, intercession, confession of faith, Holy Communion, thanksgiving, dismissal, and the Holy Lovefeast. It may be celebrated in a church, chapel, or private home wherever a celebrant and at least two communicants are gathered.

Because it is a basic form and model, the Divine Liturgy may be built upon. Appropriate psalms, hymns, prayers, intercessions, readings, and ceremonial actions may be added according to the season, feast, needs of the congregation, or local custom, provided that they remain consistent with the canon, the ecclesiastical books, the Church's teaching concerning the Holy Mysteries, Holy Rites, and liturgical worship, and the orderly and reverent character of Christian worship. Nothing should be added merely for ornament, novelty, or imitation of another tradition.

The reconstruction preserves characteristic Marcionite practices including westward prayer, the Eucharistic fast, ritual washing and footwashing, the mixed chalice, open communion for fully initiated Christians, the bowing of the head at the name of Jesus, and the Holy Lovefeast as a Holy Rite of charity.

3.27. What is the significance of the -icon suffix?

The books gathered within the modern Testamentum use a family of titles that end in -icon. This suffix carries a clear linguistic and historical logic that binds the complete Church codex together. The choice to Latinise the original Greek -ikon also suits the fact that we are writing in English and therefore already employ the Latin alphabet.

In Greek, -ικόν (-ikon) is the neuter singular of an adjective that can stand on its own as a noun, "the book pertaining to…" Thus τὸ Εὐαγγελικόν (Evangelikon), "the Gospel book," and τὸ Ἀποστολικόν (Apostolikon), literally "the Apostle book" (the collected letters of the Apostle Paul), provided early Christians with a ready template. When such titles passed into Latin manuscripts, the hard κ became c, turning -ikon into -icon. Because the modern complete collection bears the Latin title Testamentum, retaining the Latinised spelling for each constituent book is both historically faithful and visually cohesive.

Several of our titles—Evangelicon, Apostolicon,
Litourgicon, and Homileticon—are already well attested in scholarly, heresiological, and liturgical literature. The remaining names are modern but strictly grammatical coinages, chosen not only for symmetry but to flag their distinctively Marcionite content:

Antilegicon, "the book of disputed writings," rooted in the patristic term antilegomena / antilegomenon ("works spoken against"), gathers letters whose authority was historically contested.

Psalmicon designates "the psalm book," arranging those hymns read in Marcionite worship.

Synaxicon, literally "the book which brings together the epistles," borrows the form of a traditional Synaxarion—typically a summary of martyrs' and saints' lives—but here it gathers only Marcion's seven epistles composed before his own martyrdom, highlighting his witness rather than presenting a general hagiography.

Dialekticon designates "the dialogue or disputation book," gathering reconstructed dialogues and disputations useful for instruction, controversy, and the orderly expression of theology.

Adopting unique titles where precedent is lacking is more than a stylistic flourish: it marks the distinct Marcionite theological, liturgical, historical, and ecclesiastical composition of the modern Testamentum while maintaining the uniform -icon ending that identifies each constituent book as part of one ordered corpus. In this way, the collection remains stylistically coherent, linguistically transparent, and unmistakably our own.

3.28. Does the Church recognize agrapha?

By agrapha we mean dominical sayings that circulate outside Scripture as independent, extra-scriptural authorities—and we do not recognize that category as binding.

The closest case people often raise is "Be ye approved money-changers." But in our tradition this is not treated as a free-floating, non-scriptural saying. Apelles explicitly appeals to it as something Christ "said in the gospel." Epiphanius preserves Apelles' claim in exactly that form: "he said in the gospel, 'Become approved money-changers'" (Greek: γίνεσθε δόκιμοι τραπεζῖται).

In other words, what later writers and collectors handled as an "agraphon" is better explained as a textual dislocation: during the long process of editing, copying, and re-forming the Evangelicon, a line that had circulated as Gospel text could

become detached from its original context and then circulate independently—thus appearing "agraphal" after the fact.

"Be ye approved money-changers, rejecting some things, but holding fast that which is good."

Evangelicon 4:48

LESSON 4: TEXTUAL QUESTIONS

This lesson concerns the transmission, reconstruction, translation, and interpretation of Marcionite scripture and its ancient witnesses.

4.01. What is Marcionite priority?

Much of what is known about Marcion and his theological work comes to us through the writings of his detractors. Notably, every major critique of Marcion's teachings was written posthumously—after his death, when he could no longer defend himself or refute the accusations leveled against him. Among his most vocal opponents was the early ancient Catholic Church Father Tertullian, who alleged that Marcion had "mutilated" the Gospel of Luke, selectively removing passages that did not align with his beliefs. However, modern scholarship increasingly supports the theory of Marcionite Priority—the view that Marcion's Evangelicon is the earlier text, and that what we now know as the Gospel of Luke is a later, expanded version edited to reflect emerging Catholic theology.

Some scholars suggest that this editorial transformation was undertaken by Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, around 169 C.E. According to this view, Theophilus reworked and altered the original Evangelicon, adding new material and removing other material, and retroactively named the result the Gospel of Luke.

Crucially, there is no surviving documentary evidence of a pre-Marcionite Gospel of Luke or pre-Marcionite Pauline Epistles. This strongly suggests that Marcion's canon was in use in Rome before 144 C.E., and that the manuscripts he employed predate the oldest known Pauline manuscripts, such as the Egyptian papyri dating to around 200 C.E. Thus, the Pauline texts in Marcion's original Testamentum are likely closer to the original apostolic writings than the later, edited versions adopted by the emerging Catholic Church.

Moreover, the direction of textual change supports Marcionite Priority. Catholic redaction concentrated on the Pauline epistles, where concise letters were expanded and interpolated to align with emerging doctrine. By contrast, in the Evangelicon, editors altered wording, removed passages, and redistributed verses to manufacture the fourfold Gospel.

The structure and content of Marcion's texts suggest not a Catholic abridgment, but rather earlier, more primitive versions that were subsequently reshaped to conform to Catholic orthodoxy.

4.02. Who wrote the Evangelicon?

In the Marcionite Church, the Gospel is received as the work of the Apostle Paul, written and proclaimed by him as a message given directly by the risen Christ through revelation, not as a tradition derived from men. Paul states this plainly: "the gospel which was preached of me is not after man … but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11–12). He further ties that commission to the risen Son's disclosure within him: "To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen" (Galatians 1:16).

Accordingly, Paul treats the Gospel as a received deposit that he then transmits authoritatively to the churches: "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you" (I Corinthians 11:23). Likewise, "I declare unto you the gospel … For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received" (I Corinthians 15:1–3), immediately setting forth the Gospel's substance—Christ's death, burial, and rising again (I Corinthians 15:3–4).

Paul also designates this revealed proclamation as "my gospel" in the sense of stewardship and entrusted jurisdiction, warning that rival "gospels" are perversions: "Which is not another …" (Galatians 1:7). He even describes the final judgment as proceeding "according to my gospel" (Paul's Epistle to the Romans 2:7).

This Pauline authorship claim is also explicitly voiced in the Dialogue of Adamantius. When Adamantius asks from whom scripture confirms there is only one Gospel, the Marcionite spokesman answers, "Christ." When pressed about who wrote of the crucifixion and resurrection, he replies, "The Apostle Paul imparted this … He himself wrote the Gospel." In that exchange, the speaker does not quote the phrase "by the revelation of Jesus Christ," but he does ground the one Gospel in Christ and then assign its writing and impartation to Paul—precisely the point Paul makes directly in Galatians.

Claims that Marcion "wrote" the Gospel, or "edited" it into existence, confuse preservation with authorship. Marcion was not the author of the Gospel, nor was he its inventive redactor. His role was custodial and missionary: he transcribed what he had received, translated it into Latin for wider proclamation, disseminated it through evangelistic missions, and

circulated it together with Paul's epistles in a single codex—preserving the Gospel alongside the Pauline letters received in the Apostolicon.

4.03. Did Apelles use a distinct Gospel text?

Writers within a century of Apelles do not name a separate "Gospel of Apelles." When Tertullian addresses Apelles, he points back to his case against Marcion and "his own favourite gospel," which is consistent with Apelles continuing to rely on the Evangelicon used in Marcionite circles.

Pseudo-Tertullian reports that Apelles "uses one only apostle" (that is, the Apostolicon) and drew on private readings he called "Manifestations" from the prophetess Philomena. These Manifestations were prophetic notes, not a narrative life of Jesus. The first explicit notice that names an Evangelium Apellis appears only with Jerome in the late fourth century, in his preface to Matthew, where he lists it among apocrypha. Later compilers echo him, but modern scholars treat the notice as a mistake, likely a muddled reference to the Manifestations or a cataloguer's way of tagging the Evangelicon as used among Apelleans.

In short, Apelles did not compose a new gospel. He continued to preach from Marcion's Evangelicon, and references to an "Apellean gospel" likely arise from confusion over Philomena's Manifestations or over verses within the Evangelicon.

4.04. Do the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum use a Western text-type?

The Evangelicon and Apostolicon cannot be classified simply as a Western text-type in the strict technical sense.

In New Testament textual criticism, "Western," "Alexandrian," "Byzantine," and (more debatably) "Caesarean" are manuscript-based groupings. The Evangelicon is not preserved as a continuous manuscript tradition that can be classified the way a codex or versional family can. What we possess is a reconstruction derived chiefly from patristic witnesses, so it is methodologically imprecise to label it a "Western text-type" as though it were a manuscript.

That said, the Evangelicon can show occasional agreements with readings later characteristic of the so-called Western stream (especially Old Latin-related readings, and certain shorter Lukan forms sometimes discussed as "Western non-interpolations"). Those overlaps are one reason some scholars have described the Evangelicon's underlying text as "Western" in tendency. The difficulty is consistency: the Evangelicon does not behave

"Western" across the board, and it does not exhibit the broader Western habit of expansive paraphrase as a stable pattern.

A further reason the Evangelicon can appear "Western" is the mediation of the polemical witnesses themselves. Writers such as Tertullian were operating in a Latin milieu and likely compared Marcion's Gospel against the Gospel text available to them in their own ecclesial setting, which would have had a Western-style Latin complexion. In other words, part of the "Western feel" may arise not from the Evangelicon alone, but from the textual baseline and phrasing habits of the critic doing the comparison, as well as the inevitable distortions introduced when Greek is reported, paraphrased, or rebutted in Latin.

It is also possible that Western connections were strengthened through early Latin transmission. Some have proposed that Marcion (or Marcionite circles) were early movers in rendering Gospel materials into Latin, and that such translations could have influenced later Latin forms. Whether or not that stronger claim is accepted, it remains true that the Western tradition is heavily mediated through Latin witnesses, so any early Latin pathway—Marcionite or otherwise—can create points of contact that make the Evangelicon look "Western-adjacent" when filtered through later comparison.

Compared to the other text-types, the Evangelicon is least like the Byzantine text, which is typically characterized by later smoothing, harmonization, and expansion. The Evangelicon often lacks later accretions and does not exhibit the fully developed Byzantine editorial profile. It can sometimes resemble the Alexandrian tendency toward shorter, less harmonized forms, though it does not consistently reproduce Alexandrian readings either. As for the "Caesarean" category, many textual critics treat it as unstable or overly mixed even for manuscript classification; it is therefore especially unhelpful to label a reconstructed text like the Evangelicon "Caesarean," even if individual readings occasionally resemble those sometimes placed in that orbit.

A related issue is the so-called "Western non-interpolations." This term is used for a small cluster of passages—especially in Luke—where Western witnesses (most notably Codex Bezae and some Old Latin forms) preserve a shorter text that lacks material found in the majority tradition. Some textual critics have argued that these shorter readings are "non-interpolations," meaning they may reflect an earlier form of the Gospel before later scribes expanded it;

others argue the Western tradition simply omitted or abbreviated. The Evangelicon enters this discussion because, in a few of the classic Lukan loci (often cited in Luke 22 and Luke 24), reconstructions of Marcion's Gospel are sometimes closer to the shorter form. Even where that is true, it should be handled with caution: the Evangelicon is reconstructed rather than manuscript-attested, and some "Western" coloration may reflect the Latin baseline of polemical witnesses such as Tertullian. The most defensible claim is therefore limited—Western non-interpolations can illuminate why certain Evangelicon readings appear early or non-Byzantine, but they do not by themselves establish a Western text-type classification or decide originality in every disputed passage.

So the best answer is: the Evangelicon is not formally a Western text-type, but it can show Western/Old Latin points of contact and can look more Western when viewed through Latin polemical witnesses such as Tertullian. Overall, it is better described as an early, pre-Byzantine Lukan-like text-form with mixed affinities, rather than a clean member of any one later-defined text family.

Finally same caution applies to the Apostolicon. "Western," "Alexandrian," and "Byzantine" are primarily shorthand for manuscript relationships, but the Apostolicon is likewise reconstructed from patristic reporting rather than preserved as a continuous Marcionite manuscript line. Moreover, the Pauline letters do not track the Gospel text-types in a one-to-one manner; their transmission history is different, and "Western" traits in Paul are often mediated through Latin witnesses and the polemical baselines of the critics themselves. Accordingly, it is more accurate to say that the Apostolicon sometimes exhibits early, non-Byzantine affinities in particular readings, while resisting any clean, universal classification as a single later-defined text family.

4.05. What are the Marcionite prologues?

The Prologues to the Pauline Epistles—brief introductory statements akin to those found in modern Bible study guides—are not part of the biblical text itself, but have traditionally been so named because they are widely believed to have originated within Marcionite Christian circles. These prologues appear in several manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate, most notably in the Codex Fuldensis.

Contemporary scholarship generally acknowledges a Marcionite origin for these

prologues, attributing their presence in the Latin tradition to the activity of Marcion or Marcionite Christian teachers in Rome during the second century, who are believed to have translated the Greek epistles of Paul into Latin for use in their communities.

In contrast, several early Latin codices preserve Anti-Marcionite Prologues to the Gospels, which appear to have been composed as direct responses to Marcionite teachings and to assert a rival interpretive framework within the emerging Catholic tradition.

4.06. How were the Marcionite prologues reconstructed?

We reconstructed the Marcionite prologues by collating the surviving Latin witnesses of the prologue tradition and then producing a maximal composite that preserves the fullest, most concrete form of each notice. Multiple versions of the Marcionite prologues exist in Latin: some are longer and some shorter; some name couriers and others omit them; some specify a city of composition while others give only a region (or remain silent); and some explicitly note imprisonment while others do not.

Because these prologues are paratexts rather than Scripture, we did not treat any single wording as inviolable. Instead, we adopted a more liberal reconstructive method: we combined the distinct Marcionite variants into a single expanded form that includes, wherever attested, the elements most useful for historical reconstruction—namely (1) the courier who carried the epistle, (2) any named secretary or writing agent, (3) the city (or at least region) of composition, and (4) whether the Apostle wrote in prison or while at liberty.

Our aim was not merely stylistic completeness, but historical clarity. By preserving the prologues' concrete logistical data—messengers, writing locations, and imprisonment notices—we can more accurately recover the chronological and geographical sequence implied by the prologue tradition, and thus outline the Apostle's missionary journeys as the Marcionite corpus itself frames them.

Where variants conflicted on couriers or places of composition, we followed two governing principles. First, we generally preferred the more specific witness (a named city rather than a vague region, a named courier rather than an omission). Second, when specificity competed, we preferred the more constrained or "arrested" version—i.e., the one that explicitly situates Paul under custody or in prison—because these details supply a firmer chronological

anchor and typically reflect a more developed provenance tradition rather than a later abbreviation.

Two epistles require special note because their prologues necessarily involve a more explicit scholarly reconstruction. The prologue to Laodiceans was assembled by synthesizing the different Laodiceans variants that survive in the Marcionite Latin stream, while also drawing on an otherwise unused prologue tradition transmitted for Ephesians, given the long-standing identification of Laodiceans with the catholic "Ephesians" letter and the way the manuscript tradition appears to have cross-pollinated their paratexts. Likewise, the prologue to Alexandrians was recreated by adapting a Latin prologue to Hebrews, reflecting the widespread identification of "Alexandrians" with the epistle known in the catholic canon as Hebrews and the fact that the most substantial surviving prologue material for that letter is preserved under the Hebrews title.

4.07. When did the Apostle Paul write his epistles?

The list below provides not only the estimated dates for the composition of the Apostle Paul's epistles, but also the city of composition and the courier by whom each letter was carried (where the tradition specifies one), as preserved in the Marcionite Latin prologues:

Galatians — ~49 C.E. (written from Ephesus; sent by Titus)

First Corinthians — ~50 C.E. (written from Ephesus; sent by Timothy)

Second Corinthians — ~51 C.E. (written from Troas; sent by Titus)

Romans — ~52 C.E. (written from Corinth; courier not specified)

First Thessalonians — ~53 C.E. (written from Athens; sent by Tychicus and Onesimus)

Second Thessalonians — ~54 C.E. (written from Athens; sent by Tychicus and Onesimus)

Laodiceans (commonly identified as Ephesians) — ~55 C.E. (the first epistle written while imprisoned; written from Ephesus; sent by Tychicus the deacon)

Colossians — ~56 C.E. (written from Ephesus, in prison; sent by Tychicus and Onesimus)

Philemon —~ 60 C.E. (written from Rome, in prison; sent by Onesimus)

Philippians — ~61 C.E. (written from Rome, in prison; sent by Epaphroditus)

Titus — ~62 C.E. (written from Nicopolis, after he had left prison; courier not specified)

First Timothy — ~63 C.E. (written from Laodicea; sent by Tychicus)

Second Timothy — ~64 C.E. (written from Rome, during his second imprisonment; courier not specified)

Alexandrians (commonly identified as Hebrews) — ~66 C.E. (written by Tertius in Italy; sent by Phoebe)

4.08. What is the Proto-Evangelicon?

The Proto-Evangelicon is the Marcionite Church's title for the short Marcionite prologue to the Evangelicon preserved under the ancient designation Pro-Evangelium. In this usage, proto- means "before" or "prefatory to" the Gospel; it does not denote a hypothetical earlier edition of the Evangelicon.

An anonymous Syriac anti-Marcionite Exposition of the Gospel, formerly attributed to Ephrem, preserves the following sentence at the beginning of what it calls Marcion's Pro-Evangelium:

"O wonder beyond wonders, rapture, power, and amazement is it, that one can say nothing at all about the gospel, nor even conceive of it, nor compare it with anything."

The Syriac witness was edited and translated by Joseph Schäfers. Adolf von Harnack regarded the sentence as the probable opening of the Antitheses and described it as the only substantial sentence preserved word for word from Marcion. Joseph B. Tyson likewise notes both the designation "Proevangelium" and its probable connection with the Antitheses. Sebastian Moll emphasizes that the identification remains uncertain and argues that the name may instead refer to Marcion's Gospel itself or to an otherwise unknown work. (Anonymous Syriac Exposition of the Gospel 1; Adolf von Harnack, Marcion: The Gospel of the Alien God, 59; Joseph B. Tyson, "Anti-Judaism in Marcion and His Opponents," 198–199; Sebastian Moll, At the Left Hand of Christ, 169–170.)

Tertullian says that the Antitheses served as a "dowry" supporting Marcion's Gospel and elsewhere speaks expressly of "prefixing" the Antitheses to it (Tertullian, Against Marcion 4.1; 4.6). This supports treating the surviving encomium as an introductory frame placed before the Evangelicon, even though its precise ancient literary classification cannot now be established with certainty.

The Marcionite Church therefore receives the Proto-Evangelicon as a paratext rather than as a verse or chapter of the Evangelicon itself. It is treated in the same manner as the Marcionite prologues to the Pauline Epistles: an ancient introductory witness that frames a canonical book but is not itself canonical Scripture. It may accordingly be placed immediately before the

Evangelicon while remaining subordinate to the Gospel text that it introduces.

4.09. What are the anti-Marcionite prologues?

The influence and widespread circulation of the Marcionite Evangelicon, or Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, was so profound in the early centuries that the emerging Catholic Church felt compelled to preface its own gospel texts with explicitly anti-Marcionite introductions.

These introductory texts, known as the anti-Marcionite prologues, appear at the beginning of the Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John. It remains uncertain whether a similar prologue was ever composed for the Gospel of Matthew. The term anti-Marcionite prologues was coined by biblical scholar Donatien de Bruyne, who argued that their purpose was to counter the theological influence of Marcion and to reinforce the authority of the Catholic gospel tradition. Of these texts, only the prologue to the Gospel of John contains direct reference to Marcion of Sinope by name.

Although originally composed in Greek, the surviving prologues to Mark and John are preserved only in Latin manuscripts. The earliest complete manuscript containing all three extant prologues dates to the eighth century, though scholars believe they were initially circulated independently. Their composition is generally dated between the second and fourth centuries.

These prologues served to affirm the traditional church views on gospel authorship and to bolster ecclesiastical claims of continuity and orthodoxy in contrast to the Marcionite canon. Their existence highlights both the enduring popularity of Marcion's gospel and the broader effort by Catholic authorities to define—and defend—their emerging scriptural canon.

4.10. What is interpolation?

The Marcionite versions of the Pauline Epistles were markedly shorter than the expanded forms found in later canonical Bibles. However, a growing body of scholarly research has concluded that the Marcionite texts more accurately reflect the original writings of the Apostle Paul. In contrast, the conventional versions appear to have undergone substantial expansion through interpolations—additions that introduced later theological constructs foreign to Paul's original message.

Among the doctrines absent in the Marcionite corpus but present in the versions preserved in the later Catholic canon are teachings concerning misogyny, legalism, the doctrine of original sin,

deterministic predestination (which implies divine causation of sin), anti-Semitic rhetoric, eternal damnation, and polemics against pagan cultures. Marcion, by contrast, preached a message of salvation through faith alone, unburdened by the legalistic framework later embraced by the emerging Catholic Church.

In the Roman literary world, it was not uncommon for scribes or disciples to write in the name of revered figures from the past. While such practices would today be classified as forgery, they were then regarded as acts of humility and homage. This cultural reverence for tradition often led writers to frame new theological or philosophical ideas under the authority of an established name to lend credibility and acceptance.

One particular method used to alter texts was interpolation—the insertion of new material into an existing work. A scribe might pause while copying a manuscript, insert a passage of their own composition, and then resume transcription. This method was not unusual and is observable in the surviving works of authors such as Josephus and Homer. Yet, despite its prevalence in antiquity, the possibility that such interpolations also affected the biblical text is rarely confronted with due seriousness.

These insertions reflect a broader process of literary accretion—where texts, once considered complete, are gradually expanded over time. This process not only altered individual passages but also contributed to the growth of the scriptural canon itself. As more writings were appended to the original corpus, the theological character of the tradition shifted accordingly.

As a general rule, the most authentic and original form of any ancient text subject to accretion is likely to be the shortest version. In this light, the brevity and theological clarity of the Marcionite epistles may point not to deficiency, but to fidelity to the apostolic source.

4.11. By what principles are the Church's texts reconstructed and translated?

The original manuscripts of the Marcionite canon have not survived physically into modern times. Following the consolidation of Catholic political power in the fourth century, Marcionite scriptures were subjected to suppression, confiscation, and destruction, and no manuscript of the original Marcionite canon is known to have survived intact. Nevertheless, the canon of the Marcionite Church can be meaningfully reconstructed through extensive references found

within patristic sources. Several early Christian authors—particularly Tertullian in his five-volume Adversus Marcionem, Epiphanius in the Panarion, and Adamantius in De recta in Deum fide—quoted extensively from Marcionite scriptures and provided detailed comparisons between the original Testamentum and texts that later became part of the Catholic canon. These authors frequently engaged in theological critiques of Marcionite texts, thereby preserving significant portions of them within their criticisms.

The resulting text is neither a paraphrase nor a devotional rewriting. It is a disciplined textual reconstruction founded upon patristic quotations and descriptions, early Latin and Syriac evidence, ancient manuscript traditions, and modern critical scholarship.

By analyzing these quotations and descriptions, scholars have successfully reconstructed substantial segments of Marcionite scriptures. While not every verse is directly attested, ancient critics focused their attention primarily on passages that diverged theologically from texts later adopted by the emerging Catholic Church. In instances where no direct commentary or quotations exist, it is reasonable to assume that the Marcionite version closely matched, or was identical to, the corresponding conventional text. Thus, standard biblical texts often serve as reliable proxies for these uncontroversial passages.

This reconstruction adheres to a maximalist methodology, particularly for the Evangelicon and Apostolicon, favoring a comprehensive approach aimed at restoring the complete form and narrative continuity of the original Marcionite canon. The absence of mention by patristic authors such as Tertullian or Epiphanius is not considered evidence of nonexistence. Conversely, speculative interpolations are excluded unless supported by primary evidence or indicated by manuscript variations suggesting textual evolution. Hypothetical interpolations are accepted only when grounded in verifiable ancient textual divergences. Unsupported conjectures are entirely excluded.

In reconstructing the Evangelicon, attested verses absent from the Gospel of Luke are included only if they lack a parallel in Luke. The full pericope containing such verses is ordinarily preserved for narrative coherence and inserted at the most contextually suitable location. Where an attested non-Lukan verse has only a partial parallel in Luke, however, the shortest possible canonical pericope containing that

verse is employed, or, where appropriate, the verse itself is included in isolation. When a verse noted by the ancient sources as having been excised from the Evangelicon is not present in Luke, either directly or in the form of a parallel, the verse itself is excluded, but the remainder of the pericope is retained. If an attested non-Lukan textual variant exists, only that attested variant verse is included rather than the entire pericope. In every case, the fullest available form of each included pericope or verse is preferred, drawing upon attested canonical textual traditions, provided the expanded form is itself textually attested and exceeds the Lukan form in narrative or theological content. This reflects the conviction that the Evangelicon preserves remnants of a broader Gospel tradition, while ensuring that every addition remains grounded in extant textual evidence rather than editorial reconstruction.

The Pericope Adulterae, traditionally located in John 7:53–8:11, is included in this reconstruction as a conjecturally restored Lucan tradition because a small group of medieval Greek manuscripts belonging to Family 13 place it after Luke 21:38 and because the narrative exhibits notable Lukan affinities.

Material attested from the Gospel of Apelles—the gospel supposedly used by Marcion's disciple—is incorporated where relevant, reflecting the belief that Apelles continued to preserve and transmit the Evangelicon.

The identification of gospel parallels and pericopes primarily follows the scholarly works of Kurt Aland (Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum, 1985) and Lorin L. Cranford (A Study Manual of the New Testament, 1981).

For textual assimilations and harmonizations the Church adopts the Lukan form as its default text wherever no compelling evidence indicates otherwise. We recognize, however, that the Evangelicon is not merely an abbreviated form of Luke, but a witness to a broader evangelical textual tradition. Accordingly, we accept an assimilated reading only when it is independently attested in the ancient textual tradition, is fuller than the corresponding Lukan form, and contributes meaningful theological, narrative, or literary content. We do not adopt harmonizations that merely substitute synonymous words, alter word order, or otherwise produce stylistic changes without adding substantive meaning. This approach seeks to preserve the richest recoverable form of the Evangelicon while remaining anchored in the earliest available evidence.

In contrast, the reconstruction of the Antilegicon—those Pauline writings whose authenticity was historically disputed—adopts a minimalist approach. Only verses directly cited, alluded to, or referenced by early patristic writers, particularly those before the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E., are included. Clement of Alexandria serves as the primary source, supplemented by catenae and references from other second-century authors. Exceptions are limited to verses cited in the Marcionite prologues or essential for textual continuity.

The English translation of the canonical and deuterocanonical scriptural books within the Testamentum is based on the King James Version, chosen for its formal equivalence, literary elegance, and compatibility with prior reconstruction efforts. Where the surviving evidence supports distinct Marcionite language, the reconstruction preserves that language on its own terms rather than silently conforming it to later Catholic terminology.

The Evangelicon version employed in this project draws from James Hamlyn Hill's 1891 edition, itself based on August Hahn's 1823 reconstruction. Further revisions have incorporated the scholarship of Daniel Jon Mahar, David Inglis, Stephan Huller, Gustav Volkmar (Das Evangelium Marcions, 1852), Theodor Zahn (Geschichte des n.t. Kanons, 1888), Charles B. Waite (History of the Christian Religion to the Year C.E. 200, 1881), and André Wautier (Comment Naquit Le Christianisme, 1980).

Reconstructions of the Pauline Epistles in the Apostolicon principally rely on David Inglis's scholarship, integrating material from W. C. van Manen (Marcions Brief van Paulus aan de Galatiers, 1887), Adolf von Harnack (History of Dogma, 1894), Paul-Louis Couchoud (La Première Edition de St Paul, 1928), and Jason BeDuhn (The First New Testament: Marcion's Scriptural Canon, 2013).

The Antilegicon texts predominantly draw from Maegan C.M. Gilliland's work (Text of the Pauline Epistles and Hebrews in Clement of Alexandria, 2016), with supplementary reference to Philip Schaff (Ante-Nicene Fathers, 1885).

The Psalmicon was reconstructed through comparison of the surviving Syriac, Greek, and Coptic witnesses with the translations and textual work of J. Rendel Harris and Alphonse Mingana, James H. Charlesworth, and Samuel Zinner's translation, edited by Mark M. Mattison. The collection is understood as a body of hymns gathered by Marcion from different Pauline churches, including Greek-

and Syriac-speaking communities, and ordered for common liturgical use rather than composed entirely by Marcion himself. Where multiple renderings were textually defensible, the edition followed the principles stated in Question 3.22, including preservation of Marcionite distinctions concerning the heavenly and visible orders, immortality as a gift received through Christ, spiritual resurrection, and mediated fashioning of the physical world.

Liturgical rites compiled in the Litourgicon, including the Divine Liturgy, are based on translations by James Donaldson (Ante-Nicene Fathers, 1886).

The Homileticon is based principally upon J. B. Lightfoot's text and translation in The Apostolic Fathers, revised against the surviving Greek and the translations of Roberts–Donaldson, H. G. Meecham, and Kirsopp Lake according to the principles stated in Question 3.23. The translation of the Synaxicon likewise relies principally upon Lightfoot's Apostolic Fathers (1891).

The Synaxicon preserves the Marcionite letters traditionally transmitted under the names of Ignatius and the communities to which they were addressed. The reconstruction of these epistles, together with the identification and location of Johannine parallels included in the Evangelicon, draws from Roger Parvus' research (A New Look at the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch and Other Apellean Writings, 2008).

Overall, this reconstruction embodies a commitment to historical accuracy, theological coherence, and textual integrity, utilizing surviving historical evidence to restore the Marcionite canon in its most authentic and defensible form.

4.12. How does the Church use heresiological witnesses?

The Church does not fully trust the heresiologists. We consider the reconstructed scriptures of the Marcionite tradition to be the highest-priority evidence for Marcion's actual theology and the faith of the early Marcionite Church.

This also explains why their stock accusations—such as dualism, docetism, and the like—do not stand. Furthermore, the heresiologists were incentivized to claim that Marcion edited and abridged the Gospel of Luke. This bias led them to concentrate on Lukan-like verses when commenting on the Evangelicon and to ignore or explain away passages that were not Lukan in style or content. Had they acknowledged that the Evangelicon contained substantial non-Lukan material, they would have

implicitly conceded that it was earlier, larger, and the fountainhead of the later canonical gospels. Even so, they occasionally slipped and admitted, directly or indirectly, that non-Lukan material stood within the Evangelicon, and those admissions further erode their credibility.

4.13. Which English translation does the Church use for the scriptural books of the Testamentum?

The Marcionite Church affirms the use of English translations that adhere to the principle of formal equivalence. For the reconstruction of the canonical and deuterocanonical scriptural books within the Testamentum, the King James Version was selected as the translation base.

A formal equivalence, or literal, translation seeks to remain as faithful as possible to the original language of the text, minimizing interpretive influence from the translator. This approach emphasizes a word-for-word rendering rather than a thought-for-thought paraphrase. The underlying rationale is that the more literal the translation, the less risk there is of distorting or altering the intended meaning of the original message.

4.14. How does the Church interpret scripture?

The Marcionite Church affirms literal interpretation as essential to rightly dividing the word of truth—but only when applied to authentic, uncorrupted Scripture. We make a necessary distinction between the false scriptures of the Hebrew Bible and the true Gospel preserved in the canonical books of the Testamentum, the Evangelicon and Apostolicon.

We read the Hebrew Bible literally, not to redeem it, but to expose it. Its plain sense reveals a god of wrath, vengeance, and cruelty—a false deity unworthy of worship. When Yahweh commands slaughter, establishes slavery, or delights in sacrifice, we do not spiritualize those actions into metaphors. We take them at face value. And for that reason, we reject him.

Literal reading, rightly applied, reveals the moral failure of the False Covenant.

Many literalists argue that Scripture must be read at face value because it is divinely inspired. But this claim collapses when the source is false. The Hebrew Bible was not inspired by the Father of Jesus Christ, and no theory of inspiration can rescue it. Literalism, in this case, serves not to sanctify but to expose.

We agree with literalists who argue that the plain sense of the text preserves its clarity and protects against allegorical abuse. Allegory has long been used to twist evil into virtue, making genocide into

spiritual warfare and blood sacrifice into hidden mercy. These distortions corrupted the early Church, which sought to preserve the Hebrew Bible by reading it through the lens of allegory rather than truth.

What is less understood, however, is that Marcion—recognized as a prominent Christian leader in Antioch before his break with Rome—helped establish the exegetical clarity that later came to define the Antiochene school. Long before Diodore of Tarsus or Theodore of Mopsuestia, Marcion had already applied the Antiochene principle of grammatical-historical interpretation—but with greater consistency. He did not merely reject allegory; he rejected the false scriptures that allegory was invented to defend.

The Marcionite Church affirms the true principle of rightly dividing the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15). But we understand that this division is not merely about proper interpretation—it is about discerning between the word of the Father and the word of a false god. The gospel must not only be read plainly; it must be read purely. And that requires separating it from all that is foreign, false, and forged.

The Protestant Reformers, while reviving literal interpretation, were ultimately misguided. They rejected Catholic allegory but applied literalism indiscriminately—even to interpolated, corrupted, and spurious texts in what they called the "New Testament." They read the Hebrew Bible literally and still tried to claim it as Christian scripture. Worse still, they failed to cleanse their canon of forged epistles, redactions, and anti-Pauline material.

Literalism is not a safeguard if the foundation is flawed. It serves truth only when the text itself is pure—free from scribal adulteration, theological interpolation, and false attribution. That is why the Marcionite Church recognizes only the Evangelicon and Apostolicon as the canon: the unadulterated Gospel of Christ and the apostolic writings of Paul, rightly divided and preserved in their integrity within the modern Testamentum.

We read the Hebrew Bible literally—to expose the false god who authored it.

We read the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum literally—to receive the Gospel of the true God, revealed by Christ.

We do not blend the two, and we do not put new wine into old bottles.

As the Lord declares in the Evangelicon, "No man putteth new wine into old bottles."

We heed that word. The gospel of the Father cannot be poured into the skins of the Law.

Finally, Adamantius preserves this same literalist instinct on the lips of the Marcionites themselves: when Adamantius attempts to blunt the antitheses by retreating into figurative explanation, the Marcionite refuses the escape-route—"Which here is a simile? … Nothing is altogether a simile," and again, "It is not a simile"—insisting that the text must be taken as it stands, in its plain and moral sense, rather than dissolved into allegory. And when Adamantius tries to import proof from outside the Evangelicon, the Marcionite objects, "Such is not written in our Gospel," thereby binding doctrine to the written words themselves rather than to later harmonizations or interpretive inventions.

See also: Question 2.03, "What is the hierarchy of authority in the Marcionite Church?"; Question 3.15, "Is the Hebrew Bible part of the Christian canon?"

4.15. Why do Jesus and Paul refer to the Hebrew Bible?

Jesus frequently taught through parables, allegories, and metaphors—methods intended to reveal spiritual truths in symbolic or illustrative form. In the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum, references to the Hebrew Bible are didactic in nature. A citation or allusion does not imply that the referenced text is divinely inspired; rather, it may simply serve as a familiar point of contact for the audience.

One can acknowledge that a text contains ethical or moral insights without attributing divine authority to it. In the rare instances where Jesus or the Apostle Paul reference the Hebrew scriptures, it is typically either to correct or challenge their claims, or to acknowledge limited truths within them.

Adamantius preserves this very Marcionite distinction in debate: when the judge presses why the Apostle Paul "makes use of the words of the prophets," the Marcionite Megethius refuses to treat the Apostle Paul's quotations as a grant of divine precedence, answering instead that Paul is speaking of "the law of Moses and not of God." In other words, the Marcionite claim is that Paul cites the Hebrew scriptures as a disputational instrument—turning their familiar language against them for the sake of correction—rather than as an appeal to a higher, binding authority.

Given that Jesus primarily preached to Jewish and Samaritan audiences, and that Paul addressed both Jews and Gentile proselytes familiar with Jewish teachings, the Hebrew Bible served as a useful rhetorical and pedagogical tool. By invoking scriptures familiar to his listeners, Jesus and Paul were able to

communicate profound theological truths in a manner that resonated with their audience—without affirming the divine inspiration of the Hebrew texts themselves.

See also: Question 3.15, "Is the Hebrew Bible part of the Christian canon?"; Question 4.14, "How does the Church interpret scripture?"

4.16. Which translations of the Hebrew scriptures were historically used for refutations?

Marcionite polemic did not treat the Hebrew Bible as a neutral or self-authenticating text; when it was cited, it was typically handled as evidence against the false covenant, and therefore it mattered which form of the text was being quoted. In practice, that meant privileging Greek witnesses that were more exact, more transparent, and less smoothed-over than popularized renderings—because a tighter translation leaves less room to "explain away" contradictions or morally indefensible portrayals of the false deity.

A key ancient testimony on this point concerns Theodotion. Ancient writers report that Theodotion was a Marcionite Christian proselyte from Ephesus, who learned Hebrew and produced a comprehensive Hebrew-to-Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. In the Marcionite understanding, this mattered because they did not trust the prevailing text-traditions—Hebrew, Aramaic, or earlier Greek witnesses—to be handled honestly by their custodians; they believed those traditions were frequently interpreted through allegory and ecclesiastical gloss in ways that softened the plain sense of the text and hid its moral and doctrinal problems.

What made Theodotion's version different, in that context, was its method: it aimed to track the Hebrew more closely and render it more literally into Greek, with fewer interpretive liberties. This enabled a more thorough literalist reading of the texts, bringing forward the plain claims, commands, and depictions of the false deity without the usual softening layers of harmonization or allegory. For that reason, it is widely believed that such more accurate and transparent translations were well-suited—indeed, likely preferred—for possibly Marcion's Antitheses and more likely for Apelles' Syllogisms.

Unfortunately, no complete, independent copy of this translation (in the form Marcionites would have circulated and controlled) survives to us today. In practical terms, the loss of those more severe, literal textual witnesses made it easier for later centuries to

drift toward a more Judaized Christianity—one increasingly reconciled to the Hebrew Bible by interpretive smoothing, harmonization, and appeals to the very textual conventions Marcionites rejected.

It is also worth noting that an earlier Greek translation current is likewise associated with Marcion's home region: Aquila of Sinope produced a famously literal Greek rendering of the Hebrew Scriptures. Given Aquila's provenance and the timeline, Marcion likely knew of, had access to, or at least benefited from the same Pontic translation milieu—and such a translation would have served the same basic Marcionite purpose: a strict, literal presentation of the false covenant's text that could be set plainly against the Gospel in antithetical argument.

LESSON 5: SCRIPTURAL QUESTIONS

This lesson examines persons, events, and teachings within the Evangelicon and Apostolicon that are important to Marcionite interpretation.

5.01. How long did Jesus' ministry last?

The earthly ministry of Jesus Christ is understood to have lasted a little more than four years, reckoned from His descent and manifestation to the Passion.

The Evangelicon contains at least three distinct references to separate Passover observances, namely His first journey to Jerusalem, His second pilgrimage there, and finally the occasion of the Last Supper. Additionally, the Feast of Levi the Publican is widely interpreted as a fourth reference to a Passover meal, further substantiating the chronological framework.

By correlating these Passover markers with the foundational dates held in Marcionite reckoning, namely Christ's descent into Capernaum on either December 31, 28 C.E. or January 1, 29 C.E., and His crucifixion on April 3, 33 C.E., we arrive at a ministry duration of four years, three months, and three days (from December 31) or four years, three months, and two days (from January 1).

For reference, the reconstructed Jerusalem Passover dates (Nisan 14, Passover eve and preparation, in the Julian calendar) for these years are as follows:

29 C.E.: April 18

30 C.E.: April 7

31 C.E.: March 27

32 C.E.: April 13

33 C.E.: April 3

5.02. What is the role of John the Baptist in the Evangelicon?

John the Baptist is the first true prophet of Christ's testament and

the divinely sent forerunner who prepares, bears witness, and then yields the stage to Christ. He is not a prophet of the false deity known as Yahweh, and his witness is completely independent of Judaic prophecies, rites, rituals, and scriptures. The Evangelicon presents him as the earthly witness to the heavenly descent: “There was a man sent from God… He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light” (Evangelicon 1:6–8); “John bare witness of him” (Evangelicon 1:15); and “Jesus descended out of heaven into the Galilean city of Capernaum” (Evangelicon 2:3). In the Evangelicon there is no nativity, no genealogy, and no baptism of Jesus by John; John and Jesus are not related, they never meet, and John is not connected with Elias. Jesus appears and acts on the Father’s authority, set forth in a triad of witness: His self-testimony—“I am the light of the world” (Evangelicon 2:23)—His works and mission from the Father—“Though I bear record of myself… I and the Father that sent me” (Evangelicon 2:25; Evangelicon 2:27–29)—and His appeal to a “greater witness than that of John,” namely His works and the Father’s testimony (Evangelicon 7:34–35). John’s role is honored—“a burning and a shining light”—yet Christ adds, “I receive not testimony from man” (Evangelicon 7:31–33; Evangelicon 7:32).

John’s ministry is real and weighty. He calls to repentance—“O generation of vipers… the axe is laid unto the root… every tree… is hewn down, and cast into the fire” (Evangelicon 2:81–84)—and the response divides the public: “All the people, and the publicans, justified God… but the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God” (Evangelicon 5:29–30). The transition from forerunner to Christ occurs through practice rather than a baptismal rite: fasting gives way to the Bridegroom’s presence and new wine (Evangelicon 3:53–57); the disciples ask, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples,” and Jesus gives the prayer (Evangelicon 10:1); the narrative marks a turning point “until John,” after which the kingdom is proclaimed (Evangelicon 14:17). As John’s course ends, he sends two disciples from prison—“Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?”—and Jesus answers with deeds—“the blind see… the dead are raised… to the poor have good tidings been announced”—then adds the beatitude and publicly calls John “more than a prophet,” while declaring “he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he” (Evangelicon 5:19–23; Evangelicon 5:22; Evangelicon 5:26; Evangelicon 5:28). In the

Evangelicon this prison inquiry functions as the baptism-replacement: John always knows whom he is witnessing, may be tested under imprisonment, but sends his disciples to Christ and concludes his work (Evangelicon 5:19–28).

Christ then leverages John's public credibility to expose hostile leaders: "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" When they refuse, He replies, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things," warning that the stone will break or grind those who stumble (Evangelicon 18:4–9). John's witness is finally sealed in martyrdom: the court's perplexity —"John have I beheaded: but who is this?"—precedes the beheading narrative (Evangelicon 8:7–9; Evangelicon 8:10–22). In sum, the Evangelicon's presentation is clear and consistent: John is the Father's prophet, not Yahweh's; he is not tied to Hebrew prophecies or Second Temple frameworks; he does not inaugurate Jesus' ministry by baptism, nor share kinship, nor meet Him. He prepares, bears witness to the heavenly descent, hands his disciples to Christ, and departs; Jesus stands vindicated by His works and the Father's testimony (Evangelicon 7:31–35; Evangelicon 2:3).

5.03. How does the Church regard the original Twelve Apostles?

We regard the original Twelve Apostles as true but flawed and imperfect apostles of Christ. They were witnesses to his earthly ministry and were called by him, but they did not receive the fullness of the gospel in the same way Paul did. For this reason, we hold to the doctrine of Pauline primacy: the teaching that Paul, not the Twelve, was the chief apostle of the true Gospel because he received the fullness of his revelation directly from Christ. Paul alone among the apostles was endowed with the gift of prophecy.

The Twelve were therefore secondary to Paul. They believed in Christ, but they often failed to understand the true meaning of his descent, his grace, and his deliverance from the law and the powers of this world. Peter especially stands as the clearest example of this failure. Though he confessed Christ, he later wavered, compromised, and was rebuked by Paul because he "walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel" (Galatians 2:14). His weakness helped preserve the influence of James, Jerusalem, and the law, which contributed to the later corruption of the Church and the obscuring of the true gospel.

This does not mean that the Twelve were unbelievers or enemies of Christ. Rather, they were incomplete and unstable witnesses. They knew Christ according to his appearance among men, but Paul knew him according to the higher revelation of the gospel. The failure of the Twelve, especially Peter's failure to stand firmly against Judaizing corruption, allowed the Church to drift away from the gospel of grace and toward the false covenant, ritualism, and legalism.

John and Andrew stand out as partial exceptions. According to Marcionite tradition, John was the teacher of Marcion in Ephesus and received the Pauline epistles, showing that he came to recognize the superior authority of Paul's revelation. Andrew likewise is remembered as having ordained Marcion's father as bishop of Sinope, who was himself a disciple of Paul. These traditions show that at least some among the apostolic generation moved closer to the truth during their earthly lives than Peter did, turning in a more Pauline direction and separating themselves from the Jerusalem-centered influence of James and Peter.

Thus, we honor the Twelve as early Christian witnesses, but we do not place them above Paul. They were called by Christ, but Paul was chosen to reveal the fullness of Christ's gospel. The Twelve saw the beginning; Paul received the mystery. The Twelve bore witness imperfectly; Paul preached the gospel in its purity.

5.04. Who were the Seventy Disciples?

The Seventy Disciples were early emissaries appointed and commissioned by Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Evangelicon. They were sent out in pairs on specific missions to prepare the way for His arrival in various cities and regions.

"And after these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself was about to come."

Evangelicon 9:1

Below is the Marcionite Church's compilation of the Seventy. Our method is twofold: it is scripturally grounded in the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon; and it cross-checks those names against traditional rosters transmitted through history, retaining customary honorifics and traditional locales where appropriate.

Also, unlike many inherited rosters, this list includes women named in Scripture and received in the tradition. It also notes that among the Seventy is Philologus of Sinope, recognized as the father of Marcion.

1. Achaicus of Corinth
2. Alexander of Ephesus
3. Amplias of Odessos
4. Andronicus of Pannonia
5. Apelles of Heraclea
6. Apollos of Alexandria
7. Apphia of Colossae
8. Aquila of Heraclea
9. Archippus of Laodicea
10. Aristarchus of Thessalonica
11. Aristobulus of Britannia
12. Artemas of Lystra
13. Asyncritus of Hyrcania
14. Barnabas of Milan
15. Carpus of Berea
16. Clement of Rome
17. Cleopas of Jerusalem
18. Crescens of Galatia
19. Crispus of Corinth
20. Demas of Thessalonica
21. Epaenetus of Carthage
22. Epaphras of Colosse
23. Epaphroditus of Andriaca
24. Erastus of Corinth
25. Eubulus of Rome
26. Fortunatus of Corinth
27. Gaius of Ephesus
28. Hermas of Philippopolis
29. Hermes of Dalmatia
30. Hermogenes of Asia
31. Herodion of Patras
32. James the Just
33. Jason of Thessalonica
34. Joseph of Arimathaea
35. Junia of Rome
36. Justus of Rome
37. Linus of Rome
38. Lucius of Cyrene
39. Luke the Physician
40. Marcus the Evangelist
41. Narcissus of Athens
42. Nereus of Rome
43. Nicodemus of Jerusalem
44. Nymphas of Laodicea
45. Olympas the Martyr
46. Onesimus of Ephesus
47. Onesiphorus of Colophon
48. Patrobas of Puteoli
49. Phebe of Cenchrea
50. Philemon of Gaza
51. Philologus of Sinope
52. Phlegon of Marathon
53. Phygellus of Ephesus
54. Priscilla of Rome
55. Pudens the Senator
56. Quartus of Berytus
57. Rufus of Thebes
58. Silvanus of Thessalonica
59. Sosipater of Iconium
60. Sosthenes of Corinth

61. Stachys of Byzantium

62. Stephanas of Achaia

63. Tertius of Iconium

64. Timotheus of Ephesus

65. Titus of Crete

66. Trophimus the Martyr

67. Tychicus of Caesarea

68. Urbane of Macedonia

69. Zacchaeus of Caesarea

70. Zenas the Lawyer

This list reflects the wide geographical spread of the early Church and the diversity of leaders commissioned by Christ to carry His message to the nations.

5.05. Who replaced Judas Iscariot as an Apostle?

The Marcionite Church affirms that the Apostle Paul was personally appointed by the risen Jesus Christ and thereby elevated to apostolic authority, taking the place of Judas Iscariot as one of the true Twelve Apostles.

5.06. Who were the "false apostles" that Paul mentions?

The Apostle Paul employed the term "false apostles" primarily in reference to the Judaizers—a faction of Jewish Christians who insisted that adherence to the Mosaic Law, including circumcision, was necessary for salvation and for the acceptance of Gentile converts into the Christian faith.

Paul was unwavering in his opposition to the Judaizers, regarding their teachings as a fundamental distortion of the Gospel of Christ. He saw them not only as a threat to the universality of the Christian message but as disseminators of grave doctrinal error. Throughout his epistles—as preserved in the Apostolicon within the Testamentum—Paul offers a sustained and vigorous refutation of the Judaizing position, denouncing both their theology and their divisive influence within the early Church.

Paul's commitment to the Gospel of grace led him even to publicly confront the Apostle Peter, whom he accused of compromising with the Judaizers. Paul rebuked Peter for showing outward support for their practices in certain contexts while privately distancing himself from their doctrines. This confrontation underscores Paul's belief that the Gospel must be free from the legalism and ritualism of the Mosaic covenant.

All evidence within Paul's writings suggests a complete rejection of any attempt to integrate Judaism into Christianity. His stance was later echoed by figures such as Barnabas, Basilides, Cerdo, and Marcion, as well as by various Gnostic Christians—all of whom

opposed the inclusion of the Hebrew Bible within the Christian canon.

As Paul warned:

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."

II Corinthians 11:13

5.07. Why did Jesus rename Simon to Peter?

From the standpoint of the Marcionite Church, Jesus did not rename Simon "Peter" in order to make him the infallible foundation of the Church or to authorize the later claims of the emerging Catholic Church. Rather, the new name is a prophetic and judgment-laden sign. "Peter" means "rock," and in a Marcionite reading that rock symbolizes hardness, heaviness, and an earthbound attachment to the old and false order—specifically to the Law of the Hebrew Bible and to Yahweh's false covenant.

As "Simon," he is the one who hears: a disciple who has truly responded to Christ, but who stands between one old and false covenant and one new and true covenant. By calling him "Peter," Jesus identifies what Simon will become: the leading figure of a Judaizing community that tries to merge the new and true covenant of the one true God, God the Father, with Yahweh's false covenant. Peter thus becomes the "rock" on which a mixed religion is built—a religion that confuses the one true God with a false deity and binds the gospel back under the Law.

In contrast, the Marcionite Church looks to the Apostle Paul, not Peter, as the true foundational witness. Paul proclaims a gospel that is free from the entanglements of the Hebrew Bible and from the claims of Yahweh's false covenant. Jesus' renaming of Simon to Peter is therefore read as a warning sign in the gospel itself: a revelation that Peter's name and legacy would underwrite an institutional, Judaizing church, while the true Church of God the Father would be grounded instead in the heavenly revelation entrusted to Paul.

5.08. Who are the Four Evangelists?

Marcionites do not use the phrase "the four evangelists" to mean four competing Gospel authors (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). Our canon has one Gospel, and when the Apostle Paul speaks of "evangelists," he is saying in the Pauline sense of authorized Gospel preachers and emissaries, not in later attributions of separate written gospels. This is precisely how the Marcionite spokesman Megethius argues in the Dialogues of Adamantius: when pressed on "four evangelists," he rejects the category

and insists that Paul's language about "evangelists" refers instead to Paul's own co-labourers, naming Silvanus and Timothy as the relevant referents.

Following that Pauline usage, the Marcionite tradition identifies the "four evangelists" as the four principal Pauline emissaries who carried, guarded, and proclaimed the Gospel alongside the Apostle in the churches: Silvanus, Timothy, Epaphroditus, and Tychicus. This is not a claim about four authored "Gospels," but a claim about four evangelical ministers, the living messengers through whom the one Gospel was announced and the Pauline mission was sustained.

The later Paulicians, whom we treat as Neo-Marcionites in many respects, preserve this exact Pauline definition in the medieval record. Byzantine abjuration formulae explicitly accuse the Paulicians of "accepting" Paul's disciples as types of the four evangelists, and in the same sequence they name the Pauline figures associated with that evangelic role, including Silvanus, Timothy, Epaphroditus, and Tychicus.

5.09. What is the significance of Naaman the Syrian in the Evangelicon?

"And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian."

Evangelicon 3:12

In this passage, Jesus allegorically references the story of Naaman the Syrian as a teaching tool—illustrating that divine grace and healing are not reserved for the religiously privileged or ethnically chosen, but extended even to those whom society deems unworthy. Naaman, a Gentile and the commander of the Aramean army that had warred against Israel, would have been viewed by the Jewish audience as both an outsider and an enemy. Yet, in the story, it is he—not an Israelite—who receives healing from leprosy.

Jesus invokes this account not to affirm the historical accuracy or divine inspiration of the Hebrew Bible, but to challenge the exclusivist mindset of His audience. His point was clear: God's mercy is not bound by ethnic or religious boundaries.

At the time, Galilean Jews were living under Roman occupation, and the mere suggestion that God might favor Gentiles—especially over Jews—was met with intense hostility. This hostility is precisely what unfolds in Nazareth following Jesus' remarks:

"And they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,
And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was

built, that they might cast him down headlong.
But he passing through the midst of them went his way to Capernaum."

Evangelicon 3:13–15

Jesus' reference to the story of Naaman was not an endorsement of the Hebrew Bible's historical reliability. Rather, it was a rhetorical use of a familiar narrative to convey a deeper spiritual truth—that God's grace often reaches those least expected, and that divine favor is not determined by ancestry or religious observance.

5.10. Why does the Evangelicon open with the Hymn to the Word?

In Against Heresies, Irenaeus quotes what is commonly known today as the Hymn to the Word in the Gospel of John and uses it to criticize the alleged theological positions of Marcion and his followers. He quotes the line, "He was in this world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not," and then says that, according to Marcion, "neither was the world made by Him; nor did He come to His own things, but to those of another" (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.12.2).

Scholar Adolf von Harnack suggested that this may show only that Marcion knew the Hymn, not necessarily that he included it in his canon. But the argument can be reversed. If Irenaeus is using the Hymn in a polemic against Marcionite Christians, that may indicate that Marcionites knew, used, or at least had to answer that text. Heresiologists often argued from texts their opponents were known to respect, because those texts had force inside the controversy.

A similar pattern appears in Tertullian. His repeated method of argumentation follows the formula: "The Gospel says X, but Marcion teaches Y," or "Paul says X, yet the Marcionites assert Y." These rhetorical constructions are not always grounded in accurate representation of Marcionite scripture. They are polemical contrasts meant to make Marcionite theology appear absurd. Irenaeus' use of the Hymn should be read in the same way: not as proof that the Hymn is anti-Marcionite, but as evidence that the Hymn was useful in the second-century controversy over Christ, creation, matter, and the world.

The Hymn is also not hostile to Marcionite theology when read carefully. It begins not with the Hebrew creation myth, but with the eternal Word: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is not a six-day creation narrative. It is a cosmic and spiritual confession of Christ's preexistence, His relation to God

the Father, and His authority over the heavenly and invisible powers.

The line "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made" does not require the belief that God the Father directly fashioned the visible world in the manner described in Genesis. Rather, it accords with the Apostle's teaching that all things "that are in heaven and invisible," including "thrones," "dominions," "principalities," and "powers," stand beneath Christ and consist in Him. The Hymn speaks of ultimate dependence upon the Word; it does not deny mediated formation, subordinate powers, or deferred demiurgy.

This is exactly the logic of deferred demiurgy. Deferred demiurgy means that creation is mediated, not direct. The visible, fleshly, and corruptible world was not fashioned immediately by God the Father in the fullness of His perfection, but mediately through lower principalities, powers, thrones, dominions, and angelic rulers beneath Him. The Hymn defends this hierarchy by placing Christ before all things and above all things, while leaving room for the lower order through which the visible world was fashioned.

The Hymn also supports the Marcionite view of matter. Matter itself, called by the Apostle "the elements of this world," is not identical with the world-order fashioned from it. Matter is the underlying substance of the visible order. Hippolytus says that Marcion and Cerdo taught "three principles of the universe," namely "good, just, and matter," and that the lower world-fashioning power "made all things out of subjacent matter" (Hippolytus, Refutation of All Heresies 7.17).

Read in that light, the Hymn's statement that nothing made exists apart from the Word means that matter itself is not an independent eternal rival to God. Matter ultimately depends upon God the Father through the Word. But the visible, fleshly, corruptible world-order was fashioned from matter by the 'god of this world.' The bronze comes from God; the statue is shaped by the lower craftsman.

This also explains the Hymn's language of light and darkness. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." The lower world is real, but darkened. Matter is real, but not evil in itself. The visible order is real, but fleshly, corruptible, and unable to know the Father apart from Christ. When Jesus descends, the Light enters the lower realm and exposes its ignorance.

Irenaeus tried to use the Hymn against Marcionite Christianity because he assumed that "the world was made by Him" must mean that

the visible world was directly fashioned by the same God proclaimed in the Hebrew Bible. But that is precisely the assumption Marcionite Christians reject. The Hymn does not say that Genesis is Christian scripture. It does not say that the Father fashioned the world in six days. It does not say that the lower principalities and powers played no role in the visible order. It says that all things ultimately depend upon the Word, and that the world did not know Him.

That last point is deeply Marcionite. "The world knew Him not" is the language of alienation. Christ descends into a world that does not recognize Him because He comes from above it. He is not merely a prophet of the lower order, nor a servant of the 'god of this world.' He is the Light from the Father, entering the darkness of the visible realm to reveal the unknown God and rescue souls from bondage.

For these reasons, the reconstructed Evangelicon as preserved by the Marcionite Church opens with the Hymn as its first chapter. It is a declaration of Christ's cosmic preexistence, His supremacy over the heavenly and invisible powers, His role as the source through whom all things ultimately consist, and His descent as Light into the darkness of the lower world.

See also: Question 9.11, "How does the Church understand Logos-mediated creation in relation to Marcionite deferred demiurgy?"; Question 9.16, "What form of the creation hymn does the Church receive from Colossians?"

It is also noteworthy that Tatian's Diatessaron, an early gospel harmony, likewise begins with the Hymn. Modern scholarship notes that Tatian begins with John 1:1-5, placing the whole gospel narrative under the theological framework of "In the beginning was the Word." This gives additional historical support to opening a gospel text with the Hymn rather than with a birth narrative or genealogy.

Thus, the Hymn does not undermine Marcionite Christianity. It strengthens it. It teaches that Christ is from above, that He precedes the visible world, that all things ultimately depend upon Him, that darkness did not comprehend Him, and that His descent into the world was the revelation of the Father whom the world did not know.

LESSON 6: HISTORICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson explains the Church's Chronicon and surveys the history, leaders, schools, martyrs, clergy, and later continuities of the Marcionite Christian tradition.

6.01. What is the distinction between Pauline and Petrine Christianity?

Controversy took root in Christianity from its earliest days. When the Apostle Paul converted, he did not seek to reform Judaism but to leave it behind entirely. Paul believed that he was led by the indwelling Spirit of Christ and that his gospel was not of human origin, but received through divine revelation from the risen Jesus. For Paul, Christ was the universal Savior of all humanity—Jew and Gentile alike.

Throughout the first and second centuries, a profound theological divide emerged between the followers of Paul and those aligned with the Apostle Peter. Pauline Christians held that the Gospel was a new, universal covenant—open to all, independent of Jewish law. In contrast, Petrine Christians insisted that Christianity was an extension of Judaism, requiring adherence to Jewish customs such as circumcision. In their eyes, uncircumcised converts were illegitimate Christians, and bishops who had not come from the Jewish priesthood were not valid clergy. Some extreme groups, such as the Ebionites, took this position even further, demanding strict adherence to Mosaic law and denying the legitimacy of Paul's apostleship altogether.

This division manifested in ecclesiastical conflicts as well. Catholic canon law, said to be derived from apostolic tradition, later insisted that there could be only one bishop per city. Yet in Antioch—one of the earliest Christian centers—records show the simultaneous presence of two bishops: Evodius, ordained by Peter, and Ignatius, ordained by Paul. This dual succession reflects the deeper theological and institutional schism between the Pauline and Petrine streams of early Christianity.

A similar tension appears in the early episcopate of Rome. Ancient sources suggest that Linus, recognized as the first bishop of Rome, was ordained by Paul. He was followed by Anacletus (or Cletus), also said to have been appointed by Paul. Clement, traditionally regarded as ordained by Peter, is listed as third or even fourth in some episcopal lists. However, in other traditions—especially those emphasizing Petrine primacy—Clement is portrayed as the first legitimate bishop, as if the Roman church only attained apostolic legitimacy once a successor of Peter took office. Jerome himself remarked on this ambiguity, writing: "Clement… the fourth bishop of Rome after Peter, if indeed the second was Linus and the third Anacletus, although most of the Latins think that Clement

was second after the apostle [Peter]."

This complex and overlapping episcopal lineage strongly suggests that, as in Antioch, Rome too had parallel jurisdictions—one tracing its authority to Paul, the other to Peter. This dual succession helps explain the difficulty historians face in establishing clear dates and order for the earliest bishops of Rome. Rather than a single, unified episcopacy, early Christianity appears to have operated under competing apostolic lineages, shaped by profound theological differences that persisted well into the development of the institutional Church.

6.02. Who was Philologus of Sinope?

Philologus of Sinope, the father of Marcion of Sinope, is traditionally identified as one of the Seventy Disciples of Jesus Christ. According to early ecclesiastical tradition, he was consecrated as Bishop of Sinope by the Apostle Andrew.

Philologus is also believed to have been a companion of the Apostle Paul during his time in Rome. He is mentioned in the Epistle to the Alexandrians, where the text reads:

"Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them."

Alexandrians 1:15

This passage attests to Philologus's early role in the formation of the Pauline communities and his close association with apostolic leadership.

The Menologion of Emperor Basil II (tenth century) is the earliest surviving source to name Bishop Philologus as Marcion's father. Byzantine compilers had no motive to glorify a condemned heretic by inventing such a pedigree—the Apostle Andrew ordained Philologus, he was counted among Christ's Seventy disciples, and he was a devoted companion of the Apostle Paul, who even mentioned him in one of his epistles. Falsely attributing so distinguished a lineage would only have bolstered Marcion's authority; in the absence of any reason to lie, this claim must be accepted as authentic.

6.03. Did Philologus expel Marcion?

The claim that Philologus expelled Marcion—the rumor repeated centuries later by both Tertullian and Epiphanius—can be traced to hostile polemical tradition rather than reliable Marcionite memory.

This natural and orderly succession was later twisted by Catholic polemicists into a tale of scandal. Tertullian, writing in Adversus Marcionem, asserted:

"Marcion, the heretic, was disinherited by his own bishop-father, and cast out of the Church." — Adversus Marcionem 1.1

Epiphanius, writing more than two centuries later in the Panarion, embellished the accusation with a morally charged fabrication:

"When he was young, he seduced a virgin and was excommunicated by his own father, who was a bishop." — Panarion 42.1–3

These claims are entirely unsubstantiated by contemporary evidence and follow a familiar pattern of rhetorical slander employed by heresiologists to discredit theological opponents. According to Marcionite tradition, the truth is far different: Marcion was not a disgraced rebel, but a faithful heir to the Pauline mission, appointed after years of spiritual preparation and apostolic training. The narrative later crafted by Rome was not a record of history, but an act of institutional propaganda, designed to undermine Marcion's legitimacy and obscure his apostolic inheritance.

6.04. Who were the Cerdonians?

The Cerdonians were a proto-Marcionite group founded by Cerdo, a Syrian Christian teacher who came to Rome before Marcion's public ministry there. They were one of the immediate forerunners of the Marcionite Church: Pauline in disposition, sharply anti-Judaizing, and already committed to the distinction between God the Father revealed by Christ and the lower 'god of this world' known through the Law, judgment, and the material order.

Cerdo was excommunicated in 138 C.E., several years before Marcion's own rejection in 144 C.E. Yet Cerdo's response was different from Marcion's. He did not establish a separate church of his own. Instead, he repeatedly sought to regain communion with the Roman church, only to fall back again into the same confession that had first brought him under suspicion. Later heresiologists mocked him for this pattern, portraying him as a man who was continually leaving the church and then reentering it.

The Cerdonians appear to have shared a common scriptural foundation with the later Marcionites, centered on the Gospel and the Pauline epistles, rather than the Hebrew Bible or the later catholic expansion of the canon. Their theology was not yet as fully organized as Marcion's, but it already moved in the same direction: the Gospel of Christ revealed a previously unknown Father, while the world below was ruled by an inferior power marked by ignorance, judgment,

contradiction, and negative demiurgy.

The existence of Cerdo and the Cerdonians also shows that Pauline Christianity had already spread widely and retained real strength before the formal organization of the Marcionite Church. Marcion did not invent this current out of nothing. He inherited, clarified, and organized a living Pauline movement already present in Rome, while Cerdo's Syrian origin suggests that this same Pauline disposition remained strong in Syria as well. The Cerdonians therefore stand as evidence that the Gospel of Paul continued to move through the churches before Marcion gave it institutional form.

At the same time, the Cerdonians seem to have retained some gnosticizing influences. Ancient opponents describe Cerdo's teaching in language that overlaps with wider second-century dualist and anti-cosmic currents. Yet the movement was not simply "gnostic" in the later technical sense. Its heart was Pauline: salvation came through the revelation of Christ, apart from the Law, apart from the world-ruling powers, and apart from the righteousness claimed by the lower order.

When Marcion arrived in Rome, the Cerdonians welcomed him as the figure capable of giving their movement clearer doctrine, discipline, liturgy, canon, and public form. They supported Marcion's candidacy for the bishopric of Rome and saw in him the rightful organizer of the apostolic Gospel against the Judaizing party. After Marcion's rejection in 144 C.E., the Cerdonian circle did not continue as a lasting rival body. It folded into the Marcionite Church, becoming part of the broader communion that carried Marcion's Evangelicon, Apostolicon, and antithesis between God the Father and the 'god of this world' across the Roman worl

6.05. Did Marcion seek the bishopric of Rome?

Around the year 142 C.E., following the death of Hyginus, the Church of Rome stood at a defining crossroads. Marcion of Sinope, bishop of Sinope and a devoted follower of the Apostle Paul, presented himself as a candidate for the episcopal office in Rome.

According to Marcionite tradition, the first legitimate bishop of Rome was Linus, ordained by Paul, and succeeded by Anacletus, the second Pauline bishop. The Catholic faction, however, traced its authority through Peter, and claimed Clement—the first Petrine bishop of Rome—as the founder of their episcopal succession. After Anacletus's death, the Pauline line

weakened, and the Petrine succession gained exclusive control, establishing a single episcopal line that would come to dominate the Roman Church. This shift set a precedent of two competing apostolic jurisdictions—Pauline and Petrine—vying for the soul of the Church.

To support his effort, Marcion donated 200,000 sesterces to the Roman Church. His gospel message was radical and clear: the God revealed by Jesus Christ was a God of perfect mercy and goodness, wholly distinct from the false god Yahweh of the Hebrew scriptures—a god of wrath, judgment, and legalism. Alongside him, Valentinus of Egypt also sought influence, promoting a mystical Gnostic worldview. Yet both men were ultimately rejected in favor of Pius (later Pius I), who upheld the Catholic project of merging Jewish scripture with Christian revelation.

Marcion initially remained within the Roman community, leading a growing reformist faction. But on the Ides of July, 144 C.E., Bishop Pius excommunicated him, returned his donation, and expelled him from communion. According to Marcionite tradition, the following day Marcion stood before the Roman clergy and solemnly declared:

"I will divide your Church and cause within her a division, which will last forever."

Two years earlier, in 142 C.E., Marcion had already been ordained bishop of Antioch, succeeding Cornelius, a Petrine-aligned bishop. Upon assuming the post, he resigned his episcopacy in his native Sinope, where he had previously led a small but faithful Pauline community. From Antioch—a city that at the time rivaled Rome in power and prestige—Marcion began organizing a new ecclesiastical order, founded entirely on the gospel of Paul, the Apostolicon, and the Evangelicon. Anatolia, his homeland, quickly became the heartland of Marcionism, where his message of freedom from the law and rejection of Yahweh found a devoted and expanding audience. Many eastern bishops were in closer communion with Antioch than with Rome, aligning themselves with Marcion's gospel of grace.

Like Rome, Antioch had a history of dual apostolic lineage. According to Marcionite understanding, its first Pauline bishop was Ignatius, a disciple of Paul who upheld the primacy of grace. In contrast, Catholic tradition traced its Petrine succession in Antioch back to Evodius, regarded as the first Petrine bishop of Antioch,

allegedly ordained by Peter himself. This legacy of duality set the stage for the schism that followed.

Marcionite tradition holds that, in response to Marcion's rising influence and consolidation of the Pauline faction, the emerging Catholic Church installed Heron II as a parallel Petrine bishop in Antioch shortly after Marcion's excommunication in 144 C.E. Heron II represented the institutional wing rooted in apostolic succession through Peter and theological allegiance to the Hebrew scriptures. Antioch thus became a divided episcopate, with Marcion and Heron II embodying two rival theological visions: one grounded in law and prophetic continuity, the other in grace and the radical freedom of Christ revealed apart from the law.

It was also in Antioch, around 169 C.E., that the Catholic bishop Theophilus began to edit the Evangelicon, reworking and altering Marcion's gospel by adding new material and removing other material so as to align it with the Catholic view of scripture and doctrine. This reworked version would later circulate as the Gospel of Luke, stripped of its original anti-Judaic and Pauline clarity. It marked the beginning of Rome's efforts to co-opt and neutralize Marcion's scriptural legacy.

Following his excommunication, Marcion formally established a separate Church, declared himself Archbishop—a title later twisted by his Catholic opponents who mocked him as the "Archheretic"—and ordained trusted disciples to key episcopal seats across the Christian world. Among the most significant were:

Apelles, ordained bishop of Alexandria, who would later succeed Marcion as Archbishop after his martyrdom.

Lucanus, ordained as the Marcionite bishop of Rome, continued the Pauline witness in the heart of Catholic power.

Onesimus, ordained bishop of Ephesus, a church founded by Paul and long faithful to its Pauline heritage. It was in Ephesus that Marcion had originally served as a disciple of the Apostle John.

Damas, ordained bishop of Magnesia on the Maeander, a city eager to embrace Marcion's gospel over Rome's legalism.

Polybius, ordained as bishop of Tralles, an Anatolian city that openly rejected Petrine ecclesiology.

Metrodorus, ordained bishop of Smyrna, where he led the Marcionite community in open and ongoing rivalry with the Petrine faction headed by Polycarp, one of Marcion's most relentless

adversaries. It was in Smyrna that Marcion had earlier delivered his famed Homily to Diognetus.

These churches—Alexandria, Rome, Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, Philadelphia, and Smyrna—stood at the forefront of Marcion's ecclesiastical rebellion. Each declared its loyalty to the God revealed by Christ alone, rejected the authority of the Hebrew scriptures, and severed communion with the Roman and Petrine hierarchy. In these cities of Anatolia, the gospel of Paul took deep root, as Marcionite bishops took their place beside, or in place of, their Catholic counterparts.

In 154 C.E., Marcion returned to Rome, not to debate, but to face martyrdom. He had been condemned by Roman authorities for fomenting division among the Christian communities of the capital. During this final journey, he encountered his lifelong adversary, Polycarp of Smyrna, who, upon seeing him, famously declared:

"Yea, I know thee as the first-born of Satan."

Unmoved by scorn or condemnation, Marcion was led into the Colosseum, where he was martyred for the gospel he believed had been revealed through Paul alone—a gospel of grace, liberty, and the worship of the true God, wholly distinct from the false deity of the law.

Though the later ancient Catholic Church would enshrine figures like Pius and Polycarp as saints and defenders of orthodoxy, it was Marcion's legacy that forced the early Church to define its canon, its creeds, and its institutional authority. The division he foretold became real—and in many ways, has never been healed.

6.06. How did the Catholic Church alter the teachings of Paul?

The Marcionite Church confesses that the emerging Catholic Church—founded by followers of the Apostle Peter—and the Marcionite Church—established in the tradition of the Apostle Paul—were, from the beginning, divided over the true meaning of the Gospel.

After Marcion's death, Catholic authorities reportedly destroyed the original Pauline texts preserved by the Marcionite Church. In doing so, they ensured that only their redacted versions would survive, allowing them to retroactively claim apostolic authenticity for texts that had been altered to conform to Catholic theology.

The Acts of the Apostles was similarly crafted with the purpose of recasting Paul as a loyal Catholic missionary, harmonizing his

mission with Petrine authority. Scholarly consensus holds that the same author who penned the Gospel of Luke also authored Acts—a narrative shaped more by ecclesiastical politics than historical fact. Indeed, many of the events described in Acts lack any corroborating historical record. As the scholar Hermann Detering observed: "The great majority of historical statements made in Acts about the life and person of the Apostle Paul are legendary in character and thus are to be enjoyed only with great caution." The figure presented in Acts is not the radical Apostle Paul of the original Gospel, but a domesticated "Catholic" version—one created to absorb Paul into a broader ecclesial unity.

Rather than continuing to oppose Paul, as was initially the case, the emerging Catholic Church ultimately co-opted him—constructing a sanitized, orthodox version of the apostle and casting Marcion as a heretic for faithfully preserving Paul's original gospel.

The accusation that Marcion "founded" his own church was a strategic invention of the early Catholic hierarchy. In truth, Marcion did not establish a new religion, but sought to preserve the authentic, Pauline Church rooted in the teachings of the Apostle to the Gentiles. To undermine this claim, Catholic tradition began depicting Paul and Peter as close allies—appearing together in church iconography, often as friends or even brothers in ministry.

This revisionist portrayal was designed to reinforce Catholic authority and gradually eclipse the widespread influence of the Marcionite Church. Through theological appropriation, institutional power, and historical suppression, the emerging Catholic Church eventually gained the upper hand, but only by rewriting the legacy of Paul and marginalizing the church that had most faithfully preserved his message.

6.07. Who were the disciples of Marcion?

Among the known disciples and early successors of Marcion of Sinope were Apelles of Alexandria, Lucanus or Lucianus of Rome, Syneros, Potitus, and Basilicus. These names are preserved chiefly by hostile heresiological writers. Rhodo, whose testimony is quoted by Eusebius, names Apelles, Potitus, Basilicus, and Syneros, and attempts to classify them according to their supposed "principles" or "natures." Pseudo-Tertullian separately names Lucanus as a follower of Marcion. These reports should not be read as proof that Marcion's successors abandoned the Marcionite confession, which always upheld the belief in the one unbegotten god, God the Father.

Rather, their disputes concerned how to describe the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath Him, especially the being called in the Apostolicon ‘god of this world.’

6.08. Who were the notable Marcionite Christian martyrs?

Eusebius of Caesarea records that among the various early Christian sects, the Marcionite Christians produced the greatest number of martyrs. His testimony highlights the widespread devotion and steadfastness of the Marcionite faithful in the face of imperial persecution.

He names two martyrs in particular. The first is Metrodorus, Bishop of Smyrna, who was burned alive alongside Polycarp in 156 C.E., during the wave of Christian persecutions under Emperor Antoninus Pius. Metrodorus is remembered for his unwavering commitment to the Gospel preserved in the original Testamentum.

The second is Asclepius, Bishop of Eleutheropolis, who suffered martyrdom during the Diocletianic Persecution. He was burned alive at Caesarea on January 10, 310 C.E., sharing the pyre with Peter Apselamus, another Christian martyr.

Eusebius also makes mention of an unnamed Marcionite woman—possibly a deaconess—who was executed in the arena of Caesarea around 257 C.E., during the reign of Emperor Valerian. Though her name is lost to history, her witness remains a testament to the courage and endurance of the early Marcionite Church.

6.09. Who was Apelles of Alexandria?

Apelles of Alexandria began his ministry under Marcion’s guidance in Rome and later continued his theological work in Alexandria. Apelles remained active well into the reign of Emperor Commodus, which lasted from 180 to 193 C.E.

Apelles stands out as the most prominent and influential of Marcion’s disciples, and should be regarded as the true theological successor of Marcion. The Apellean school was not a corruption of Marcionism, nor a departure from Marcion’s original doctrine, but a direct continuation of Marcion’s own teaching. Despite the accusations of the heresiologists, Apelles preserved the original Marcionite confession: God the Father, revealed by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by the Apostle Paul. Rhodo identifies Apelles as a Marcionite teacher who confessed one highest God, though Rhodo reports this through the language of hostile controversy. Pseudo-Tertullian likewise calls Apelles “a disciple of Marcion” and

says that he taught one God in the infinite upper regions, together with subordinate powers and angels beneath Him.

Apelles developed his own school of thought while maintaining fidelity to the foundational principles of Marcionite Christianity. The Apelleans did not abandon Marcion's faith or introduce a foreign dualism. Nor did Apelles accept the false accusation that Marcionite Christianity denied the real manifestation of Christ. Against the heresiological charge of docetism, Apelles affirmed that Christ truly appeared and was truly manifested, while still refusing to identify the Savior with the material order governed by the lower powers. He taught, as Marcion did, that there is one supreme God, God the Father. The Apellean distinction concerned the identity and role of the lower power called in the Apostolicon 'god of this world.' The Apelleans understood this lower power as a begotten, subordinate being, identified with Satan, not as a second co-eternal, co-equal god.

Apelles was also the first to advance a distinctly Marcionite theory of the making of the physical world. He attributed the making of the physical world to a lower angelic power, a form of deferred or indirect demiurgy that preserved the transcendence of God the Father while explaining the world's mixture of order and disorder. Pseudo-Tertullian says Apelles taught that the supreme God made many powers and angels, while another angelic power, called Lord, fashioned the world in imitation of a superior world. This lower fashioner of the physical world was not evil in the absolute sense. Like Marcion, Apelles understood the lower power as just, limited, and inferior, not as equal to God the Father.

This point is crucial. Traditional Apelleans did not view the physical world as evil. They viewed it as inferior, mixed, limited, and governed by a lower just power. The fashioner of the physical world could impose law, judgment, and order, but he could not reveal the alien mercy of God the Father. Thus the Apellean position remained Marcionite: one highest God, one saving Christ, one Gospel, and a lower fashioner of the physical world whose justice is surpassed by the grace of the Father.

Apelles was also known for his Syllogisms, a work of argumentative proofs directed against the Hebrew Bible. Pseudo-Tertullian says Apelles wrote books called Syllogisms in which he sought to prove that what Moses wrote about God was false. These were not mere polemics, but a structured program of critique that

pressed opponents on consistency, causality, and divine character, aiming to clear space for the singular Gospel proclaimed by Christ and Paul.

From Alexandria, Apelles engaged currents of philosophical exegesis and employed rigorous logical method. His Syllogisms marshaled contradictions and moral difficulties in the Hebrew Bible to argue that it could not be the pure revelation of God the Father as proclaimed by Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul. Apelles' Alexandrian associations also suggest contact with schools that prized textual criticism and philosophical theology, which helped shape his distinctive combination of biblical argument, moral reasoning, and spare Christ-centered proclamation.

Later reports connect Apelles with the prophetess Philumena, but even there his emphasis remained on a simple rule of faith oriented to God the Father and Jesus Christ. He also expanded the canon to include the Epistle to the Alexandrians and the Pastoral Epistles, I and II Timothy and Titus. Moreover, Apelles did not teach works-based justification, but rather treated good works as the necessary evidence and fruit of genuine faith. Rhodo reports that Apelles taught that those who trusted in the Crucified would be saved, and that such faith would be shown by their continuance in good works.

6.10. Did Apelles preserve Marcion's doctrine?

Apelles taught essentially as Marcion did.

Apelles lived long enough to witness the first heresiological treatises and attacks that proliferated after Marcion's death, and he directly repudiated the two accusations that became the standard calumnies against Marcionite Christians: docetism and dualism. We know this most clearly from his conversation with Rhodo, where Apelles does not "revise" Marcion so much as rebut hostile caricatures of him. And he likely did the same in his own major work, the Syllogisms, a kind of sequel to Marcion's Antitheses, extending the same antithetical critique by systematic argument.

Only later, after Apelles' death, did heresiologists increasingly feel compelled to frame him as a "heretic of Marcion." This was not because Apelles had actually founded a new theology, but because their broader narrative required it: if Apelles remained plainly Marcionite while publicly refuting their stock accusations, then the web of polemical claims they had spun about Marcion would begin to unravel. Recasting Apelles as a deviant offshoot preserved their storyline.

The false heresiological claim that Apelles broke with Marcion because he lusted after a woman belongs to the same genre as the equally false claim that Marcion's own father expelled him for seducing a virgin. Both stories follow a familiar polemical pattern. When heresiologists wished to discredit theological opponents, they often supplied a sexual scandal to explain what was, in reality, a doctrinal conflict. These tales should be read not as sober biography, but as fabricated motifs designed to castigate dissenting teachers and make their theology appear to arise from moral corruption rather than from scriptural conviction.

The more straightforward historical reality is that Apelles is the first clearly "historic" Marcionite figure for whom we have sustained notice, and there are no reliable reports demonstrating that he materially departed from Marcion's theology or from the Marcionite canon. Where later writers insist on differences, their reports are best read as retrospective damage control, not neutral description.

6.11. Did Apelles have any disciples?

Early Christian writers attest that Apelles of Alexandria had at least one prominent later follower, Severus. Epiphanius of Salamis (Panarion 45.1.3–4), Augustine (De Haeresibus 55), and Theodoret of Cyrrhus (Compendium of Heretical Fables 1.25) name Severus as a successor to Apelles and as the leader of the Severians.

Severus should be understood as representing a later development within the broader Apellean stream of Marcionite Christianity. Like Apelles, the Severians preserved the simpler Apellean structure: God the Father, above all; and beneath him the lower power called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." Like the traditional Apelleans, the Severians identified this lower maker of the physical world with Satan, while still refusing to make him a second co-eternal, co-equal god.

The key difference between the traditional Apelleans and the Severians was moral and ascetic. Traditional Apelleans, preserving the original teaching of Marcion and Apelles, understood the lower maker of the physical world as just, limited, and inferior, but not evil in the absolute sense. The Severians sharpened this critique. They treated the lower maker of the physical world not merely as just and inferior, but as evil. This led them toward a more ascetic and world-denying approach to life, and to a stronger rejection of much of the material world. Even so, the Severians remained within a

Marcionite cosmological hierarchy, not a system of dualism, because they did not make Satan equal to God the Father.

The sources also report that Severus and his followers repudiated the Hebrew Bible and its prophetic books. Epiphanius says they "revile the Law and the Prophets" (Panarion 45.1.4), and Augustine notes that they "receive neither the Law nor the Prophets" (De Haeresibus 55). This rejection of the Hebrew Bible's authority ties Severus directly back to Marcion and Apelles, both of whom distinguished the Gospel of Christ from the law, prophets, and scriptures of the lower maker of the physical world. The Severians therefore did not represent a foreign religion, but a stricter ascetic development within the Apellean branch of Marcionite Christianity.

In addition, the sources attest that Philomena the Prophetess was closely associated with Apelles. She originally served as a Marcionite deaconess and, according to Jerome, went to Rome ahead of Marcion to herald his arrival (Epistle 133.4). Apelles confirmed her prophetic gifts, and her revelations were recorded in his now-lost Manifestations (Phanerōseis), which preserved her prophecies and visions.

Philomena's role is important because it shows that the Apellean school was not merely philosophical or argumentative. It included prophecy, ecclesial ministry, and charismatic authority within the Marcionite Church. Apelles' association with Philomena did not represent a departure from Marcion's original teaching, but belonged to the living continuation of Marcionite Christianity: the Gospel, the Apostle, the original Testamentum, and the witness of prophetic revelation ordered beneath God the Father.

According to Marcionite tradition, Philomena was martyred in Rome, and her tomb is identified in the Catacombs of Priscilla, where her remains were discovered on May 24, 1802. Three tiles sealing the tomb read Pax tecum Filumena — "Peace be unto you, Philomena" — from which her name, Filumena, Greek philouménē, meaning "beloved," is rendered in English as Philomena. The two anchors, three arrows, the palm, and the ivy leaf on the tiles were interpreted as symbols of her martyrdom.

We maintain that, after miracles were associated with the tomb and remains, the Roman Catholic Church attributed to her a constructed history unrelated to her true identity. Later, on February 14, 1961, the Roman Catholic Church ordered her name removed from all liturgical calendars, most likely

when it was recognized that she was the Marcionite Philomena.

Writers who mention Apelles' prophetess include Tertullian (De Carne Christi 6; cf. Against Marcion 4.17), Hippolytus (Refutation of All Heresies 7.26), and the Latin Adversus Omnes Haereses 6. Later notices occur in Epiphanius (Panarion 44–45) and Theodoret (Compendium 1.25). These testimonies preserve the memory of Philomena as a prophetic figure within the Apellean continuation of Marcionite Christianity, and of Severus as the founder of a later Severian development within that same broader stream.

6.12. Who was Lucanus of Rome?

Lucanus, also called Lucanus of Rome, appears as another important disciple of Marcion. Pseudo-Tertullian says that after Marcion arose "a certain Lucanus," whom he calls a follower and disciple of Marcion. Lucanus became associated with a later Marcionite school that distinguished more sharply among the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God the Father.

Lucanus' teachings included the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, a form of reincarnation, and the immateriality and immortality of the soul. More importantly for the history of Marcionite schools, the Lucanist tendency distinguished the 'god of this world' from Satan, treating the former as just and directly responsible for the making of the physical world, and the latter as evil.

6.13. What were the principal Marcionite schools?

The principal Marcionite schools were the Apellean, Lucanist, and Severian schools. These were internal tendencies within the broader Marcionite Church rather than independent religions or formal schisms. They remained united by the Evangelicon, the Apostolicon, the apostolic primacy of Paul, and the confession of God the Father revealed through Jesus Christ.

Apelles of Alexandria founded the Apellean school, with Potitus and Basilicus associated with that stream. Lucanus of Rome founded the Lucanist school, to which Syneros belonged. Severus gave his name to the later Severian school. Their theological distinctions are treated separately below.

See also: Question 6.17, "How were the Marcionite schools theologically distinguished?"

6.14. What was the Apellean School?

The Apellean school, founded by Apelles of Alexandria, was the direct continuation of Marcion's

original teaching. Apelles did not create a new religion, nor did he replace Marcion's doctrine with a foreign system. He preserved the original Marcionite confession of God the Father, revealed by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by Paul. The later heresiologists tried to represent Apelles as a deviation from Marcion, but this was polemical distortion. In substance, Apelles taught exactly as Marcion did: there is one supreme God, and beneath him are lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions. Apelles also pushed back against the false accusations of docetism and crude dualism leveled against the Marcionites, affirming the real manifestation of Christ and clarifying that the lower maker of the physical world was a subordinate power rather than a second co-eternal, co-equal god.

The Apelleans understood the lower power called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world" as a subordinate, begotten power. This lower power was identified with Satan, but he was not a second co-eternal, co-equal god. He was one of the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God the Father.

The Apelleans believed that this lower power played a role in the making of the physical world. Pseudo-Tertullian reports that Apelles taught one supreme God in the infinite upper regions, who made many powers and angels, and that another angelic power originated the world in imitation of a superior world. This is why Apelles may be described as teaching a deferred or indirect demiurgy. The making of the physical world is mediated through a lower power, while creation still ultimately flows from God the Father.

This is not dualism. The Apelleans did not posit two eternal gods. They did not teach that Satan was equal to God. They taught a cosmological hierarchy: God the Father, above all; Christ sent by him; and beneath them the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions associated with the governance and making of the physical world.

Traditional Apelleans did not regard the physical world as evil. They regarded it as inferior, mixed, limited, and governed by a lower just power. Nor did they regard the maker of the physical world as evil in the absolute sense. Like Marcion, they regarded this lower power as just, limited, and inferior. The maker of the physical world could impose law, judgment, and order, but he could not reveal the alien mercy of God the Father. His justice was surpassed by the grace

of the Father revealed in Jesus Christ.

Within this Apellean stream belong Apelles, Potitus, Basilicus, Marcus, Philomena the Prophetess, and Severus. Potitus and Basilicus are named by Rhodo among Marcionite teachers whom hostile writers described in terms of a "two-principle" view. Within a Marcionite reading, this should not be understood as belief in two co-eternal, co-equal gods. Rather, they are best treated as Apellean because their framework preserves the simpler distinction between God the Father, and the lower powers associated with the making and governance of the physical world. Marcus, in the Dialogue of Adamantius, likewise belongs in the Apellean stream because he preserves the simpler Marcionite structure that identifies the lower maker of the physical world with the hostile power called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." Both Philomena the Prophetess and Severus were direct disciples of Apelles, though Severus would ultimately found his own school, distinct from the Apellean stream.

6.15. What was the Lucanist School?

The Lucanist school, founded by Lucanus or Lucianus of Rome, developed Marcionite cosmology in a different direction. Pseudo-Tertullian explicitly calls Lucanus a follower and disciple of Marcion. The Lucanists still confessed God the Father. They did not teach that Satan was equal to God, nor did they teach two co-eternal gods. Rather, they distinguished between the "god of this world" and Satan.

For the Lucanists, the "god of this world" was the just lower power directly responsible for the making of the physical world. Satan, by contrast, was an evil third entity. This produced a threefold cosmological hierarchy: God the Father, above all; the "god of this world" as the just maker of the physical world beneath him; and Satan as a hostile and evil lower power beneath or against that order.

Traditional Lucanists, like traditional Apelleans, did not view the physical world as evil in itself. They viewed it as inferior, limited, and governed by lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions. The Lucanists differed from the Apelleans not because they were more dualistic, but because they distinguished the just "god of this world," who made the physical world, from Satan, who was evil. The world was therefore not the product of an evil co-eternal god, but of a lower just power beneath God the Father.

This also is not dualism. It is not a doctrine of two equal gods. It is a

hierarchy of lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God the Father. Even when the making of the physical world is mediated through the "god of this world," and even when Satan is distinguished as an evil power, all being still ultimately depends upon the one true God.

Within this Lucanist stream belong Lucanus, Syneros, Megethius, and Prepon the Assyrian. Syneros is associated by Rhodo with "three natures," a hostile formulation that fits the Lucanist tendency to distinguish the just "god of this world" from Satan as another lower power. Megethius, in the Dialogue of Adamantius, likewise belongs in the Lucanist stream because he preserves a threefold cosmological scheme, distinguishing the good, the just, and the evil. Finally, Prepon belongs naturally in the Lucanist camp because Hippolytus says he introduced a doctrine in which "what is just" constitutes a third principle, placed between what is good and what is bad. Within Marcionite theology, none of this should not be treated as three co-eternal gods, but as an attempt to describe the order of lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God the Father.

6.16. What was the Severian School?

The Severian School was a later and more radical ascetic movement associated with Severus and his followers, the Severians. Although heresiologists often used this school as a stand-in for "Marcionism" writ large, this identification is misleading. The Severians were relentlessly mocked and attacked by hostile writers for their extreme asceticism, rigid discipline, hatred of the world, and severe rejection of ordinary material life. Because of this, many ancient accusations against "Marcionites" in general are likely exaggerated through a Severian lens.

The Severian School was not founded by a direct disciple of Marcion. For this reason, its distinctive views are not accepted as normative by the modern Marcionite Church. This differs from the Apellean and Lucanist streams, which are recognized as legitimate Marcionite positions because Apelles and Lucanus were both disciples of Marcion and therefore stand within the immediate Marcionite succession.

Theologically, Severus represents a later development from within the broader Apellean stream. His followers still identified Satan with the being called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." They therefore preserved the simpler Apellean structure rather than the threefold Lucanist

structure. However, the Severians departed from traditional Apelleans by treating this lower world-fashioning power not merely as just, limited, and inferior, but as evil. This led them toward a far more severe rejection of the physical world.

This is the key distinction between traditional Apelleans and Severians. Traditional Apelleans, like Marcion, viewed the lower ruler of the physical world as just and inferior, not evil. Severians, while preserving the Apellean identification of Satan with the "god of this world," sharpened the critique and treated the lower world-fashioning power as evil. As a result, they adopted a more world-denying, ascetic, and rigid posture.

Thus, the Severian School should be understood as a later, extreme, and non-normative branch associated with the Marcionite world, not as the standard form of Marcionite Christianity. Its testimony is historically useful, especially for understanding how hostile writers caricatured Marcionites, but its distinctive theology is not received as authoritative by the Marcionite Church.

6.17. How were the Marcionite schools theologically distinguished?

The main division within Marcionism was not between monotheism and dualism. All schools confessed God the Father. The difference concerned the order of the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath him. These differences did not result in formal schisms from the Marcionite Church. They reflected distinct schools of interpretation within one ecclesial body, united by the same Gospel, the same Apostle, and the same confession of God the Father.

The traditional Apelleans held a two-fold structure:

God the Father, above all; the lower "god of this world", identified with Satan, beneath him; this lower power being just, limited, and inferior, but not a second co-eternal, co-equal god.

The Severians held a stricter ascetic version:

God the Father, above all; the lower "god of this world", identified with Satan, beneath him; this lower power being evil, leading to a more ascetic rejection of much of the material world.

The Lucanists held a threefold structure:

God the Father, above all; the just "god of this world," maker of the physical world, beneath him; and Satan as an evil third power.

Neither the traditional Apellean nor the Lucanist position was dualist in the strict sense. Neither taught a

second co-eternal, co-equal god. Both preserved a Marcionite cosmological hierarchy, and both viewed the physical world as inferior and limited rather than evil in itself. The Severians moved in a more ascetic and world-denying direction by identifying the maker of the physical world with evil, but even there they did not make him equal to God the Father. These differences did not result in formal schisms from the Marcionite Church, but remained internal schools within the broader Marcionite tradition. All these schools sought to explain the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath the sovereignty of God the Father, while remaining united by the singular Pauline Gospel.

6.18. Who were the first Marcionite bishops, presbyters, and deacons?

Marcion of Sinope, in his preserved epistles contained within the Synaxicon, names a wide circle of Marcionite deacons, presbyters, and bishops who accompanied or supported him during his captivity. Together, these figures reveal both the breadth of his influence across second-century Christian communities and the well-defined leadership structure already in place within the Marcionite Church.

Deacons:

Philo of Cilicia – Deacon of Tarsus, mentioned in the letters to the Smyrnaeans and Philadelphians; he travelled with Marcion toward Rome, highlighting Cilicia's strong Marcionite presence.

Rhaius Agathopus – A Syrian deacon who joined Marcion at Troas and remained with him throughout the journey.

Burrhus of Ephesus – Deacon delegated by the Ephesian assembly; he met Marcion early on the route and carried messages on their behalf.

Crocus of Rome – Roman deacon who hosted and ministered to Marcion after his arrival in the capital.

Zotion of Magnesia – Deacon of the Magnesian church who assisted Bishop Damas in greeting the prisoner on his way to Smyrna.

Presbyters:

Apollonius of Magnesia – One of two presbyters sent by the Magnesian congregation to visit Marcion, offering encouragement and logistical aid.

Bassus of Magnesia – Fellow presbyter of the same church, partnering with Apollonius and Damas to ensure Marcion's letters reached their destinations.

Bishops:

Damas of Magnesia – Encountered Marcion while Roman soldiers

escorted the latter toward Smyrna; Marcion entrusted him with a letter addressed to the Magnesian flock.

Metrodorus of Smyrna – Bishop of Smyrna who received and hosted Marcion during his stop in the city, convened the local assembly, forwarded Marcion's letters, safeguarded his personal effects, and acted as liaison with neighbouring churches. His steadfast leadership made Smyrna a rallying point for Marcionite believers, and he was burned alive in 156 C.E. during persecutions carried out under Emperor Marcus Aurelius, sealing his witness in martyrdom.

Polybius of Tralles – Described in Marcion's Epistle to the Trallians as a man of solemn bearing and gentle spirit, he travelled to Smyrna to stand in solidarity with Marcion during the final stages of the journey.

These bishops, presbyters, and deacons form a vivid portrait of committed Marcionite leadership—men who stood beside their founder in faith and service and whose cooperation attests to the vigor and organization of the Church he established.

6.19. Who are some other notable Marcionite Christians?

Among other notable Marcionite Christians preserved in the historical record are Prepon the Assyrian, Paul of Lebaba, Pitho, Megethius, Marcus, Theodotion, Ambrose of Alexandria, and Blastus of Rome. These figures show the continued development, spread, and influence of Marcionite Christianity after Marcion himself. Some belonged to the major theological schools within Marcionism, while others bear witness to the geographic and ecclesial reach of the Marcionite Church.

Prepon the Assyrian belongs naturally within the later Lucanist stream of Marcionite theology. He is remembered for composing an epistle, now lost, to Bardaisan or to Bardaisan's followers, in which he defended the theological principles of the Marcionite tradition. According to Hippolytus, in this lost epistle, Prepon articulated the threefold distinction between what is good, what is just, and what is evil.

Paul of Lebaba, a Marcionite presbyter, is renowned for establishing a church in the village of Lebaba in Syria in 318 C.E. The inscription found within this church remains the oldest known surviving inscribed reference to Jesus Christ. It reads:

"The meeting-house of the Marcionites, in the village of Lebaba, of the Lord and Saviour Jesus the Good — Erected by the

forethought of Paul a presbyter, in the year 630 [Seleucid era]."

This archaeological discovery affirms the enduring presence of Marcionite Christianity in Syria and serves as a powerful witness to their Christological devotion. It also shows that Marcionite communities were not merely speculative schools or literary circles, but organized ecclesial bodies with presbyters, meeting-houses, and public inscriptions.

Megethius and Marcus, both Marcionite presbyters, are cited in De Recta in Deum Fide, also known as the Dialogue of Adamantius, a late-third or early-fourth-century dialogue opposing various theological views. Their inclusion demonstrates the continued activity and influence of Marcionite leaders in theological discourse well into the post-Marcion era.

Within the framework of the two major Marcionite schools, Marcus should be identified with the Apellean stream, while Megethius should be identified with the Lucanist stream.

Pitho also belongs among the later Marcionite figures preserved in the historical record. Although little survives concerning his individual teaching, he appears within the broader stream of Marcionite leadership and succession. His importance lies chiefly in showing the continuity of Marcionite ecclesial life beyond the first generation of disciples.

Theodotion, the translator of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, is recorded by Epiphanius of Salamis as having once been affiliated with the Marcionite Church before abandoning Christianity entirely and embracing Judaism. Whether Epiphanius' report is complete or polemically shaped, it nevertheless shows that heresiological writers remembered Marcionite Christianity as a movement with influence beyond its own congregations and with contact even among figures later associated with Jewish textual traditions.

Similarly, Jerome notes that Ambrose of Alexandria had been a Marcionite Christian prior to his conversion under the influence of Origen. This testimony is significant because it places Marcionite Christianity within the intellectual and theological world of Alexandria, where disputes over scripture, canon, allegory, and the character of God were especially active. Because Apelles himself was associated with Alexandria, Ambrose's Alexandrian connection makes him a likely former Apellean before becoming an Origenist, though the surviving sources do not explicitly label him as such.

Blastus is also remembered in later sources as having originally been associated with Marcionite

Christianity in Rome before aligning with other Christian movements. Theodoret of Cyrrhus identifies him as a figure later connected with Montanism and Quartodeciman practice. His case shows that Marcionite Christianity stood within the larger network of second- and third-century Christian disputes over prophecy, discipline, ecclesial authority, and the proper observance of the Christian calendar.

Taken together, these figures reveal the wide reach of Marcionite Christianity across Syria, Rome, Alexandria, and the wider Greek-speaking world. They also show that Marcionism did not dissolve into unrelated sects. Its internal differences, including the Apellean and Lucanist schools, did not result in formal schisms from the Marcionite Church. Rather, they represented distinct schools of interpretation within one broader ecclesial body.

6.20. Which later Christian groups descended from or were influenced by the Marcionites?

Some scholars, including historian Joseph Turmel, have noted striking theological parallels between the Marcionite Christians and the early Johannine community responsible for the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles. According to certain traditions, Marcion of Sinope began his ministry in Anatolia as a disciple of the Apostle John, suggesting a potential lineage of influence between these early Christian streams.

Numerous later Christian movements appear to have inherited theological elements from the Marcionite tradition. If the Cerdonians can be described as proto-Marcionites, then the Paulicians can best be described as neo-Marcionites: not identical to the original Marcionite Church, but a later Pauline revival that received, adapted, and reworked major elements of the Marcionite inheritance.

Among these later movements, the Paulicians stand out as the most prominent successors. Confined primarily to the territories of the Eastern Roman Empire, the Paulicians first flourished in Armenia, where they preserved a strongly Pauline and Marcionite foundation. Over time, however, this inheritance began to diverge as the Paulicians encountered and absorbed Manichaean and other dualist influences. These influences gradually pulled portions of the movement farther away from their original Marcionite and Pauline roots and contributed to the development of a more syncretic theology.

Like the Marcionites, the Paulicians held the Apostle Paul in the highest regard, considering him the

foremost interpreter of the Gospel. The founder of the Paulician movement, Constantine the Armenian, hailed from a Marcionite church in Mananalis, near Samosata. Around 657 C.E., he began to teach a new religious message based on the Marcionite canon. According to the account of Petrus Siculus, a Byzantine chronicler who lived among the Paulicians in Tibrike, Constantine received the Evangelicon and Apostolicon from a Marcionite deacon in Syria and distributed them among his followers, who initially preserved these texts as their authoritative scriptures.

In their earliest form, then, the Paulicians appear to have stood very near to the Marcionite tradition. Their foundation was Gospel and Apostle, not the Hebrew Bible. Their religious identity was Pauline, anti-Judaizing, and hostile to the later catholic expansion of the canon. But as the movement developed, especially in Armenia and the eastern borderlands of the empire, Manichaean dualism increasingly shaped Paulician doctrine and practice. This later Manichaean overlay explains why the Paulicians eventually departed from Marcionism proper while still retaining unmistakable Marcionite elements.

Over time, the Paulicians appear to have expanded and modified Marcion's original Testamentum. They continued to use only the Gospel of Luke and retained most of Paul's interpolated epistles, while rejecting the Epistles of Peter. Like the Marcionites, they entirely rejected the Hebrew Bible, rejected the resurrection of the body, embraced amillennialism, and refused to venerate Mary.

Despite their shared Pauline foundation, the Paulicians eventually diverged significantly from Marcionite theology. They came to embrace dualism, docetism, iconoclasm, and a non-Trinitarian understanding of God, positions that brought them closer to later dualist and gnosticizing traditions than to Marcionism proper. These divergences should be understood not as the essence of their original Marcionite inheritance, but as later developments caused in large part by the merging of Paulician Christianity with Manichaean influences.

Between 747 and 970 C.E., the Byzantine emperors deported large numbers of Paulicians to Thrace, in modern-day Bulgaria, as part of imperial resettlement and religious control efforts. These transplanted Paulician communities gradually evolved into a new movement:

Bogomilism, which flourished throughout Bulgaria.

Bogomilism, in turn, gave rise to Catharism, a dualist Christian movement that spread through southern France between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. As political and religious pressures intensified in the region, many of the remaining Paulicians and Bogomils eventually converted to Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, or Islam during the period of Ottoman conquest. Ethnic groups such as the Banat Bulgarians and the Pomaks trace their ancestry to these historical communities.

Those Paulicians who remained in Armenia and were not deported gradually gave rise to the Tondrakian movement by the tenth century, a Christian movement that persisted in Armenia until as late as the 1820s.

If one accepts the theory of baptismal successionism, the belief that valid Christian faith communities can be traced through their rejection of infant baptism, then a theological lineage may be drawn from the Marcionites through the Paulicians, Bogomils, and Cathars, ultimately culminating in the emergence of modern Baptist traditions. Each of these historical movements consistently upheld the doctrine of credobaptism, baptism upon profession of personal faith.

6.21. What is the Chronicon?

The Chronicon is the historical record of the Marcionite Church, tracing its foundations in Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul, the life and ministry of Marcion of Sinope, and the development, persecution, and endurance of Marcionite communities throughout the ancient world.

Its name is drawn from the Greek chronikon, meaning a chronicle or ordered account of events. The Chronicon arranges the history of the Church in chronological form, preserving dates, persons, ministries, councils, persecutions, schools, migrations, and surviving notices from the descent of Christ and the apostolate of Paul through the last explicit notice of living Marcionite communities in 987 C.E., followed by later medieval witnesses preserving the historical memory of Marcionism through 1286 C.E.

The Chronicon is an ecclesiastical historical work rather than canon or deuterocanon. It preserves the memory and continuity of the Church, distinguishes received Marcionite tradition from hostile heresiological claims, and orders the surviving evidence into a coherent account. Like every subordinate ecclesiastical work, it is received only insofar as it accords with the Gospel revealed

by Christ and preached by the Apostle Paul.

LESSON 7: THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson explains Marcionite theological method, its principal doctrinal works, and the use of reason, philosophy, councils, and other theologians.

7.01. What is theology?

Theology is the ordered confession and explanation of the revelation of God the Father through Jesus Christ. It begins with the Gospel, is governed by the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum and the Rule of Faith, and uses reason, tradition, and historical evidence in subordination to that revelation.

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 9:1

Marcionite theology therefore seeks neither speculation detached from the Gospel nor submission to later councils as independent authorities. Its purpose is to understand, defend, and faithfully proclaim what Christ revealed and Paul preached.

7.02. How does the Church understand Holy Wisdom?

Holy Wisdom is the divine Wisdom of God manifested through Jesus Christ and communicated to the faithful by the Holy Spirit. Holy Wisdom is not a separate goddess, a fallen Aeon, or an independent divine being alongside God the Father.

The Apostle expressly identifies Christ as “the power of God, and the wisdom of God,” and declares that Christ is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The Holy Spirit likewise grants the word of wisdom, reveals spiritual truth, and enables the faithful to discern the things of God. The Church may therefore speak of Holy Wisdom both christologically, because Christ is the Wisdom of God manifested, and pneumatologically, because the Holy Spirit communicates that Wisdom within the Church.

“But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

I Corinthians 1:24

“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

I Corinthians 1:30

“For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom.”

I Corinthians 12:8

The Church rejects the Valentinian myth that Sophia fell from the divine fullness and produced the lower world through error. Divine Wisdom does not fall into ignorance. Christ descends to overcome ignorance, and the Holy Spirit leads the faithful into the Wisdom revealed through Him.

7.03. How does the Church distinguish revelation, scripture, tradition, and reason?

Revelation is the self-disclosure of God the Father through Jesus Christ. Scripture is the authoritative written witness to that revelation in the Evangelicon and Apostolicon. Tradition is the Church's received transmission of doctrine, worship, and discipline, while reason is the faculty by which the faithful examine, order, and defend what has been received.

These are not equal authorities. Revelation is fulfilled in Christ; scripture bears supreme written witness to it; tradition serves its preservation; and reason serves its understanding. None may be used to contradict the Gospel.

7.04. What are the Antitheses?

According to Marcion of Sinope, God the Father—who is revealed through Jesus Christ—had no prior interaction with the world before Christ's manifestation. He was entirely unknown until that moment, transcendent and untainted by the material realm. In his now-lost work the Antitheses, Marcion presented a series of stark contrasts between the Hebrew Bible and the Gospel, between the god of the false covenant and the true God revealed in the Evangelicon and Apostolicon, between law and grace, judgment and mercy. He depicted Christianity not as a continuation of the Hebrew tradition but as a completely new and independent revelation, one that abrogated and superseded all that came before it.

In our chronology, we date the composition of the Antitheses to 139 C.E., aligning it with the Chronicle of Edessa's notice (Seleucid year 449) that Marcion "forsook the emerging Catholic Church." That Edessan datum functions as the best external chronological peg for the moment when Marcion's Gospel-versus-Law program is remembered as taking a written, public form.

Tertullian, one of Marcion's fiercest critics, preserved a single quote from the Antitheses that illustrates Marcion's approach:

"Whereas David in old time, in the capture of Sion, was offended by the blind who opposed his admission into the stronghold, so, on the contrary, Christ succored the blind man, to show by this act that He was not David's son, and how different in disposition He was—

kind to the blind, while David ordered them to be slain."

Marcion's critique was shaped by Hellenistic philosophical principles, especially Platonism, and he employed moral reasoning to contrast the inconsistency and cruelty of the Hebrew Bible deity with the compassion and righteousness of the God proclaimed by Christ. Marcion argued that the original Testamentum and the Hebrew Bible are irreconcilable. Where Moses taught "an eye for an eye," Jesus nullified this code of retaliation. Marcion highlighted Isaiah's disturbing claim—"I make peace and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things"—and contrasted it with Jesus' statement, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit." Marcion emphasized the incompatibility between the fruits of the two trees: one bitter, one sweet.

He cited examples of moral divergence: in the Hebrew Bible, the prophet Elisha curses children, and bears maul them. Jesus, by contrast, says, "Let the little children come unto me." Joshua halts the sun to prolong the massacre of his enemies, while Paul, quoting Christ, teaches, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." The Hebrew Bible allows for divorce and polygamy; the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon forbid both. Moses imposed strict Sabbath regulations and ceremonial law; Jesus deconstructs and transcends both.

Marcion also pointed to internal contradictions within the Hebrew Bible itself. The deity commands that no work be done on the Sabbath, yet instructs the Israelites to march around Jericho seven times on the Sabbath. Though he forbids graven images, he directs Moses to create a bronze serpent. Marcion questioned how an omniscient deity could ask, "Adam, where art thou?"—a clear sign, in Marcion's view, of ignorance.

Even more strikingly, in Genesis, Jacob is said to have wrestled with the deity of the Hebrew Bible and prevailed—a blasphemous notion if applied to the true God. Likewise, before destroying Sodom and Gomorrah, the deity says, "I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it… and if not, I will know." Marcion saw this as further proof that the god of the Hebrew Bible was neither omnipresent nor omniscient, but a limited, fallible being unworthy of worship.

Through these comparisons, Marcion advanced the case for a radical theological reformation: the rejection of the false covenant and its god, and the full embrace of the true covenant revealed by Jesus

Christ through the Gospel and the writings of Paul.

7.05. What are the Syllogisms of Apelles?

Apelles, a notable disciple of Marcion, authored a substantial multi-volume work entitled Syllogisms—comprising at least thirty-eight volumes—in which he offered a systematic critique of the Hebrew Bible and its depiction of God (Ambrose explicitly notes Apelles' arguments "in the thirty-eighth tome" of that work). The title itself suggests that Apelles intended to build upon Marcion's earlier work, the Antitheses, which had contrasted the false deity of the Hebrew Bible with the true God revealed in the original Testamentum, emphasizing the irreconcilable differences between law and Gospel, justice and mercy, wrath and grace.

Though the original text of Syllogisms has not survived, several fragments have been preserved through the polemics of later Catholic theologians. Ambrose of Milan, in the fourth century, directed a number of rebuttals against Apelles in his treatise De Paradiso. It is through such responses that we possess rare direct quotations from Apelles' lost work.

In one preserved fragment, Apelles addresses the inconsistency of divine foreknowledge in the Genesis account:

"Did God know that Adam would transgress His commandment, or knew He it not? If He knew it not, how then declareth He Himself to be Almighty? But if He knew, and yet gave commandment concerning that which He foresaw would not be obeyed, then did He speak in vain. But God doeth nought in vain, neither commandeth He that which is superfluous. Yet lo, He gave unto Adam, the first-formed man, a statute which He knew should not be observed. Wherefore, this writing proceedeth not from God, for the Most High doth nothing without purpose."

Another excerpt questions the plausibility of the flood narrative and the Ark:

"By no means could it have been possible to bring aboard the Ark so great a multitude of beasts, and the provision for their sustenance for the space of a whole year, in so short a time. For if the unclean beasts are said to have entered two and two, that is, two males and two females of each kind, and the clean beasts seven and seven, that is, seven pairs, how then could the space, as it is written, have contained even four elephants alone? Verily, it is manifest that the tale is feigned. And if the tale be false, then surely this scripture proceedeth not from God."

In a third passage, Apelles critiques the theological logic of the Eden narrative:

“How is it that the tree of life doth seem to confer more life than the very breath of God?”

On the supposed perfection of Adam:

“If God made man not perfect; yet if every man by his own diligence acquireth the perfection of virtue, doth it not appear that man obtaineth more unto himself than God bestowed upon him?”

On the knowledge of death:

“And if man had not tasted of death, surely he could not know that which he had not tasted.”

These fragments show Apelles continuing the Marcionite tradition of moral and philosophical opposition to the Hebrew Bible, exposing what he perceived to be contradictions, absurdities, and ethical failings in the text. Like Marcion, Apelles maintained that such scriptures could not have proceeded from the Father revealed by Christ, but rather from a lesser, false, and ignorant deity associated with the false covenant. His work represents a further refinement of the Marcionite conviction that Christianity stands in absolute distinction from Judaism—not as its fulfillment, but as its repudiation.

7.06. How is Marcionite theology related to Hellenistic philosophy?

Marcion and the early Marcionites engaged with Hellenistic philosophy to sharpen and defend their theological convictions, particularly drawing from Platonism, Stoicism, Cynicism, and to a lesser extent, Epicureanism, always holding revelation above reason. From Platonism, they embraced the idea that the highest reality is spiritual and that God is wholly Good, immutable, benevolent, and free from violence or contradiction; and they also operated comfortably within the wider Greco-Roman “soul-language” that included metempsychosis (the transmigration of souls) as a conceptual tool for describing the soul’s chastening within the material order and its eventual ascent. This helped articulate the radical moral and ontological distinction between the true God revealed by Christ and the morally deficient false god depicted in the Hebrew Bible. In the same orbit belongs the Marcionite recognition of a division of souls, that souls are not all “the same” in their condition or orientation, but can be spoken of as differing in nature and destiny; Origen explicitly notes that those “from the school of Marcion” (alongside Valentinus and Basilides) were associated with the claim that there are “souls of

different natures," precisely as a way of accounting for radically different births and outcomes. Stoic influence is reflected in Marcion's personal asceticism and moral seriousness, though asceticism was not universally mandated among Marcionite believers. Cynicism, with its contempt for religious hypocrisy and institutional corruption, resonated with the Marcionite critique of both Jewish legalism and the authoritarian tendencies of the emerging proto-Catholic church. Even Epicureanism could contribute by reinforcing the premise that a truly good God cannot be the author of suffering, injustice, or fear. This perspective sharpened their theological rejection of the false god as depicted in the Hebrew Bible. In all, Hellenistic philosophy provided the Marcionites with tools to express their faith in the supreme goodness of the Father and the uniqueness of the Gospel, without ever eclipsing the authority of divine revelation.

7.07. How does the Church read other Christian theologians?

The Marcionite Church reads other Christian theologians critically and selectively. Marcionite Christians hold in high regard the centuries of thought produced by theologians outside our own tradition. Many ancient Church Fathers and later Christian thinkers ironically shared views with Marcion on a variety of issues, and we can appreciate their arguments and reasoning even as we dispute other points of doctrine. We encourage every Marcionite believer to engage these writings with an open mind and a discerning spirit. In many areas, such as philosophical reasoning, moral instruction, liturgical development, and historical analysis, the insights of non-Marcionite scholars harmonize with our own convictions and can deepen our understanding of the Gospel. When their conclusions align with the testimony of the Evangelicon, the Apostolicon, and the witness of the Apostle Paul, they are worthy of study and reflection. Where their assertions contradict the core principles handed down through Marcion and our received Scriptures, particularly doctrines that elevate the Hebrew Bible's deity as the Father of Jesus Christ, we respectfully set those portions aside. By reading broadly yet critically, Marcionite Christians gain both the benefits of the wider Christian intellectual heritage and the clarity that comes from remaining faithful to the true message of Christ preserved in the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon.

7.08. Why does the Church reject the ecumenical councils?

The Marcionite Church rejects all ecumenical councils and recognizes only the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem held in 48 C.E., the sole council recorded in the Apostolicon and convened under apostolic authority.

This council affirmed that followers of Jesus were not bound to observe the Mosaic Law, including circumcision, Sabbath regulations, or ritual fasting. However, it did retain a limited set of ethical and ritual instructions, now known as the Apostolic Decree. These include abstaining from food offered to idols, from blood and meat from strangled animals, and from idolatry and sexual immorality.

The Marcionite Church holds that this decree, issued by the Apostles, remains the only legitimate and binding conciliar directive in the history of the faith. This same anti-conciliar posture was later preserved by the Paulicians, whom we regard as Neo-Marcionites: the medieval Paulician adjuration formulae explicitly accuse them of rejecting the ecumenical councils, confirming that they did not receive the post-apostolic conciliar system as authoritative.

Notably, the first non-apostolic ancient church councils only began to occur over 10 years after Marcion of Sinope's excommunication and one year after his martyrdom, the first of these being the Council of Rome in 155 C.E.

The rejection of the Council of Nicaea does not imply denial of the divinity of Jesus Christ. The Church confesses the Son as truly divine, but rejects the council's attempt to define His divinity by identifying God the Father with Yahweh and by placing an imperially convened assembly above the apostolic canon.

No post-apostolic council may create a new rule of faith, bind the Church to the Hebrew Bible, or revise the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul. Councils may be studied as historical witnesses, but they possess no authority over the Evangelicon and Apostolicon.

7.09. How does the Church approach Christian unity?

The Marcionite Church remains open to Christian unity, although its theological convictions differ significantly from the dominant doctrines of most other Christian traditions.

7.10. How does the Marcionite Church understand dispensationalism?

Marcionite Christians affirm a form of dispensationalism in which God's actions in history are

understood through distinct periods or revelations. In the Marcionite view, the singular and defining dispensation began with the sudden and unexpected descent of Jesus Christ in 29 C.E. Prior to this event, God the Father had never revealed Himself to humanity nor engaged with the world in any way. All divine revelation begins, and is fulfilled, with Christ alone.

LESSON 8: CHRISTOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson sets forth the Church's doctrine of Jesus Christ, including His identity, descent, embodiment, saving work, names, and mission.

8.01. Who is Jesus Christ?

The Marcionite Church confesses that Jesus Christ is one Lord, truly divine and truly embodied, possessing real flesh and a real human mode of life, yet descending from above rather than being generated through ordinary human generation. Later theological vocabulary may be used descriptively to clarify this confession, but it is not received as conciliar authority.

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

Laodiceans 1:20–21

Marcion of Sinope upheld both the unity of Christ's person and the reality of His dual mode of existence. His teachings emphasized that the Lord Jesus was not a mere apparition or a being of divided substance, but truly both God and man. As preserved in Marcion's Epistle to the Ephesians 8:5, Marcion writes:

"There is one only physician, of flesh and of spirit, generate and ingenerate, God in man, true Life in death, Son of Man and Son of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord."

This confession reflects the Marcionite understanding of Christ, not as a mere apparition, nor as a confusion of divine and human realities, but as the one Lord sent by God the Father to redeem souls from the bondage of this world.

8.02. Does the Church believe in the pre-existence of Christ?

The Church confesses the pre-existence of Jesus Christ. The Son did not begin when He descended into Capernaum, nor was He generated by this world. He came from above, from God the Father, and His descent was His manifestation in the visible world for the salvation of souls.

The Evangelicon teaches that the Word was with God in the beginning, that the Word was God,

and that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. It also teaches that none knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son wishes to reveal Him. Thus Christ is not a mere prophet who arose from below, but the heavenly Son who reveals the otherwise unknown Father.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Evangelicon 1:1

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Evangelicon 1:14

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."

Philippians 2:6-7

The pre-existence of Christ therefore grounds the Church's doctrine of descent and kenosis. Christ's appearing was not His creation, but His voluntary self-emptying and saving entrance into the corruptible world-order.

See also: Question 8.01, "Who is Jesus Christ?"; Question 8.03, "What does it mean that Christ descended?"; Question 8.04, "How does the Church understand kenosis?"

8.03. What does it mean that Christ descended?

Christ's descent means that the Son came from the heavenly and invisible order into the physical, fleshly, and visible world without being generated by that world. His appearing was a true entrance into human history, not merely a change in human awareness or an allegorical manifestation.

The descent reveals both His heavenly origin and His saving mission. He came from God the Father to make the Father known, overthrow the bondage of the lower powers, and deliver souls through His teaching, suffering, death, and resurrection.

8.04. How does the Church understand kenosis?

Kenosis is the voluntary self-emptying or humiliation of Jesus Christ. It does not mean that the Son ceased to be divine, surrendered His Sonship, or became a mere man. It means that He descended from the heavenly and invisible order, took the form of a servant, entered the condition of human weakness, and submitted

Himself to suffering and death for the salvation of souls.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Philippians 2:5–8

Christ's kenosis was real because His embodiment, suffering, bloodshed, and death were real. His body was not generated through ordinary human birth, but neither was it a phantom. The Son entered the visible world-order ruled by the lower powers and accepted the condition of those whom He came to liberate.

Kenosis is therefore both humility and redemptive descent. He who was above the powers placed Himself beneath their violence; He who was life entered death; and He who came from God the Father answered the cruelty of this world with obedience, mercy, and forgiveness. His self-emptying reveals not the loss of divinity, but the humility of divinity.

The faithful are called to possess the same mind: renouncing pride, domination, vainglory, and fleshly bondage, while serving others in love. Christian kenosis is not self-hatred or the denial of one's being, but voluntary humility in imitation of the Lord.

See also: Question 8.03, "What does it mean that Christ descended?"; Question 8.07, "Why is Marcionite Christology not docetic?"; Question 8.08, "How can Christ possess real flesh if He was not born of Mary?"; Question 11.03, "How does Christ save?"

8.05. What does Christ's descent into Capernaum signify?

Why did Jesus choose to descend into Capernaum, a modest fishing village in Galilee, rather than any other place on Earth? While we, as finite beings, cannot fully comprehend the workings of the divine, we can attempt to reason through the possibilities with the light we have been given.

It may be that Jesus chose Galilee—and, by extension, Samaria and Judea—because it was one of the few regions in the world at that time where some form of monotheism was practiced. This theological framework, though flawed and distorted, may have prepared the people there to more readily grasp the truth of the God revealed through Christ. Their belief in an omnipotent, omniscient, and incorporeal deity aligned more closely with the nature of the true

Father than the polytheism found elsewhere.

Another possible reason is the ministry of John the Baptist, who preached repentance and prepared the hearts of many for the coming of Christ. Jesus himself acknowledged John's unique role:

"For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Evangelicon 5:28

This may suggest that Jesus chose to enter the region west of the Jordan River not only to fulfill a mission of salvation, but to affirm and build upon the groundwork laid by John.

The Jews and Samaritans, despite their many errors, did acknowledge many attributes of God the Father—his eternal nature, his spiritual essence, and his sovereign authority. It was during the Transfiguration that the true Father was fully revealed through Christ, making this region the place where spiritual blindness could begin to be undone.

Additionally, some Marcionite Christians believe that Yahweh, the deity worshipped in the Hebrew Bible, is in fact Satan masquerading as God. In this view, Jesus' choice to descend into a land devoted to that false god was a deliberate act of confrontation—to overturn the false covenant and expose its author. As Jesus declared:

"Think not that I am come to fulfil the law, or the prophets: I am not come to fulfil, but to destroy."

Evangelicon 14:16

While these reflections provide insight, they remain conjecture. The true answer to why Jesus descended where he did may never be fully known in this life. What matters above all is not the geography of his appearance, but the authority of his teaching and the salvation he brought.

8.06. Why did Christ not descend sooner?

The Apostle Paul declares that the sending of Christ came at the appointed season of God. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son" so that we might receive adoption (Galatians 4:4–5). "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Paul's Epistle to the Romans 4:6). God made known "the mystery of his will" to unite all things in Christ "in the dispensation of the fulness of times" (Laodiceans 1:9–10). This gospel is "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints" (Colossians 1:26). Christ "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due

time" (I Timothy 2:6), and God "hath in due times manifested his word through preaching" (Titus 1:2–3).

Marcion's Homily to Diognetus teaches the same truth in another key. God acted according to a long-kept, great, and unutterable plan. While that counsel was concealed, He only seemed to neglect us. Once it was revealed through His Son, its purpose became clear.

God permitted humanity for a season to follow its passions so that, convicted by our own deeds as unworthy of life, we would learn that we could not attain it by our own works. Then, when our iniquity was filled up and the time appointed by God arrived, He sent His Son. He came gently, as a king might send his son, to persuade and to summon rather than to coerce, for force is no attribute of God.

Thus, the timing reveals the sweet exchange: the holy for the lawless, the just for the unjust, so that the righteousness of One should justify many. Having first demonstrated our inability, God displayed His power to save, granting what we could never achieve on our own.

8.07. Why is Marcionite Christology not docetic?

Marcionite Christianity does not affirm docetism. Docetism is a heterodox doctrine that holds Jesus' bodily existence—particularly His human form—as a mere illusion or appearance, denying that He truly suffered or died in the flesh.

There is no credible evidence that Marcion of Sinope taught or supported this view. The primary source for the accusation that Marcion believed Christ to be a phantom is Tertullian, who presents it within Adversus Marcionem. However, these claims appear to function more as a reductio ad absurdum—an exaggerated rhetorical device—than a faithful representation of Marcion's own Christology. Ironically, even within Tertullian's own polemic, there are remnants suggesting that Marcion affirmed Christ's possession of real flesh—flesh capable of suffering and dying on the cross. Tertullian simply dismissed these details as inconsistent and irrational rather than reassessing his accusations. Modern scholarship has increasingly rejected Tertullian's caricature, particularly given that nearly all other early sources from the second and third centuries are silent regarding any association between Marcion and Docetism.

The doctrine of Docetism finds no support in the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon, and it is explicitly refuted by Marcion's foremost disciple, Apelles. According to Rhodo, an early Christian writer, Apelles rejected Docetism outright, affirming that

Jesus truly possessed human flesh —though not born of human parents. Apelles taught that Jesus descended directly from Heaven and appeared in human form, possessing real flesh, but not through natural birth. This belief aligns with the textual structure of the Evangelicon, which contains no nativity or birth narrative, omits any mention of the Virgin Mary, and begins with Christ's sudden appearance in Capernaum. Apelles upheld the Marcionite view that Jesus entered the world fully formed, not through human generation, but by divine descent.

Misunderstandings about Marcion's theology are largely due to the fact that nearly all surviving accounts were written by hostile Catholic heresiologists intent on discrediting him. In Evangelicon 23:36–42, Jesus explicitly demonstrates the reality of His body after the resurrection:

"But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a phantom. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them."

This passage affirms both the physicality and continuity of Christ's risen body—explicitly refuting any notion that Marcionite theology denied Christ's true humanity.

It is likely that the association of Marcion with Docetism arose from confusion with another figure: Marcian of Rhossus, a contemporary of Marcion who led a Docetist sect believed to have authored or used the Gospel of Peter. Since Marcion rejected Peter and upheld Paul alone as the true apostolic witness to Christ, it is implausible that he and this Marcian were the same individual.

Furthermore, while one of Marcion's disciples—Lucanus—is reported to have embraced some Docetist beliefs, including denial of the physical body of Christ and the immortality of the soul, these views were not representative of the broader Marcionite Church, which consistently upheld the teachings of Marcion and the authority of the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon.

Finally, some accusations of Docetism may have stemmed from Marcion's eschatological position, which aligns with that of the Apostle Paul—namely, that it is the

soul or spirit that is raised in the resurrection, not flesh and blood. This view, focused on spiritual resurrection for believers, may have led critics to falsely extend the belief to Christ, erroneously assuming that the Marcionite Church denied His physical resurrection. Yet, as the Evangelicon affirms, Jesus not only appeared in the flesh but suffered, died, and rose bodily—refuting the charge of Docetism entirely.

See also: Question 8.01, "Who is Jesus Christ?"; Question 8.09, "Why does the Church reject the virgin birth?"

8.08. How can Christ possess real flesh if He was not born of Mary?

Christ possessed real flesh because embodiment does not require generation from ordinary human generation or birth from Mary. The Church teaches that He descended from above and assumed a true human body suited to His mission in the world. His flesh was tangible, capable of suffering, and truly given unto death.

The rejection of the virgin birth is therefore not a denial of embodiment. The Church rejects an earthly genealogy for Christ, not His real body, real suffering, real death, or bodily appearances after the resurrection.

Christ's body was therefore real in substance and capable of hunger, weariness, pain, bloodshed, and death, yet it was divinely given for His saving mission rather than produced through ordinary human generation. His heavenly origin and His true embodiment are complementary, not contradictory.

See also: Question 8.07, "Why is Marcionite Christology not docetic?"; Question 8.09, "Why does the Church reject the virgin birth?"; Question 10.01, "What is the soul?"

8.09. Why does the Church reject the virgin birth?

Marcionite Christians reject the doctrine of the virgin birth. The belief is so widely accepted within mainstream Christianity that questioning it is often treated as heretical. Yet this doctrine is absent from the earliest Christian texts and traditions foundational to Marcionite Christianity.

The Evangelicon contains no birth narrative. There is no manger, no Bethlehem infancy, no Mary cradling a child, no star, no shepherds, no magi, no census, no flight to Egypt, and no genealogy. The Gospel begins not with Christ's birth, but with his descent from heaven into Capernaum:

"Jesus descended out of heaven into the Galilean city of Capernaum, a city near the sea, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim. Having taken on the appearance of a man,

he appeared thirty years of age and was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath days."

Evangelicon 2:3–4

This opening is central to Marcionite Christology. Christ does not enter the Gospel as an infant born into a human bloodline. He descends from heaven, takes on the appearance of a man, appears thirty years of age, and begins teaching with authority. The silence about birth is not an accidental omission. It is theological. The Evangelicon refuses to anchor Christ in the lower order of flesh, genealogy, tribal descent, or Hebrew prophecy.

In Marcionite doctrine, descent from above does not mean illusion. Christ's flesh was real, His suffering was real, and His death was real; what the Church rejects is not embodiment, but generation through ordinary human generation.

Most biblical scholars regard Mark as the earliest of the four gospels of the later Catholic canon. Mark also contains no birth or childhood narrative. It begins with Jesus' public ministry. The Gospel of John, typically dated later than the Synoptics, likewise contains no nativity account. This absence shows that the virgin birth was not essential to the earliest proclamation of Christ. The birth narratives appear only in Matthew and Luke, and even there they differ significantly.

Matthew and Luke do not give one consistent nativity tradition. Matthew traces Jesus' genealogy through Solomon, while Luke traces it through Nathan, another son of David. Matthew includes magi, Herod's massacre of infants, and the flight to Egypt. Luke includes a census under Quirinius, shepherds, and a presentation at the temple. Matthew has no shepherds or temple presentation; Luke has no magi, massacre, or flight to Egypt. These are not minor differences. They are distinct theological constructions designed to attach Jesus to Davidic descent, Bethlehem, and Hebrew Bible expectation.

Both Matthew and Luke also contain a basic tension: they assert a miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit while also providing genealogies through Joseph, whose biological connection to Jesus is denied by the same birth narratives. This contradiction raises serious questions about the coherence and purpose of the virgin birth doctrine.

The Apostle Paul never teaches a virgin birth. He never mentions Mary as Christ's mother, never appeals to Bethlehem, never grounds Christ's identity in Davidic biology, and never makes the Gospel depend on a nativity. In the Apostolicon, Paul's language is

instead the language of sending, descent, likeness, and manifestation.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 7:3

The phrase “in the likeness of sinful flesh” is crucial. It does not mean Christ was unreal. It means his body was real and capable of suffering, but not generated by the lower biological order. Christ truly appeared in flesh, truly suffered, truly died, and truly rose. But his origin was from God the Father, not from a womb.

Paul makes the same point in his hymn of Christ’s descent:

“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:
But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:
And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

Philippians 2:6–8

The language is form, likeness, and fashion. It describes a real manifestation from above, not ordinary biological generation below. Christ’s body was not an illusion, phantom, or costume. It was real. But it was differently originated.

The Evangelicon also preserves a direct challenge to the claim that Christ had a biological mother and brothers:

“To find out if he was birthed, they set a trap for him.
And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.
And he answered and said unto them, Who are my mother and my brethren? None but they who hear my words and do them.”

Evangelicon 6:19–21

In the Marcionite reading, this is not a casual remark about family priorities. It is a Christological declaration. Christ does not affirm biological descent and then merely subordinate it to spiritual kinship. He refuses to define himself by earthly motherhood, fleshly lineage, or family claim. His origin is the Father.

This rejection of the virgin birth is not docetism. Marcionite Christianity does not teach that Christ was a ghost, illusion, or mere appearance. Apelles, the foremost disciple of Marcion, pushed back against the false accusation of docetism and affirmed the real manifestation of Christ. Christ’s body was real. His suffering was

real. His death on the cross was real. What Marcionites deny is not the reality of Christ's body, but its generation through the lower order of flesh, conception, gestation, and birth.

The virgin birth, therefore, appears to be a later theological development rather than an apostolic teaching. Its purpose was to graft Jesus onto the prophecies, geography, and lineage of the Hebrew Bible. It made him the Davidic Jewish Messiah expected by the Jewish scriptures. Marcionite Christians reject that framework. Jesus was not the Jewish Messiah foretold by the Hebrew prophets. He was the divine Son sent from God the Father to reveal the previously unknown Father and rescue souls from bondage to the lower world-order.

The importance of Jesus Christ lies not in the manner of a supposed earthly birth, but in the divine mission he accomplished through his descent, teaching, death, and resurrection. The foundation of the Christian faith is not the nativity. It is the revelation of the Father, the Gospel, the cross, and the empty tomb.

"Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually."

Alexandrians 8:3

This verse encapsulates the Marcionite understanding: Christ came not through human lineage, but directly from the Father, outside the constraints of earthly descent and Judaic expectation.

This rejection did not disappear with Marcion's immediate school. It persisted among later neo-Marcionites, such as the Paulicians. The Byzantine adjuration formulae condemn those who say the Lord "brought his body from above" and require converts instead to confess that the Son of God was truly "born in the flesh of holy Mary" and "incarnate of her substance." In plain terms, the adjurations treat the Paulician position as a denial that Christ was genuinely conceived and born of the Virgin, and they require its formal repudiation as a condition of reconciliation.

Thus, Marcionite Christians reject the virgin birth not because we deny Christ's reality, but because we affirm his higher origin. Christ was not produced by the lower order. He was sent by God the Father, manifested in real flesh, and entered the world to rescue souls from bondage. He had no need of Bethlehem, Davidic genealogy, or Mary's womb. His origin is the Father, and his mission is salvation.

See also: Question 8.04, "How does the Church understand kenosis?"; Question 8.08, "How

can Christ possess real flesh if He was not born of Mary?"; Question 8.05, "What does Christ's descent into Capernaum signify?"

8.10. How did Jesus pass through the angry crowd in Nazareth with a real body?

"But he passing through the midst of them went his way to Capernaum."

Evangelicon 3:15

From a Marcionite perspective, this event does not mean Jesus became incorporeal or ceased to have a real body. We confess that He truly assumed a body — not from the mythological virgin birth, but miraculously given by God the Father. In this scene, that body remained fully tangible, yet He was able to pass unharmed through a hostile crowd.

The text does not require that He vanish or lose materiality. Rather, He moved through them by the force of His will, the awe of His authority, and possibly the aid of God the Father. The crowd, though enraged, could not seize Him because His time had not yet come.

This moment at Nazareth shows that even before the resurrection, Jesus' body was fully subject to His divine will and could not be taken except on His own terms. It was a real, tangible body, yet His mission and authority ensured that no opposition could prevail until the appointed hour.

8.11. How did Jesus disappear and reappear after the resurrection?

"And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight."

Evangelicon 23:30

From a Marcionite perspective, this disappearance is fully consistent with the reality of the Lord's post-resurrection body. We confess that Jesus truly assumed a body — not from the mythological virgin birth story, but miraculously given by God the Father. After His resurrection, this body was glorified and entirely subject to His will.

In that glorified state, He was touched, He ate, and He was seen. Yet He was no longer bound by the ordinary limitations of mortal flesh. His appearances were physical and real, but His glorified nature allowed Him to manifest and withdraw from sight at the time and place of His choosing.

At Emmaus, the disappearance was not a trick of perception, but the deliberate conclusion of His visible presence after revealing Himself in the breaking of bread — signaling that His followers would now know Him, not by constant physical presence, but through faith and the proclamation of His word.

The vanishing at Emmaus affirms both that the risen Christ bore a real, tangible body and that the resurrection transformed it into a glorified body, perfectly responsive to His divine will.

8.12. Why is Christ called the Son of Man?

In the Dialogue of Adamantius, the Marcionite speaker Megethius is directly questioned about the title "Son of Man." Adamantius asks how Christ can be called "Son of Man" if he is truly the Son of God and did not come by ordinary human generation. Megethius answers that Christ used the phrase "as a parable," and when Eutropius asks whether this should be understood spiritually rather than historically, Megethius answers: "Spiritual."

The witness is hostile, but valuable: it preserves a distinctly Marcionite way of reading the title.

Therefore, when Christ calls himself the "Son of Man," he is not confessing descent from Adam, birth from the lower order, or subjection to the false deity of the Hebrew Bible. He is speaking according to his manifestation among men. He appeared in the likeness of men, took the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man, yet his origin remained heavenly.

This agrees with the Evangelicon, where Christ descends from heaven into Capernaum, having taken on the appearance of a man. It also agrees with Paul, who says that God sent his own Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh" and that Christ was "made in the likeness of men." The phrase "Son of Man" therefore refers to Christ's real manifestation in the human condition, not to ordinary human generation.

It is not a denial of his true body. Christ was not a phantom, illusion, or mere symbol. He truly appeared in flesh, truly suffered, truly died, and truly rose. But his flesh was divinely given from above, not produced by the fleshly system governed by the 'god of this world.'

Thus, "Son of Man" means that the Son of God humbled himself and appeared among men for our salvation. It is the title of his condescension, manifestation, and redemptive solidarity with those he came to rescue. It does not make him a son of Adam. It reveals the mercy of the heavenly Christ who entered the condition of mankind without originating from its bondage.

8.13. What is the significance of the name 'Jesus'?

If Jesus was not born to Mary and Joseph, then why did he bear the name "Jesus"? The name Jesus is derived from the Hebrew Yeshua, meaning "to rescue," "to save," or

simply "salvation." These meanings are entirely consistent with his divine mission: he came to bring salvation to all people, transcending nations and borders.

Though the precise mysteries of the divine may remain beyond our full comprehension as mortal beings, it is reasonable to conclude that Jesus chose a name that would be both accessible to those he ministered to and rich in symbolic meaning. His name, therefore, was not merely a cultural reference point but a direct reflection of his purpose—to redeem and to save.

In the Evangelicon narrative, the name "Jesus" does not first appear as a birth-name spoken by Mary or Joseph, but as an address thrust upon Him at the outset of His public manifestation: it is the devil-possessed man in the synagogue of Capernaum who first cries out "Jesus," and he immediately couples the name not with any genealogy or earthly origin, but with a divine title—"the Holy One of God." This detail is telling. The Evangelicon presents the name as part of His revealed identity in ministry, recognized (even unwillingly) by hostile spirits, rather than as a merely domestic or familial designation anchored in nativity traditions.

8.14. Was James the Just Christ's biological brother?

James the Just was not the biological brother of Jesus Christ. According to early Christian tradition, he was one of the Seventy Disciples and the first bishop of Jerusalem.

"And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

Galatians 2:9

Paul also refers to James as "the Lord's brother":

"But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother."

Galatians 1:19

And again, James is named among those to whom the risen Christ appeared:

"And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve… After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles."

I Corinthians 15:4–7

In all of these cases, the term "brother" comes from the Koine Greek word adelphos, which often denotes spiritual kinship rather than

blood relation. This is evident throughout Paul's epistles, where he frequently uses the term to describe fellow believers and co-laborers in the faith.

For example:

Paul calls Apollos "our brother": "As touching our brother Apollos…" (I Corinthians 16:12)

He refers to Timothy as "our brother":
"Paul, an apostle… and Timothy our brother…" (II Corinthians 1:1)

He describes Titus as "my brother": "…because I found not Titus my brother…" (II Corinthians 2:13)

He calls Tychicus a "beloved brother":
"…Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord…" (Laodiceans 6:21)

He refers to Onesimus likewise: "…Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother…" (Colossians 4:9)

He describes Epaphroditus as "my brother":
"…Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour…" (Philippians 2:25)

And he calls Sosthenes "our brother":
"…Sosthenes our brother." (I Corinthians 1:1)

These consistent usages demonstrate that "brother" in Paul's writings does not signify a literal family relationship but a spiritual or communal bond in Christ.

Neither Catholic, Orthodox, nor Lutheran traditions today insist on a biological brotherhood between Jesus and James, instead suggesting he may have been a cousin, step-brother, or some other familial relation. However, the Marcionite Church rejects any physical or biological kinship between James and Jesus, affirming instead that James was a spiritual brother—one of the early leaders of the Church, not of Christ's household, but of his mission.

The honorific title "the Lord's brother" was used by Paul to emphasize James' importance in the early Christian community, particularly in Jerusalem, and his role as a witness to the risen Christ —just as Paul himself was. But this title in no way suggests biological relation. Rather, it affirms the spiritual unity shared by all who follow Christ in truth and faith.

8.15. Why does the Church deny that Christ is the Jewish Messiah?

The Jewish Messiah, as envisioned in the Hebrew scriptures, is described as a militant leader—a bearer of arms and skilled in warfare. By contrast, our Lord Jesus Christ came in peace, without sword or spear, offering salvation

to all nations rather than conquest for one people.

The prophecies of Isaiah regarding the Jewish Messiah do not align with the life or mission of Jesus. Isaiah's Jewish Messiah is said to be named Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14), and to plunder Damascus and Samaria before the king of Assyria (Isaiah 8:4). These descriptions do not suit Jesus Christ, who neither bore that name nor participated in military conquest or nationalistic violence.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was not foretold in the Hebrew Bible. His suffering and death on the cross contradict the expectations of a Jewish Messiah and are in fact condemned by the Hebrew scriptures themselves. According to the Law, anyone hung on a tree is accursed of the false god:

"And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."
—Deuteronomy 21:22–23

This passage only reinforces the conclusion that the god of the Hebrew Bible—the lawgiver who curses the crucified—is a false deity and not the Father revealed by Jesus.

Marcion taught that Christ was the sudden savior, who descended from Heaven in the form of a fully mature man. He came to rescue believers from bondage to the Law of the false god and returned to Heaven after accomplishing his mission. He was not the Jewish Messiah of Judaic expectation, nor did he fulfill any of the prophecies claimed by the Jewish tradition. Neither Christ nor his Apostles, especially Paul, subjected themselves to the Law or its ordinances. Marcion's original Testamentum made no attempt to reconcile the Gospel with the Hebrew scriptures, for it recognized no continuity between the two. Christ was not the fulfillment of Judaism, but its rejection—and the revelation of a new and true God.

8.16. How does the Church understand the names Christos and Chrestos?

Marcionite Christians would not have used the word Christ—Christos in Greek—in the sense of affirming Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. While the term Christos literally means "anointed," Marcionite Christians likely understood it in a more general, symbolic sense, referring to Jesus' spiritual mission rather than any fulfillment of Hebrew prophecy. The reference to Jesus being

anointed with oil before his passion, as found in the Evangelicon, supports this interpretation:

“My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.”

Evangelicon 5:46

This anointing of the feet, rather than the head as in Israelite tradition, marked a key divergence from Jewish messianic customs and indicated that Jesus’ kingship was not of this world. While none of the ancient critics of Marcion—including Tertullian and Epiphanius—accused the Marcionite Christians of using an alternate word in place of Christos, Tertullian does note that Marcionites practiced anointing newly baptized believers with oil, reflecting a continuation of this spiritual symbolism.

An important historical artifact sheds further light on Marcionite terminology. On October 1, 318 C.E., Paul of Lebaba, a Marcionite presbyter, dedicated a church in the Syrian village of Lebaba. The surviving inscription is the oldest known inscribed reference to Jesus and uses a related term, Chrestos—meaning “good” or “righteous”—rather than Christos. The inscription reads:

“The meeting-house of the Marcionites, in the village of Lebaba, of the Lord and Saviour Jesus the Good — Erected by the forethought of Paul a presbyter, in the year 630 Seleucid era.”

This phrase, “Jesus the Good,” was likely a devotional title emphasizing his moral perfection and divine benevolence, not a doctrinal replacement for Christ. The canonical scriptures of the Testamentum refer to Jesus by many titles—Lord, Saviour, Son of God, and Son of Man—reflecting his manifold office in Marcionite theology.

Even in the Septuagint—the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible—the term Christos is not reserved for a singular Jewish messianic figure. It is applied to Israelite kings, high priests, prophets, patriarchs, and even foreign rulers like Cyrus the Great. Thus, the Marcionite use of the term Christos would have aligned with its more general meaning: one who is consecrated, not necessarily one who fulfills Jewish nationalist expectations.

Marcionite Christians affirmed that Jesus’ anointing was spiritual, not political, and that his mission had nothing to do with the restoration of Israel under the law of the false god. Instead, Jesus was anointed to proclaim the Kingdom of God—a heavenly, universal reign in which he now sits at the right hand of the true God, revealed only through the Gospel.

This understanding also helps explain the significance of the Chi Rho symbol within Marcionite tradition. The Chi Rho, formed by the overlapping Greek letters chi (X) and rho (P), stands for both Christos (anointed) and Chrestos (good). It represents the dual truths of Jesus' divine mission: that he is both the anointed emissary of God the Father and the embodiment of perfect goodness.

In the Evangelicon itself, it is striking that the first figure to address Jesus by name is not a disciple, nor a friendly confessor, but the devil-possessed man in the synagogue of Capernaum—who cries out "Jesus" and identifies him only as "the Holy One of God," before Jesus has offered any public self-designation that would invite a reading of Him as the Jewish Messiah. Only much later in the ministry does Peter apply the title "the Christ"; and even then, Jesus appears to treat that term as a practical label of recognition rather than a programmatic claim to Jewish Messiahship—employing it sparingly, and without the prophetic-nationalist content that the false covenant attached to it, as though he adopted the title only as convenience required, while continuing to be known chiefly by truer names: Lord, Saviour, Son of God, Son of Man, and Holy One.

8.17. Was Christ Melchisedec?

Melchisedec is not to be identified with Jesus Christ. Rather, he functions as a literary foreshadowing or typological figure within the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Alexandrians.

Melchisedec appears only briefly in the Book of Genesis, where he offers a symbolic sacrifice of bread and wine and receives tithes from Abraham. The Hebrew Bible provides no account of his ancestry, birth, or death, leading some to interpret him as an eternal priest without origin or conclusion. The name "Melchisedec" itself is not a proper name but a title, meaning "King of Righteousness."

In the Epistle to the Alexandrians, the Apostle Paul does not equate Melchisedec with Christ but states clearly that Melchisedec resembles the Son of God. This resemblance lies in his portrayal as timeless and in his offering of bread and wine—elements that Christ himself fulfills in the true, spiritual sense. Paul's usage is allegorical, not literal; Melchisedec serves as a figure by which to explain Christ's superior and eternal priesthood.

The Apostle Paul never defines Melchisedec's identity because the purpose of referencing him was pedagogical, not doctrinal. Paul is instructing the Alexandrian believers—many of whom were familiar with the Hebrew scriptures

—by reinterpreting their literary heritage in light of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus.

“Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

Alexandrians 7:11

8.18. Why does the Church use the Chi Rho rather than the Cross?

Marcionite Christians seek to restore the original and most authentic form of Christianity. In doing so, we adopt the Chi Rho as our principal symbol—a Christogram formed by overlaying the first two capital letters of the Greek word ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (Christos), chi (Χ) and rho (Ρ), so that the vertical stroke of the rho intersects the center of the chi. Unlike other Christian traditions, the Marcionite Chi Rho is never flanked by the Alpha and Omega symbols, as these are derived from the non-canonical Book of Revelation, which we do not recognize as scripture.

Our preference for the Chi Rho over the traditional cross distinguishes us from other Christian denominations and reflects historical accuracy. There is minimal evidence of the cross as a Christian symbol in the second century, and it is likely that early Christians avoided it due to its gruesome association with public execution. For the first three centuries of the Church, the cross played a relatively minor role in Christian iconography.

Nevertheless, we do not reject or forbid the use of the cross or crucifix. The only guideline for Marcionite Christian imagery is that it must be grounded in the canonical scripture contained in the Testamentum. The Chi Rho remains our preferred symbol because it emphasizes the central truth of our faith—that the resurrection of Jesus is more essential than the manner of His death.

8.19. How does the Church understand christocentrism?

Christocentrism refers to a theological orientation within Christianity in which the person and work of Jesus Christ serve as the central focus around which all doctrine, worship, and interpretation are ordered.

The Apostle Paul articulates the foundation of this approach:

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 8:7

Marcion of Sinope extended and systematized this principle by asserting that the revelation of Christ constitutes the highest and final authority in matters of faith.

For Marcion, the person of Jesus—His incarnation, death, and resurrection—superseded and transcended the authority of the Hebrew scriptures. The Gospel of Christ, preserved in the original Testamentum, became the inviolable standard by which all else must be measured.

In responding to those who demanded validation from Hebrew texts, Marcion drew a sharp distinction:

"For I heard certain persons saying, 'If I find it not in the charters, I believe it not in the Gospel.' And when I said to them, 'It is written,' they answered me, 'That is the question.' But as for me, my charter is Jesus Christ, the inviolable charter is His cross and His death and His resurrection, and faith through Him."
Philadelphians 8:6–8

This bold affirmation encapsulates the Christocentric heart of Marcionite Christianity: all truth and authority flow from the revelation of Jesus Christ alone.

LESSON 9: COSMOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson explains the order of creation, matter, the visible world, the heavenly powers, the lower ruler, and the origin and continuation of evil.

9.01. What is Marcionite cosmology?

Marcionite cosmology adheres to both deferred demiurgy and negative demiurgy.

Deferred demiurgy means that creation is mediated, not direct. The visible, fleshly, and corruptible world was not fashioned immediately by God the Father in the fullness of His perfection, but mediately using subjacent matter by lower principalities, powers, thrones, dominions, and angelic rulers beneath Him.

Negative demiurgy means that the 'prince of this world', as known in the Evangelicon, and the 'god of this world', as known in the Apostolicon, was initially ignorant of God the Father. He ruled and fashioned the lower world without knowing the Father above him. He thought himself God because he knew no higher God. But when Jesus descended, the hidden Father was made known, and the lower powers perceived that their kingdom was being invaded, judged, and overthrown by One greater than themselves.

9.02. How does the Church understand creation?

Marcionite Christians are creationists in the theological sense: all being ultimately depends upon God the Father. Yet the Church does not receive the Genesis creation account as

Christian scripture, nor does it teach that God the Father directly fashioned the visible world in six literal days.

The Church distinguishes ultimate origin from mediate formation. God the Father is the source of all being; the visible and corruptible world-order was fashioned below Him through lower powers from matter, which the Apostle calls "the elements of this world." Therefore the Father is not the immediate craftsman of the present bondage, decay, and false worship that mark this age.

Where the Testamentum does not define questions of natural history, cosmology, biology, or the age of the universe, the Church uses reason and observation. Creation is confessed theologically, not reduced to a literal reading of the Hebrew Genesis narrative.

See also: Question 9.03, "What is matter?"; Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"; Question 9.10, "What is deferred demiurgy?"; Question 9.11, "How does the Church understand Logos-mediated creation in relation to Marcionite deferred demiurgy?"

9.03. What is matter?

Matter is the underlying substance or elemental material from which the physical, fleshly, and visible world was fashioned. The Apostle calls it "the elements of this world." Matter is not God, not the 'god of this world', not an angelic power, and not the world-order imposed upon visible creation.

"Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."

Galatians 4:3

Matter is morally neutral in itself. It is distinct from the fashioned world and from the corrupt system of bondage governing that world. The question of its ultimate origin is treated separately.

The Dialogue of Megethius confirms this distinction. Matter is not an eternal rival to God, nor is it the cause of evil as though matter were a wicked substance. Matter belongs to the created order; evil belongs to disorder, bondage, action, corruption, and false rule.

See also: Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"; Question 9.09, "What is the difference between matter, the world, and the world-order, and are they evil?"

9.04. What is the origin of matter?

Matter itself, called by the Apostle "the elements of this world," was not made by the 'god of this world.' The ancient witnesses distinguish matter from the power that fashioned the visible, fleshly world. Hippolytus says that Marcion and Cerdo taught "three principles of

the universe," namely the good, the just, and matter, and that the 'god of this world' formed all things from "subjacent matter" (Hippolytus, Refutation of All Heresies 7.17). However, the heresiologists inaccurately depicted matter as though it were a distinct principle within a cosmological hierarchy. It was not. Matter was not a ruler, power, angel, or rival deity. Matter ultimately originates from God the Father, but it was taken up, shaped, and arranged by the lower world-ruling power into the present physical order.

The Dialogue of Megethius strengthens this doctrine by rejecting the claim that matter is uncreated. Megethius argues that if matter is compound, it depends upon prior elements and therefore came into being; and if it came into being, it cannot be uncreated. Matter therefore cannot stand beside God as a second eternal principle.

In other words, matter is not identical with the 'god of this world', nor is it simply the same thing as the visible world he formed. Matter is the underlying substance from which the present physical order was fashioned, but its ultimate source is God the Father. The physical world fashioned from matter is likewise not evil merely because it exists. It contains real goods, but it is also flawed, mixed, corruptible, and subject to bondage, decay, sin, and death.

This distinction is important. The 'god of this world' is not the absolute maker of being itself. He is the fashioner, arranger, and ruler of this lower world. Matter is like bronze in the hand of a craftsman. A sculptor may fashion a bronze statue, shape it, polish it, and give it visible form, but he did not thereby create the bronze itself. So also the 'god of this world' fashioned the physical, fleshly, and visible world from matter, but he did not originate matter as God the Father does.

Tertullian, though writing as a hostile witness, preserves the same basic distinction when he argues against Marcion's teaching concerning God, the lower world-fashioning power, and matter. Even in Tertullian's account, matter is treated as something underlying the formation of the world, not simply as the same thing as the lower ruler himself (Tertullian, Against Marcion 1.15).

Therefore, we do not say that matter is evil in itself. Matter is morally neutral. Nor do we say that the physical world is pure evil. It contains life, beauty, order, and many real goods, but these goods are unstable and perishing because the present world-system is flawed, fleshly, corruptible, and ruled by

lower powers. The evil lies not in matter as such, but in the corrupt order imposed upon it by the 'god of this world', who fashioned a visible realm in imperfect imitation of the higher heavens. Matter belongs ultimately to God the Father, but the present world-system is the work of the lower ruler who shaped it. The bronze is not evil; the idol made from it is.

9.05. Does the Church believe matter is eternal?

No. The Church does not believe that matter is eternal, uncreated, self-existent, or co-eternal with God. God the Father alone is unbegotten and without beginning. Matter is created, derivative, subordinate, and dependent upon Him.

The Dialogue of Megethius rejects the opinion of Hermogenes that uncreated matter must be placed beside God in order to explain evil. Megethius argues that if matter is compound, it depends upon prior elements and therefore came into being; and if it came into being, it cannot be uncreated.

Thus the Church confesses neither eternal matter nor evil matter. Matter ultimately belongs to the created order, while the present world-order is the result of lower fashioning, bondage, and corruption.

See also: Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"; Question 9.06, "Does the Church believe in creation out of nothing?"; Question 9.07, "Why does the Church reject the doctrine of co-eternal matter?"; Dialogue of Megethius 7:1-20; Dialogue of Megethius 11:1-11.

9.06. Does the Church believe in creation out of nothing?

The Church teaches that matter is not eternal, uncreated, self-existent, or co-eternal with God. God the Father alone is unbegotten and without beginning. All things beneath Him are derivative, dependent, and brought into being by His will through the Word.

Creation out of nothing does not mean that the present corrupt world-order is the direct and perfect work of God the Father. Rather, it means that no eternal matter stands beside God as a rival principle. Matter itself is created and morally neutral; the lower powers then fashioned the visible world-order from created matter, in imitation of the higher heavens and under the limits of their own inferiority.

God the Father gives being from nothing through the Logos; the lower powers fashion the visible world-order from created matter. Thus the Church rejects both errors: we do not say that matter is eternal, as Hermogenes taught; nor do we say that the corruptible world-order

is equal to the Kingdom of God. God gives being; the lower powers fashion, order, govern, and corrupt what is beneath them.

The Dialogue of Megethius supports this doctrine by arguing that if qualities can be made where they did not previously exist, then they are made out of nothing; and if such qualities may be made out of nothing, matter itself cannot be treated as an eternal limit upon God.

See also: Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"; Question 9.05, "Does the Church believe matter is eternal?"; Question 9.07, "Why does the Church reject the doctrine of co-eternal matter?"; Question 9.10, "What is deferred demiurgy?"; Question 9.11, "How does the Church understand Logos-mediated creation in relation to Marcionite deferred demiurgy?"; Dialogue of Megethius 8:1-31.

9.07. Why does the Church reject the doctrine of co-eternal matter?

The Church rejects co-eternal matter because it introduces a second uncreated principle beside God, weakens divine supremacy, and fails to explain evil. If matter is separate from God, then it becomes a rival eternal substance. If matter is in God, then God becomes the receptacle of disorder and evil. If God is in matter, then God is contained and circumscribed by matter.

Megethius therefore argues that the doctrine of uncreated matter cannot preserve the greatness of God. It either collapses God and matter into one uncreated substance, multiplies uncreated substances, or makes God dependent upon a realm beneath Him. None of these errors may be confessed by the Church.

The true doctrine is simpler and more reverent: God the Father alone is unbegotten; matter is created and subordinate; evil is not explained by making matter eternal, but by recognizing disorder, false rule, bondage, corruption, and sinful action within the lower world-order.

See also: Question 9.05, "Does the Church believe matter is eternal?"; Question 9.06, "Does the Church believe in creation out of nothing?"; Question 9.08, "Is evil a substance?"; Dialogue of Megethius 7:1-20.

9.08. Is evil a substance?

Evil is not a substance, not matter, and not a created nature. Evil belongs to disorder, corruption, privation, false rule, sinful will, destructive action, and bondage under the lower powers. Matter can be used wrongly, ordered wrongly, or ruled corruptly, but matter itself is not evil.

The Dialogue of Megethius is especially useful here. Megethius presses the question whether evil things are substances or actions and qualities. The argument shows that evil things do not possess independent substantial being; they arise in actors, actions, passions, corruptions, and disordered qualities.

Therefore the Church does not blame matter as though matter were a wicked god or an evil substance. The evil of this age lies in the corrupt world-order, in the lower powers who govern it, and in sinful wills that serve bondage rather than the Gospel.

See also: Question 9.09, "What is the difference between matter, the world, and the world-order, and are they evil?"; Question 11.05, "How does the Church explain moral evil?"; Question 9.20, "How does the Church explain natural evil?"; Dialogue of Megethius 9:1-18; Dialogue of Megethius 10:16-24.

9.09. What is the difference between matter, the world, and the world-order, and are they evil?

The Church distinguishes matter, the world, and the world-order. Matter is the underlying substance from which the physical, fleshly, and visible world is fashioned. The world is visible creation in its present corruptible form, marked by weakness, decay, suffering, and death. The world-order is the system of bondage, domination, false worship, and lower rule operating within it.

Matter is not evil in itself, nor is bodily existence intrinsically sinful. The visible world is corruptible and inferior to the heavens above, yet it contains real goods, beauty, love, mercy, order, and created life. The world-order, however, is the system by which the lower powers enslave souls and turn the good things of creation into idols.

This distinction preserves the rejection of both material worship and hatred of the body. The faithful do not adore matter as though the visible world were the Kingdom of God, nor do they despise embodiment as though the body were intrinsically sinful. The body is disciplined as a temporary instrument of obedience, while Christ liberates the soul from the corrupt world-order.

Most Marcionite schools held this distinction. The Severians adopted a stricter and more world-denying position, but their teaching did not define Marcionite Christianity as a whole.

See also: Question 9.03, "What is matter?"; Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"; Question 9.19, "Why do beauty, love, and goodness exist in this world?"; Question 10.09, "Does the

Marcionite Church believe the body is evil?"

9.10. What is deferred demiurgy?

Deferred demiurgy explains how this lower order came to be. The physical world was fashioned mediately through lower powers. This is why Marcionite Christianity speaks in the Apostle's language of "principalities," "powers," "thrones," and "dominions," and of things "in heaven and invisible." God the Father is above all. Christ is sent from Him. Beneath them are the lower powers. Matter itself is not one of these powers, nor another rung in their hierarchy. It proceeds ultimately from God the Father, while the physical world-order is the result of lower fashioning from matter.

Deferred demiurgy does not mean Hermogenean eternal matter. The lower powers fashion the visible world from matter, but matter itself is created and subordinate. The Dialogue of Megethius is important here because it rejects the attempt to explain evil by placing uncreated matter beside God.

The ancient heresiologists preserve the angelic character of these lower powers most clearly in their reports about Apelles and the Apelleans. Apelles taught that the one who fashioned the world was an angelic power beneath the supreme God. Pseudo-Tertullian says Apelles taught that the world was made by a lower angelic power "in imitation of a superior world," but imperfectly. Tertullian likewise reports that the Apelleans spoke of "a certain angel of great renown" as having made this world and then repented of his work. (Pseudo-Tertullian, Against All Heresies 6; Tertullian, On the Flesh of Christ 8.)

Tertullian, arguing against Marcion's use of the Apostle, also discusses "princes and powers," "fallen angels," and the devil in connection with the powers that did not know the Lord of glory. (Tertullian, Against Marcion 5.6.) This supports the wider Marcionite reading of the lower powers as angelic or fallen angelic rulers, though the clearest explicit testimony belongs to the Apelleans.

Marcionite cosmology, therefore, has a clear hierarchy: God the Father above all; Christ sent from Him; beneath them the lower principalities, powers, thrones, dominions, and angelic rulers; and the visible, fleshly, corruptible world fashioned from matter through deferred demiurgy. Matter itself is not a separate ruler or divine principle in this hierarchy. Matter ultimately originates from God the Father, but the present world-system is the result of matter being shaped and governed by lower powers.

This is why Marcionite salvation is not the glorification of the present world-order, but rescue from it. Christ comes from God the Father into the world governed by lower powers. He reveals the unknown Father, exposes the ignorance of the 'god of this world', defeats the dominion of sin, death, Satan, and the lower powers, and rescues souls from bondage. The Gospel is therefore not a law for improving the lower order, but a revelation from above that calls souls out of corruption and into the kingdom of God.

Thus, Marcionite cosmology is neither materialist nor Gnostic dualist. It is a hierarchical cosmology of God, Christ, souls, angelic powers, matter, and the physical world. Matter is real, but morally neutral. Matter ultimately comes from God the Father, not from the 'god of this world.' The world is real, but flawed and inferior. The body is real, but fleshly and corruptible. The lower powers are real, but subordinate. Satan is real, but defeated. God the Father alone is supreme, and Christ alone is the way of deliverance from the present evil age.

See also: Question 9.12, "Who is called the 'god of this world'?"; Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"; Question 9.16, "What form of the creation hymn does the Church receive from Colossians?"

9.11. How does the Church understand Logos-mediated creation in relation to Marcionite deferred demiurgy?

Creation through the Logos is the ancient Christian teaching that God the Father brought creation into being through his pre-existent Word, or Logos. Ancient Christian writers who taught some form of this doctrine included Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Athenagoras of Athens, Irenaeus of Lyons, Tertullian, Origen, and Athanasius of Alexandria. They did not all possess identical Christologies, but they agreed that the Logos existed before the world and served as the divine agent, instrument, pattern, or mediator through whom creation was ordered.

Justin Martyr wrote that the Word was begotten before the works of creation and that God "created and arranged all things by Him" (Second Apology 6). Theophilus likewise declared that "God by His own Word and Wisdom made all things" (To Autolycus I.7), while Athenagoras described the Son as "the Logos of the Father," after whose pattern and through whose agency all things were made (Plea for the Christians 10).

Irenaeus taught that God's own Word was sufficient for "the formation of all things," including the material world (Against

Heresies II.2.5). Tertullian similarly distinguished the Father, "by whom" all things were made, from the Word, "through whom" they were made (Against Praxeas 21). Origen maintained that nothing was made apart from the Logos, although he explored distinctions between things made "through" him and things made "by" him (Commentary on John II). Athanasius later expressed the developed Nicene form of the doctrine by teaching that all things were created by the Father through the Son, while the Son himself was begotten rather than created (Statement of Faith 2).

Marcionite deferred demiurgy accepts the fundamental principle that creation proceeds from God the Father through the Logos, but it distinguishes between the direct creation of the heavenly order and the subsequent formation of the material world. The Logos directly brought forth the spiritual and invisible creation, including the thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers described in Colossians. These lower spiritual powers thereafter fashioned the visible and ordered world.

Matter itself should not therefore be regarded as inherently evil or as necessarily independent of God. On the Marcionite understanding presented here, the Logos likely brought matter into being as an unformed or elemental substance, while the lower spiritual order later arranged, shaped, and governed it as the physical cosmos. The distinction is between the creation of matter and spiritual being through the Logos and the secondary formation of matter into the ordered world by subordinate powers.

The difference may be represented as follows:

Ordinary Logos-Mediated Creation:

God the Father → the Logos → the entire visible and invisible creation

Marcionite Deferred Demiurgy:

God the Father → the Logos → matter and the heavenly spiritual powers → the lower powers fashion matter into the ordered visible world

Deferred demiurgy may therefore be understood as a stratified or extended form of Logos-mediated creation. God the Father remains the ultimate source of all existence, and the Logos remains the universal foundation through whom creation proceeds. Nevertheless, the Logos need not be regarded as the immediate artificer of every material form, creature, or structure within the physical cosmos.

This distinction permits the Church to affirm that "all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made,"

while recognizing different degrees of causation. Nothing exists independently of the Logos, because matter itself, together with the lower powers that ordered it, ultimately derives from him. The Logos is consequently the ultimate cause and sovereign of the entire creation, while the immediate fashioning of the material cosmos is deferred to the spiritual powers that he brought into being.

The Dialogue of Megethius supports this by showing that matter cannot be treated as uncreated or co-eternal. Matter belongs to the created order, while the lower powers are responsible for the secondary fashioning of the corruptible world-order.

See also: Question 9.10, "What is deferred demiurgy?"; Question 9.16, "What form of the creation hymn does the Church receive from Colossians?"; Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"

9.12. Who is called the 'god of this world'?

In the traditional Apellean and Marcionite understanding, Satan, the 'prince of this world', is called the 'god of this world'. The Lucanist school distinguished the lower just ruler from Satan, but likewise regarded him as a subordinate angelic power rather than a true or coequal god.

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

II Corinthians 4:4

In the traditional Apellean reading, which preserves Marcion's original teaching, the phrase "god of this world" refers to the fallen angel known as Satan, the 'prince of this world', and the ruler of the present age. This title identifies him as a real lower power, principality, throne, or dominion, but not as a second co-eternal, co-equal god.

This distinction is essential. The "god of this world" is mockingly called "god" only in relation to this world, this age, and the unbelieving order he blinds and governs. He is not God in the true sense. He is not unbegotten. He is not equal to God the Father. He is a subordinate and begotten angelic power whose authority is limited, derivative, and temporary.

All Marcionite schools that speak of these lower powers understand them as angelic beings, not as rival deities. The Apelleans identify the "god of this world" with Satan, understood as a fallen angelic power. The Lucanists distinguish the "god of this world" from Satan, but still regard both as lower angelic powers beneath God. The Severians identify Satan with the

“god of this world” and take a stricter view of his evil, yet even they do not make him an unbegotten or co-equal god. Across all positions, the dispute concerns how the lower angelic hierarchy is ordered, not whether any lower power rivals God the Father.

The Apelleans taught that this lower angelic power played a role in the fashioning of the physical world. Apelles described the ‘prince of this world’ as a fiery angel who attempted to imitate the higher realm but failed to reproduce its perfection. This explains why the physical world contains order, law, judgment, beauty, and structure, but also corruption, bondage, decay, and death. The world is not evil in itself, but it is inferior, mixed, and governed by a lower just angelic power that cannot reveal the alien mercy of God the Father.

Thus, when Paul says that the “god of this world” blinds the minds of unbelievers, he is not teaching dualism. He is describing the activity of a lower angelic power beneath God. Satan’s dominion operates through blindness, accusation, law, judgment, fear, false religion, worldly philosophy, and the systems of the present age. His influence permeates the values and assumptions of the unbelieving world, preventing men from beholding “the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God.”

Elsewhere, this same hostile dominion is described through related Pauline language. In Laodiceans, Satan is called “the prince of the power of the air,” a title that emphasizes his sway over the spiritual atmosphere of the present world. This title does not imply ultimate or unrestrained authority. It describes the scope of his permitted and temporary influence among those who remain outside the light of Christ.

Paul also speaks of the “princes of this world”:

“Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought… which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

I Corinthians 2:6–8

These “princes of this world” are not merely earthly rulers. They are lower angelic powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions operating behind the visible structures of worldly authority. Deceived by their own blindness, they failed to recognize Christ and became unwitting instruments of their own defeat. Their reign is temporary. They “come to nought.”

The Lucanist school developed this cosmology differently. Lucanists distinguished the "god of this world" from Satan. In their view, the "god of this world" was a just lower angelic power directly responsible for the fashioning of the physical world, while Satan was an evil angelic adversary. This created a threefold hierarchy: God the Father, above all; the just angelic ruler of the physical world beneath him; and Satan as a hostile and evil angelic power. Even here, however, the doctrine is not dualism, because neither the "god of this world" nor Satan is co-eternal or co-equal with God the Father.

The Severians later took a stricter ascetic position. Like the traditional Apelleans, they identified Satan with the "god of this world." Unlike traditional Apelleans, however, they regarded the 'prince of this world' as evil rather than merely just, limited, and inferior. This led the Severians toward a more world-denying approach. Yet even the Severians did not make Satan equal to God the Father. He remained a fallen angelic power, not a rival god.

Therefore, when the Apostolicon declares that the "god of this world" blinds unbelievers, it must be understood within a hierarchy of lower angelic powers, not a system of rival gods. His dominion extends over the present age and the unbelieving world. Those who belong to Christ are delivered from his rule and brought into the light of the Gospel.

In the Evangelicon, Jesus declares:

"The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

Evangelicon 24:16

This statement reveals the singular hostility of the ruler of the present age. He approaches Christ, but he has no claim over him. Christ does not belong to the physical world's bondage, law, judgment, or corruption. He comes from God the Father, and stands utterly apart from the lower angelic powers that govern this age.

Thus, in the traditional Apellean and Marcionite reading, the "god of this world" is Satan, the 'prince of this world', and the angelic ruler of the present age. In the Lucanist reading, the "god of this world" is distinguished from Satan, but remains a subordinate angelic power beneath God. In the Severian reading, Satan is again identified with this title, but viewed more severely as evil. None of these readings teaches that the lower power is the true God. None makes him eternal. None makes him equal to the Father. All understand him within the lower angelic order of powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God the Father,

whose sovereignty alone is absolute.

9.13. What is negative demiurgy?

Negative demiurgy explains the ignorance of the lower ruler. The ‘god of this world’ began in ignorance of God the Father. He knew his own law, judgment, dominion, and visible realm, but he did not know the invisible Father whom Jesus came to reveal. This is why the Apostle says:

“Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

I Corinthians 2:8.

Tertullian preserves the Marcionite use of this passage when he says that Marcion’s side argued from Paul that the “princes of this world” did not know the Lord of glory. Tertullian rejects the Marcionite conclusion, but his objection preserves the claim: the lower powers were ignorant before Christ’s revelation. He also says that the evil spirit in the Gospel knew Jesus as “the Holy One of God,” and that once the stronger One had come upon the strong man, the lower ruler “could not have been ignorant any longer.” (Tertullian, Against Marcion 5.6.)

This is exactly what the Evangelicon shows at the beginning of the Lord’s manifestation:

“And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, Saying, let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.”

Evangelicon 2:7-8.

By this time, the devils knew. The lower principalities, powers, thrones, and dominions had begun to perceive that Jesus was not beneath them, not sent by them, and not subject to their order. He came from above them. His descent revealed that their authority was not ultimate.

Ancient witnesses differ in describing the lower ruler’s response to this disclosure, but they preserve the central claim that God the Father was not known before Christ revealed Him. His ignorance concerned revelation and worship, not the ultimate source of being.

9.14. How does the Church distinguish physical and visible creation from spiritual and invisible creation?

The ancient heresiologists themselves preserve this distinction as part of their accusation against Marcion. Tertullian says that Marcionites divided “things visible and invisible,” while Jerome likewise reports that Marcion separated the creation of the

physical, fleshly, and visible world from the spiritual, heavenly, and invisible realm.

Jerome preserves the same accusation in his commentary on Ephesians/Laodiceans.
Commenting on Ephesians 3:9, he asks: “Where are Marcion, Valentinus and the other heretics who say that there is one creator of the visible world and another creator of the invisible?” This is one of the clearest hostile summaries of the Marcionite distinction between the visible and invisible orders.

This distinction is also grounded in the Apostle’s own language:

“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

II Corinthians 4:18

The “things which are seen” are temporal, fleshly, and corruptible. The “things which are not seen” are eternal, heavenly, and spiritual. The lower visible order is therefore not identical with the higher invisible kingdom revealed by Christ.

However, this distinction does not mean that matter is eternal, evil in itself, or independent of God the Father. Ultimately, all creation ties back to the Father, for Paul says:

“But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

I Corinthians 8:6

God the Father is the ultimate source of all things. He made matter itself, from which the physical, fleshly, and visible world was later fashioned, and he also made the ‘prince of this world’. The lower ruler is therefore not eternal, equal to God, or self-existing. He is a subordinate power who fashioned the physical, fleshly, and visible world from what ultimately proceeds from the Father.

Therefore, we confess a real distinction between the lower visible order and the higher invisible kingdom, without making matter a second eternal principle. The physical, fleshly, and visible world is temporal and subject to corruption. The spiritual, heavenly, and invisible world is eternal and belongs to God the Father, Christ, and the kingdom of God. All things ultimately proceed from the Father, but the lower world was fashioned through the ‘prince of this world’ and the powers beneath him.

This cosmology also explains the condition of souls. Souls are not products of the physical body. They preexist embodiment and come from God the Father. The body belongs to the visible and

corruptible realm shaped through deferred demiurgy, but the soul belongs to the higher and invisible order. The pre-existant soul descends into embodiment, becomes subject to bondage under the elements of this world, and must be awakened and liberated by Christ.

The soul's descend and salvation mirrors Christ's own movement. Christ descends from above into the lower world, enters the realm of flesh and death, defeats the powers that govern it, and ascends again to the Father. So too the soul, once liberated by Christ, is not left in the lower order. It is rescued from bondage, drawn upward from the visible to the invisible, from the fleshly to the spiritual, from corruption to incorruption, from the present age into the kingdom of God.

This distinction between visible and invisible creation does not imply two eternal substances or two supreme gods. The Dialogue of Megethius rejects any doctrine that would make matter an uncreated rival beside God.

See also: Question 18.05, "Why is Marcionism not dualism?"; Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"

9.15. What are angels?

Angels are spiritual beings belonging to the invisible order. They are begotten and subordinate powers, not gods, and none is co-eternal or co-equal with God the Father. The Apostle speaks of angels, archangels, principalities, powers, thrones, and dominions, showing that the spiritual world contains many ranks and authorities beneath God.

Some angels serve the purposes of God, minister to the faithful, and rejoice in the salvation of souls. Others are ignorant, rebellious, hostile, or bound to the government of this present world. Satan, demons, and the lower world-ruling powers are therefore angelic beings, but not all angels are evil, nor should every spiritual power be identified indiscriminately with Satan.

The Church worships no angel. However great a power may appear, it remains a creature beneath God the Father and subject to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle's declaration that the saints shall judge angels confirms that angelic powers are not sovereign over the children of God:

"Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"

I Corinthians 6:3

9.16. What form of the creation hymn does the Church receive from Colossians?

The Marcionite Church receives the creation hymn from Colossians in the following form:

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by Him were all things created that are in heaven and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist."

Colossians 1:15-17

This form is not a denial of creation through Christ. It is a confession of the proper order of creation. The hymn speaks of Christ as the image of the invisible God, the firstborn before every creature, and the one through whom the heavenly and invisible orders were established. The things named are not the earthly, physical, and visible fabric of this world, but the spiritual ranks above it: thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers.

This is why the hymn still allows for a true cosmological hierarchy. God the Father is the invisible and supreme God. Christ is the image of the invisible God and is before all things. Beneath Christ stand the heavenly and invisible powers. Beneath them stands the physical, fleshly, and visible world, fashioned within the lower order from matter and ruled by the 'god of this world.' The hymn therefore does not collapse all reality into one undifferentiated creation. It distinguishes the heavenly and invisible order from the earthly and visible order.

See also: Question 9.10, "What is deferred demiurgy?"; Question 9.12, "Who is called the 'god of this world'?"

This comports with the Marcionite teaching of deferred demiurgy. God the Father is the source of the spiritual and invisible order revealed in Christ. The physical and visible world proceeds through subordinate powers and belongs to the lower cosmological order. Thus all things may still be ordered under Christ, without making the Father directly responsible for the fashioning of the fleshly and visible world.

The hostile witnesses provide evidence that this distinction was central to Marcionite interpretation. Tertullian says the Marcionites divided reality into visible and invisible classes, "to divide things into the two classes of visible and invisible, with two gods for their authors, and so to claim the invisible for their own, (the supreme) God" (Tertullian, Against Marcion I.16). Though Tertullian rejects the doctrine, his accusation supports the conclusion that Marcionite teaching separated the

invisible things belonging to the supreme God from the visible things belonging to the lower world.

Tertullian also addresses this very passage in Colossians. He argues that Marcion removed certain constituent parts from the hymn, asking, “what fullness is that which is not composed of the constituents which Marcion has removed from it” (Tertullian, Against Marcion V.19). He then identifies those constituents as the things “created in Christ, whether in heaven or on earth,” the things “visible and invisible,” and the ranks of “thrones and dominions and principalities and powers” (Tertullian, Against Marcion V.19). Tertullian does not give a clean transcript of Marcion’s Apostolicon, nor does he tell us with precision which exact words stood in Marcion’s text and which did not. His testimony shows that this passage was disputed precisely because it bore upon the distinction between heaven and earth, invisible and visible, and the spiritual ranks of the higher order.

This is important for defending the reconstruction. Tertullian’s complaint should be read as polemical and collective, not as a word-for-word report of Marcion’s text. When he lists the “constituents” of the passage, he is naming the categories needed for his own argument against Marcion: heaven and earth, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers. But this does not prove that every item in Tertullian’s list was absent from Marcion’s Apostolicon. It may mean that Marcion’s text, or Marcionite interpretation of the text, excluded the earthly and visible categories while preserving the heavenly and invisible hierarchy.

The retained angelic-rank list also fits the Marcionite sense of the passage. Thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers are not ordinary earthly objects. They are precisely the kind of heavenly and supra-cosmic orders that belong naturally to the invisible hierarchy. Retaining them allows the hymn to confess Christ’s supremacy over the spiritual order without making Him the immediate fashioner of the physical, fleshly, and visible world.

Jerome witnesses to the same controversy in his Commentary on Laodiceans, the epistle commonly called Ephesians. Speaking against Marcion and Valentinus, he asks, “Ubi sunt Marcion et Valentinus, et omnes haeretici, qui alterum mundi, id est, visibilium, et alterum asserunt invisibilium conditorem?” (Jerome, Commentary on Laodiceans/Ephesians, on Ephesians 1:9). That is, Jerome accuses them of teaching one source of the world, that is, of

visible things, and another of invisible things. Jerome writes as an opponent, but his testimony supports the same distinction: Marcionite exegesis separated the heavenly, spiritual, and invisible creation from the earthly, physical, and visible world.

The reconstruction is therefore not arbitrary. The received text says, “in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible.” The Marcionite form preserves the conceptual structure, but gives it its proper theological sense: “in heaven and invisible.” It removes exactly the two categories the hostile witnesses say Marcionite theology separated from the supreme God: earth and visible. The result is shorter, coherent, and theologically intelligible.

Colossians 1:17 also supports this reading: “And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.” This does not require that Christ directly fashioned the physical world. The phrase “all things” is governed by the immediate context: the heavenly and invisible orders just named, including thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers. Christ is before all these things, and by Him these things consist. The verse therefore confesses Christ’s priority, supremacy, and sustaining power over the invisible hierarchy, while remaining compatible with deferred demiurgy.

This reconstruction also avoids the opposite error of over-editing. If Marcion had simply removed the entire hymn, Tertullian’s detailed engagement with its categories would be harder to explain. Tertullian does not merely say that Marcion deleted the passage. He argues that Marcion removed or emptied those parts which, in Tertullian’s reading, would make the hymn support the direct fashioning of all visible and earthly things by the supreme God. That fits a partial Marcionite form better than a total omission.

Therefore, our form of Colossians 1:15-17 does not erase cosmology. It clarifies it. Christ is confessed as preeminent over every heavenly and invisible power, while the

physical and visible world remains the domain of matter, flesh, and the lower ruler. The hymn is therefore a confession of Christ's supremacy within a real hierarchy of being, not a confession that the true God directly fashioned the lower world.

For this reason, the reconstruction is not proven word-for-word by the surviving hostile witnesses, but it is disciplined, cautious, and patristically defensible. It preserves Colossians 1:15 and 1:17, which Tertullian's argument presupposes, and it narrows Colossians 1:16 at precisely the point where Marcionite cosmology required distinction: heaven from earth, invisible from visible, and spiritual hierarchy from the physical world.

See also: Question 9.14, "How does the Church distinguish physical and visible creation from spiritual and invisible creation?"; Question 9.17, "What is the locus classicus in Laodiceans?"

9.17. What is the locus classicus in Laodiceans?

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."

Laodiceans 3:9

Tertullian's well-known complaint about Laodiceans, commonly called Ephesians, turns on a remarkably small textual point. He alleges that Marcion's text lacked the preposition "in" in the phrase "hid in God." He then argues that this omission forces the reader to understand the clause as though the mystery had been hidden "from" the God who created all things. But that is a polemical amplification, not a secure textual demonstration of an intentional Marcionite editorial program.

The absence of a short particle like ἐν is exactly the sort of mechanical omission scribes routinely introduce, especially in densely copied theological prose, without any doctrinal motive. Text-critically, the "missing ἐν" reading is also not uniquely Marcionite. The broader manuscript tradition contains witnesses that likewise omit ἐν at Ephesians 3:9, showing that this variant can arise and circulate independently of Marcionite transmission. That alone substantially weakens the inference: "Marcion deleted it, therefore Marcion intended to teach dualism."

Grammatically, Tertullian's theological conclusion is larger than the textual difference he claims. In Greek, removing ἐν typically leaves a dative construction, τῷ θεῷ, that does not naturally and automatically yield "hidden from God" without further interpretive pressure. Tertullian's "from God" construal works more

cleanly in Latin rhetoric than it does as a strict inference from the underlying Greek syntax. This suggests that we are seeing a controversial reading strategy, an adversary leaning hard on an awkward or ambiguous line, rather than reliable evidence that Marcion deliberately recast the verse to teach a metaphysical dualism.

The theological issue must also be stated carefully. Marcionite Christianity does teach deferred demiurgy: the physical world was made mediately through lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God the Father. In the traditional Apellean reading, the lower maker of the physical world is the being called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." But this is not dualism in the classical sense. The lower maker is not a second co-eternal, co-equal god. He is subordinate, begotten, limited, and derivative.

Therefore, even if Tertullian is accurately reporting a Marcionite textual variant, the conclusion he draws is still too large. The variant would not prove that Marcionite Christianity taught two equal gods, nor would it prove that Marcion deliberately altered Paul to establish a dualist metaphysics. At most, it would show that Tertullian found a textual ambiguity useful for arguing that Marcion separated God the Father from the maker of the physical world.

Nor does this verse erase the distinction between Apellean and Lucanist readings. Traditional Apelleans preserved the original teaching of Marcion by identifying the lower maker of the physical world with Satan, while typically treating Yahweh as a false and fabricated national deity rather than automatically identifying him with the "god of this world." Some later Lucanists, by contrast, did identify or closely associate the 'god of the Jews' with the just 'god of this world,' the lower maker and governor of the physical world. But even in that Lucanist framework, the 'god of this world' remains subordinate to God the Father and is not a second eternal principle.

Finally, if this verse truly functioned as a decisive locus classicus for proving "Marcionite dualism," it is notable that Epiphanius does not make it a centerpiece in his anti-Marcionite cataloguing in the way one might expect from an author eager to stockpile prooftexts and textual "smoking guns." Epiphanius often pounces on what he takes to be distinctive Marcionite corruptions. His failure to spotlight this specific verse, or to underline the alleged prepositional variant, is at least consistent with the judgment that

Laodiceans 3:9 was not a stable, widely recognized Marcionite signature, but a minor textual fluctuation inflated by later polemic.

For these reasons, Laodiceans 3:9 should not be pressed into service as evidence that Marcion deliberately edited Paul to promote crude dualism, nor should it be treated as a textual foundation for the claim that Marcionite Christianity is reducible to two rival gods. The Marcionite doctrine is subtler: God the Father is supreme; the physical world is made mediately through lower powers; the lower maker of the physical world is subordinate and derivative; and salvation is the revelation of the Father through Christ, who rescues souls from bondage to the present world-order.

At most, Tertullian's argument shows how anti-Marcionite writers tried to frame Marcion's text. A small, readily explicable scribal omission was leveraged into a sweeping theological accusation that the underlying textual evidence does not compel. Laodiceans 3:9 may be important for later anti-Marcionite controversy, but it should not be allowed to override the more precise Marcionite confession: not dualism, not two coequal gods, but deferred demiurgy beneath the sovereignty of God the Father.

9.18. What are the three heavens?

Marcionite Christians confess a threefold division of heaven: the visible heavens, the second heaven of the lower powers, and the third heaven, which is Paradise and the Kingdom of God.

The first heaven is the visible heaven: the sky, firmament, stars, and ordered heavens seen by bodily eyes. This is the heaven of the visible cosmos, bound to the material and fleshly order of this world. Paul distinguishes the earthly and heavenly orders when he writes:

"There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another."

I Corinthians 15:40

And again:

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

I Corinthians 15:50

The second heaven is the higher cosmic realm of the 'god of this world' and the princes, powers, thrones, dominions, and rulers who govern the present age. Paul speaks of this lower ruler when he writes:

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the

image of God, should shine unto them."

II Corinthians 4:4

Paul also speaks of heavenly powers and rulers:

"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,"

Laodiceans 3:10

And again:

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places."

Laodiceans 6:12

This second heaven is the realm of cosmic government beneath God the Father. It is the dwelling-place of the lower powers who rule the present world-order. It is also the realm where pre-embodied souls dwelt before their descent into flesh, embodiment, trial, and eventual salvation.

The ancient heresiologists preserve a related teaching from Apelles, the disciple of Marcion. Pseudo-Tertullian says that Apelles taught that the lower world was formed "in imitation of a superior world," but not with the same perfection as that higher realm. This supports the Marcionite understanding that the 'god of this world' did not create the visible order as an original kingdom of his own, but fashioned it as a lower, defective imitation of the higher cosmic pattern.

The third heaven is the heaven of God the Father: Paradise, the Kingdom of God, and the realm revealed by Jesus Christ. This is the true heavenly kingdom beyond the dominion of the 'god of this world.' Paul writes:

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth; such an one caught up to the third heaven.
And I knew such a man, whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;
How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

II Corinthians 12:2–4

For Marcionite Christians, this passage is central. Paul was swept into the third heaven, into Paradise itself, and there received the direct revelation of Christ for the Gospel. This agrees with Paul's own declaration:

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.
For I neither received it of man,

neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Galatians 1:11–12

The ancient heresiologists also show that Marcionite and Marcion-adjacent schools distinguished between the highest God, the lower powers, and the fashioned world. Tertullian, while arguing against Marcion, connects the dispute over Paul's ascent with Paradise and the question of whether the higher God has a Paradise of his own. Rhodo, preserved by Eusebius, also reports that Marcionite schools debated one, two, and three principles or natures, showing that these heavenly distinctions belonged to the wider Marcionite theological world.

Therefore, when we speak of three heavens, we do not mean three equal realms or three gods. We mean three ordered levels of reality:

The first visible heaven of the material and fleshly world;

The second heaven of the 'god of this world', the princes, powers, and pre-embodied souls, after which the visible world was defectively patterned;

The third heaven, Paradise, and the Kingdom of God, where God the Father, Christ, and the souls that have obtained salvation dwell.

9.19. Why do beauty, love, and goodness exist in this world?

The Marcionite Church does not hate the world, the flesh, or created beauty. The world is flawed, corruptible, and inferior to what is above, yet it still contains real beauty, love, and goodness because it was fashioned as an imitation of a higher order.

Apelles, the disciple of Marcion, taught that the lower world was formed in imitation of a superior world, but not with the same perfection as that higher realm. The Church receives this Apellean witness as valuable testimony to the wider Marcionite cosmology: this world is not the Kingdom of God, but neither is it pure evil or hateful in itself.

The visible world bears fractured reflections of the second heaven, and the second heaven itself is a lower reflection of the third heaven, Paradise and the Kingdom of God. Earthly beauty, familial love, friendship, mercy, art, music, order, and the goodness found in creatures are therefore not to be despised. They are signs, shadows, and fragments of what is greater.

The faithful may admire beauty, love, and goodness in this world with gratitude and discernment, while remembering that the present world-order is not the Kingdom of God. We do not worship the world, the body, or fleshly beauty, nor do

we mistake a fragment for the fullness. We receive every good thing as a faint witness to the greater incorruptible good that is to come.

Because matter is not evil in itself, the goods of this world are not illusions. They are real but partial, unstable, and inferior reflections of the higher order. The Dialogue of Megethius therefore helps the Church admire created beauty without worshipping the world and reject world-hatred without denying corruption.

See also: Question 9.09, "What is the difference between matter, the world, and the world-order, and are they evil?"; Question 9.10, "What is deferred demiurgy?"; Question 9.18, "What are the three heavens?"; Question 10.09, "Does the Marcionite Church believe the body is evil?"

9.20. How does the Church explain natural evil?

Natural evil refers to suffering that occurs independently of direct human action. Earthquakes, droughts, famines, congenital diseases, plagues, and natural disasters fall into this category. Unlike moral evil, which is rooted in human choice and disobedience, natural evil appears indiscriminate and morally neutral, yet it inflicts real pain and hardship upon humanity.

The Dialogue of Megethius helps the Church avoid two false answers: that evil comes from God the Father directly, or that evil comes from matter as though matter were itself wicked. Natural evil belongs to the instability, corruption, and lower ordering of the present world, not to the Father's perfect will or to matter as an evil substance.

Many have viewed natural evil as a serious objection to belief in a good and sovereign God. They ask: if it would be wrong for a person to allow such suffering, why is it not wrong for God? Does a benevolent God permit devastation that no decent human being would ever cause?

Marcionite Christianity answers this question by beginning with the true order of reality. There is God the Father, revealed by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by the Apostle Paul. Beneath him are lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions. The physical world was not made directly by God the Father in the fullness of his perfection. It was made mediately through a lower, imperfect being. This is the doctrine of deferred demiurgy.

According to this doctrine, the maker of the physical world is not a second co-eternal, co-equal god. He is a subordinate lower power. Traditional Apelleans, preserving the original teaching of Marcion,

identified this lower maker of the physical world with the being called in the Apostolicon “the god of this world” and called in the Evangelicon “the prince of this world.” Apelles described this lower maker as a fiery angel who attempted to imitate the higher realm but failed to reproduce its perfection. The result is the physical world we inhabit: ordered but unstable, beautiful but corruptible, lawful but violent, capable of life yet always shadowed by decay and death.

Natural evil, then, is not a defect in God the Father. It is a defect in the lower physical order. This world was made imperfectly because it was made by a lower imperfect being. Its earthquakes, diseases, famines, and disasters belong to the instability of a creation that reflects the limitations of its maker. The physical world is not evil in itself, but it is inferior, mixed, fragile, and subject to corruption.

This is why Marcionite Christianity does not answer the problem of natural evil by making God the Father the direct author of every disaster. The Father revealed by Christ is not the author of disease, catastrophe, decay, and death. These belong immediately to the lower order of the physical world, governed by lesser powers. Yet neither does Marcionite Christianity teach that the maker of the physical world is equal to God. The lower maker is subordinate, limited, and derivative. His world exists beneath the sovereignty of God the Father.

This does not mean that God the Father is absent from the question of natural evil. All being ultimately depends upon God the Father, even when the physical world is made mediately through lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions. God permits the lower physical order to continue for a time, not because it is perfect, but because he is using even this corruptible world as the arena in which the Gospel is preached, souls are rescued, judgment is revealed, mercy is shown, and the children of God are called out of bondage into the liberty of Christ.

Why, then, does God the Father keep the physical world this way?

He permits it because the present age is not the final kingdom. God the Father has not chosen to perfect the lower creation by force from within its own system. Instead, he has revealed a higher salvation through Jesus Christ. He allows the present world to continue for a time so that the Gospel may be preached, so that souls may be rescued from bondage, and so that the children of God may be called out from the dominion of the lower powers into the liberty of Christ.

The Apostle Paul gives voice to this truth:

“For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 7:20–22

This passage is central to the Marcionite answer. Creation is subject to vanity. It is in bondage to corruption. It groans and travails in pain. That is exactly what we see in the natural order. The world is not already the perfected kingdom of God. It is a lower, suffering, corruptible order awaiting deliverance.

Natural evil, therefore, is both a symptom and a revelation. It reveals the inferiority of the physical world and the insufficiency of the lower maker. It shows that the present age cannot save itself. It exposes the limits of law, nature, flesh, and worldly wisdom. The disasters of this world are not evidence against the goodness of God the Father. They are evidence that this physical order is not his final and perfect kingdom.

Natural evil may also function, in part, as judgment, chastening, exposure, or summons to repentance. This does not mean that every disaster should be simplistically assigned to a particular sin, nor that every sufferer is more guilty than another. Rather, it means that suffering within the lower physical order reveals the condition of a world estranged from its true hope. It exposes the vanity of the present age and reminds mankind that life in this world is fragile, temporary, and unable to save itself.

At the same time, natural evil also becomes a stage upon which the depth of human character is revealed. In the wake of disaster, we often witness courage, compassion, sacrifice, mercy, and love. We also see cowardice, cruelty, exploitation, and indifference. Natural tragedy exposes not only the fragility of the world, but also the moral condition of mankind.

Morally accountable humanity stands under the shadow of sin:

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 3:23

That any of us are granted life, mercy, rescue, and the promise of eternal inheritance is not something owed to us by the physical world. It is the gift of God the Father through

Jesus Christ. The present world gives suffering, decay, and death. Christ gives life, freedom, and incorruption.

To those who demand that God justify himself before man, Marcionite Christianity gives a sober reply: God does not answer to man. Man answers to God.

“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 12:12

It is wrong for human beings to take life because we are not its authors. We are creatures, not sovereigns. But all life ultimately belongs to God the Father. Even where death comes through the instability of the lower physical order, man still gives account to God, not God to man. The divine prerogative belongs to God alone, while human beings are judged by the law of love, mercy, and righteousness revealed through Christ.

The existence of natural evil therefore does not place God the Father in the dock of human judgment. Rather, it reminds us that we are mortal creatures living in a lower and corruptible order. We are not the authors of life. We are not the masters of creation. We are those in need of rescue.

Ultimately, the only lasting hope in a world marked by natural suffering is Jesus Christ. He does not promise that his followers will be untouched by the hardships of this life. The children of God still live for now within the lower physical order, and therefore they still encounter sickness, loss, disaster, and death. But Christ offers something greater than temporary exemption from suffering. He offers deliverance from the whole dominion of corruption.

In the Gospel, God the Father does not merely explain natural evil. He overcomes it. He sends Christ into the world governed by lower powers, and Christ conquers without belonging to it. The prince of this world has nothing in him. The lower powers cannot claim him. Death cannot hold him. Through him, those who believe are rescued from the present evil age and promised a kingdom beyond decay.

In that coming reality, moral and natural evil alike will be no more. The bondage of corruption will end. The groaning creation will be delivered. The children of God will be transformed into the image of Christ, free from sin, sorrow, death, and the tyranny of the lower powers.

Until then, natural evil does not prove divine apathy. It reveals the condition of a lower world made imperfectly by a lower imperfect being. It reveals a creation still groaning for redemption. It exposes the vanity of the present age,

summons mankind to repentance, and points beyond itself to the mercy of God the Father, who is already at work through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, calling his children out of corruption and into eternal life.

See also: Question 11.05, "How does the Church explain moral evil?"; Question 12.06, "What is annihilationism?"; Question 12.07, "What is the eternal sin?"

9.21. Why does God the Father permit the present world to continue?

God the Father permits the present world to continue for a time so that the Gospel may be preached, souls may repent and be rescued from bondage, and the children of God may be gathered into the liberty of Christ.

This permission does not signify approval of evil or suffering. The present age is not the final Kingdom of God, but the temporary arena in which mercy is revealed, judgment is exposed, repentance is summoned, and redemption is offered.

Therefore, the evil, corruption, decay, violence, and instability of the present world should not be attributed directly to God the Father. The world is imperfect because it was made by a lower imperfect power. It is ordered, but unstable; beautiful, but corruptible; capable of life, but subject to death. The physical world is not evil in itself, but it is inferior, mixed, and governed by lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God.

This lower maker of the physical world is not a second co-eternal, co-equal god. He is subordinate, limited, and derivative. Traditional Apelleans, preserving the original teaching of Marcion, identified him with the being called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." He is a lower power, not the true God. His making of the physical world explains why the present order contains both structure and suffering, law and death, beauty and bondage.

Why, then, does God allow this world with evil to continue?

He allows it because the present age is not the final kingdom. God the Father has not chosen to perfect the lower creation by force from within its own system. Instead, he has revealed a higher salvation through Jesus Christ. He permits the present world to continue for a time so that the Gospel may be preached, so that souls may be rescued from bondage, and so that the children of God may be called out from the dominion of the lower powers into the liberty of Christ.

This does not mean that God delights in evil or suffering. It means that he is using even this corruptible world as the arena in which mercy is revealed, judgment is exposed, repentance is summoned, and redemption is offered. The evil of this world is not the final word. It is the condition from which Christ rescues his own.

What if God had made souls incapable of evil? A world without choice might contain no rebellion, but it would also lack genuine love, worship, obedience, mercy, repentance, and faith. Forced obedience is not righteousness. It is compulsion. The true God revealed through Jesus Christ seeks children, not machines. He desires willing hearts, not coerced behavior.

Freedom entails risk, but it also makes possible the glory of redemption. The present world reveals what law, flesh, nature, and lower powers can and cannot do. It exposes the vanity of the present age. It reveals mankind's need for rescue. And it provides the arena in which the mercy of God the Father is revealed through Jesus Christ.

Thus, Marcionite Christians do not believe that this present world is the final expression of God's goodness. It is not the perfected kingdom. It is a lower, corruptible order awaiting deliverance. The Apostle Paul writes:

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 7:18

This is the promise that sustains us: not that we will be spared all pain in the present age, but that the suffering of this lower world is not the end of the story. God the Father has revealed in Christ a kingdom beyond corruption, beyond death, beyond the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions that govern this age.

In that kingdom, evil will not merely be restrained. It will be overcome. The children of God will be delivered from the bondage of corruption and transformed into the image of Christ. The question, then, is not why this lower world is already perfect. It is not. The question is why God allows it to continue for a time. Marcionite Christianity answers: so that Christ may rescue his own from the present evil age and bring them into eternal life through God the Father.

9.22. How does the Church understand Satan?

Satan is a fallen angel, a hostile lower power, and the adversary of mankind. He is not a second co-eternal, co-equal god. He is not equal to God the Father. He belongs among the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and

dominions that govern and afflict the present age.

Jesus makes it unmistakably clear that Satan is a fallen angel:

“And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fallen from heaven.”

Evangelicon 9:18

This declaration follows the return of the seventy disciples, who rejoiced that even the demons submitted to them in Jesus’ name. But Jesus reminded them that Satan had already been cast down. His fall was not merely a future event, but a present reality. He had no power over Christ, and therefore no ultimate power over those sent out in Christ’s authority.

Jesus assured his disciples that he had granted them authority over the hostile powers of this age:

“Behold, I give unto you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”

Evangelicon 9:19

Yet Jesus also made clear that spiritual authority, while extraordinary, is not the highest cause for joy. Far greater is the assurance of salvation, that our names are written in the heavens:

“Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in the heavens.”

Evangelicon 9:20

In the traditional Apellean reading, which preserves the original teaching of Marcion, Satan is the same lower power called in the Apostolicon “the god of this world” and called in the Evangelicon “the prince of this world.” He is the lower maker of the physical world, but he is not the true God. He is begotten, subordinate, limited, and derivative. Apelles described this lower maker as a fiery angel who attempted to imitate the higher realm but failed to reproduce its perfection. This is why the physical world is ordered yet unstable, beautiful yet corruptible, capable of life yet subject to decay and death.

Traditional Apelleans, like Marcion, did not regard Satan as a second divine principle equal to God. Nor did they treat the physical world as evil in itself. Rather, they understood Satan as a lower just power: inferior, limited, and unable to reveal the alien mercy of God the Father. He could impose law, judgment, and accusation, but he could not reveal grace.

The Lucanists understood Satan somewhat differently. They distinguished Satan from the “god of this world.” In their threefold structure, God the Father, stands above all; the just “god of this world” is the maker of the physical

world beneath him; and Satan is an evil third power. This Lucanist distinction does not create dualism, because Satan still remains a lower power, not a co-eternal or co-equal god.

The Severians took a stricter ascetic view. Like the traditional Apelleans, they identified Satan with the "god of this world" and the "prince of this world." Unlike the traditional Apelleans, however, they regarded this lower maker of the physical world as evil rather than merely just, limited, and inferior. This led them toward a more world-denying and ascetic posture. Yet even the Severians did not make Satan equal to God the Father.

Until Christ fully overthrows the powers of darkness, believers remain engaged in spiritual struggle. The Apostle Paul reminds us that our conflict is not against flesh and blood, but against lower spiritual powers:

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:
Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

Laodiceans 6:10–18

This passage places Satan within the broader hierarchy of hostile lower powers, principalities, and rulers of the darkness of this world. He acts through accusation, blindness, fear, false religion, worldly systems, and spiritual deception. But his power is not absolute. He is already fallen, already judged, and already defeated in Christ.

Tertullian, though writing against Marcion, still preserves an important admission. He calls Satan "the angel," "which both we and Marcion know him to be," thereby conceding that Marcion also

recognized Satan as a fallen angel. This is consistent with the Marcionite confession: Satan is real, hostile, and powerful within the present age, but he is not God. He is a fallen lower power beneath God the Father.

Christ has already triumphed over Satan's dominion. Through Christ, believers are equipped not only to resist evil but to stand firm in the light of divine truth, clothed in righteousness and strengthened by the hope of eternal life. Satan may blind the unbelieving world, but he has no claim over Christ, and he cannot overcome those whose names are written in the heavens.

9.23. How does the Church understand pagan deities?

Marcionites hold that the deities of the pagans were not all mere inventions. Some were real lesser spirits—angels or devils—who held authority in this present world, though identifying which ones is difficult. Discernment rests on their fruits, the bondage their cults produced, and how they shrink before the Gospel. With the advent of Christ their sway was unmasked and greatly diminished. Similar views appear in other early Christian thinkers who equated pagan deities with hostile spirits, including Justin Martyr (1 Apol. 5; 2 Apol. 5), Athenagoras (Plea 24), Theophilus of Antioch (Ad Autol. II.31), Tertullian (Apol. 22; De Idol.), Clement of Alexandria (Protr. 2), Origen (C. Cels. V.4), Lactantius (Div. Inst. II), and Augustine (City of God VIII–IX).

9.24. Who is the 'god of the Jews'?

Marcionite Christianity teaches deferred demiurgy: the physical world was fashioned mediately through lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God the Father. The name Yahweh is a modern scholarly vocalization of the Hebrew divine name YHWH. Ancient Marcionites, as quoted by heresiologists, usually speak instead of the 'god of the Jews.'

In the traditional Apellean reading, which preserves the original teaching of Marcion, the lower fashioner of the physical world is the being called by the Apostle the 'god of this world.' He is subordinate, begotten, limited, and derivative, not a second eternal God. Apelles described him as an angelic power who attempted to imitate the higher realm but failed to reproduce its perfection. This explains why the physical world is ordered yet unstable, beautiful yet corruptible, lawful yet violent, capable of life yet subject to decay and death.

The Apelleans typically viewed the god of the Jews, Yahweh, as a false and fabricated deity, comparable to other mythological and national

gods invented throughout human history, such as Zeus, Thor, Baal, or Marduk. On this reading, the god of the Jews is not the lower fashioner of the physical world himself, but a counterfeit religious identity projected onto the lower order by human tradition, priestcraft, fear, and false revelation. The deity portrayed in the Hebrew Bible is therefore not God the Father, not the source of the Gospel, and not worthy of Christian worship.

This Apellean attitude is clearest in the Syllogisms of Apelles. Ancient testimony says Apelles composed the Syllogisms to expose the Hebrew writings as inconsistent, false, self-contradictory, and mythical. Eusebius preserves Rhodo's report that Apelles said the prophecies "refuted themselves, because they have said nothing true; for they are inconsistent, and false, and self-contradictory," and further says Apelles wrote many things against the law of Moses, being zealous for its "refutation and overthrow" (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.13). Origen likewise says Apelles treated the writings of the Jews as fables (Origen, Against Celsus 5.54).

The Syllogisms were therefore not merely a criticism of isolated passages. They were a direct refutation of the existence and authority of the god presented in the Hebrew myths. The Apellean position was that the Hebrew Bible did not reveal a true lower god worthy of worship, but a fabricated and contradictory religious fiction.

This means that, in the Apellean stream, the 'god of this world' and the god of the Jews should not automatically be collapsed into one figure. The 'god of this world' is the lower world-fashioning angel, identified with Satan, while the god of the Jews is typically treated as a false national deity and fabricated claimant to divine authority. The Hebrew Bible is rejected not because it reveals a true rival god, but because it falsely attributes divine authority to a counterfeit deity and binds its readers to law, violence, jealousy, tribal election, and failed prophecy.

A minority position among later Lucanists, however, described the 'god of this world' more directly as the 'god of the Jews.' This was not the universal Marcionite position, nor the traditional Apellean position. It appears instead as a later Lucanist tendency, likely among communities that may not have been well catechized in the older distinction between the lower world-fashioning power and the fabricated deity of the Hebrew Bible.

The clearest evidence for this appears in the Dialogue of Adamantius. In that work, Megethius, the Marcionite

spokesman whom we identify with the Lucanist stream, distinguishes God the Father, the ‘god of this world’, and Satan. He explicitly identifies the lower just ruler with the god of the Jews, saying: “This is one, who handed down the Law, the God of the Jews,” and again, “The God of the Jews is one, [the demiurge], but the Other is not his son” (Dialogue of Adamantius 1.9-10).

This fits the Lucanist pattern. The Lucanists distinguished three principles: good, just, and evil. God the Father is the good God above all. The ‘god of this world’ is the just lower ruler beneath Him. Satan is the evil third power. Because the Lucanists distinguished the just lower ruler from Satan, some later Lucanists could identify the just lower ruler with the god of the Jews, the lawgiver and governor of the lower order, while still treating Satan as a separate evil adversary.

Epiphanius preserves similar hostile testimony. In the Panarion, he reports that Marcionites fasted on the Sabbath because it was the rest day of “the god of the Jews who made the world.” Elsewhere, he describes Marcionite teaching in terms of the prophets speaking by inspiration of the archon who fashioned the world, and refers to the god of the Jews as the lower world-fashioning power. These reports show that some heresiological witnesses associated Marcionite doctrine with the formula: god of the Jews equals the lower world-ruler (Epiphanius, Panarion 42).

Even these witnesses must be read carefully. They are hostile reports, not neutral Marcionite catechisms. They often compress different Marcionite schools into one polemical summary. The existence of these reports provides evidence that some Marcionites, especially later Lucanists, identified or closely associated the god of the Jews with the just ‘god of this world.’ It does not establish that this was the universal Marcionite doctrine.

The difference between the Apellean and Lucanist readings is therefore clear. In the Apellean framework, the lower world-fashioning angel is identified with Satan, while the god of the Jews is more typically regarded as a false and fabricated deity of the Hebrew Bible. In the Lucanist framework, the just ‘god of this world’ is distinguished from Satan, and some later Lucanists identified that just lower ruler with the god of the Jews.

Thus, Marcionite Christians reject both errors: we do not worship the god of the Jews as God, and we do not elevate him into a second eternal principle. The god of the Jews is not God the Father. He is not equal to God. He is not the

source of the Gospel. In the traditional Apellean view, he is a false and fabricated deity of the Hebrew Bible, refuted by Apelles' Syllogisms as part of the mythology of the Jews. In the later minority Lucanist view, he was identified with the just 'god of this world', the lower ruler of the visible order. But neither view makes him the true God, and neither view compromises the Marcionite confession that God the Father, revealed by Jesus Christ, alone is supreme.

9.25. How does the Church regard astrology?

The Church distinguishes the recognition of heavenly signs from divination, fatalism, and the worship of celestial powers. The Marcionite Church affirms that the heavens can bear real signs permitted by God, and that these signs can be read as public testimony to divine action in history and as warnings of coming judgment. As the Evangelicon teaches: "And there shall be signs in sun, and moon, and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and waves roaring;" (Evangelicon 19:22).

At the same time, we explicitly couch any astrological sympathies with Paul's warnings against returning to religious calendarism and the "elements" (στοιχεῖα) of the world. The Apostle cautions against being brought back under ritualized observances that enslave rather than liberate: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years" (Galatians 4:10), and he warns against captivity through merely human systems and elemental powers: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Colossians 2:8). For the Marcionite Christian, this means: signs are not fate, and the heavens are never a substitute providence.

This distinction also clarifies the famous polemical charge. The oft-cited claim that "the Marcionites are very strongly addicted to astrology" comes from Tertullian in Against Marcion 1.18, where it functions as a taunt rather than a documented Marcionite rule of faith or liturgical directive. There is no surviving Marcionite creed, canon rule, or liturgical instruction that commands believers to practice horoscope-casting or astral divination.

A more plausible reason the slur circulated is calendrical. Marcionite Christians historically distinguished themselves in how they fixed feast days: rather than anchoring Easter to the Jewish Passover (as some early communities did) or relying primarily on later ecclesiastical

convention, Marcionite observance has often emphasized historically remembered dates and widely discussed celestial phenomena—something opponents could easily (and unfairly) caricature as "astrology."

That is how the Marcionite Church treats the heavens in practice: not to foretell fortunes, but to remember and to confess. For example, in Marcionite Christian practice, Good Friday is fixed as the first Friday in April, historically anchored (in Marcionite tradition) to Friday, April 3, 33 C.E., and associated with a lunar eclipse tradition. This is commemoration, not divination: we do not consult the heavens to predict personal outcomes, but to anchor the Lord's passion to a remembered historical horizon.

Further, later Christian writers explicitly appealed to non-Christian chroniclers when discussing the crucifixion darkness and "eclipse" tradition. They report that Thallus, a pagan historian, tried to explain the darkness as an eclipse (a notice preserved only through later quotation, especially in Julius Africanus), and that Phlegon of Tralles recorded an extraordinary eclipse and earthquake in the time of Tiberius (cited by Origen and also carried in the chronographic tradition associated with Eusebius and Jerome). Whatever one concludes about these reports, they are invoked precisely as external witnesses to a public portent—again, sign language, not horoscope practice.

So our answer is "yes," with precision: we affirm heavenly signs (Evangelicon 19:22), and we deny astrology as fate-craft and fortune-telling—lest anyone be returned to "days, and months, and times, and years" (Galatians 4:10) or to the "rudiments of the world" rather than Christ (Colossians 2:8).

LESSON 10: ANTHROPOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson concerns the nature and destiny of the soul, its relation to the body, and the doctrines of preexistence, transmigration, freedom, and reason.

10.01. What is the soul?

The soul is the living, personal principle of human identity that thinks, wills, remembers, suffers, and is capable of receiving the revelation and salvation of God the Father through Christ. It is distinct from the physical body and continues beyond the death of the body.

"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

II Corinthians 4:16

The soul is not divine by nature and does not save itself. It remains dependent upon grace, judgment, correction, and liberation through Jesus Christ.

10.02. What is the relation between the soul and the body?

The soul and body are joined during earthly life, but they are not identical. The body belongs to the physical, fleshly, and visible order and is subject to corruption, while the soul is the enduring personal subject capable of faith, repentance, and salvation.

The body is not evil in itself. It may become an instrument of righteousness through prayer, fasting, charity, Holy Baptism, and Holy Communion. Nevertheless, salvation concerns the liberation and transformation of the soul rather than the eternal preservation of corruptible flesh.

The body consequently possesses a temporary sacred use during earthly life. It is not the soul's final destiny, but it is the vessel through which the faithful worship, serve, suffer, and grow in holiness.

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

I Corinthians 6:19–20

See also: Question 10.09, "Does the Marcionite Church believe the body is evil?"; Question 10.05, "What is the transmigration of souls?"; Question 11.01, "What is salvation?"

10.03. What are the different natures of souls?

The early patristic record explicitly associates Marcionites with the doctrine of a "different nature" of souls. Origen, in his Commentary on Romans, says the Marcionites taught that souls differ by nature, and he treats this as a defining feature of their anthropology.

At the same time, this development did not arise in a vacuum. It draws on patterns already present in the Apostolicon. The Apostle Paul repeatedly distinguishes between the "natural" and the "spiritual" man: "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God… but he that is spiritual judgeth all things" (I Corinthians 2:14–15). He contrasts a "natural body" with a "spiritual body," insisting that "there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (I Corinthians 15:44–46). He also divides humanity into those who are "after the flesh" and those who are "after the Spirit" (Paul's Epistle to the Romans 7:5–6), and prays that the believers' "whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless" (I Thessalonians 5:23), implying a

real qualitative differentiation within human life. In receiving and reworking some Valentinian-style language about different soul-orders, later Marcionites were developing their own theology in direct dialogue with these Pauline distinctions.

For these reasons, we can say that there is scriptural warrant for speaking of a real distinction—often described, in later language, as a "different nature" of souls—between those who remain merely "natural" and those who, by the grace of God the Father revealed in Christ, participate in a truly "spiritual" life. While we reject any crude fatalism, we acknowledge with the Apostle Paul that not all souls stand in the same order, orientation, or destiny, and that the epistles of the Apostolicon themselves provide the categories of "natural" and "spiritual" that later Marcionites developed, in conversation with certain Gnostic currents, into a more explicit doctrine of differing soul-natures.

In the Dialogue of Adamantius, the Marcionite Marcus presses this distinction to its sharpest edge: only "spiritual" souls, that is, the spiritual element in man (the pneuma), are saved. This means that souls that have not attained spirituality through faith in Christ are not saved. In Marcus's framing, salvation belongs properly to what is spiritual, not to the material order, and not to the merely natural constitution of man as such.

10.04. What is the preexistence of souls?

The Marcionite Church affirms the preexistence of souls: souls exist prior to embodiment. This doctrine coheres naturally with the Apostle's "before" language and with the Marcionite account of embodiment within the physical, fleshly, and visible world.

"He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world…"

Laodiceans 1:4–5

And again:

God's saving purpose and grace were given "before the world began."
Titus 1:2

In Marcionite theology, the soul is not merely a product of the flesh, nor is it generated by the material body. The soul precedes embodiment and enters the lower physical world, where it becomes subject to bondage, forgetfulness, judgment, temptation, and the powers of the present age. This is why salvation concerns the awakening and liberation of the soul, not the permanent vindication of corruptible flesh.

This doctrine also shows that souls were created directly by God the Father. Because souls are non-

physical and preexist embodiment, they cannot be explained as products of the lower physical order or as creations of the lower maker of the physical world. The body belongs to the corruptible realm shaped through deferred demiurgy, but the soul belongs to the higher order. Souls come from God the Father, descend into embodiment, and are liberated by Christ so that they may return to the Father's kingdom.

In the Apellean tradition, which preserves the original teaching of Marcion, this preexistence is described through a concrete descent narrative. Tertullian reports that Apelles taught that souls were enticed down from heavenly abodes by a lower power, the being called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." Apelles described this lower power as a fiery angel, the lower maker of the physical world, who attempted to imitate the higher realm but failed to reproduce its perfection. In this account, souls are drawn downward into the lower world and enclosed within flesh.

This doctrine is not dualism. The lower maker of the physical world is not a second co-eternal, co-equal god. He is a subordinate lower power, principality, throne, or dominion beneath God the Father. The physical world is therefore real, ordered, and meaningful, but also inferior, mixed, corruptible, and subject to decay. Embodiment is not the soul's origin. It is the soul's condition within the present world-order.

This same framework also makes the other Marcionite soul teachings cohere rather than conflict. If souls exist prior to embodiment and are not produced by the body, then it is intelligible that Marcionites spoke of a division or differentiation among souls. Hostile writers often summarized this as a distinction between different "natures" of souls. In Marcionite terms, this is better understood as the distinction between natural souls and spiritual souls.

Natural souls remain bound to the physical world of the flesh and may pass through remedial embodiment until they encounter the Gospel in due season, provided they have not committed the Eternal Sin. Spiritual souls, by contrast, are awakened by the revelation of God the Father through Jesus Christ. Having received the Gospel and not hardened themselves against the Holy Spirit, they are not destined for repeated embodiment but for ascent into the Father's kingdom.

Origen explicitly targets those who "introduce souls of different natures," a polemical engagement widely understood to include Marcionite claims about

differentiated souls and destinies. His criticism preserves the fact that Marcionite Christians did not treat all souls as identical in condition, reception, or destiny. Yet this distinction should not be misread as fatalism. The key question is not merely what condition a soul begins in, but whether it receives the Gospel, repents, and is awakened by Christ.

The doctrine of preexistent souls also explains the Marcionite teaching on transmigration of souls, or metempsychosis. If embodiment is a condition the soul can enter, rather than the event that creates the soul, then the soul can also pass from body to body within the lower world-order. Epiphanius attributes to Marcion the claim that there are "reincarnations of souls" and "transmigrations from body to body." Within Marcionite theology, this does not mean endless return for all souls without distinction. It is a remedial process for natural souls who have not truly heard the Gospel, or who remain imperfect and in bondage but have not committed the Eternal Sin.

Preexistence, the differentiation of souls, and transmigration therefore form one coherent doctrine: natural souls may remain bound to the present world-order until they encounter the Gospel, while souls awakened through Christ ascend into the Kingdom of God. Those who knowingly commit the Eternal Sin face annihilation rather than further remedial embodiment.

This framework also clarifies the relationship between preexistence and the harrowing of hell. Christ's descent broke the absolute dominion of death, Hell, Satan, and the lower powers over human souls. It did not erase the soul's need for repentance, awakening, and deliverance. Rather, it opened the way for souls to be rescued from bondage, whether through direct reception of the Gospel or, for natural souls still capable of repentance, through remedial passage within the lower world-order.

Finally, it is worth noting that some form of preexistence was debated beyond Marcionite circles. Origen himself developed a major early Christian account of rational souls' prior existence and descent in his theological system, even while opposing the Marcionite claim that souls differ by nature. This shows that the preexistence of souls was not an alien or impossible concept in early Christian thought. In Marcionite Christianity, however, it serves a distinctly Gospel-centered purpose: to explain the soul's divine origin, its bondage in the lower world, its need for Christ, and its liberation by the one true God revealed through Jesus Christ.

See also: Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"; Question 10.05, "What is the transmigration of souls?"

10.05. What is the transmigration of souls?

The Church affirms transmigration of souls (also called metempsychosis) as a real feature of the soul's journey through the present world-order—but not as a blanket guarantee of universal salvation.

In the patristic record, this belief is explicitly attributed to Marcion and the Marcionites as part of their broader insistence that salvation pertains to the soul rather than to the permanent vindication of fleshly bodies. Epiphanius, for example, says that Marcion "assigns salvation" to souls, and "claims that there are reincarnations of souls, and transmigrations from body to body."

This teaching is also associated, in the same heresiological stream, with Marcionite schools after Marcion. Epiphanius identifies Lucian (Lucanus) as an early associate of Marcion who founded the Marcionite school known as the Lucanists, whose doctrines he describes as "like Marcion's in every way," even while admitting that the sect was hard to track because it was ancient and short-lived.

Irenaeus reports that Christians, including Marcionites, who taught transmigration, appealed to this saying in the Gospel, treating "prison" as embodiment and "release" as the soul's eventual liberation after completing what is lacking.

Evangelicon 11:70-71

"For as thou goest with thine adversary before the magistrate, on the way give diligence to be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last lepton."

In this reading, the Lord's image is not merely a warning about earthly courts, but a spiritual description of the soul's remedial passage through the realm of judgment until its debt is exhausted. Crucially, this remedial logic is aimed at souls who remain capable of repentance and reception—souls that have not shut themselves against the Spirit in the way Christ calls eternal and unforgivable.

This framework also clarifies the Marcionite doctrine of the division of souls: the heresiological claim that there are differing kinds of souls coheres naturally with transmigration. On this reading, natural souls remain bound to the physical world of the flesh and

therefore transmigrate from body to body until they encounter the Gospel in due season—so long as they have not committed the Eternal Sin. Spiritual souls, by contrast, are awakened by the revelation of God the Father, having received the Gospel and not hardened themselves against the Holy Spirit; they are not destined for repeated embodiment but for ascent into the Father's kingdom. In short: natural souls transmigrate; spiritual souls ascend.

The Marcionites were not alone in being accused of (or known for) transmigration.

Carpocratians. Irenaeus says the Carpocratians taught that souls must undergo "transmigration from body to body" so they can experience every form of life and action. He adds that, on their scheme, "in this way also all souls are saved," including those who are "set free" by passing "from body to body." This is an important parallel: transmigration is explicitly presented as a salvation-explaining doctrine—though we do not follow the Carpocratian claim that this mechanism guarantees salvation for all without exception.

Basilides and the Basilideans. Clement of Alexandria reports Basilidean teaching in which the soul is punished in the present life for sin "in another life," and he explicitly raises the question "whether the soul is changed to another body." This is not merely moral progress; it is a theory of prior lives and bodily change used to explain suffering and purification.

So when critics claim transmigration is an alien concept imported into Christian discourse, the historical record shows multiple early Christian or quasi-Christian movements using it to address the same pressure point: how divine justice and mercy can be true when human lives are radically unequal in opportunity and knowledge.

Transmigration of souls provides a coherent answer to a moral problem that every serious theology must face: How can those who never heard the Gospel be saved? If a soul can pass through successive lives, then no one is "finally lost" simply because they were born in a place, time, or circumstance where the Gospel was never encountered. Transmigration becomes the mechanism by which grace can reach such souls in due season—so long as they have not committed the Eternal Sin, which Christ sets apart as uniquely unforgivable and therefore beyond remedial restoration.

This is also one more place where Marcionism shows its Hellenistic intellectual pedigree. The Marcionite movement emerged in a Greco-Roman milieu saturated

with Platonic and Middle-Platonic talk about the soul's imprisonment in the material order, its purification, and its ascent toward the divine; and the older philosophical tradition (Plato and the Pythagoreans especially) already had a vocabulary for metempsychosis as a way of explaining moral formation, recompense, and cosmic pedagogy. Our confession of transmigration is therefore not an embarrassment or a novelty, but a consistent example of Marcionism translating the Evangelicon's sharp antithesis between fleshly bondage and spiritual deliverance into the conceptual language the ancient world actually spoke—pressing philosophy into service as handmaid, not master, of the Gospel of God the Father.

In short: metempsychosis safeguards the breadth of God the Father's saving mercy toward those who lacked Gospel light, while still taking seriously the soul's real need for repentance, awakening, and deliverance from the world's bondage—and it does so without denying Christ's own boundary: that there is an Eternal Sin which "shall not be forgiven," and thus is not included within remedial transmigration.

See also: Question 12.06, "What is annihilationism?"; Question 12.07, "What is the eternal sin?"

10.06. How does the Marcionite Church understand original sin?

The Marcionite Church understands original sin not as inherited guilt, but as bondage within the corruptible world-order, and therefore rejects the doctrine developed by the emerging Catholic tradition and later inherited by much of Western Christianity. That doctrine taught that all humanity inherited guilt and condemnation from Adam's disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Rooted in the mythological creation story of Genesis, it portrayed humanity as fallen by nature and deserving divine wrath from birth. For Marcionites, such a doctrine slandered the character of God the Father and obscured the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Western doctrine of original sin eventually came to rest on several claims: that Adam committed a historical transgression in Eden; that the guilt of that transgression was transmitted to all his descendants; that this inherited guilt was sufficient to condemn even infants before any personal act; and that a ritual or forensic remedy was required to remove that inherited charge. Marcionite Christianity rejects this entire structure.

This does not mean that Marcionites are soft on the human condition. We reject inherited guilt,

but we affirm the reality of bondage. Humanity is born into the lower world-order, a physical order shaped through deferred demiurgy and governed by lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions. Souls enter a realm marked by flesh, law, corruption, violence, death, and temptation. The problem is not that every soul is legally guilty of Adam's mythical transgression. The problem is that souls are bound within a corruptible order from which they cannot free themselves.

In contrast to the Catholic doctrine of inherited guilt, Marcion and his followers taught that sin arises because souls possess freedom and live within a world shaped by corruption, law, and violence. It is not guilt that is transmitted biologically from one generation to the next, but the ongoing condition of bondage and the capacity for moral failure within the lower order. Each soul is responsible for its own choices, not for the imagined rebellion of a mythical first man.

The Apostle Paul's language supports this distinction. The condition of mankind is not best described as inherited guilt, but as slavery: slavery under the elements of the world, the law of sin and death, and the powers of the present age. A slave is not guilty merely for being born inside the master's house. He is captive. What he needs is not condemnation for another man's crime, but rescue from bondage.

This is why the Gospel is deliverance. Christ does not come to prosecute Adam's descendants for inherited guilt. He comes to rescue souls from the present evil age. He liberates them from sin, death, Satan, and the lower powers. Salvation is therefore not the satisfaction of inherited legal wrath, but ransom, purchase, and liberation from bondage through Jesus Christ.

Romans 7 likewise supports this understanding. Sin works in the flesh through commandment and law. The agent of death is not inherited biological descent, but the law of sin and death operating within the lower world-order. Paul describes the soul's captivity within flesh and law, and then gives the answer: freedom in Christ. There is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, because the law of the Spirit of life has freed them from the law of sin and death.

Nor can the Hebrew Bible be used to establish original sin for Christians. The Hebrew Psalms and Genesis are not part of the canon or deuterocanon of the Testamentum and are not the doctrinal foundation of the Gospel. Their exclusion from the scriptural rule is not altered by the broader codicological use of

Testamentum for the Church's complete modern collection. Whatever the Hebrew Bible says about Adam, conception, guilt, or inheritance belongs to the covenant and literature of the lower order. Christian doctrine must be read from Christ and the Apostle, not from Genesis mythology.

The same applies to the common appeal to the phrase "all have sinned." Marcionite Christianity affirms that all morally accountable persons sin personally, because all who come to discernment live within the present corruptible order and are subject to moral failure. But this is not the same as saying that infants, babies, or young children before moral discernment are born legally guilty of Adam's sin before they have done anything at all. Universal personal sin among the morally accountable is not inherited ancestral guilt.This doctrine matters most at the cradle. Original sin has been used for centuries to terrify parents with the thought that infants are born guilty, condemned, and liable to punishment before any personal act. Marcionite Christianity rejects that cruelty. An infant is not born guilty. No transgression, ancestral or personal, is imputed to the infant. God the Father is not the prosecutor of Adam's race. He is the rescuer of souls through Jesus Christ.

This also comports with the Marcionite doctrine of souls. Souls preexist embodiment and come from God the Father. They are not products of corruptible flesh, nor are they guilty because of descent from Adam. Babies, infants, and young children who die before moral discernment are not judged as sinners, nor sent into corrective transmigration for personal guilt, but are received by God the Father into the kingdom of God. Natural souls may pass through remedial embodiment until they encounter the Gospel in due season, so long as they have not committed the Eternal Sin. Spiritual souls, awakened by Christ, ascend through him into the Father's kingdom.

Those who willfully commit the Eternal Sin are not restored by remedial transmigration but pass into destruction. In every case, judgment belongs to the soul's own condition and response, not to inherited guilt from Adam.

The Catholic doctrine of original sin served to bind humanity under law and to justify the legalistic authority of the institutional church. The Marcionite Gospel offers a radically different vision. God the Father, revealed through Jesus Christ, does not impose inherited guilt. He extends mercy, awakens souls, and calls them out of bondage into freedom. The problem

is not an ancestral debt. The problem is captivity. The answer is not condemnation. The answer is rescue.

In this, Marcionites proclaim freedom over bondage, grace over inherited guilt, and truth over myth: a Gospel that liberates rather than condemns.

10.07. How does the Marcionite Church understand free will?

The Marcionite Church understands free will as a sacred gift from the true God, enabling each soul to choose faith, obedience, and love for Christ. Without free will, worship would be hollow and salvation meaningless.

We are not born guilty. Marcionite Christians reject the doctrine of original sin and hold that accountability begins when a person can discern right from wrong.

As the Apostle Paul writes:

“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.”

Laodiceans 6:5

Such obedience must be freely given, not coerced. It is by the voluntary turning of the heart that one enters into the liberty of the Gospel.

Thus, free will is essential to the Christian life and to the transformative grace offered by the God revealed in Jesus Christ.

10.08. How does the Church understand human reason and its role in knowing God?

Marcionites affirm that reason is a limited but valuable faculty for understanding the world, yet it cannot unveil the true God. Human philosophies, though often admired, fall into grave error when they attempt to define the divine through material elements or natural forces. As Marcion’s Homily to Diognetus warns: “Or dost thou receive the vain and foolish sayings of those pretentious philosophers, of whom some said that God was fire, calling that God whereunto they themselves shall go; and others water; and others some other of the elements formed by God?” (Diognetus 8:2).

Marcionites, though conversant with the language of philosophy, reject its claim to divine knowledge apart from revelation. Revelation from God the Father is not the product of contemplation or debate, but an act of divine initiative, breaking into history through Christ. Though reason cannot discover God the Father on its own, it may serve the faithful in expressing and defending the truth once revealed. Reason may illuminate, but it can never

originate the truth revealed by God the Father through Christ.

10.09. Does the Marcionite Church believe the body is evil?

The Marcionite Church does not teach that the body is evil in the sense that human flesh is morally guilty by mere existence. The body is weak, mortal, corruptible, and bound to the physical, fleshly, and visible world, but sin belongs to the will and to the passions that enslave the soul, not to the body as though the body alone were responsible for evil.

The Dialogue of Megethius strengthens this teaching by rejecting the claim that matter is evil in itself. Since matter is not an evil substance, the body is not evil merely because it is material. The body is weak, mortal, and corruptible, but it is not intrinsically sinful by mere existence.

The Apostle teaches that “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh” (Galatians 5:17). He also says, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 6:24). These sayings show the misery of embodied life under the powers of this world. The flesh is not the soul’s true home. It is the place of temptation, decay, suffering, and death.

Yet the Marcionite Church also rejects the claim that the body should be hated, abused, or despised as though cruelty toward the flesh were holiness. The faithful are called to chastity, fasting, temperance, modesty, and discipline, not because the body is to be mutilated or loathed, but because the soul must not be ruled by fleshly passions. The body is to be governed, not worshipped; disciplined, not adored; restrained, not destroyed.

The body also has a temporary sacred dignity because it may be used in obedience to Christ. The body receives Holy Baptism. The body partakes of Holy Communion. The body kneels in prayer, fasts in repentance, gives alms in charity, and serves the brethren in love. Therefore, although the body belongs to the lower order and shall not inherit the Kingdom in its corruptible form, it can still be made an instrument of righteousness while the soul remains in this world.

The same is true of the world. The Marcionite Church does not hate the world as though every creature, every act of love, or every experience of beauty were evil. We reject worship of the world and bondage to the world-order, not the recognition that created life contains real goods. We do not think the flesh or the world is

superior to what is to come. We discipline the body and use the world without making either our god.

The Marcionite Church therefore distinguishes between the body as created under the order of corruption and the soul as called to salvation by the Father. The body is not man's final destiny. It is a mortal vessel, a place of trial, and a sign of bondage to the present world. But it is not to be treated as an excuse for sin, nor as an object of hatred. The Christian must bring the body into subjection, that the soul may be freed for God.

Thus the Marcionite Church does not simply say, "the body is evil." Rather, it teaches that the body is mortal, fleshly, corruptible, and subject to the powers of this world, while the soul is called by Christ to liberation, purification, and entrance into the Kingdom of God.

Bodily weakness and suffering may therefore become occasions for patience, discipline, and growth in the spirit. The Christian neither worships bodily beauty nor despises bodily frailty, but uses every condition of embodied life in the service of faith and charity.

See also: Question 9.09, "What is the difference between matter, the world, and the world-order, and are they evil?"; Question 9.19, "Why do beauty, love, and goodness exist in this world?"; Question 14.03, "What is Holy Baptism?"; Question 14.08, "What is Holy Communion?"; Dialogue of Megethius 9:1-18; Dialogue of Megethius 10:16-24.

LESSON 11: SOTERIOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson explains salvation through Jesus Christ, the liberation of souls, grace, faith, works, repentance, and obedience to the law of Christ.

11.01. What is salvation?

Salvation is deliverance from the law of sin and death, from bondage to the corruptible world-order, and from the powers that hold the soul beneath them. The soteriology of Marcionite Christians, particularly as expressed in the Psalmicon, is deeply rooted in the doctrine of grace and conditional election. Salvation, in the Marcionite view, is entirely the work of God and not something earned or merited by human effort. However, this election is not arbitrary or unconditional—it is based on God's foreknowledge of those who would respond in faith to His revelation through Christ.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew, and also to the Greek."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 1:12

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

I Thessalonians 5:9

Imputed righteousness teaches that the righteousness of Jesus is credited to believers through faith, meaning they are regarded by God as righteous not because of their own deeds, but because of Christ's perfection. It is on the basis of this righteousness—not personal merit—that God the Father accepts and justifies the believer.

See also: Question 10.06, "How does the Marcionite Church understand original sin?"

11.02. From what are human souls saved?

Human souls are saved from ignorance of God the Father, bondage to sin and death, enslavement to the powers of the present world-order, and the cycle of judgment that follows unbelief and disobedience. Salvation is therefore both revelation and liberation.

Christ does not merely improve the conditions of the lower world. He makes the Father known, breaks the claims of the hostile powers, forgives sins, and gathers the faithful into the true covenant of grace.

11.03. How does Christ save?

Christ saves by revealing God the Father, proclaiming the Gospel of grace, giving Himself as a ransom, descending into hell, overcoming death, and liberating souls from the dominion of the present world-order. His saving work is completed through His true suffering, death, burial, and resurrection.

The faithful receive this salvation by grace through faith, are incorporated into the Church through Holy Baptism, and are strengthened in obedience through the Holy Mysteries, prayer, charity, and the law of Christ.

11.04. What is the ransom theory of atonement?

The Dialogue of Adamantius preserves precisely the sort of ransom, purchase, and liberation logic that undergirds Marcionite soteriology: salvation as deliverance from the lower powers through the redeeming work of Christ.

In the disputation, the Marcionite spokesman Megethius frames the advent of Christ as a rescue operation aimed at the tyrannical spiritual ruler. Within the Lucanist framework, Megethius distinguishes between the good, the just, and the evil: God the Father above all, the just "god of this world" associated with the making of the physical world, and Satan as

the evil adversary. Christ comes from God the Father to conquer the devil and break the hostile dominion that held mankind. That victory language is already the backbone of ransom theology: humanity is held under alien lordship, namely sin, death, and the devil, and the Son is sent to break that lordship and release the captives.

The same dialogue then makes the transactional aspect explicit by leaning on Paul's redemption language. Megethius appeals to the apostolic claim that Christ "purchased" us out of bondage and insists that this implies Christ cannot be identical with the maker of the physical world, because no one purchases what is already his. Adamantius presses the argument in overtly ransom-like terms: if Christ is the purchaser, who then is the party from whom the purchase is made? Is it the wicked devil who held mankind, or the maker of the physical world himself?

This purchase language is not incidental. It expresses the moral character of God the Father. A wholly good God does not steal, seize, or violate justice, even when rescuing those held in bondage. If mankind was under the dominion of lower powers, then the Father's rescue is accomplished not by theft but by righteous purchase. Christ buys back the captives so that liberation itself is just, good, and holy. The ransom therefore reveals not only the defeat of the adversary, but the perfect goodness of the Father who rescues without wrongdoing.

The Apellean and Lucanist distinction matters chiefly in how one describes the party from whom mankind is ransomed, but not in whether ransom itself is true. Traditional Apelleans, preserving the original teaching of Marcion, identified the lower maker of the physical world with Satan, the same being called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." In that framework, the ransom is directed against the dominion of Satan, who is also the lower maker of the physical world. The Lucanists, by contrast, distinguished the just "god of this world" from Satan. In their framework, the ransom concerns liberation from the bondage of the lower order, sin, death, and Satan, while also separating the just maker of the physical world from the evil adversary. Yet both schools preserved the same fundamental Marcionite soteriology: Christ purchases souls out of bondage and transfers them from the dominion of lower powers into the liberty of God the Father.

Even when Megethius answers in the idiom of being purchased "from

sin itself," the structure remains the same. Redemption is conceived as manumission from slavery by a costly act that transfers humanity out of one dominion and into another. In short, Adamantius' record shows Marcionites arguing for salvation as purchase-from-bondage in Pauline terms, not merely as moral improvement or ethical instruction.

This ransom logic fits the broader Marcionite distinction between God the Father and the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath him. Christ is not sent by the maker of the physical world to recover what already belongs to that lower maker. Rather, Christ is sent by God the Father to rescue souls from bondage under sin, death, the devil, and the lower order of the present age. The language of purchase therefore reinforces the Marcionite claim that salvation is deliverance from an alien dominion into the liberty of Christ.

That Pauline purchase motif also explains the later Marcionite price-formula often attributed to Marcion:

"We are the price of the blood of Jesus."

The statement is a compressed ransom confession. The redeemed community is what Christ's blood has bought. Those redeemed by Christ now belong to God the Father rather than to the old bondage. They have been transferred from the dominion of the lower powers into the kingdom of the Son.

From there it is a short step to the more developed patristic ransom idiom. Irenaeus speaks in the same broad register of liberation from captivity through the Lord's self-gift, emphasizing that deliverance is accomplished not by the tyranny of a stronger power but by a righteous rescue. Origen, in the later tradition that summarizes his comments on Romans, sharpens the framework by naming the captor: the devil held humanity through sin and therefore demanded a price, but was outwitted because he could not hold the sinless one.

That dovetails with the classic hidden-divinity elaboration. Christ enters the lower world under the appearance of weakness. The adversary overreaches. In attempting to seize Christ, he loses his claim over those held in bondage. The death of Christ becomes the very means by which Christ shatters the adversary's dominion and frees the captives.

Taken together, the Dialogue of Adamantius corroborates a recognizably Marcionite ransom logic: humanity is held under hostile dominion; Christ intervenes as liberator; redemption is described as a costly purchase out

of bondage; and the defeat of the adversary is accomplished through Christ's death, which becomes the instrument of emancipation rather than a mere example or moral exhortation. This remains fully compatible with Marcionite cosmology: not dualism, not two co-equal gods, but deliverance from lower powers through the saving act of Christ sent by God the Father. Most importantly, the ransom reveals the character of the Father himself: he is so wholly good that even his rescue of mankind is accomplished righteously, as purchase rather than theft, liberation rather than seizure, and mercy without injustice.

See also: Question 9.12, "Who is called the 'god of this world'?"; Question 9.22, "How does the Church understand Satan?"; Question 12.04, "What is the harrowing of hell?"

11.05. How does the Church explain moral evil?

Marcionite Christianity affirms that moral evil arises from sinful will and action, not from matter itself and not from a dualistic cosmos of co-equal gods. Evil is not a substance created by God, nor is matter an evil nature. Moral evil appears when rational creatures turn from love, truth, and mercy into disobedience, cruelty, idolatry, and bondage under the lower powers.

The Dialogue of Megethius distinguishes evil from substance. Evil is not a thing created by God, nor is it matter itself. Moral evil arises from will, passion, action, disorder, and bondage under lower powers.

Natural evil belongs to the instability and corruption of the lower world-order; moral evil belongs to will, intention, action, and omission. The two are related within the present evil age, but they should not be collapsed into one cause. The lower powers corrupt and enslave; human beings also sin by freely serving that corruption rather than the Gospel.

Moral evil consists of the actions, thoughts, and omissions of individuals that violate the law of love - the divine will revealed in the Gospel. Acts such as murder, theft, hatred, cruelty, or the refusal to show mercy are all expressions of moral evil. It also includes sins of omission: to ignore a plea for help or to remain indifferent in the face of injustice is itself a form of moral failure.

As the Apostle Paul writes:

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 4:12

The Apostle does not teach that matter itself is sinful, but that sin

and death reign within the present age through disobedience. The brokenness and suffering we now witness therefore arise from sinful wills, lower bondage, and corrupt rule, not from the direct intent of God the Father or from matter as such.

Violence, cruelty, hatred, and refusal of mercy arise from hearts turned away from God and from actions committed under bondage to the lower powers. Trace moral evil to its source, and one finds disordered will: the refusal to love God the Father revealed by Jesus Christ and to love one's neighbour.

God does not forcibly eliminate moral evil, because to do so would mean abolishing human freedom. And without freedom, there is no personhood, no capacity for genuine love, no ability to reflect the image of God. A being without free will is not made in God's image. Free will is necessary for eternal existence, for worship, for obedience, and for love. Worship that is coerced or mechanical is not worship at all - it is an insult to God.

Therefore, God permits moral evil to exist within the bounds of human freedom, using even suffering and consequence as tools to teach mankind the goodness it once knew but lost through sin.

The problem of moral evil was addressed at the cross, where Christ bore the weight of human sin. The power of death was overcome in His resurrection. Though evil remains present in the world and continues to cause suffering and death, God has acted decisively in Christ to redeem what man has ruined. He offers forgiveness for our sins and the promise of life beyond death - a life without evil or sorrow.

Imagine a world without the possibility of forgiveness for moral evil. In Christ, we have been spared such hopelessness. God has given us His Word, His Spirit, and His Gospel as a sustaining source of truth and strength through the trials of this life. The resurrection of Jesus stands as the pledge of our own, and the hope of restoration beyond the reach of evil.

Though we may feel powerless to change the world at large, each of us has the capacity to overcome the dominion of moral evil in our own lives through Jesus Christ. In doing so, we diminish its power - not only in ourselves but in every soul we help lead to Christ. Through the Gospel, we are not passive witnesses to the world's decay, but active participants in its redemption.

See also: Question 9.08, "Is evil a substance?"; Question 9.20, "How does the Church explain natural evil?"; Question 10.07, "How does the Marcionite Church understand free will?"; Dialogue of Megethius

9:1-18; Dialogue of Megethius 10:16-24.

11.06. How should Christians respond to suffering?

Christians should respond to suffering through faith, prayer, endurance, charity, and practical care for those who are afflicted.

The Apostle Paul, who endured profound affliction for the sake of Christ, offers a powerful model for how believers should approach suffering. He did not resist it in bitterness but embraced it as a meaningful part of his calling. From his example, we learn that suffering is not meaningless. It reveals much about our relationship to God—its purpose, its effects, and the promise it carries.

Suffering affirms that we belong to God.
Suffering produces endurance and, ultimately, hope.
Suffering leads others to glorify God.
Suffering is permitted under God's sovereign care.
And most of all, we are never alone in our suffering.

Though suffering is a reality in this world, its fruit is lasting joy and eternal reward.

First, Paul teaches that suffering cultivates hope—a hope not based on the seen or temporary, but on the eternal:

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:
By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;
And patience, experience; and experience, hope:
And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 4:1–5

Paul also acknowledged that his afflictions brought him to the limits of human strength so that he would learn to rely fully on God:

"For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia,
that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:
But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:
Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;
Ye also helping together by prayer for us…"

II Corinthians 1:8–11

This trust in God's sovereign care is echoed in Paul's well-known reassurance:

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God,
to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 7:28

Yet we must remember: what is "good" in God's eyes may not align with what we naturally desire. When Paul pleaded with God to remove a persistent suffering—his "thorn in the flesh"—God refused, but not without purpose. He responded:

"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

II Corinthians 12:9

God did not remove Paul's suffering because that very weakness revealed God's strength—and drew others to glorify Him.

Paul also taught that the comfort we receive in our own trials equips us to comfort others:

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble,
by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

II Corinthians 1:4

Those who have walked through the valley of suffering are uniquely qualified to guide others through it. They become vessels of God's grace, ministering to others with the same compassion they themselves received.

Even creation, Paul reminds us, suffers alongside humanity:

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 7:22

Disease, death, and decay are all part of the current age. Yet this age is not the end.

The hope of the believer lies in Christ's return. As Paul gently reminds us:

"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand."

Philippians 4:5

The Lord is near. He is close to the brokenhearted and soon to return to restore all things. In our present trials, we are not abandoned. We wait, with hope, for the fulfillment of what God has promised: a new creation, free of suffering, where every tear is wiped away and every sorrow redeemed.

11.07. Why is the Church not antinomian?

Marcionite Christians believe that salvation comes by faith and through divine grace, not through adherence to the law of Moses.

They affirm that the law of Moses belongs to the false covenant and has no binding authority over Christians. Yet freedom from the law of Moses is not freedom from obedience: the Church rejects the law of Moses while affirming the law of Christ, by which the faithful bear one another's burdens, walk in love, and fulfil the commandment of the Lord.

This position is grounded firmly in the writings of the Apostle Paul, who writes:

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 5:14-15

Paul continues:

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 8:7

While rejecting the Mosaic Law, Marcionite Christians recognize that moral truths are accessible through natural law—what Paul refers to when speaking of Gentiles:

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 2:5-6

Paul reprimands the Galatians for returning to the law of Moses, calling it a regression:

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

Galatians 3:1-3

Marcionite Christians follow Paul's emphasis on salvation by grace alone:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Laodiceans 2:8-9

Paul also affirms Christian liberty from the law:

"And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage."

Galatians 2:4

Christian liberty is therefore governed by the law of Christ, as Paul writes:

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

Galatians 6:2

Finally, Paul declares the law of Moses abolished in Christ’s crucifixion:

“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us… and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”

Colossians 2:13-14

In every respect, Marcionite Christianity rejects antinomian lawlessness. Salvation is a gift received by faith, not a prize earned through legal obedience; yet those who are saved are called to live under the law of Christ through love, charity, holiness, and mutual service.

11.08. How does the Church understand faith and works?

Salvation is received through faith and grace, not earned through observance of the law of Moses or through human merit. Good works are the fruit, evidence, and discipline of living faith under the law of Christ, not the legal price paid or justification for salvation.

The Evangelicon expresses this principle directly: “And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”

Evangelicon 5:50

Marcion of Sinope likewise teaches in Marcion’s Homily to Diognetus that human effort cannot earn divine favor. Salvation is the gift of God, received through faith; works follow as the grateful expression of a life already turned toward Christ.

See also: Question 11.09, “What place do good works have in salvation?”; Question 17.02, “What is the law of Christ?”

11.09. What place do good works have in salvation?

Ancient Marcionite testimony shows that good works were regarded as the necessary evidence or fruit of faith rather than the meritorious price or justification of salvation. Rhodo’s account, preserved by Eusebius, reports Apelles teaching that “those who place their hope in the Crucified will be saved if they persist in good works.”

Apelles emphasized concrete deeds of charity, purity, mercy, and self-denial as the visible evidence that faith is genuine. His teaching reflects a practical emphasis within the Marcionite tradition: faith saves, while a life transformed by the Holy Spirit manifests that faith

through obedience to the law of Christ.

The present Marcionite Church therefore affirms that good works neither purchase salvation nor replace faith. They are the consequence, sign, and discipline of a sincere faith that has received grace.

See also: Question 11.08, "How does the Church understand faith and works?"; Question 17.03, "How does Christian liberty differ from lawlessness?"

11.10. How do faith, good works, the Holy Mysteries, and Holy Rites relate?

Faith receives the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ. Good works are the fruit and evidence of living faith, not a legal price paid or justification for salvation. The three Holy Mysteries initiate and nourish the faithful within the true covenant, while the Holy Rites order repentance, healing, ministry, marriage, worship, and charity in the life of the Church.

These realities are therefore neither rivals nor interchangeable. Salvation is grounded in grace and received through faith; good works manifest obedience to the law of Christ; the Holy Mysteries incorporate and nourish the faithful; and the Holy Rites support the ordered common life by which believers are formed in holiness and love.

See also: Question 11.08, "How does the Church understand faith and works?"; Question 14.01, "Which Holy Mysteries does the Church recognize?"; Question 14.02, "Which Holy Rites does the Church recognize?"

11.11. What is sin?

Sin is the willful turning of the soul away from God the Father and the law of Christ through thought, word, deed, or omission. It includes unbelief, false worship, hatred, cruelty, impurity, dishonesty, injustice, refusal of mercy, and every act contrary to faith working through love.

Sin is not the mere possession of a material body, inherited guilt from Adam, ritual impurity, or failure to observe the law of Moses. The body is corruptible and subject to temptation, but moral guilt belongs to the person who knowingly misuses freedom. Neither food, marriage, nationality, bodily weakness, nor ceremonial condition makes a person sinful in itself.

"For whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 12:23

Ordinary sins may be forgiven through grace, repentance, confession, amendment of life, and Holy Reconciliation. They must be

distinguished from the Eternal Sin: the settled and knowing blasphemy against the Holy Spirit by which the soul repudiates the very grace through which forgiveness is received.

11.12. What is repentance?

Repentance is the turning of the soul away from sin, false worship, and disobedience toward God the Father through Jesus Christ. It includes sorrow for wrongdoing, confession, amendment of life, restitution where possible, and renewed obedience to the law of Christ.

Repentance is not an attempt to purchase forgiveness. It is the faithful response to grace and the continuing discipline by which the baptized return to the way of Christ.

11.13. What is grace?

Grace is the free and undeserved favor of God the Father revealed and bestowed through Jesus Christ. It is not a wage earned by observance of the law of Moses or by human merit, but the divine gift by which sins are forgiven, souls are liberated, and the faithful are strengthened for holy living.

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 3:24

Grace does not abolish obedience. It establishes the faithful in the law of Christ, whose fulfillment is love, charity, holiness, and service to one another.

LESSON 12: ESCHATOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson concerns the last things, the destiny of souls, judgment, annihilation, the harrowing of hell, and the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God.

12.01. What are the Church’s eschatological beliefs?

Marcion, following the eschatological teachings of the Apostle Paul, believed that a time of persecution and opposition awaited the faithful, led by a sinister figure Paul referred to as the “man of sin” or “son of perdition”:

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.”

II Thessalonians 2:3

In the Psalmicon, this adversary appears in symbolic form, where the redeemer triumphs over a great and terrifying beast:

“He overthrew by my hands the seven-headed dragon, and set me over its root, that I might destroy its offspring.”
Psalmicon 22:5

Despite these references to evil and judgment, Marcion did not teach a visible return of Christ, nor was he consumed by apocalyptic fervor like many early Christians. His eschatology, much like that of Paul, centered on spiritual truths rather than literal, physical end-times scenarios. Paul makes this clear:

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

I Corinthians 15:50

Paul taught that the resurrection would not involve earthly, perishable bodies, but that the saved would receive spiritual bodies fit for the eternal kingdom. Marcion agreed with this view and rejected any notion of bodily resurrection.

Apelles, Marcion's disciple, reaffirmed this interpretation. He taught that salvation was reserved for the soul alone, and that the physical body would not be raised. The soul, once redeemed, would ascend to heaven, freed from the corrupt and dying flesh.

Both Marcion and Apelles derived their views entirely from the Pauline epistles. Marcion's soteriology, centered on the boundless grace of God, naturally extended into an eschatology in which all believers would be spiritually delivered and made incorruptible in the presence of the true God.

A later and unusually explicit witness to this "non-bodily" reading appears in the Dialogue of Adamantius, where the Marcionite Megethius answers that Christ came to save "only the soul," and the Marcionite Marcus presses the point even further by refusing salvation-language for "body" or even "soul," insisting instead upon the saving of the "spirit."

12.02. What is perfect amillennialism?

Marcion upheld the doctrine of perfect amillennialism, the belief that there would be no literal thousand-year reign of Christ on Earth. Instead, he taught that Christ's kingdom is spiritual and heavenly, not political or earthly.

He stands among the earliest Christians known to have explicitly opposed an earthly millennial kingdom. For Marcion, the expectation that Christ would return physically to Earth to inaugurate a temporal kingdom before the final judgment contradicted the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom.

His amillennial position finds strong support in scripture. Jesus himself told the Pharisees that the coming of God's kingdom would not be an observable event, but a

spiritual reality already present among them:

“And when he was questioned by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”

Evangelicon 15:36–37

The Apostle Paul also spoke of the kingdom of God not in material terms, but in moral and spiritual language:

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 12:17

Paul further affirmed that the new dispensation began with the resurrection of Christ, describing him as the firstborn from the dead:

“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

Colossians 1:18

Marcion believed that Christ now reigns from heaven, seated at the right hand of the Father, and that this reign is ongoing through the Church. According to this view, the gospel age is the present manifestation of Christ’s kingdom on earth. Good and evil continue to coexist in the world, including within the Church itself, as illustrated in the parable of the wheat and tares. Marcion understood the Church’s mission of proclaiming the gospel as the true and final expression of Christ’s reign.

Ironically, many later Catholic theologians, such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Eusebius of Caesarea, would come to share Marcion’s amillennial convictions. Even some of Marcion’s fiercest opponents, including Epiphanius of Salamis and Ephrem the Syrian, advocated for what might be described as an imperfect form of amillennialism, coming close to Marcion’s own teaching.

12.03. What is Hell?

Hell was the prison of condemned souls held under death, Satan, and the powers and principalities of this world before the descent of Christ. It was not the Father’s everlasting torture chamber, but a realm of captivity, darkness, accusation, and bondage beneath the dominion of the lower powers.

Christ destroyed Hell in the Harrowing of Hell. By descending into the lower parts of the earth and rising again as the firstborn from the dead, He broke the gates of the prison-house, freed the righteous

dead, and ended Hell's universal claim over mankind.

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?"

Laodiceans 4:8–9

Therefore Hell no longer exists as the unbroken prison of mankind. If the name is still used after Christ's victory, it refers to the grim realm of Satan, devils, and fallen lower powers awaiting final defeat. It is not the destiny of ordinary ignorant souls, nor is it a place where God the Father preserves souls in endless torment.

When the Church speaks of Hell after the harrowing of hell, it does not mean a continuing prison for ordinary human souls, but either the defeated realm of fallen powers, the abyss of devils, the grave, or a figure of final destruction.

See also: Question 12.04, "What is the harrowing of hell?"; Question 12.06, "What is annihilationism?"; Question 12.05, "Does the Church believe in eternal damnation?"

12.04. What is the harrowing of hell?

Marcionites affirmed the harrowing of hell, an event also reported by Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Epiphanius, grounding the doctrine in Laodiceans 4:8–9 and Colossians 1:18. These verses teach that Christ first "descended into the lower parts of the earth" and then rose as "the firstborn from the dead." This descent belongs to the same ransom and liberation logic central to Marcionite soteriology: mankind was held in bondage under sin, death, Satan, and the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions of the present age. Christ, sent by God the Father, freely offered his own life as the ransom, for, as Marcion proclaims, "We are the price of the blood of Jesus."

The distinction between the Apellean and Lucanist schools affects how this captivity is described, but not the truth of the ransom itself. Traditional Apelleans, preserving the original teaching of Marcion, identified Satan with the lower maker of the physical world, the being called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." In this framework, Christ's descent shattered the dominion of Satan, who held mankind under the bondage of the lower order. Lucanists, by contrast, distinguished the just "god of this world" from Satan as an evil third power. In their framework, Christ's descent liberated souls from the lower order, sin, death, and Satan, while preserving the distinction

between the just maker of the physical world and the evil adversary. Yet both schools confessed the same essential doctrine: Christ descended as liberator and purchased souls out of bondage.

When Christ entered Hell, he broke its gates and destroyed its claim over mankind. This descent was essential in two respects. First, it secured the freedom of all future believers from the dominion of Satan, death, and the lower powers. Second, it rescued the righteous dead who had already perished before his Advent, liberating them from darkness and bringing them into the life revealed by God the Father.

This should not be misunderstood as a denial of the Marcionite doctrine of transmigration of souls. The Harrowing does not mean that every soul in every condition was finally and immediately translated into the Father's kingdom. Rather, it means that Christ broke the universal prison-house of death and ended Hell's absolute dominion over human souls. The righteous dead were liberated. Future believers were secured. Souls capable of repentance and reception were no longer abandoned to darkness without hope, but placed within the economy of Christ's victory.

Marcionite teaching on transmigration clarifies this point. Natural souls that never truly heard the Gospel, or that remained imperfect and bound to the world-order without committing the Eternal Sin, may pass through remedial embodiment until they encounter the Gospel in due season. For such souls, Christ's Harrowing does not abolish the need for repentance, awakening, and deliverance. Rather, it opens the way by which such deliverance becomes possible. The descent of Christ breaks the tyranny of death; transmigration explains the remedial path by which certain souls may still be brought to the light of the Gospel.

In this sense, the Harrowing and transmigration are not contradictory doctrines. They answer different parts of the same problem. The Harrowing proclaims Christ's objective victory over Hell, death, Satan, and the lower powers. Transmigration explains how souls who had not yet truly received the Gospel may continue through the present world-order until their debt is exhausted, their bondage exposed, and the light of Christ is encountered. The one is Christ's cosmic victory; the other is the soul's remedial journey under that victory.

This is why the Evangelicon's language of prison and release is so important:

"When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite."

Evangelicon 11:70–71

In Marcionite reading, this "prison" may describe embodiment within the lower world-order and the soul's remedial passage through judgment until what is lacking has been completed. Christ's Harrowing breaks the finality of that prison. It ensures that bondage is not absolute, death is not sovereign, and Hell cannot hold those whom Christ liberates. Yet it does not erase the distinction between spiritual souls awakened by the Gospel, natural souls still passing through remedial bondage, and those who have committed the Eternal Sin.

Those who willfully reject the Spirit in the manner Christ declares unforgivable are not included within remedial transmigration. They pass into destruction, in accordance with Marcionite annihilationism. Marcion echoes the principle in Marcion's Epistle to the Magnesians: "For if He should imitate us according to our deeds, we are lost." The Apostle Paul likewise warns of those "who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Thessalonians 1:9). The punishment is not eternal conscious torment under the rule of Satan, nor endless transmigration without limit, but destruction, exclusion from life, and final non-being.

Since the Harrowing, Hell is no longer the unbroken prison of mankind. It is the grim domain of Satan and his devils, fallen lower powers destined to be vanquished when the Son's victory is complete. Satan remains real, hostile, and active in the present age, but his dominion has been broken. He is not a second co-eternal, co-equal god. He is a fallen angel, a defeated adversary, and a lower power beneath God the Father.

The Psalmicon enshrines this triumph in song, praising Christ before whom "The abysses were dissolved before the Lord: and darkness was destroyed by His appearance" (Psalmicon 31:1) and who declares, "And I made a congregation of living men among his dead, and spake with them by living lips" (Psalmicon 42:19). These images do not require the denial of transmigration. They proclaim that darkness has been

broken, the captives have been gathered, and the dead are no longer beyond the reach of Christ's victory.

Thus, the Harrowing secures Marcionite confidence in total liberation without collapsing all souls into the same immediate destiny. The righteous dead are freed. Future believers are safe in Christ. Natural souls capable of repentance may still pass through remedial transmigration until they encounter the Gospel and are awakened. Those guilty of the Eternal Sin pass into destruction. Satan's tyranny is broken, Hell has lost its absolute claim, and the lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions now await their final defeat when the victory of the Son is complete.

See also: Question 11.04, "What is the ransom theory of atonement?"; Question 12.06, "What is annihilationism?"

12.05. Does the Church believe in eternal damnation?

The Marcionite Church denies the doctrine of eternal conscious torment. We do not believe that God the Father created an everlasting torture chamber, nor do we believe that any soul is condemned to suffer without end. Hell, as commonly preached, is not the gospel of Christ or Paul. It is a later doctrine built chiefly from writings outside the original Marcionite canon, especially Revelation, II Peter, Jude, and the hellfire passages of Matthew.

Within the Evangelicon and Apostolicon, the fate of the soul is not eternal torture, but bondage, corruption, death, purification through suffering, transmigration, and final deliverance by the grace of God the Father. The physical, fleshly, and visible world is real, and its suffering is real, but its punishments are not endless. They belong to the present age, the realm of flesh, decay, and the powers that rule this world.

Paul teaches that creation itself is subject to corruption, but that this bondage will not last forever:

"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 7:21

The Marcionite Church therefore rejects eternal damnation, but it does not reject every form of destruction. We believe annihilation applies only to those who commit the Eternal Sin, the settled blasphemy against the Holy Spirit described in Question 12.07.

Even here, however, annihilation is not eternal torment. It is not endless conscious suffering, nor a soul preserved forever in fire. It is final destruction. All other souls remain within the physical, fleshly, and

visible world and transmigrate until they are saved. Epiphanius, though hostile to Marcion, preserves this point when he says that Marcion taught the salvation of souls rather than bodies and spoke of reincarnations and transmigrations from body to body.

This also explains the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in the Evangelicon. The parable is not a map of the Father's kingdom, nor a proof of eternal hell. Christ uses the imagery of Abraham, Moses, the prophets, the place of the dead, torment, and the great divide to expose the failure of the false covenant. Abraham cannot save. Moses cannot persuade. The prophets cannot deliver. Even within the physical, fleshly, and visible world, there is no true rescue. The Father's salvation must come from beyond that world entirely.

Therefore, we deny eternal damnation because it contradicts the gospel of grace. There is judgment, suffering, bondage, death, corruption, and, for the eternal sin alone, annihilation. But there is no eternal conscious torment. The Father does not preserve souls forever in pain. He saves, and the final word for all who can be saved is not hell, wrath, or endless punishment, but deliverance from corruption into the liberty of the children of God.

12.06. What is annihilationism?

Marcionite Christians affirm the doctrine of annihilationism—the belief that condemned souls will ultimately be destroyed and cease to exist, rather than endure eternal conscious torment in Hell. This applies, in the strictest and most final sense, to those who commit the Eternal Sin: the settled blasphemy against the Holy Spirit for which Christ declares there is no forgiveness. See Question 12.07, "What is the eternal sin?"

Thus, for the unforgivable and finally hardened—those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit and therefore remain outside mercy—judgment is not remedial, and it is not endless torture, but final extinction. This view stands in contrast both to the doctrine of eternal damnation and to universalism, which claims that all souls will eventually be saved.

Annihilationism is rooted in the principle of conditional immortality—the belief that the human soul is not inherently immortal but receives eternal life only as a gift from God. In this view, the wicked do not continue in endless suffering but are completely extinguished, their being consumed because of their incompatibility with God's holiness and justice. God grants immortality only to those who receive it through faith and

righteousness; those who persist into the Eternal Sin remain unforgiven, and therefore do not receive life.

Marcion of Sinope alludes to this doctrine in Marcion's Epistle to the Magnesians, writing:

For if He should imitate us according to our deeds, we are lost. (Magnesians 8:2)

This reflects the Marcionite understanding that judgment is real and deserved, yet not vindictive or eternal in nature—rather, it is final in its destruction, especially where forgiveness is explicitly excluded.

The Apostle Paul supports this perspective, teaching that the end result of judgment upon the wicked is their utter destruction:

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. (II Thessalonians 1:9)

Paul also declares that death itself—the final enemy—will be abolished:

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. (I Corinthians 15:26)

If death is destroyed, it cannot be perpetuated endlessly in conscious form; it must be fully removed, which entails the cessation of existence for those who remain under its power—preeminently those who remain unforgiven by committing the Eternal Sin.

Christ's own teaching in the Evangelicon uses vivid parables to convey this truth. In the parable of the wheat and the tares, the weeds sown by the enemy are gathered at the harvest, bound, and burned—an image of complete eradication rather than ongoing torment:

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.
(Evangelicon 12:13-19)

The tares are consumed completely, just as chaff is destroyed in flames

without remainder; they do not continue in existence once the field is cleansed.

In the Evangelicon, Christ gives an unambiguous warning of God's power to end life entirely:

Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. (Evangelicon 11:5)

This is the authority not merely to kill the body but to remove the whole person from existence—an authority that bears its most fearful weight where forgiveness is denied.

Paul echoes the same finality when speaking of those who reject the Gospel:

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. (I Corinthians 1:18)

And again:

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Paul's Epistle to the Romans 5:23)

The contrast is absolute—death for the wicked, eternal life for the righteous. Death is not redefined as "life in torment," but remains the absence of life itself.

In this way, annihilationism affirms both divine justice and divine mercy. Justice is upheld in the certain and final judgment of the wicked, above all, of those who persist in the Eternal Sin for which Christ declares there is no forgiveness. Mercy is upheld in that God does not sustain their existence forever in misery. This is neither the cruelty of endless punishment nor the compromise of universal restoration, but the just and final removal of all that is incompatible with the kingdom of the Father.

See also: Question 10.05, "What is the transmigration of souls?"; Question 12.07, "What is the eternal sin?"

12.07. What is the eternal sin?

Marcionite Christians affirm the reality of the eternal sin—the one sin Christ Himself declares to be unforgivable.

In the Evangelicon, the Lord draws a clear distinction between sins that may be remitted and a final blasphemy that remains without pardon:

"And every one, who shall speak against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that speak against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." (Evangelicon 11:9)

For this reason, we confess that there exists a genuine "sin unto death": a willful and settled opposition to the Holy Spirit's witness to Christ. It is not a moment of weakness, confusion, or ignorance, but a hardened

repudiation of the very grace by which forgiveness is given. Where forgiveness is refused at the root, forgiveness cannot be received.

Therefore, the Eternal Sin stands as Christ's own warning that divine mercy is not mocked: God the Father freely forgives all who turn to Him through the Gospel, yet He does not absolve those who knowingly blaspheme the Holy Spirit and persist in that defiance.

See also: Question 10.05, "What is the transmigration of souls?"; Question 12.06, "What is annihilationism?"

12.08. What becomes of the soul after death?

After bodily death, the soul continues under the judgment and providence of God. The faithful are received into rest and drawn toward the Kingdom of God. Souls not yet reconciled to the Gospel continue according to their condition: the unlearned transmigrate without penal torment until they encounter the Gospel, while souls requiring correction remain subject to judgment and transmigration until they are saved or, in the case of the eternal sin, destroyed.

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."

Philippians 1:23

The death of the body therefore does not end personal existence or divine judgment. It reveals more fully the soul's dependence upon Christ and the necessity of salvation.

12.09. What is the fate of the unlearned?

The unlearned are those souls who never truly heard, understood, or received the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and who did not knowingly blaspheme the Holy Spirit. Their condition is ignorance and incompleteness, not final condemnation.

The Marcionite Church teaches that such souls transmigrate through remedial embodiment until they encounter the light of the Gospel in due season. They do not suffer penal torment merely for what they never knew. Their passage is one of continued mercy and instruction under the victory of Christ, not the cruelty of endless punishment.

Christ Himself prayed for the ignorant from the cross:

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Evangelicon 22:49

This prayer does not make ignorance saving by itself; salvation is still through Christ. But it shows that the Father's mercy distinguishes ignorance from hardened rebellion. The unlearned therefore remain within the remedial order of transmigration

until they are awakened by the Gospel, rather than being consigned to Hell or torment.

See also: Question 10.05, "What is the transmigration of souls?"; Question 12.08, "What becomes of the soul after death?"; Question 12.10, "What is the fate of children?"

12.10. What is the fate of children?

Children are born sinless. Until they can understand right from wrong, they continue to be sinless and are not morally accountable for unbelief, transgression, or ignorance. Therefore, if tragedy befalls infants, babies, or young children before such understanding, they are received directly by God the Father and do not transmigrate.

The Church does not infer hidden guilt in infants or young children from the preexistence or transmigration of souls. In this present life, before the child can discern good from evil and personally consent to sin, the child is regarded as innocent before God.

The Evangelicon bears witness to the innocence and nearness of children to the Kingdom:

"And they were bringing unto him also the infants, that he should touch them: but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and hinder them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter into it."

Evangelicon 16:15–17

The Church therefore rejects the claim that infants and young children are guilty by birth or in need of punishment after death. Their innocence is not earned by works, nor supplied by ritual apart from faith; it belongs to their condition before moral accountability. Such little ones belong to the mercy of the Father revealed by Christ.

See also: Question 10.06, "How does the Marcionite Church understand original sin?"; Question 14.03, "What is Holy Baptism?"

12.11. What is the final judgment?

The final judgment is the definitive manifestation of Christ's victory and the righteous determination of the destiny of souls. It is not the establishment of an earthly millennium, but the completion of the Kingdom of God and the end of the present world-order.

Those saved through Christ enter the life of the Kingdom. Those who remain under correction are judged according to truth, while those guilty of the eternal sin are

annihilated rather than preserved in everlasting torment.

Immortality is not the natural possession of every soul but the gift of God bestowed through Christ. The final judgment manifests this distinction by granting incorruptible life to the saved and bringing the finally unforgiven to an end rather than sustaining them eternally in torment.

See also: Question 12.06, "What is annihilationism?"; Question 12.07, "What is the eternal sin?"

LESSON 13: LITURGICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson explains the Church's common prayer, Divine Liturgy, intercession, sacred images, signs, and the practice of worship in daily life.

13.01. How should Christians pray?

Marcionite Christians pray not as servants of the false covenant, nor as worshippers bound to the prayer-forms of the 'god of this world', but as children of God the Father. The Holy Spirit helps our weakness and intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. Prayer is therefore both a discipline commanded of the faithful and a grace already working within them.

"Pray without ceasing."

I Thessalonians 5:17

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

Philippians 4:6

The ordinary daily rule of Marcionite prayer is the Lord's Prayer at the third hour, 9:00 A.M.; the sixth hour, Noon; and the ninth hour, 3:00 P.M. These hours recall the Passion of Jesus Christ and order the day around remembrance of the Lord. In preparation for the Sunday Eucharist, the celebrant and the communicants recite the Lord's Prayer three times at the ninth hour on Saturday, after which the Eucharistic fast begins and continues until Holy Communion.

This rule is also illuminated by the prayer of Christ upon the cross: "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." The Lord addresses the Father directly and asks forgiveness rather than vengeance. In this He teaches the Church to pray beyond accusation, retaliation, and the law, appealing to the mercy of God the Father.

Marcionite Christians reject the seven daily fixed prayer times as a Judaizing discipline rooted in the false covenant. This does not diminish the apostolic command to pray without ceasing, to make requests known to God with thanksgiving, and to persevere in

prayer through the Spirit. The Church's fixed daily form is the Lord's Prayer; other personal prayers are offered freely and sincerely rather than recited from an imposed script.

Prayer is also offered before meals so that food may be received with thanksgiving. Before Divine Liturgy, the celebrant and the communicants wash their hands and faces, and the celebrant washes the feet of the communicants, who may also wash one another's feet. These acts are not legal purifications but signs of humility, service, and reverence before the common worship of the Church.

Marcionite Christians ordinarily pray facing west. When space and circumstance permit, they stand with their arms extended in the ancient orans posture. They may also kneel or bow according to the appointed rubric, the character of the prayer, or personal devotion. No single bodily posture is required for every private prayer.

Apart from the Lord's Prayer and the prayers appointed within the Litourgicon, Christian prayer should be personal rather than the mechanical repetition of a prepared text. The believer should speak truthfully to the Father in his or her own words, naming sin, need, gratitude, suffering, captivity, hope, and intercession without trusting in eloquence or formula.

At times the Spirit does not merely carry the believer's words but prays through the believer beyond words. Such prayer cannot be manufactured, staged, or commanded. It is not spectacle or public performance, but the Spirit of God the Father helping human weakness and carrying prayer beyond the accusation of this world.

When a believer is oppressed by fear, shame, appetite, debt, decay, accusation, grief, bondage, or any other captivity of this world, that captivity should be named plainly before the Father in personal prayer. The believer may then remain silent, receiving quietness, tears, groaning, or wordless intercession without performance or fear.

Thus Marcionite prayer has both order and freedom. The faithful pray the Lord's Prayer at the appointed hours, pray before meals, face west, observe the bodily disciplines appropriate to worship, intercede for others, and pray without ceasing. Above all, they trust the Holy Spirit to carry their personal prayers to the Father through Jesus Christ.

See also: Question 13.02, "What form of the Lord's Prayer does the Church use?"; Question 13.04, "Why does the Church pray westward?"

13.02. What form of the Lord's Prayer does the Church use?

The Marcionite version of the Lord's Prayer, preserved in Evangelicon 10:2–4, opens with the striking invocation, "Let Thy Holy Spirit come upon us, and cleanse us."

The closing petition also reveals a key theological distinction. The Marcionite version reads, "suffer us not to be brought into temptation," rather than "lead us not," softening the tone and avoiding any suggestion that God initiates trials. Tertullian preserves this permissive reading in Latin, and it aligns with the passive Greek verb used. This phrasing fits Marcion's vision of the true God—who never tests, tempts, or harms—unlike Yahweh, who in the Hebrew Bible hardens hearts, creates evil (Isaiah 45:7), and commands destruction. The shift preserves the Father's moral purity and aligns the prayer with the Gospel Paul preached. Modern scholars such as Harnack, BeDuhn, Vinzent, and Klinghardt affirm the priority of the Marcionite version. Rome's discomfort with the older language resurfaced in modern times: in 2008, the Vatican banned the use of the name "Yahweh" in hymns, and in 2019, Bishop Francis revised the Lord's Prayer to read, "do not let us fall into temptation"—a move that echoes Marcion's ancient insight. The full version of the Lord's Prayer, as preserved in the Evangelicon, the Gospel-book of the original Testamentum, is:

Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Let thy Holy Spirit come upon us, and cleanse us.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.
Give us day by day thy daily bread.
And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is in-debted to us.
And suffer us not to be brought into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

The invocation of the Holy Spirit is not supported by patristic testimony alone. It survived in the writings of Gregory of Nyssa and Maximus the Confessor and in Greek manuscripts 162 and 700, providing further witness to an early form of the prayer preserved by the Marcionite Church.

This same form is used in the Divine Liturgy and in the threefold recitation at the ninth hour on Saturday. It is the Church's principal fixed prayer; prayers outside the appointed rites are ordinarily offered personally and in the believer's own words.

13.03. How does the Church conclude prayers?

Marcionite Christians have historically ended their prayers

with the word Amen, much like other Christian traditions. The Apostle Paul concluded all his epistles with Amen, and it also appears in several doxologies throughout his writings.

The term Amen means “truly,” “verily,” “so be it,” or “it is true.” Though it has Semitic roots and entered Greek from Aramaic and Hebrew-speaking Christians, its meaning is universal and does not carry any inherent theological association with the false covenant. It simply affirms the truth and sincerity of what has been spoken in prayer.

In contrast, the use of Hallelujah is strictly forbidden in Marcionite Christian prayer and liturgy. Hallelujah translates directly to “Praise Yahweh” in Hebrew and bears an explicit connection to the false god of the Hebrew Bible. Since Marcionite Christians reject the worship of Yahweh, the term is considered theologically offensive and must not be used.

13.04. Why does the Church pray westward?

Ephrem the Syrian attested that Marcionite Christians prayed facing west, a practice known as Ad occidentem. While this custom is not explicitly commanded in the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum, it does not conflict with any scriptural teaching. Rather, it appears to have developed organically as a distinctive tradition within Marcionite Christian communities.

The westward orientation likely arose to set Marcionite Christians apart from their Judeo-Christian counterparts, who preserved the Jewish custom of praying toward the east—Ad orientem—a practice rooted in the Hebrew Bible’s creation narrative, which situates the Garden of Eden in the east.

In deliberate contrast, Marcionite Christians rejected these eastward associations tied to the false covenant and instead instituted their own westward prayer direction as a unique expression of their faith and separation from Judaism.

13.05. How does the Church understand intercession?

The Apostle Paul presents intercession—prayer to God on behalf of others—as a necessary part of Christian life. He regularly prayed for the churches and asked the faithful to pray for him, showing that intercession is mutual, communal, and directed to God the Father through Jesus Christ.

The Divine Liturgy gives intercession an ecclesiastical form. The Church prays for the Marcionite Church, her bishops and presbyters, all communicants, and those who preach the Gospel; for rulers and civil authorities; for the

sick, afflicted, poor, imprisoned, and all who suffer; and for the strengthening of the faithful in faith, hope, and charity. The communicants answer the appointed petitions, “O God our Father, hear our prayer.”

Outside the Divine Liturgy, Christians should intercede in their own words according to the actual needs of the persons and communities for whom they pray. The Church does not require a separate scripted form for private intercession. What matters is that the prayer be truthful, charitable, persevering, and addressed to God the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Intercession is offered for the living and for the unity, endurance, healing, repentance, and salvation of the Church. It is not prayer directed to saints or other intermediary beings, for petitions and spiritual appeals belong to God alone.

13.06. How is Divine Liturgy conducted?

The Divine Liturgy is the common Eucharistic worship of the Marcionite Church. Because no complete ancient Marcionite order has survived, the present rite is a reconstruction designed as a simple and basic Pauline liturgy in keeping with the earliest surviving pre-Nicene forms of Christian worship. It is arranged according to the Evangelicon and Apostolicon, the Psalmicon, ancient Christian liturgical practice, and Marcionite teaching concerning the Holy Mysteries and Holy Rites.

The rite may be celebrated in a church, chapel, or private home by a bishop or presbyter serving as celebrant, together with at least two communicants. Its simplicity allows the Church to worship without requiring an elaborate building, choir, or ceremonial establishment.

After the preparation for the service, the Divine Liturgy follows a seven-part order: the Introductory Rites; the Liturgy of the Word; the Offertory Rites; the Liturgy of the Eucharist; the Communion Rites; the Concluding Rites; and the Rites of the Holy Lovefeast. Within this order the Church proclaims the Evangelicon and Apostolicon, sings or reads psalms from the Psalmicon, receives a homily, offers intercession, confesses the Pauline faith, exchanges the Holy Kiss, presents the bread and mixed chalice, gives thanks to God the Father, invokes the Holy Spirit, prays the Lord’s Prayer, receives Holy Communion, and shares the Holy Lovefeast, the Church’s Holy Rite of charity.

Cyril of Jerusalem warned Christians traveling among rival congregations not to mistake a Marcionite assembly for a Catholic

one, so similar were their outward prayers, rites, and forms of worship. The reconstructed rite preserves this ancient liturgical seriousness while ordering every element according to Marcionite doctrine.

Before the service, the celebrant and the communicants wash their hands and faces, and the celebrant washes the feet of the communicants; the communicants may also wash one another's feet. Men worship with their heads uncovered, and women cover their heads. The liturgy is celebrated in a language understood by the communicants. The celebrant and communicants pray facing west and, when space permits, stand with their arms extended. At every mention of the name of Jesus during the service, all present bow their heads in reverence.

The Divine Liturgy is ordinarily celebrated on the Lord's Day in remembrance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. At its conclusion, the celebrant and communicants participate in the Holy Lovefeast, contributing according to ability and sharing without preference for the wealthy over the poor. A portion shall be reserved for an absent communicant prevented from attending by sickness or infirmity. When appropriate, a portion may also be reserved for one prevented by imprisonment, distance, or another serious necessity.

The Divine Liturgy is not intended to be the longest or maximum possible form of Marcionite worship. It is the foundational order upon which the Church may build. Suitable psalms, hymns, prayers, intercessions, readings, and ceremonial actions may be added for feasts, seasons, pastoral needs, or local custom, provided that they remain scriptural, Pauline, Marcionite, orderly, reverent, and directed toward the proclamation of Christ and the edification and unity of the communicants.

13.07. Why are three Christians required for Divine Liturgy?

The Divine Liturgy requires one celebrant and at least two communicants, making a minimum assembly of three Christians. This rule expresses that the Eucharist is an act of the gathered Church rather than a private devotion or a solitary action of the clergy.

Christ joins agreement in prayer with His presence among the gathered faithful:

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Evangelicon 15:5–6

The Church applies these words by requiring two communicants to agree and participate together under the presidency of the celebrant. The minimum assembly can therefore make the congregational responses, exchange the Holy Kiss, receive from the one bread and cup, and wait for one another at the Holy Lovefeast. As the Apostle teaches:

"For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

I Corinthians 10:17

The requirement is therefore a rule of ecclesiastical order grounded in the scriptural character of gathered worship. It does not mean that Christ is absent from the prayer of one or two believers; it means that the Church's celebration of the Holy Mystery should visibly include both an ordained celebrant and a congregation.

13.08. In what language is Divine Liturgy conducted?

Divine Liturgy and prayers within the Marcionite Church are to be conducted in a language fully understood by those participating—typically the vernacular. However, the Church places no restriction on the use of traditional liturgical languages such as Latin or Koine Greek, provided the congregation can comprehend the words being spoken. What matters most is not the language itself, but the clarity of understanding, so that all may participate fully in the worship and meaning of the Holy Rites.

13.09. How does the Church honor the saints?

Marcionite Christians reject the veneration of saints, regarding it as a form of idolatry, and view the practice of canonization as a form of deification. Marcionite theology holds that no meaningful distinction can be made between veneration and worship; both ultimately divert the soul's attention from its rightful focus—the worship of God alone.

In Marcionite belief, the term "saint" refers broadly to any true follower of Jesus Christ. This usage reflects how the Apostle Paul frequently addresses believers in his letters, identifying all members of the Body of Christ as saints by virtue of their relationship with the Lord. Accordingly, intercessory prayers directed to saints—whether living or deceased—are viewed as improper, since they attribute to others a form of honor and appeal that should be reserved for God alone.

That said, it is considered acceptable to admire and honor biblical saints—those specifically mentioned or alluded to in the scriptural books of the Testamentum—such as the Apostles and early Disciples of

Jesus Christ. Marcionite churches and institutions may be named in their honor, provided it remains clear that reverence is not worship, and that no prayer or spiritual petition is ever directed to them.

13.10. How does the Church regard icons and religious images?

From a Marcionite perspective, the veneration of sacred images—iconodulism—is appropriate when directed toward the true God revealed through Jesus Christ, not the false god of the Hebrew Bible. Icons serve as visual testimonies to the goodness, mercy, and love of the Father made known through His Son.

Christ appeared truly among men—not as an illusion, but as the perfect image of the Father's goodness and grace. Depicting Him in sacred art affirms His manifestation in history and His work of deliverance. Icons are not worshiped, but serve as visual proclamations of the Gospel and reminders of the true God's revelation through Christ.

In honoring the image of Christ, we honor the revelation of the good God, made known in love and truth—not in fear or wrath.

13.11. What is the Holy Sign?

The Holy Sign, commonly called the Sign of the Cross, is one of the Church's Holy Rites. According to Tertullian, Marcionite Christians were among the earliest Christians to employ it as a regular devotional practice.

The Litourgicon appoints the Holy Sign at the beginning and conclusion of Divine Liturgy; before and after the Lord's Prayer; before and after receiving Holy Communion; before the Holy Lovefeast; and within the Liturgies of Holy Baptism and Holy Chrismation. Marcionite Christians may also make the Sign of the Cross when entering or passing a church, following Holy Reconciliation, and at other suitable moments of personal devotion.

The gesture is performed by joining the first three fingers together to represent the Holy Trinity, while folding the remaining two into the palm as a sign of Christ's dual nature. The hand is then moved from the forehead, to below the chest, to the left shoulder, then to the right shoulder, and finally placed over the heart with a bow of the head. The invocation accompanying the motion is Trinitarian: at the forehead, "In the name of the Father," at the chest, "and of the Son," across the shoulders, "and of the Holy Spirit," and finally, "Amen."

13.12. Does the Church pray before meals?

Marcionite Christians should pray before meals, giving thanks to God the Father and receiving food as a

gift to be used with gratitude, moderation, and charity. Jesus Himself blessed bread before giving it to those who ate with Him:

“And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.”

Evangelicon 23:29

The Church does not prescribe a fixed grace for ordinary meals. The prayer should be personal and offered in the believer’s own words, thanking the Father through Jesus Christ and remembering those who lack food. The appointed blessing of the Holy Lovefeast is different because it forms part of the Divine Liturgy and is therefore prayed according to the Litourgicon.

LESSON 14: SACRAMENTAL QUESTIONS

This lesson concerns the three Holy Mysteries by which the Church initiates and nourishes the faithful, together with the Holy Rites that order repentance, healing, ministry, marriage, worship, and charity.

14.01. Which Holy Mysteries does the Church recognize?

Tertullian acknowledged that the worship of the Holy Mysteries practiced by Marcionite Christians bore notable similarity to that observed within his own Catholic tradition. Likewise, Cyril of Jerusalem warned Christians to take care not to mistake a Marcionite church for a Catholic one while traveling, further attesting to the resemblance in worship and liturgical structure between the two communities.

The Marcionite Church recognizes three Holy Mysteries of Christian initiation: Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and Holy Communion.

Holy Baptism joins the believer to the death and resurrection of Christ; Holy Chrismation seals the baptized with the Holy Spirit; and Holy Communion completes the believer’s incorporation into the one bread and body of the Church. Upon receiving all three, a person is a fully initiated member of the Marcionite Church and is expected to wear the Chi Rho as a visible confession of allegiance to Christ.

Holy Baptism, the foundational Holy Mystery, is repeatedly affirmed in the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum:

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 5:3–4

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body… and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

I Corinthians 12:13

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

Colossians 2:12

Holy Chrismation, the sealing with the Holy Spirit following baptism, is reflected in the Apostle Paul's words:

"In whom ye also trusted… after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Ghost of promise."

Laodiceans 1:13

"And grieve not the Holy Ghost of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

Laodiceans 4:30

Holy Communion was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper and is affirmed both in the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon:

"And they rehearsed… how he became known to them in the breaking of the bread."

Evangelicon 23:34

"This is my body, which is broken for you… For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

I Corinthians 11:24–27

The Church therefore does not extend the name Holy Mystery beyond these three. Other scriptural and ecclesiastical actions that support, order, and express the life of grace without themselves completing Christian initiation are received as Holy Rites. See also Question 14.02, "Which Holy Rites does the Church recognize?"

14.02. Which Holy Rites does the Church recognize?

Alongside the three Holy Mysteries, the Marcionite Church recognizes nine principal Holy Rites: Holy Reconciliation, Holy Matrimony, Holy Anointing, Holy Ordination, Holy Footwashing, Holy Veiling, the Holy Lovefeast, the Holy Kiss, and the Holy Sign.

Holy Rites are blessings, disciplines, and ecclesiastical actions grounded in scripture and received tradition. They dispose the faithful to grace, strengthen the Church's common life, and express repentance, healing, ministry, charity, and worship, but they are not Holy Mysteries and do not complete Christian initiation.

The authority to forgive sins, passed from Christ to the Apostles, is the basis of Holy Reconciliation, the Holy Rite of confession and absolution:

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 8:13

Holy Anointing, the Holy Rite of anointing the sick, continues the healing ministry of Jesus:

"To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit."

I Corinthians 12:9

Holy Ordination, the Holy Rite by which clergy are set apart for ecclesiastical office, was instituted by Christ and affirmed by Paul:

"…That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations."

Evangelicon 23:43–45

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ… be ye reconciled to God."

II Corinthians 5:20

Holy Matrimony, the Holy Rite of covenant between man and woman, symbolizes the bond between Christ and the Church:

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother… This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

Laodiceans 5:31–32

Holy Footwashing is a Holy Rite of humility and service instituted by Christ:

"He riseth from supper… and began to wash the disciples' feet."

Evangelicon 20:10–11

"Thou gavest me no water for my feet… Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much."

Evangelicon 5:45–49

The Holy Kiss is a Holy Rite and sign of peace and fellowship commanded by the Apostle Paul:

"All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss."

I Corinthians 16:20

The Holy Sign, or Sign of the Cross, is a Holy Rite of confession and devotion by which the faithful mark themselves with the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ:

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Galatians 6:14

Holy Veiling is a Holy Rite and discipline required of women in worship, based on Paul's directive:

"Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head… But if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered."

I Corinthians 11:3–15

Lastly, the Holy Lovefeast is one of the Church's Holy Rites: a

communal meal following Holy Communion and referenced in the Apostle's instructions:

"Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another… And the rest will I set in order when I come."

I Corinthians 11:33–34

These nine Holy Rites form an important part of Marcionite liturgical and ecclesiastical life. They are rooted in the teachings of Christ and Paul and in the received worship of the Church, but remain distinct in rank and purpose from the three Holy Mysteries.

See also: Question 13.11, "What is the Holy Sign?"; Question 14.01, "Which Holy Mysteries does the Church recognize?"; Question 14.16, "What is the Holy Lovefeast?"; Question 17.07, "What is the Church's teaching on marriage?"

14.03. What is Holy Baptism?

Marcionite Christians do not practice infant baptism, as infants are incapable of repentance or belief—both of which are clear prerequisites for baptism according to Scripture. Infants are born without sin and are not morally accountable until they reach an age where they can understand the difference between good and evil. Until such time, they have no need for baptism; and if they die before moral discernment, they are not condemned for lack of baptism, but belong to the kingdom of God. Nowhere in the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum is infant baptism explicitly described or commanded.

For this reason, the Marcionite Church adheres to the practice of 'Credobaptism,' or 'Believer's Baptism.' This is administered exclusively by full triple immersion —also known as trine immersion— in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The triple immersion recalls both the trinitarian formula and the three days and three nights our Lord Jesus Christ lay in the tomb.

Historical testimony supports this practice. Both Epiphanius and Eznik of Kolb confirm that Marcionite Christians observed trine immersion and permitted Deaconesses to baptize other women, in keeping with apostolic-era customs of modesty and propriety.

The Marcionite Church recognizes as valid only those baptisms that are performed in the trinitarian formula and by full triple immersion. Baptisms that do not meet these criteria require proper rebaptism upon entry into the Church.

In accordance with the practice of the earliest Christians, catechumens preparing for baptism are required to fast for the full day preceding their reception of Holy Baptism.

This is an act of purification and solemn anticipation.

Tertullian further records that Marcionite Christians anointed the baptized with Holy Oil and gave them milk and honey as part of the complete post-baptismal initiation. In the present Litourgicon, the anointing and the offering of milk and honey are administered in the Liturgy of Holy Chrismation immediately following Holy Baptism. These signs express the sealing of the baptized with the Holy Spirit and the sweetness and incorruptibility of the true covenant in Christ, in contrast to the false Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants.

As Christ himself commanded:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Evangelicon 24:73

This command, coupled with the apostolic pattern of teaching, repentance, faith, confession, and baptism, guides the Marcionite Church in its discipline concerning the Holy Mysteries and preserves the purity of Christ's ordinance. Holy Baptism should not be administered hastily, nor to one who has not been instructed in the Gospel, examined in repentance, and prepared to confess Jesus Christ as Lord. It should ordinarily be administered before the gathered Church, or before sufficient witnesses of the Church, so that the catechumen's repentance, confession, and baptism are openly testified. Baptism is not a private religious gesture, but the public entrance of the believer into the visible communion of the Church.

See also: Question 14.07, "What is Holy Chrismation?"; Question 14.08, "What is Holy Communion?"

14.04. May infants be blessed if they are not baptized?

The Church does not baptize infants, for Holy Baptism belongs to those who believe, repent, and confess Jesus Christ as Lord. Yet infants and young children may be brought before the Church for naming, prayer, and blessing.

In this rite the Church gives thanks for the child, prays that the child may be preserved in innocence, raised in the faith, and brought in due time to Holy Baptism by personal confession. This blessing is not baptism, does not regenerate, and does not admit the child to Holy Communion. It is an act of charity, thanksgiving, and pastoral care.

See also: Question 14.03, "What is Holy Baptism?"; Question 12.10, "What is the fate of children?"; Question 14.08, "What is Holy Communion?".

14.05. Does marriage or non-celibacy prevent Holy Baptism?

Marriage and non-celibacy do not prevent Holy Baptism. A lawful marriage need not be dissolved before baptism, and the Church does not require celibacy as a condition of baptism.

Tertullian incorrectly alleged that Marcionite Christians refused baptism to those who were married, requiring spouses to divorce before receiving Holy Baptism. This accusation misrepresents the discipline of the Church.

The accusation also exploited a category error. Because Marcionites did not number marriage among the Holy Mysteries, heresiologists portrayed them as rejecting marriage itself. In fact, the Church receives Holy Matrimony as a Holy Rite and covenant, distinct from the three Holy Mysteries of initiation, while fully affirming lawful Christian marriage.

The Pauline privilege, derived from the Apostle Paul's instructions in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, teaches that if one spouse remains outside the faith and refuses peace, the baptized spouse is not bound in bondage. This principle does not mean that baptism itself requires the dissolution of a lawful marriage.

This discipline must be read narrowly. It does not authorize the dissolution of a marriage between baptized Christians, nor does it require the baptized to abandon a peaceful spouse. The Marcionite Church does not permit the dissolution of a marriage between two baptized Christians. Such a separation is viewed as adultery and is strictly forbidden.

Tertullian also wrongly asserted that candidates for baptism in the Marcionite Church were required to take vows of celibacy. This claim mischaracterizes the Church's ascetical discipline, its refusal to bless irregular unions, and its distinction between lawful Christian marriage and sexual bondage under the world-order.

Marcionite Christianity places no restrictions on lawful Christian marriage, nor does it mandate celibacy. These false accusations were propagated by Catholic heresiologists writing long after the death of Marcion of Sinope and without firsthand knowledge of Marcionite practice.

Indeed, Marcion of Sinope emphasized that Christian marriages should be conducted with ecclesiastical approval, underscoring the moral and pastoral integrity of the Church's leadership. As he taught:

"It becometh men and women too, when they marry, to unite

themselves with the consent of the bishop, that the marriage may be after the Lord and not after concupiscence."
—Metrodorus 5:7

It is possible that bishops within the Marcionite Church—including Marcion himself—declined to sanction certain marriages that appeared to be driven solely by lust rather than genuine Christian commitment. This pastoral discretion may have contributed to the false impression that Marcionite Christians rejected marriage altogether.

In truth, the Marcionite Church affirms the sanctity of Christian marriage, upholds the Pauline privilege as scripturally warranted, and rejects the imposition of celibacy as a prerequisite for baptism.

14.06. Does the Church believe in baptism for the dead?

The Marcionite Church does not believe in baptism for the dead.

This accusation comes from hostile heresiologists, not from Marcionite doctrine itself. The clearest form of the charge appears in John Chrysostom, who says that those "infected with the Marcionite heresy" hid "the living man under the couch of the dead" and then baptized him in place of the departed catechumen (John Chrysostom, Homily 40 on First Corinthians). A fragment attributed to Didymus the Blind makes the same charge more briefly: "The Marcionites baptize the living on behalf of dead unbelievers" (Didymus the Blind, Fragment on I Corinthians 15:29).

This is a late and absurd heresiological accusation. Tertullian, who is the earliest and closest of these witnesses to Marcion, discusses I Corinthians 15:29 directly in Against Marcion, yet he does not accuse Marcionites of performing any such proxy rite. Instead, he gives his own interpretation of the verse: "To be 'baptized for the dead' therefore means, in fact, to be baptized for the body" (Tertullian, Against Marcion 5.10). This matters. If such a grotesque practice had actually belonged to Marcionite religion in the second century, Tertullian would have had every polemical reason to mention it. He does not.

The Marcionite Church therefore rejects baptism for the dead as a made-up charge of the heresiologists. It belongs to the same class of hostile caricatures by which the enemies of Marcion tried to make Marcionite doctrine appear foolish, impious, or corrupt in its Holy Mysteries and Holy Rites.

Baptism for the dead is also contrary to Marcionite theology. Holy Baptism is not a magical act performed upon one body for the

benefit of another. It is the living soul's renunciation of the lower powers, its confession of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, and its entrance into the life of the Gospel. A corpse cannot confess, repent, believe, or receive illumination; neither can another man do these things in its stead.

Moreover, the Marcionite teaching on the transmigration of souls makes baptism for the dead a silly and useless concept. The departed soul is not trapped in dead flesh, waiting for another person to receive water on its behalf. The soul continues under divine judgment and correction until it is saved. Therefore, to baptize a living man for a dead man would accomplish nothing. It would neither cleanse the departed soul, nor change its course, nor supply faith where faith is absent.

See also: Question 10.05, "What is the transmigration of souls?"; Question 12.07, "What is the eternal sin?"

When the Apostle speaks of those "baptized for the dead" in I Corinthians 15:29, he is not establishing a Marcionite rite of proxy baptism. At most, he refers to a practice known among others in order to make an argument about resurrection and hope. The Marcionite Church receives Holy Baptism as a Holy Mystery for the living, not as a vain ceremony for the dead.

14.07. What is Holy Chrismation?

Chrismation is the Marcionite Christian term for what is commonly referred to as Confirmation. It is administered after Holy Baptism and is the second of the three Holy Mysteries of Christian initiation. Chrismation seals the baptized with the Holy Spirit and prepares the believer to receive Holy Communion, by which initiation is completed.

The Marcionite Church holds that individuals who have received a trinitarian credobaptism by full triple immersion—but who have not undergone Chrismation—must receive this Holy Mystery before proceeding to Holy Communion. Chrismation serves as the spiritual sealing of the believer and affirms the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, while full initiation into the visible communion of the Church is completed through reception of Holy Communion.

Tertullian attests that after baptism, Marcionite Christians were given a mixture of milk and honey to drink. This act likely formed part of the Chrismation rite. The consumption of milk and honey symbolized the believer's entrance into the spiritual Promised Land of the Christian covenant—superior to the false covenant, which forbade the use of

honey in sacrificial offerings due to its tendency to corrupt.

This symbolism is reflected in the Psalmicon, which contains the line:

“Distil thy dew upon us, and open thy rich fountains, which pour forth unto us milk and honey.” —Psalmicon 4:10

This practice underscores the Marcionite emphasis on the grace-filled nature of the true covenant in contrast to the legalism, corruption, and fleshly rituals of the false covenant of the Hebrew Bible.

14.08. What is Holy Communion?

Holy Communion is the Holy Mystery in which the faithful receive the consecrated bread and mixed chalice as participation in the body and blood of Jesus Christ. It proclaims His true suffering and death, unites the Church in one fellowship, and nourishes the baptized in the covenant of grace.

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?”

I Corinthians 10:16

Holy Communion is neither a bare memorial nor a repetition of Christ’s sacrifice. It is the Church’s mystical participation in the one saving work of the Lord and a pledge of fellowship with Him and with one another.

Holy Communion also requires unity, equality, and self-examination. The Apostle condemns divisions at the common table and the humiliation of the poor, for the one bread cannot rightly be received while the members of Christ despise one another. The Holy Mystery therefore joins remembrance of the Lord’s death to charity within His body, the Church.

Holy Communion therefore belongs to the faithful who have been baptized, sealed, examined, and admitted to the holy table. Catechumens, the unbaptized, the unrepentant, and those not yet received into communion may hear the Gospel, join the prayers of the Church, and witness the rite, but they do not receive the consecrated bread and chalice. The table is open beyond denominational membership, but it is not careless: it requires faith, repentance, Baptism, Chrismation or Confirmation, and ecclesiastical admission to Communion.

14.09. How is Holy Communion received?

Marcionite Christians receive Holy Communion under both kinds, partaking of the consecrated bread and mixed chalice as the body and blood of Christ. Communion in one kind alone is considered incomplete.

The celebrant receives first. The communicants then approach in order and kneel before the

celebrant. A portion of the consecrated bread is dipped into the chalice and placed directly upon the communicant's tongue. The celebrant identifies the gift as the body of Christ given and the blood of Christ shed for the communicant, who answers, "Amen," and reverently returns to his or her place.

This manner of reception preserves the ancient Christian practice of Communion upon the tongue, ensures reception from both the bread and chalice, and visibly expresses that the Holy Mystery is received rather than taken by private possession. After all have communicated, the service continues with the thanksgiving, hymn, prayer for perseverance, blessing, and dismissal appointed in the Divine Liturgy. No additional fixed private Thanksgiving Prayer is required.

14.10. Why does the Church use a mixed chalice?

The Marcionite Church prepares the chalice with wine mixed with a few drops of water. Tertullian, Ephrem the Syrian, and Eznik of Kolb attest the use of wine among Marcionites, while Epiphanius's accusation concerning water is best understood alongside the ancient Christian custom of mingling the two.

The Litourgicon expressly directs the celebrant to prepare the mixed chalice in remembrance of the blood and water that came forth from the side of the Lord. The words over the chalice likewise declare that wine and water were mingled.

"But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water."

Evangelicon 22:68

The mixed chalice therefore preserves an early Christian practice and bears sacred witness to Christ's true suffering, the blood He shed, and the life and cleansing bestowed through Him.

14.11. How does the Church understand the Eucharistic presence?

Marcionite Christians hold that, in the Eucharist, the entire substance of the bread becomes the Body of Christ, and the entire substance of the wine becomes the Blood of Christ. This transformation occurs through the words of Christ and the operation of the Holy Spirit during the Eucharistic prayer. The outward appearance and physical qualities of bread and wine—the Eucharistic species—remain.

The Litourgicon makes this faith explicit in the epiclesis. The celebrant asks God the Father to send down the Holy Spirit upon the communicants and the offering, to make the bread the holy body of Christ and the cup His precious

blood, and to grant that the cup and bread be communion in Christ's blood and body. The prayer asks the Father to unite the many as one bread and one body through the Holy Spirit, fill them with the Spirit, strengthen them in faith, establish them in the truth, and confirm their reconciliation through Jesus Christ.

"They abstain from eucharist and prayer, because they allow not that the eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which flesh suffered for our sins, and which the Father of His goodness raised up." Smyrnaeans 6:8

The reality of Christ's presence must never be separated from the purposes for which the Holy Mystery was given: remembrance of His saving death, self-examination, charity, sanctification, and the unity of the faithful. A metaphysical confession without these fruits contradicts the communion it professes.

14.12. How does the Church view the validity of the mysteries and sacraments of other churches?

The Marcionite Church does not teach that every sacred act performed outside formal Marcionite jurisdiction is automatically empty. The Church judges mysteries and sacraments by apostolic form, intention, and doctrine, receiving what accords with the Testamentum and correcting what is deficient.

For Holy Baptism, the rule is the rule already stated by the Church: baptism is valid only when performed in the trinitarian formula and by full triple immersion. Those who received a merely symbolic washing, infant baptism, sprinkling, pouring, a non-trinitarian formula, or a baptism without faith and repentance require proper Holy Baptism upon entry into the Church.

For Holy Communion, the Church recognizes the sacramental validity of a Eucharist celebrated with bread and a mixed chalice of wine and water, when the church celebrating it confesses the real presence of Christ in the Holy Mystery. A rite that denies the real presence or lacks the mixed chalice is deficient and is not received as the full Eucharistic Mystery recognized by the Marcionite Church.

This judgment does not make the Marcionite Church indifferent to doctrine, communion, or discipline. Validity is not the same as full ecclesiastical unity. The faithful may recognize a true sacramental form where it exists while still confessing the superior purity of the Gospel, canon, and liturgical order preserved by the Marcionite Church.

See also: Question 14.03, "What is Holy Baptism?"; Question 14.10,

“Why does the Church use a mixed chalice?”; Question 14.11, “How does the Church understand the Eucharistic presence?”; Question 14.13, “Why does the Church practice open communion?”

14.13. Why does the Church practice open communion?

The Marcionite Divine Liturgy practices open communion by welcoming Christians who have received Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation or Confirmation, and Holy Communion, even when they are not formal members of the Marcionite Church. Properly baptized and chrismated candidates may also be admitted to their first Holy Communion, by which their Christian initiation is completed. Open communion therefore means openness beyond denominational membership, not reception without Baptism, sealing, and ecclesiastical admission to the holy table.

“Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.”

Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 12:1

Catechumens, non-Christians, and other visitors may remain and observe the Eucharistic rite, hear the Gospel and Apostle, and witness the worship of the Church. They are not numbered among the communicants until they have completed catechesis, received Holy Baptism and Holy Chrismation, and been admitted to Holy Communion, through which their initiation is completed.

For this reason, the Church distinguishes open communion from indiscriminate communion: it welcomes properly initiated Christians from beyond formal Marcionite membership, but does not communicate those who have not yet received Baptism, sealing, and admission to the holy table.

Historical accounts from Tertullian, Epiphanius, and Jerome likewise attest that Marcionite congregations permitted outsiders and catechumens to enter and observe their worship. The Church therefore combines hospitality toward those who seek the Gospel with disciplined admission to the holy table.

14.14. How is Holy Reconciliation practiced?

Marcionite Christians maintain that the confession and absolution involved in Holy Reconciliation must take place openly before the gathered faithful. As a Holy Rite, Holy Reconciliation is ecclesial and public rather than a purely private transaction. It is not numbered among the Holy Mysteries, nor is it a sacrifice, satisfaction, or work by which forgiveness is purchased. The Church is sola fide: forgiveness is given for Christ's sake and received by faith, not earned by confession, penance, or human merit.

Holy Reconciliation is therefore open to all, commended to the burdened, and required of none as a condition of grace. No communicant is required to use this rite as though faith alone were insufficient, or as though every hidden fault must be named before forgiveness can be received. Nevertheless, when a believer is troubled in conscience, has fallen into grave sin, has wounded the brethren, or has disturbed the peace of the Church, this rite should be sought as the Church's appointed means of pastoral healing, public repentance, and restored communion.

Thus the rite does not add to faith, but serves faith. The sinner does not confess in order to earn grace, but because grace has called him to repentance. The minister does not absolve by private power or personal worthiness, but in the person of Christ and on behalf of the Church, declaring the promise of forgiveness to the penitent and peace to the gathered faithful. The Church, hearing both confession and absolution, receives again the restored brother or sister, lest sorrow be swallowed up by despair.

Holy Reconciliation therefore has three chief uses. First, it comforts the conscience by setting the promise of forgiveness before the penitent in a clear and outward word. Secondly, it restores ecclesial peace, so that sin which has wounded the body is answered by public repentance and public absolution. Thirdly, it provides pastoral correction, counsel, and discipline, not as punishment that merits grace, but as medicine for amendment of life. Good works and repaired conduct follow absolution as the fruits of repentance, not as the price of forgiveness.

The Church rejects every abuse by which confession is made a torment of the conscience. The penitent is not required to enumerate every hidden fault as though forgotten sins were unforgiven. Nor does the Church teach that absolution is effective because of the worthiness of the minister or the intensity of

the penitent's sorrow. It is effective because Christ has entrusted reconciliation to His Church, and because the Gospel, when believed, truly gives what it promises.

"To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ."

II Corinthians 2:10

14.15. Does the Church practice fermentum?

The Marcionite Church practices fermentum as an expression of ecclesiastical and Eucharistic communion. By this ancient Christian practice, bishops demonstrate and maintain communion with one another, as well as with their subordinate presbyters, by sending a portion of the consecrated bread from the bishop's Eucharist to another altar.

"For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

I Corinthians 10:17

As part of this practice, a fragment of the consecrated Eucharistic bread from one bishop's celebration was sent—often by a presbyter or deacon—to another bishop of a neighboring or affiliated jurisdiction. The receiving bishop would then consume the fragment during his next liturgical celebration, symbolizing the unity and shared faith between the churches.

The term fermentum likely refers to the Eucharist as the leaven of Christian life—an emblem of how the faithful, though dispersed across many places, are united through the one Body of Christ to act as leaven within the world. Fermentum therefore expresses visibly that separated congregations remain one Church, one body, and one Eucharistic communion in Christ.

See also: Question 16.01, "What is the Church?"

14.16. What is the Holy Lovefeast?

The Holy Lovefeast is the communal meal shared by the celebrant and communicants after the Divine Liturgy and is one of the Church's principal Holy Rites. It continues the fellowship expressed in Holy Communion by joining worship to practical charity, equality, and the common life of the Church.

Each household or communicant contributes according to ability. The food is gathered and shared without preference for the wealthy over the poor. No one begins before the others are ready, for the Apostle commands:

"Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another."

I Corinthians 11:33

The meal is blessed according to the Divine Liturgy and shared in charity and peace. It is not merely a social reception after worship, but a sacred sign that the many are one body in Christ and that no communicant should hunger while another possesses abundance.

A portion of the Holy Lovefeast shall be reserved for an absent communicant prevented from attending by sickness or infirmity. When appropriate, a portion may also be reserved for one prevented by imprisonment, distance, or another serious necessity. The celebrant or an appointed communicant may carry it to that person as a sign that he or she remains joined to the fellowship of the Church.

See also: Question 14.01, "Which Holy Mysteries does the Church recognize?"; Question 14.02, "Which Holy Rites does the Church recognize?"; Question 14.08, "What is Holy Communion?"

LESSON 15: CALENDRICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson explains the Menologion and the annual order of Holy Week, major and minor feasts, and the Church's appointed fasts.

15.01. What is the Menologion?

The Menologion is the official liturgical calendar of the Marcionite Church.

Menologion derives from the Greek words μήν (mēn, "month") and λόγιον (logion, "register, catalogue"), literally "the monthly catalogue," a term the early Church used for its liturgical calendar of feasts and saints.

It consists of designated Holy Days, which are organized into two main categories: Holy Week and Holy Feasts. The Holy Feasts are further divided into Major Feasts and Minor Feasts.

On all Holy Days, the faithful are expected to attend Mass and refrain from work and leisure activities as an act of reverence and devotion.

Each Holy Day in the Menologion corresponds to a significant historical or scriptural event. Dates are never chosen arbitrarily; every observance must be grounded in canonical or deuterocanonical scripture contained in the Testamentum, or in authentic historical tradition, preserving the integrity and meaning behind each commemoration.

See also: Question 15.02, "Why does the Church observe the Lord's Day rather than the Jewish Sabbath?"

15.02. Why does the Church observe the Lord's Day rather than the Jewish Sabbath?

The Marcionite Church observes the Lord's Day on Sunday because it commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the new life revealed through Him. The Jewish Sabbath belongs to the law of Moses and to the false covenant; the Lord's Day belongs to the Gospel, grace, and the newness of Christian life.

Marcion's Epistle to the Magnesians teaches that Christians are "no longer observing sabbaths but fashioning their lives after the Lord's day, on which our life also arose through Him and through His death."

Marcion's Epistle to the Magnesians 7:1

Sunday observance is therefore not the transfer of the Mosaic Sabbath to another day. It is a distinctively Christian commemoration of the Lord's victory over death and the beginning of the new creation. The faithful gather for prayer, instruction, fellowship, and Holy Communion, ordering their lives according to Christ rather than the ordinances of the Hebrew Bible.

The Church does not condemn necessary works of mercy, protection, or service performed on the Lord's Day. Its observance is evangelical rather than legalistic: the day is sanctified by worship, charity, rest from ordinary labor where possible, and joyful remembrance of the risen Lord.

See also: Question 3.24, "What is the Synaxicon?"; Question 15.01, "What is the Menologion?"; Question 17.02, "What is the law of Christ?"

15.03. When does the Church celebrate Holy Week?

Marcionite Christians were the first to break with the tradition of celebrating Easter on the same day as the Jewish Passover. Instead, they established the custom of observing it on a Sunday, the day marking Christ's resurrection. This deliberate departure emphasized the distinction between the false covenant and the true Gospel revealed through Jesus.

In the Marcionite tradition, Holy Week is a cycle of moveable feasts and fasts, unlike the fixed-date Holy Feasts found in the Menologion. The foundation for determining the yearly observance of Holy Week is Good Friday, which Marcionite Christians fix as the first Friday of April. This date is historically anchored to April 3, 33 C.E.—the day Jesus was crucified. In the Jewish reckoning of that year, April 3 falls within the Passover observance, and this Passover dating aligns perfectly with the chronological order of the passion events as recorded in the

Gospel. On that day, a notable lunar eclipse, often referred to as a "Blood Moon," began at 2:01 P.M., roughly an hour before Christ's death, and ended at 7:34 P.M., lasting 333 minutes.

Later Christian chronographers report that the pagan historian Thallus attempted to explain the darkness of the crucifixion as an "eclipse of the sun," treating the event as a natural phenomenon rather than a confession of faith.

Origen further appeals to the pagan chronicler Phlegon, stating that Phlegon wrote of an "eclipse" and major earthquakes in the reign of Tiberius Caesar—again, not as Christian testimony, but as an external chronicle invoked for corroboration.

A fuller fragment attributed to Phlegon, as preserved in Jerome's rendering of Eusebius' Chronicle, describes an extraordinary eclipse "at the sixth hour," accompanied by a great earthquake, with damage reported in Bithynia and Nicaea—an entry frequently connected, in later Christian argument, to the Gospel's three-hour darkness.

"And it was about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the sanctuary was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he expired." Evangelicon 22:59–61

Using this date as a reference point, Marcionite Christians can determine the precise dates of Holy Week each year, beginning with the first Friday of April:

Holy Sunday – Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem (Sunday, March 29, 33 C.E.)

Holy Monday – The Parable of the Minas (Monday, March 30, 33 C.E.)

Holy Tuesday – The cleansing of the Temple and Jesus' response to the questioning of His authority (Tuesday, March 31, 33 C.E.)

Spy Wednesday – The betrayal of Jesus by Judas (Wednesday, April 1, 33 C.E.)

Holy Thursday – The Last Supper (Thursday, April 2, 33 C.E.)

Good Friday – The Crucifixion of Jesus (Friday, April 3, 33 C.E.)

Black Saturday – Jesus laid in the sepulcher (Saturday, April 4, 33 C.E.)

Easter Sunday – The Resurrection (Sunday, April 5, 33 C.E.)

Ascension Monday – Jesus' Ascension (Monday, April 6, 33 C.E.)

Marcionite Christians fast on Spy Wednesday in remembrance of Judas' betrayal, and again on Good

Friday in solemn mourning for the Lord's crucifixion.

It is also a long-held tradition among Marcionite Christians to eat broiled fish and honeycomb on Easter Sunday, in memory of the meal Christ shared after His resurrection:

"And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them."
Evangelicon 23:41–42

15.04. Why was the Last Supper on Thursday and not Friday?

In Marcionite Christianity, the question is best answered by paying close attention to how the Gospel itself reckons days and how it frames the Passion in relation to the Sabbath. The day that moderns call "Thursday night" is, in the ancient Hebrew manner of counting, already the beginning of the next day, for the day turns at sundown, so that what is Thursday evening by common modern reckoning is already the next day by ancient Hebrew reckoning. Thus, the Supper, though spoken of in common speech as Thursday evening, stands at the threshold of the day upon which the Passion unfolds. For this reason, the Church commemorates the Last Supper on Thursday, April 2, 33 C.E.

The Gospel also makes clear that the crucifixion and burial were carried out with urgency as the Sabbath approached. Jesus is taken, examined, condemned, and delivered up, and He must be laid in the tomb before sundown, for the Sabbath rest was at hand. This is the controlling fact of the chronology: the death and burial are set before the Sabbath, not within it. If one were to move the Supper to Friday night, then the arrest, judgment, crucifixion, and burial would be forced into the Sabbath itself, overturning the Gospel's insistence that these things were accomplished before the Sabbath began.

For this cause, the Church confesses that the Supper stood on the evening before the day of the Cross. It is not that the Gospel requires us to imagine a long span of days between the table and the tree, but rather that it preserves a sober and consistent order: the Supper first, then the seizure in the night, then the condemnation and crucifixion by day, and then the burial before the Sabbath. In this way, the Gospel keeps the Passion free from contradiction and preserves the sacred sequence by which the Lord gave bread and cup, and afterward gave His life, and then rested in the tomb as the Sabbath approached.

15.05. When and why does the Church celebrate Christmas?

Christmas, also known as the Feast of the Descent, is a major feast of the Marcionite Church. It is observed as a movable feast kept on the Saturday nearest to New Year's Day. It therefore falls either in the last week of December or the first week of January, depending on which Saturday lies closest to January 1.

This dating reflects the ancient Marcionite conviction—drawn from the received chronology of the Evangelicon—that Christ's descent into Capernaum occurred at the beginning of the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar and that His first public appearing was bound to the Jewish Sabbath, for He went directly to the synagogue of Capernaum.

"In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. Jesus descended out of heaven into the Galilean city of Capernaum, a city near the sea, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim. Having taken on the appearance of a man, he appeared thirty years of age and was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath days."

Evangelicon 2:1-4

Even Tertullian, while disputing Marcion, preserves this Marcionite sequence with the striking phrase: "From heaven straightway into the synagogue" (Latin: De caelo statim ad synagogam; Tertullian, Against Marcion IV.7).

In civil-calendar terms, the threshold dates December 31, 28 C.E. (Friday) and January 1, 29 C.E. (Saturday) align naturally with the Sabbath boundary: the Jewish Sabbath begins at sundown on Friday and continues through Saturday. Thus, either a Friday-evening descent (already Sabbath) or a Saturday descent coheres with the Marcionite insistence that Christ appeared on the Sabbath and went "straightway" to the synagogue. For that reason, Marcionite Christians commemorate the Descent on the nearest Jewish Sabbath to New Year's Day, preserving both the event's historic calendrical roots and its placement at the turning of the year.

This practice also finds a notable historical echo in the Paulician adjurations, which include the explicit condemnation: "[Anathema] to those who on the first of January assemble, as they say for a feast …" (Anathema 7).

Many have regarded the Paulicians as Neo-Marcionites or at least as inheritors of Marcionite-adjacent traditions; on that reading, a New-Year feast is plausibly a late survival or distortion of an earlier Descent commemoration.

Ironically, this Marcionite moveable feast typically falls between the dominant ecclesiastical calendars: the Western Church's fixed December 25 (a later convention often explained in relation to the Roman midwinter calendrical milieu), and the cluster of Orthodox and Oriental observances in early January—most prominently January 6 in the Armenian tradition (Nativity and Theophany together), January 7 for churches following the Julian-calendar December 25, and the wider Theophany season that, in many Orthodox usages, culminates on January 19.

15.06. When and why does the Church celebrate Hallowmas?

Hallowmas, also known as the Feast of the Martyrs, is a major feast of the Marcionite Church. It is observed on January 10, marking the exact date on which Asclepius, the Marcionite bishop of Eleutheropolis, was martyred in 310 C.E.

15.07. What minor feasts does the Church observe?

The Feast of Marcion and the Feast of the Cross are the two minor feasts of the Marcionite Church. Marcionite Christians commemorate the Feast of Marcion on July 15, the Ides of July, as a sacred observance honoring the life and enduring legacy of Marcion of Sinope. This date reflects the early Marcionite Christian phrase, "115 years and six and a half months between Christ and Marcion," a calculation cited by Tertullian. It spans from the descent of Jesus in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar (29 C.E.) to the excommunication of Marcion by the Roman Church and his formation of his own Pauline church, the Marcionite Church in July of 144 C.E. Marcion's unwavering boldness, empowered by the Holy Spirit, enabled him to stand firm against opposition and proclaim that the true Christian God was made known solely through Jesus Christ.

On this day, Marcionite Christians read Marcion's Homily to Diognetus as the appointed homily during the Divine Liturgy, reflecting the theological convictions and spiritual clarity Marcion brought to the early Church.

Marcionite Christians also observe the Feast of the Cross on September 14. According to Christian tradition, the True Cross was discovered on this date in the year 326 C.E. by Helena of Constantinople, mother of Emperor

Constantine the Great, during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. At the site of the discovery, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was commissioned and later dedicated. The cross was divided into three parts: one remained in Jerusalem, another was brought to Rome and enshrined in the Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, and the third was sent to Constantinople to serve as a symbol of divine protection for the city.

15.08. Why does the Church reject Lent?

Marcionite Christianity does not observe Lent, because the scriptural basis commonly appealed to for Lent is not present in the Evangelicon as a binding rule of Christian practice.

It is also notable that certain neo-Marcionite movements appear, in hostile sources, as explicitly anti-Lenten by design. In the Byzantine abjuration formulae directed against the Paulicians, converts are made to anathematize those who refuse Christian fasts and deliberately eat dairy during Lent. The text reads:

“Anathema to those who reject all Christian fasts, and at the season of what they think is Lent enjoy cheese and milk.”

A parallel abjuration formula expands the charge:

“Anathema to those who avoid all Christian fasts, but who at the time which they think is Lent enjoy meat, cheese and milk.”

This practice coheres with Marcionite antithetical tradition: where later convention imposes a fast without Gospel warrant, the instinct is not merely to ignore it, but to invert it—so that what others mark as a time of compulsory abstinence becomes, in effect, a time of open eating and feasting as a visible contradiction.

15.09. When does the Church fast?

Marcionite Christians observe fasting on Spy Wednesday to commemorate the betrayal of Christ by Judas, and again on Good Friday in solemn remembrance of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Additionally, Marcionite Christians are required to fast from their third recitation of the Lord’s Prayer at the ninth hour (3:00 P.M.) on Saturday until they receive Holy Communion on Sunday. A full day of fasting is also mandated prior to baptism as a sign of spiritual preparation and devotion.

Epiphanius noted that the Marcionite practice of a Saturday Eucharistic fast arose in deliberate contrast to Judaism, which regarded the Sabbath as a time of joy and feasting. Interestingly, this same tradition of Saturday fasting was

later adopted in the Western Catholic Church, further underscoring its early Christian roots.

LESSON 16: ECCLESIASTICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson concerns the nature, mission, government, ministry, succession, saints, prophets, and continuing order of the Church.

16.01. What is the Church?

The Church is the assembly of those called by the Gospel and united in the confession that Jesus is Lord. A believer becomes a fully initiated member of the Church through Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and Holy Communion. Within this body the Evangelicon and Apostolicon are proclaimed as canonical scripture, the other books of the Testamentum are used according to their proper rank, the Holy Mysteries are celebrated, the Holy Rites are administered, and the faithful are formed in worship, charity, and obedience.

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

I Corinthians 12:27

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

I Corinthians 3:16

The Church is more than an institution or historical association. It is the visible community of the saved and the appointed instrument through which the Gospel is preserved and proclaimed in the world.

See also: Question 16.03, "What is the Church's ecclesiastical polity?"; Question 16.05, "How does the Church understand apostolic succession?"; Question 14.01, "Which Holy Mysteries does the Church recognize?"

16.02. What is the mission of the Church?

The mission of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, make God the Father known, call souls to faith and repentance, celebrate the Holy Mysteries, administer the Holy Rites, instruct the faithful, care for the suffering, and preserve the apostolic doctrine received through Paul.

"For from you sounded out the word of the Lord."

I Thessalonians 1:8

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"

I Corinthians 9:16

The Church fulfills this mission through preaching, catechesis,

worship, discipline, charity, and the common witness of holy lives.

16.03. What is the Church's ecclesiastical polity?

The Marcionite Church follows an episcopal form of governance, specifically a monoepiscopal or monarchic episcopate, wherein each jurisdiction is overseen by a single bishop. This structure is rooted in the earliest traditions of the Church.

Adamantius attests to an unbroken succession of Marcionite bishops beginning with Marcion of Sinope himself. Marcion served as the original Archbishop of the Marcionite community and passed this role on to his disciple and chosen successor, Apelles of Alexandria. The title of Archbishop, denoting the chief spiritual leader of the Church, has been preserved as the exclusive designation for the head of the Marcionite Church. Tertullian, one of the ancient Catholic heresiologists, mockingly referred to Marcion as the first "Arch-heretic," inadvertently acknowledging the prominence of his episcopal authority.

The Archbishop alone holds the authority to ordain new bishops, in accordance with ancient Christian practice. The Marcionite Church also maintains the apostolic custom of episcopal succession, whereby bishops are appointed by other bishops. This requires the laying on of hands by three bishops in the ordination of a new bishop who has previously served as a presbyter. Bishops may also ordain presbyters who have served as deacons, and presbyters may, in turn, ordain deacons and deaconesses.

This model emphasizes continuity, unity, and apostolic order in the governance and liturgical life of the Church.

16.04. What are the orders of clergy?

The Marcionite Church recognizes three major Holy Orders—bishop, presbyter, and deacon—and one minor order, the acolyte. The major orders are the episcopate, presbyterate, and diaconate; the acolyte serves in support of the major orders.

No one is to be ordained hastily. Before the laying on of hands, the candidate must be examined in faith, conduct, sobriety, charity, and ability to serve the Church. Ordination is not a private honor or personal title, but a public recognition of ministry and responsibility before God and the faithful. The Church must not entrust Holy Orders to the untested, greedy, divisive, or careless, lest the ministry itself become a cause of scandal.

16.05. How does the Church understand apostolic succession?

The Church understands apostolic succession as continuity in apostolic doctrine, ministry, ordination, the Holy Mysteries, the Holy Rites, and ecclesiastical office. Doctrinal succession through fidelity to the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul is the higher measure, because an outward chain of ordination without Pauline truth is not genuine apostolic succession.

Marcionite tradition also preserves a historical episcopal foundation. Philologus of Sinope is remembered as a disciple connected with Paul and Andrew, and Marcion as his successor in the episcopal ministry of Sinope. On this basis, the ancient Marcionite Church claimed both doctrinal and historical continuity with the apostolic age.

Centuries of persecution and discontinuity interrupted the visible historical chain between the ancient Church and its modern revival. The modern Marcionite Church therefore does not claim an unbroken episcopal lineage from antiquity. It honors historical succession where it can be recovered or restored, but it does not make such a lineage the sole foundation of ordination, the validity of the Holy Mysteries, or ecclesiastical legitimacy.

See also: Question 16.06, "How does the Church regard traditional episcopal succession lists?"

16.06. How does the Church regard traditional episcopal succession lists?

The Church respects traditional episcopal succession lists as historical witnesses, but it does not regard them as infallible, complete, or the sole foundation of ecclesiastical legitimacy. Such lists must be judged by chronology, surviving evidence, and fidelity to the apostolic Gospel.

Marcionite tradition honors the ancient successions of Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, and other early centers up to the rupture of 144 C.E., when Bishop Pius of Rome excommunicated Marcion and the Pauline faction. In Antioch, Paul is remembered as having ordained Ignatius, while in Rome the earliest succession through Linus and Anacletus is understood as Pauline in character before the later Petrine realignment.

Beginning with Pius, the Roman succession no longer represents the Pauline ecclesial continuity claimed by the Marcionite Church. These lists remain valuable for reconstructing early Christian ministry, but apostolic legitimacy ultimately depends upon fidelity to Christ and Paul rather than upon an uninterrupted list alone.

See also: Question 16.05, "How does the Church understand apostolic succession?"

16.07. Does the Church require clerical celibacy?

Marriage and raising a family are both virtuous and honorable. The Marcionite Church does not prohibit clergy from marrying or having children; in fact, being married and raising children can demonstrate the capacity to govern one's own household well.

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" —I Timothy 3:2–5

16.08. Does the Church ordain women?

The Church permits the ordination of women as deaconesses. In accordance with the customs of the early Church, they are permitted to assist in the administration of baptism for women, perform charitable service, and minister to women in circumstances where modesty and propriety require female assistance.

16.09. Who are the Father and Doctors of the Church?

The Marcionite Church honors Marcion of Sinope as Father of the Church. He preserved the Gospel revealed by Jesus Christ and preached by Paul, compiled the original Christian canon, established the Marcionite ecclesiastical tradition, and became the decisive witness by whom the Church's doctrine, scripture, and discipline are known.

The Church also honors Apelles of Alexandria, Lucanus of Rome, Megethius, and Prepon the Assyrian as Doctors of the Church. They are so called because each either wrote or taught something of lasting value for the advancement of Marcionite theology, or stood as a disciple of Marcion who founded or preserved a distinct school within the broader Marcionite tradition.

Apelles is honored for his theological defense of one supreme God, his refinement of Marcionite cosmology, and his witness to the soul's descent and salvation. Lucanus of Rome is honored as the founder and teacher of the Lucanist school. Megethius is honored as a Marcionite teacher and disputant whose witness is connected with the Church's theological defense against false accounts of matter. Prepon the Assyrian is honored for his remembered role in the

Marcionite theological tradition, even though his work is now lost.

The loss of Prepon's writing does not erase his honor. The Church remembers not only surviving books, but also faithful teachers whose works, schools, or testimony helped preserve and advance the doctrine of Christ and Paul within the ancient Marcionite communion.

See also: Question 1.02, "Who was Marcion of Sinope?"; Question 6.07, "Who were the disciples of Marcion?"; Question 6.08, "Who were the notable Marcionite Christian martyrs?"; Question 6.17, "How were the Marcionite schools theologically distinguished?"

16.10. Who are the biblical saints?

Marcionite Christianity recognizes as saints all Apostles and Disciples of Jesus Christ, together with every Christian mentioned—directly or indirectly—within the scriptural books of the Testamentum. They are honored not through veneration or intercession, but as examples of faith and devotion. The following are named biblical saints (their names appearing either in Scripture or in received tradition) acknowledged by the Marcionite Church:

1) The Twelve Apostles

1. Saint Paul the Apostle
2. Saint Simon called Peter the Apostle
3. Saint Andrew the Apostle
4. Saint James the Apostle
5. Saint John the Apostle
6. Saint Philip the Apostle
7. Saint Bartholomew the Apostle
8. Saint Matthew the Apostle
9. Saint Thomas the Apostle
10. Saint James, the son of Alphaeus, the Apostle
11. Saint Simon called Zelotes the Apostle
12. Saint Judas, the brother of James the Apostle

2) The Seventy Disciples

1. Saint Achaicus of Corinth
2. Saint Alexander of Ephesus
3. Saint Amplias of Odessos
4. Saint Andronicus of Pannonia
5. Saint Apelles of Heraclea
6. Saint Apollos of Alexandria
7. Saint Apphia of Colossae
8. Saint Aquila of Heraclea
9. Saint Archippus of Laodicea
10. Saint Aristarchus of Thessalonica
11. Saint Aristobulus of Britannia

12. Saint Artemas of Lystra
13. Saint Asyncritus of Hyrcania
14. Saint Barnabas of Milan
15. Saint Carpus of Berea
16. Saint Clement of Rome
17. Saint Cleopas of Jerusalem
18. Saint Crescens of Galatia
19. Saint Crispus of Corinth
20. Saint Demas of Thessalonica
21. Saint Epaenetus of Carthage
22. Saint Epaphras of Colosse
23. Saint Epaphroditus of Andriaca
24. Saint Erastus of Corinth
25. Saint Eubulus of Rome
26. Saint Fortunatus of Corinth
27. Saint Gaius of Ephesus
28. Saint Hermas of Philippopolis
29. Saint Hermes of Dalmatia
30. Saint Hermogenes of Asia
31. Saint Herodion of Patras
32. Saint James the Just
33. Saint Jason of Thessalonica
34. Saint Joseph of Arimathaea
35. Saint Junia of Rome
36. Saint Justus of Rome
37. Saint Linus of Rome
38. Saint Lucius of Cyrene
39. Saint Luke the Physician
40. Saint Marcus the Evangelist
41. Saint Narcissus of Athens
42. Saint Nereus of Rome
43. Saint Nicodemus of Jerusalem
44. Saint Nymphas of Laodicea
45. Saint Olympas the Martyr
46. Saint Onesimus of Ephesus
47. Saint Onesiphorus of Colophon
48. Saint Patrobas of Puteoli
49. Saint Phebe of Cenchrea
50. Saint Philemon of Gaza
51. Saint Philologus of Sinope
52. Saint Phlegon of Marathon
53. Saint Phygellus of Ephesus
54. Saint Priscilla of Rome
55. Saint Pudens the Senator
56. Saint Quartus of Berytus
57. Saint Rufus of Thebes
58. Saint Silvanus of Thessalonica
59. Saint Sosipater of Iconium
60. Saint Sosthenes of Corinth
61. Saint Stachys of Byzantium
62. Saint Stephanas of Achaia
63. Saint Tertius of Iconium
64. Saint Timotheus of Ephesus

65. Saint Titus of Crete
66. Saint Trophimus the Martyr
67. Saint Tychicus of Caesarea
68. Saint Urbane of Macedonia
69. Saint Zacchaeus of Caesarea
70. Saint Zenas the Lawyer

3) The Four Myrrhbearers

1. Saint Joanna the Wife of Chuza
2. Saint Mary Magdalene
3. Saint Mary, the Mother of James
4. Saint Susanna the Myrrhbearer

4) The Other Saints

1. Saint John the Baptist
2. Saint Bartimaeus of Jericho
3. Saint Berenice the Syrophoenician
4. Saint Chloe of Corinth
5. Saint Claudia of Rome
6. Saint Dismas the Penitent Thief
7. Saint Eunice of Lystra
8. Saint Euodias of Philippi
9. Saint Ignatius the God-bearer of Antioch
10. Saint Jairus of Capernaum
11. Saint Julia of Rome
12. Saint Justa the Syrophoenician
13. Saint Lazarus the Beggar
14. Saint Lois of Lystra
15. Saint Longinus the Centurion
16. Saint Martha of Bethany
17. Saint Mary of Bethany
18. Saint Mary of Rome
19. Saint Persis of Rome
20. Saint Simon of Cyrene
21. Saint Syntyche of Philippi
22. Saint Tryphena of Rome
23. Saint Tryphosa of Rome
24. Saint Veronica of Capernaum

16.11. What is the communion of saints?

The communion of saints is the spiritual fellowship of all who belong to Jesus Christ: the faithful living upon earth and the souls of the saved received into the Kingdom of God. All are united in one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one spiritual body.

This communion does not mean that departed saints are invoked, worshipped, or treated as mediators alongside Christ. The Church honors the saints as examples of faith, remembers them in its calendar and worship, and gives thanks for their witness, but directs prayer to God the Father through Jesus Christ.

The communion of saints is therefore a communion in Christ rather than a cult of the departed. Death does not overthrow the unity of those who belong to the Lord, for whether living or departed, they remain His.

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

I Corinthians 12:12, 27

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism.”

Laodiceans 4:4–5

16.12. Who are the prophets?

We reject all prophets of the Law and the Hebrew Scriptures. Yet we affirm that Christ’s assemblies truly receive the gift of prophecy: “Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy” (I Corinthians 14:1). “He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort” (I Corinthians 14:3). “Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (I Thessalonians 5:20–21).

We recognize prophets only if Scripture explicitly names them a prophet, or if they are among the Seventy Disciples and tradition explicitly ascribes prophetic status. We also hold that Paul, the chief Apostle of the true Gospel and the only apostle endowed with the gift of prophecy, received his commission directly from Christ: “Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father” (Galatians 1:1). “I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 1:11–12).

Recognized prophets (by Scripture and tradition):

John the Baptist. Forerunner named in Scripture as a prophet who testified to Christ.

Paul the Apostle. The chief Apostle of the true Gospel and the only apostle endowed with the gift of prophecy.

Barnabas of Milan. Traditionally listed as one of the Seventy Disciples and an early herald of the gospel.

Lucius of Cyrene. Prophet and teacher at Antioch, included among the Seventy Disciples in tradition.

Silvanus of Thessalonica. Included among the Seventy Disciples in tradition and esteemed as a prophet.

Timotheus of Ephesus. Disciple and coworker of Paul; Scripture speaks of prophecies concerning

him and a gift imparted "by prophecy."

Hermas of Philippopolis. Traditionally listed among the Seventy Disciples; remembered as a visionary whose revelations were received and recorded in the early Church.

Philomena the Prophetess. Her gifts were confirmed by Marcion's disciple Apelles, and her revelations were recorded in his now-lost Manifestations. She went to Rome before Marcion to proclaim his arrival and served as a Marcionite Deaconess. Her remains were discovered on May 24, 1802, in the Catacomb of Priscilla. Three tiles sealing the tomb read Pax tecum Filumena ("Peace be unto you, Philomena"), from which her name (Filumena, Greek φιλουμένη (philouménē), "beloved") is rendered in English as Philomena. The two anchors, three arrows, the palm, and the ivy leaf on the tiles were interpreted as symbols of her martyrdom. We maintain that, after miracles were associated with the tomb and remains, the Roman Catholic Church originally attributed a constructed history unrelated to her true identity; later, on February 14, 1961, the Roman Catholic Church ordered her name removed from all liturgical calendars, most likely when it was recognized that she was the Marcionite Philomena.

16.13. How does the Church understand prophecy and revelation?

We affirm the gift of prophecy, yet we do not accept "continuous revelation" as the addition of new doctrine or new scripture. By "continuous revelation," we mean any claim that adds to the Church's rule beyond the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon. These writings are the Church's rule, and they judge all prophetic claims.

Paul requires both discernment and order in the exercise of prophecy: "to another discerning of spirits" (I Corinthians 12:10); "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge" (I Corinthians 14:29); and "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (I Corinthians 14:32).

This guarded openness to prophecy is not foreign to ancient Marcionite controversy. Tertullian, writing against Marcion, challenged Marcionite Christians to produce the signs of spiritual gifts: prophets speaking by the Spirit, predictions of things to come, the manifestation of the secrets of the heart, psalms, visions, prayers, ecstatic utterance, interpretation of tongues, and even women prophets among their holy sisters. His testimony is hostile, and he presents the challenge in order to deny Marcionite claims, not to commend them. Nevertheless, the passage shows that prophecy,

visions, psalms, spiritual prayer, tongues, discernment, and women prophets were all recognized categories in the second-century debate over true apostolic assembly life.

Our guardrails are Pauline. “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you… let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8–9). “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (I Corinthians 14:35). We hold that Paul is the chief Apostle of the true Gospel, the only apostle endowed with the gift of prophecy, and the authoritative herald of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Accordingly, we reject any claim that revises Paul’s gospel or expands the canon, and we reject treating private revelations as universally binding doctrine. We likewise reject the false prophets of the Law and the Hebrew Bible.

In the apostolic era, the Apostles received revelation directly from God the Father or from God the Son (Galatians 1:12; I Corinthians 11:23; II Corinthians 12:1). After the Apostles, authentic revelation is mediated: the Father grants illumination through the Holy Spirit and, at times, by his holy angels (I Corinthians 2:10).

Because mediation can be counterfeited, discernment is necessary. Paul warns that “Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (II Corinthians 11:14). For this reason, Paul’s apostolic Scripture always stands above all later revelations and judges them.

We acknowledge that the Father may grant revelation through the Holy Spirit and at times by his holy angels, yet we also heed the warning that there are deceiving spirits (I Timothy 4:1). A basic confession test remains: “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit” (I Corinthians 12:3).

In practice, we distinguish between general or public prophecy and direct or private revelation. General prophecy is given in the assembly for the edification of the body. It may warn, console, direct, or present interpreted visions, but it cannot create new doctrine, new Holy Mysteries or Holy Rites, or new Scripture. It is delivered under judgment and in ecclesiastical order. Private revelation is granted to an individual for personal direction, correction, consolation, intercession, or vocation. It is not binding on the whole Church, must come under pastoral oversight if it touches others, and is tested against the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon.

Claims are tested by content, authority, purpose, and process. Their content must conform to the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon. Their authority is examined by Marcionite bishops with their presbyters and deacons, together with the assembly. Their purpose must be to edify, exhort, or comfort, not to sow confusion, for "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (I Corinthians 14:33). Their process must be orderly, and "all things" must be done decently and in order (I Corinthians 14:38).

Today, revelation may enrich and support the faith, but it is acceptable only insofar as it remains in complete harmony with the written word, that is, the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon. Prophecy is pastoral and local in scope. It may correct, console, warn, or call to repentance. It cannot create new doctrine, new Holy Mysteries or Holy Rites, new canon, a new creed, or a binding timetable for the whole Church, nor may it set dates for eschatological events.

The Church has historically received a small number of prophets through Scripture and tradition, yet even then, their words did not add to the Evangelicon or the Apostolicon, nor did they alter Paul's gospel. Philumena the Prophetess is the last figure our tradition recognizes in connection with the ancient Marcionite schools; her revelations, preserved in Apelles' now-lost Manifestations, were never added to the canon and do not stand above the Apostolicon.

We believe the Holy Spirit still grants prophecy, and we welcome what truly builds up the faithful. We do not believe in ongoing doctrinal revelation. The gospel delivered through Paul is complete, and all things are proved and held fast only if good.

See also: Question 2.03, "What is the hierarchy of authority in the Marcionite Church?"; Question 2.04, "What is prima scriptura?"

LESSON 17: ETHICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson explains the moral discipline of those who confess Jesus as Lord and their duties under the law of Christ.

17.01. What is the Christian moral life?

The Christian moral life is the life of faith working through love under the law of Christ. It requires truthfulness, chastity, mercy, charity, self-control, forgiveness, care for the poor, and faithful service to God and neighbor.

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."

Galatians 5:13

Christian morality is not obedience to the law of Moses and is not lawlessness. It is the grateful response of souls liberated by grace and called to reflect the goodness revealed by Jesus Christ.

17.02. What is the law of Christ?

The law of Christ is the commandment of love and the pattern of life taught and embodied by Jesus Christ. It is fulfilled by bearing one another's burdens, showing mercy, practicing charity, forgiving enemies, preserving holiness, and serving the brethren.

The Church therefore rejects the law of Moses as a covenantal authority while affirming the binding moral authority of Christ. Grace frees the faithful from the former law so that they may obey the Lord in love rather than descend into lawlessness.

See also: Question 11.07, "Why is the Church not antinomian?"; Question 17.01, "What is the Christian moral life?"

17.03. How does Christian liberty differ from lawlessness?

Christian liberty is freedom from the law of Moses, condemnation, false worship, and bondage to the powers of the present world-order. Lawlessness is the rejection of moral responsibility and the use of grace as an excuse for sin.

The faithful are free in Christ so that they may obey the law of Christ. Liberty therefore produces holiness, charity, discipline, and service rather than self-indulgence.

17.04. How does the Church understand peace, non-retaliation, and righteous resistance?

The Marcionite Church commands Christians to seek peace, love their enemies, reject vengeance, and overcome evil with good. It does not, however, teach an absolute pacifism that requires moral paralysis before grave injustice or forbids the protection of the innocent.

When the Lord commands the faithful to offer the other cheek, He forbids retaliation born of hatred and teaches a courageous refusal to be mastered by humiliation. Righteous resistance preserves dignity without imitating the cruelty of the aggressor:

"Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."

Evangelicon 4:31

The Apostle likewise forbids private vengeance and teaches personal peace:

"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved,

avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 10:9–11

This rule governs personal conflict, private retaliation, and the ordinary conduct of Christians. It does not abolish civil authority, public justice, or the duty of lawful rulers to restrain violent evil. The Church's teaching on public force and war is therefore treated separately from personal vengeance.

Christians must neither worship force nor abandon those entrusted to their care. They are called to act with courage while remaining under the law of Christ, using no more force than protection and justice require and seeking reconciliation whenever it is possible.

See also: Question 11.06, "How should Christians respond to suffering?"; Question 17.02, "What is the law of Christ?"; Question 17.03, "How does Christian liberty differ from lawlessness?"; Question 17.05, "Does the Church support just war theory?"

17.05. Does the Church support just war theory?

The Marcionite Church recognizes the principles of just war as a moral exception under lawful public authority, not as a celebration of war or violence. It bases this judgment on Pauline theology rather than on Augustine. The Church begins from the Apostle's distinction between private vengeance and public authority.

In personal conflict, Christians are commanded not to avenge themselves, but to live peaceably as far as possible, feed the enemy, and overcome evil with good. This governs the conduct of the faithful as private persons:

"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 10:9–11

The Apostle then turns immediately to civil authority and teaches that rulers bear a real public office for the restraint of evil:

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 11:1–4

Therefore the Church distinguishes the Christian's duty to renounce private revenge from the civil authority's duty to restrain violent evil. A war may be just only when undertaken by lawful authority, for a just cause, with right intention, proportionate force, discrimination between combatants and noncombatants, and a sincere aim at restoring peace. War may never be waged for conquest, cruelty, hatred, vengeance, persecution, or forced conversion.

Just war is therefore an exception under public justice, not a license for bloodshed. The Christian must never worship the sword; yet neither may he deny that civil authority can bear the sword for the protection of the innocent and the restraint of wickedness.

See also: Question 17.04, "How does the Church understand peace, non-retaliation, and righteous resistance?"

17.06. What is the Church's teaching on sexual morality?

The Marcionite Church teaches that sexual relations belong within Holy Matrimony between one man and one woman, and that all Christians are called to chastity, fidelity, self-control, and holiness.

The Marcionite Church fears God alone, and we do not hate our neighbors. The Church receives all who come to hear the Gospel, to pray, and to seek the mercy of God through Jesus Christ.

If someone experiences same-sex attractions, those thoughts are to be brought to God in prayer, as with any other temptation. Temptation itself is not sin. Sin is the willful consent to, and acting upon, what God forbids. The Apostle teaches that believers are called to self-control and holiness, not to be driven by passions: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication… that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence" (I Thessalonians 4:3–5).

The Apostolicon does not present same-sex sexual behavior as something to be blessed or affirmed. Paul is explicit that same-sex acts fall under disordered passions and are contrary to nature: "For even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men… burned in their lust one toward another" (Paul's Epistle to the Romans 1:22–23). This is not framed as a "special sin" singled out for unique hatred; it is included within Paul's broader indictment of human rebellion and the need for grace. The point is moral clarity, not personal contempt.

Likewise, Paul warns that unrepented sexual wrongdoing excludes a person from the inheritance of the kingdom—while immediately holding out the promise of cleansing and restoration for those who turn to God: "Be not deceived… [the sexually immoral]… shall not inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified" (I Corinthians 6:9–11). The Church's message is therefore twofold: (1) certain behaviors are sin, and (2) sinners can be forgiven, changed, and made clean through Christ.

For that reason, our teaching about same-sex behavior sits inside a consistent standard applied to everyone. Paul does not permit believers to redefine holiness around desire—whether heterosexual or homosexual. He calls the faithful to flee "fornication" and every form of sexual uncleanness (Galatians 5:19–21), and he affirms chastity as the expectation outside of marriage: "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (I Corinthians 7:2). The same Gospel that forbids sin also provides strength to resist it, forgiveness when one falls, and a new life ordered by faith rather than appetite.

So, no—we are not "homophobic." We do not teach fear, ridicule, or mistreatment of anyone. We do teach repentance, self-denial, and purity, as Paul delivered to the churches. Anyone who desires to follow Christ is invited to do so, to pray, to seek counsel, and to pursue holiness—trusting that God is able to grant both mercy and power to obey.

See also: Question 17.07, "What is the Church's teaching on marriage?"; Question 17.08, "What is the Church's teaching on divorce?"; Question 17.10, "Does the Church mandate celibacy?"

17.07. What is the Church's teaching on marriage?

Marriage, also called Holy Matrimony, is a sacred covenant and Holy Rite ordained solely between one man and one woman. The Marcionite Church firmly rejects and prohibits both same-sex marriage and all forms of polygamy.

Ancient Catholic heresiologists attacked the Marcionites by claiming that they did not believe in marriage. This was a purposeful distortion of the Church's refusal to number Holy Matrimony among the Holy Mysteries. The Marcionite Church has always been able to honor, solemnize, and defend marriage as a holy covenant and Holy Rite without treating it as one of the three Holy Mysteries.

Many Protestant denominations likewise practice and affirm Christian marriage while declining to classify it among their sacraments. Their position is not ordinarily taken to mean that they reject marriage; neither should the same distinction be misrepresented when applied to the Marcionite Church.

“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.”
—Alexandrians 14:2

17.08. What is the Church’s teaching on divorce?

We do not permit or recognize divorce between properly baptized Christians. However, we uphold the Pauline privilege, which allows for the dissolution of a marriage between two individuals who were not validly baptized at the time of their union—meaning they had not received credobaptism by triple immersion, nor had they been sealed by Chrismation or Confirmation. Outside of this circumstance, divorce is regarded as a form of adultery and is strictly prohibited.

“And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.”

I Corinthians 7:10–15

17.09. What is the Church’s teaching on abortion?

The womb is sacred, and the taking of innocent life within it is murder.

The Homily to Diognetus, traditionally attributed by the Church to Marcion, identifies the refusal to destroy or abandon offspring as a distinguishing mark of Christian life:

“They marry as all other men, and they beget children;
But they cast not away their offspring.”
—Diognetus 5:8–9

“Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the breasts which thou didst suck.”

Evangelicon 10:27

17.10. Does the Church mandate celibacy?

The Marcionite Church does not mandate celibacy, although it honors voluntary celibacy and temporary abstinence as spiritual disciplines.

This accusation—like many others made by the ancient Catholic heresiologists—was a false and misleading claim designed to discredit Marcionite Christians and portray them as enemies of marriage and family life.

Nowhere in the canonical scriptures of the Testamentum is there a commandment requiring followers of Jesus Christ to live in celibacy. The Apostle Paul affirmed the value of celibacy for those called to it, especially in service to the Gospel, but he never forbade marriage. Rather, he upheld marriage as honorable and drew rich theological parallels between the union of husband and wife and the relationship between Christ and the Church:

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.”

Laodiceans 5:25–28

While it is true that Marcion himself embraced celibacy as a personal spiritual discipline, he never imposed it as a requirement upon his followers. Rather, he emphasized the importance of Eucharistic discipline and encouraged married couples to observe periodic abstinence in preparation for receiving Holy Communion.

This practice aligns with the Marcionite Church’s tradition of the Saturday Eucharistic fast, in which believers abstain from food and drink beginning at the ninth hour (3:00 P.M.) following their third recitation of the Lord’s Prayer. This fast continues until the faithful receive the Holy Communion on Sunday. During this time, abstention from marital relations is also expected—again, not as a blanket prohibition on sexuality, but as a devotional preparation for the Holy Mystery.

This discipline reflects the Apostle Paul’s own guidance regarding married life, in which he encourages temporary abstinence by mutual consent for the purpose of prayer and spiritual focus:

“Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own

husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."

I Corinthians 7:2–5

In keeping with this instruction, Marcionite Christians also observe abstinence from marital relations on Spy Wednesday, in remembrance of Christ's betrayal, and on Good Friday, in mourning of His crucifixion.

These devout practices of Eucharistic discipline and temporary abstinence were not unique to the Marcionite Church. They were later adopted by the emerging Catholic Church and continue to be observed in various forms by many Christian traditions today. Far from forbidding marriage, the Marcionite Church affirms it as a holy covenant while also upholding the value of spiritual discipline in preparation for Holy Rites.

17.11. Does the Church prohibit circumcision?

Circumcision is viewed by the Marcionite Church as a form of carnal mutilation and an outdated, barbaric practice. In keeping with the teachings of the Apostle Paul, we reject circumcision as a religious obligation and refuse to bind Christians to the mark of the false covenant.

17.12. Does the Church impose dietary restrictions?

The only dietary restrictions observed by Marcionite Christians are those outlined in the Apostolic Decree. These include abstaining from food offered to idols, from blood, from meat containing blood, and from the flesh of animals that have been strangled.

"Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."
I Timothy 4:2–5

Outside of these restrictions, Marcionite Christians are free to eat all foods with thanksgiving, as they are sanctified through prayer and the word of God.

17.13. Does the Church require vegetarianism, pescatarianism, or veganism?

There is no scriptural basis for mandating a vegetarian, pescatarian, or vegan lifestyle for Marcionite Christians.

The Apostle Paul plainly teaches that abstaining from meat is not a sign of spiritual strength, but rather a sign of weaker faith:

"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 12:1–2

At the same time, Paul warns believers not to pass judgment on each other regarding food, emphasizing that diet should not be a source of division within the Christian community:

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 12:13

Paul also suggests that refraining from meat in certain contexts—such as when dining with those who are sensitive or concerned about food sacrificed to idols—is an act of charity, not a commandment:

"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat…"

Paul's Epistle to the Romans 12:15

Paul addresses concerns about food sacrificed to idols, explaining that while idols are nothing, Christians must remain sensitive to the consciences of others:

"What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God… Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof… But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake…"

I Corinthians 10:19–29

Dietary practices are therefore matters of Christian liberty and conscience, provided they do not violate the Apostolic Decree or become a cause of spiritual harm to others.

17.14. How does the Church understand asceticism?

The Marcionite Church practices disciplined and voluntary asceticism but does not impose extreme renunciation as a universal condition of salvation. Fasting,

celibacy, temporary abstinence, prayer, and bodily discipline may serve the spiritual life when freely undertaken in faith and charity.

“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.”

I Corinthians 9:27

Marcion of Sinope personally embraced an ascetic life, including celibacy, but Marcionite tradition does not treat his personal discipline as a command binding every Christian. Marriage, family life, and ordinary labor remain honorable Christian vocations.

Apelles likewise illustrates the voluntary character of ascetic discipline. He did not impose universal celibacy, and the diversity preserved within the early Marcionite tradition shows that ascetic practices were understood as callings and disciplines rather than as prerequisites for salvation.

See also: Question 15.09, “When does the Church fast?”; Question 16.07, “Does the Church require clerical celibacy?”; Question 17.10, “Does the Church mandate celibacy?”

17.15. How should Christians live among those outside the Church?

Christians should live among those outside the Church with truth, peace, patience, charity, and fidelity to the Gospel. They must neither conceal their confession nor treat unbelievers with hatred or contempt.

“Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

Colossians 4:5–6

The faithful bear witness through honest speech, moral discipline, works of mercy, and readiness to explain their hope. They should cooperate in what is good while refusing idolatry, injustice, and participation in practices contrary to the law of Christ.

17.16. What duties do Christians owe to the poor, the suffering, and one another?

Christians owe practical charity to the poor, comfort to the suffering, hospitality to the stranger, forgiveness to the repentant, and mutual service within the Church. These duties are not optional ornaments of faith but direct expressions of the law of Christ.

“Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.”

Galatians 2:10

The faithful must therefore give according to their means, defend those who are wronged, visit the sick, sustain the bereaved, and bear one another’s burdens in love.

LESSON 18: APOLOGETICAL QUESTIONS

This lesson answers common objections and distinguishes Marcionite Christianity from theological and religious categories that do not accurately describe it.

18.01. Why does the Marcionite Church reject the charge of heresy?

The Marcionite Church rejects the charge of heresy because the Roman Catholic Church, as it exists today, did not yet exist at the time the Marcionite Christians established their own church. In fact, the Marcionite Church predates the formal organization of Catholicism by several generations. Many of the attacks against Marcion came later and were often written by critics with vested interests in discrediting his legacy. One of the most vocal among them was Tertullian. Yet even Jerome, a prominent figure in the early Catholic tradition, offered the following assessment:

"As to Tertullian, I have nothing else to say except that he was not a man of the Church."
— Jerome, De Viris Illustribus

On this point, we are in full agreement with our Catholic counterparts.

Moreover, the most common accusations of heresy against the Marcionite Christians are either mistaken or entirely unfounded. Marcionites are not dualists. We are not docetists. We do not forbid marriage, impose celibacy, or prohibit the consumption of wine or meat. These accusations belong more to the polemical imagination of later heresiologists than to the actual faith and practice of the Marcionite Church.

Cerdo, a Syrian Christian teacher active in Rome before Marcion, was part of the same wider Pauline current that had already taken root in Rome before 144 C.E. His excommunication around 138 C.E. appears to have been an early stage in a broader purge of Pauline Christians from the Roman church, a purge that culminated several years later in the rejection of Marcion himself.

Unlike Marcion, Cerdo did not immediately establish a separate church. He sought to regain communion, returning repeatedly to the Roman assembly even after being condemned. Later heresiologists mocked this pattern, portraying him as unstable or evasive. Yet a more charitable reading is possible: Cerdo still hoped that the Roman church could be corrected from within. Marcion, by contrast, would later recognize that the conflict had become irreconcilable and would give the Pauline Gospel its independent ecclesial form.

Many charges later directed against Marcion were first attached to Cerdo and then blurred together by hostile writers who wished to make Marcionite Christianity appear derivative, confused, or tainted by association. Tertullian and other polemicists depicted Cerdo as Marcion's teacher rather than as a related predecessor within the same Pauline movement. This conflation served a polemical purpose: it reduced Marcion's public witness to a mere continuation of an already-condemned figure and obscured the independent authority of the Marcionite Church.

It is notable, however, that Cerdo and the Cerdonians appear to have used the original Testamentum, or an early form of the same Gospel-and-Apostle scriptural foundation later received and ordered by the Marcionites. Like the Marcionites, they rejected the Hebrew Bible as Christian scripture and did not identify Jesus with the expected deliverer of the Hebrew prophets. This indicates that Marcion was not alone in his rejection of the Hebrew scriptures. The Pauline Gospel had already produced communities and teachers who distinguished God the Father revealed by Christ from the lower 'god of this world' proclaimed in the Law and judgment.

Under Bishops Hyginus and Pius I, the Roman church excommunicated first Cerdo and then Marcion. These were not isolated disciplinary incidents. They reflect an escalating struggle over the identity of Christianity itself: whether the Church would be governed by the Gospel revealed through Christ and preached by Paul, or whether it would be reattached to the Hebrew Bible, the Law, and the authority of the lower world-ruling power. Cerdo's condemnation in 138 C.E. and Marcion's rejection in 144 C.E. therefore belong to the same historical sequence: the Roman suppression of a strong Pauline Christianity already present in the city.

It is highly plausible that the original Testamentum, later associated exclusively with the Marcionite Church, was at one point known among Roman Christians before 144 C.E. The existence of Cerdo and the Cerdonians shows that Marcion did not invent this scriptural and theological current out of nothing. He inherited, clarified, and organized a living Pauline movement already present in Rome, with roots also reaching back to Cerdo's native Syria.

At the conclusion of his excommunication trial, Marcion is said to have turned to the assembled bishops and presbyters of Rome and declared:

"I will divide your Church and cause within her a division, which will last forever."

History suggests he was right.

18.02. How did the Catholic Church respond to Marcionite Christianity?

Following Marcion's evangelistic mission across the Roman Empire in the second century, several energetic responses emerged—many of which can be seen as indirect reactions to his foundational work. Among these were the expansion of the New Testament canon, the development of apostolic tradition, the formulation of the rule of faith, and the doctrine of apostolic succession. Each of these innovations served to counter Marcion's uncompromising commitment to prima scriptura—the principle that scripture alone, not tradition or hierarchy, is the foundation of Christian belief.

The doctrine of apostolic succession enabled emerging Catholic authorities to claim divine legitimacy in determining which texts were to be regarded as "authentic" and which were "spurious." This conferred on Church leadership the power to enforce doctrinal conformity, often by retroactively assigning apostolic origin to texts that aligned with their theological agenda. As a result, a flood of gospels, interpolated epistles, and forged writings began to circulate—many bearing false claims of apostolic authorship. Criteria for canonization were arbitrarily established: a text had to claim apostolic origin, or at least connection to an apostle, and it had to reflect beliefs already widespread within the Catholic faction. This framework, known as "apostolic tradition," effectively institutionalized the attribution of Catholic customs and doctrines to the Apostles—regardless of historical authenticity.

Because many of these writings lacked legitimate claims to apostolic origin, elaborate legends and theological rationales were constructed to justify their inclusion in the canon. This is a particularly sobering realization for modern Protestants who adhere to sola scriptura, often unaware that several New Testament books owe their canonical status solely to assertions of tradition rather than demonstrable apostolic authorship. As Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer aptly observed, "Protestants, in denying the authority of tradition, have cut off the branch on which they sit."

Marcion's missionary advance also triggered a flood of apologetic and polemical writing. Pseudepigraphal texts expanded in the second century with explicit anti-

Marcionite polemics, such as the forged Third Epistle to the Corinthians, and even the Apostles' Creed itself was crafted or edited to counter Marcionite theology. Scholars such as Arthur C. McGiffert view the creed precisely as a reaction meant to counter Marcion's radical theology.

The renowned scholar Adolf von Harnack went so far as to describe Marcion as the "father of the Catholic Church"—not because Marcion founded it, but because the emerging Catholic Church largely defined itself in opposition to his teachings. The Roman Church's reaction to the rapid spread of Marcionite congregations across the Empire during the early second century compelled it to construct a more centralized hierarchy and formalize its canon, doctrine, and institutional presence.

Marcion's introduction of a clearly defined and limited scriptural canon presented a direct challenge to the developing Catholic tradition. His original Testamentum, containing only the Gospel of the Lord and the ten original Pauline epistles, forced the emerging Catholic Church to confront a difficult question: if Marcion's canon was not the true one, then what was? In response, the Church began the long and contested process of expanding the New Testament—a process rooted not in original apostolic witness, but in theological reaction to Marcion's radical clarity.

18.03. Why is Marcionism not Gnosticism?

Marcionism does not involve any form of secret knowledge. Its doctrine, worship, history, and discipline are openly set forth in the books gathered within the modern Testamentum, above all in the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon. There are no hidden doctrines, secret initiations, or esoteric revelations reserved for an elite inner circle.

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Colossians 2:9

The confusion between Marcionism and Gnosticism arose because hostile writers often collapsed many different movements into one convenient category. Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, and later heresiologists frequently treated Valentinians, Sethians, Basilideans, Carpocratians, Marcionites, and other non-Catholic Christians as though they belonged to one broad "Gnostic" tendency. This was polemically useful, but historically imprecise. These movements differed sharply in canon, worship, theology, cosmology, ecclesiology, and soteriology.

Classical Gnostic systems, especially the Valentinian and Sethian traditions, developed elaborate mythologies of Aeons, Pleroma, Sophia's fall, an ignorant Demiurge, and salvation through esoteric knowledge. Marcionite Christianity has none of this. It has no Pleroma, no Aeon-pairs, no Sophia myth, no secret initiatory curriculum, and no hidden saving knowledge reserved for an elite. Marcionite Christianity teaches the public Gospel of Christ, proclaimed by the Apostle Paul and preserved in the original Testamentum.

Marcionite cosmology is also distinct from Gnostic mythology. Marcionite Christianity teaches deferred demiurgy: the physical world was made mediately through lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God the Father. In the traditional Apellean reading, which preserves the original teaching of Marcion, the lower maker of the physical world is the being called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." But this lower maker is not a second co-eternal, co-equal god, nor is he the ignorant offspring of Sophia. He is subordinate, begotten, limited, and derivative.

Salvation in Marcionite Christianity is not gnosis. It is rescue. Christ descends into the lower world-order to liberate souls from bondage to sin, death, Satan, and the lower powers. The Gospel is not an esoteric map through the Aeons, but the public proclamation of deliverance through Jesus Christ. The Father is not discovered through secret initiation; he is revealed by Christ and proclaimed by Paul.

Marcionite anthropology is likewise different from Gnostic caste systems. Some Gnostic schools divided humanity into fixed classes, such as pneumatic, psychic, and hylic. Marcionite Christianity does recognize the distinction between natural and spiritual souls, and it affirms the preexistence and transmigration of souls. But this is not a metaphysical caste system of secret initiates. Natural souls may be awakened through the Gospel in due season, so long as they have not committed the Eternal Sin, while spiritual souls ascend through Christ into the Father's kingdom.

Marcion's commitment to the authority of a defined Christian canon placed him far closer to scripture-oriented Christianity than to the speculative and myth-driven systems of the Gnostics. Unlike Gnostic groups, which often relied on esoteric writings, hidden revelations, and mythological expansions, Marcion grounded his teaching in public scripture: the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and

the epistles of the Apostle Paul. His project was not the invention of a secret mythology, but the recovery of the pure Gospel from Jewish corruption and proto-Catholic harmonization.

Marcion also fostered an open and public Christian faith. Marcionite Christians organized congregations, built churches, ordained clergy, celebrated the Holy Mysteries and Holy Rites, and proclaimed a public canon. This differs sharply from Gnostic circles that often emphasized private instruction, graded initiation, and spiritual elitism. The Marcionite Church was not a mystery cult for the learned few. It was a public Christian communion centered on the Gospel, the Apostle, and the worship of God the Father revealed by Christ.

While Gnosticism tended toward abstract mythology and metaphysical speculation, Marcion's theology was pastoral, scriptural, and ethically clear. Central to Marcion's message was Christ's command to love even one's enemies, a command that revealed the moral superiority of God the Father over the law, violence, jealousy, tribal election, and vengeance associated with the Hebrew Bible. Marcionite Christianity was therefore not an escape into secret speculation, but a public mission of compassion, liberation, and Gospel proclamation.

Even secular and academic authorities have long distinguished Marcionite Christianity from Gnosticism. The 1911 Encyclopaedia Britannica states:

"It was no mere school for the learned, disclosed no mysteries for the privileged, but sought to lay the foundation of the Christian community on the pure gospel, the authentic institutes of Christ. The pure gospel, however, Marcion found to be everywhere more or less corrupted and mutilated in the Christian circles of his time. His undertaking thus resolved itself into a reformation of Christendom. This reformation was to deliver Christendom from false Jewish doctrines by restoring the Pauline conception of the gospel, Paul being, according to Marcion, the only apostle who had rightly understood the new message of salvation as delivered by Christ. In Marcion's own view, therefore, the founding of his church—to which he was first driven by opposition—amounts to a reformation of Christendom through a return to the gospel of Christ and to Paul; nothing was to be accepted beyond that. This of itself shows that it is a mistake to reckon Marcion among the Gnostics."

Similarly, The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church affirms:

"It is clear that he would have had little sympathy with their mythological speculations."

Adolf von Harnack likewise distinguished Marcion from the Gnostics, even while later popular summaries often blurred that distinction again. The distinction remains essential. Marcion was not offering a hidden cosmological curriculum. He was proclaiming the Gospel.

That said, it is true that Marcionites and Gnostics shared certain points of contact. Both rejected the authority of the Hebrew Bible. Both denied that the deity depicted in the Hebrew Bible was the Father revealed by Christ. Both held Paul in high regard. Both discussed the soul's bondage in the material order. Some Gnostic groups may even have drawn from the Evangelicon, the Apostolicon, or related Gospel-and-Apostle traditions. But shared opposition to the Hebrew Bible and shared persecution by proto-Catholic authorities do not make the two movements identical.

Solidarity in suffering is not theological identity. The Valentinians, Sethians, and other Gnostics taught mythological systems of hidden knowledge, Aeons, emanations, and esoteric ascent. Marcionite Christianity taught the public Gospel, the Apostle Paul, the canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon, deferred demiurgy, the rescue of souls through Christ, and the open worship of God the Father. We are not Gnostics. We are Marcionite Christians.

See also: Question 9.03, "What is matter?"; Question 9.10, "What is deferred demiurgy?"; Question 10.04, "What is the preexistence of souls?"

18.04. How does the Church understand Gnosis?

The word gnosis means knowledge. The Marcionite Church affirms the true knowledge of God the Father revealed through Jesus Christ and communicated by the Holy Spirit, but it rejects the claim that salvation is obtained through secret doctrines, hidden passwords, esoteric initiations, or knowledge reserved for a spiritual elite.

Before Christ, God the Father was unknown to the world. Christ descended to reveal Him, and the Apostle Paul was entrusted with the full proclamation of that revelation. True Christian knowledge is therefore not discovered by speculation or recovered from pagan mysteries; it is received through the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul.

Knowledge alone does not save. A person may possess learning, understand mysteries, and yet remain without charity. Saving

knowledge is inseparable from faith, grace, repentance, and love. It brings the soul into obedience to Christ rather than exalting the knower above the faithful.

“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.”

I Corinthians 13:2

The Church therefore receives gnosis when the word signifies the knowledge of God given openly in Christ. It rejects Gnosticism when gnosis is made a secret means of salvation, separated from faith, charity, the Gospel, and the common life of the Church.

18.05. Why is Marcionism not dualism?

Marcionism is not metaphysical dualism. It recognizes a real moral and cosmic opposition between God the Father and the powers governing the present world, but it does not teach two co-eternal, co-equal, or independent gods. The Marcionite Church confesses one supreme God, the Father, above every lower ruler, principality, power, throne, and dominion.

When hostile writers speak of “principles,” the Church does not receive that language as meaning three co-eternal first principles. It means that Marcionite theology distinguished God the Father, the lower just ruler, and matter as different realities within the account of the visible world.

Classical dualism means belief in two equal and opposing divine beings or eternal principles, often one good and one evil, coexisting in cosmic balance. That is not the Marcionite view. Marcionite Christianity does not teach two co-eternal, co-equal gods. It does not teach that Satan is equal to God. It does not teach that the ‘prince of this world’ is an eternal rival to God the Father.

Marcion’s foremost disciple, Apelles of Alexandria, directly rejected the accusation of dualism leveled against Marcionite Christians. Apelles preserved the original teaching of Marcion and reaffirmed belief in one supreme God above all lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions. Ancient witnesses say that Apelles confessed one first principle and described the ‘prince of this world’ not as a second god, but as an angelic power beneath the higher God. Tertullian says that the Apelleans spoke of “a certain angel of great renown” who had “created this world of ours,” and Pseudo-Tertullian says Apelles taught that powers and angels in the lower regions formed this world.

Apelles declared:

“One good God, one Beginning, and one Power beyond all description.”

The Apellean school, founded by Apelles, was the direct continuation of Marcion’s original teaching. Apelles did not create a foreign system or abandon Marcionite Christianity. He taught, as Marcion did, that there is God the Father, revealed by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by Paul. Beneath him are lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions. These lower powers are best understood not as rival deities, but as angelic powers: subordinate, begotten, limited, and beneath the sovereignty of God.

This is how Apelles clarifies the issue. When the ‘prince of this world’ is described as an angel, the charge of strict dualism collapses. An angel may rule, fashion, accuse, judge, or rebel, but an angel is not God. An angel is not unbegotten. An angel is not co-eternal or co-equal with the Father. The lower power may be called “the god of this world” in the Apostolicon because he governs this present age, blinds the unbelieving, and exercises dominion over the visible order, but this title does not make him truly divine.

The traditional Apelleans identified the ‘prince of this world’ with Satan, but not as a second co-eternal, co-equal god. He was a begotten and subordinate angelic power. The ‘prince of this world’ was therefore inferior to God, dependent upon God, and unable to reveal the alien mercy of God the Father. But traditional Apelleans, like Marcion, did not regard the physical world as evil in itself, nor did they regard the ‘prince of this world’ as evil in the absolute sense. They regarded him as just, limited, and inferior.

The Lucanists, founded by Lucanus or Lucianus of Rome, developed the cosmology differently but still did not teach dualism. They distinguished between the “god of this world” and Satan. For them, the “god of this world” was the just lower angelic power directly responsible for fashioning the physical world, while Satan was an evil lower angelic power. This produced a threefold hierarchy: God the Father, above all; the just lower angelic power beneath him; and Satan as an evil angelic adversary.

The Severians, a later development associated with Severus, took a stricter and more ascetic position. Like the Apelleans, they identified Satan with the being called in the Apostolicon “the god of this world.” Unlike traditional Apelleans, however, they treated the ‘prince of this world’ as evil rather than merely just, limited, and inferior. This led them toward a

more ascetic and world-denying approach. Yet even the Severians did not teach that Satan was equal to God the Father. Their doctrine remained hierarchical rather than dualist in the strict sense.

This is the key distinction: Marcionite Christianity teaches cosmological hierarchy, not dualism. The lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions may govern, blind, accuse, judge, or oppose mankind, but they are not equal to God. They are beneath him. They are not eternal rivals. They are not coequal divine beings. They are angelic powers, not unbegotten gods. All reality remains ultimately beneath the sovereignty of God the Father.

Marcionite Christianity therefore does not teach that there is one god of the Hebrew Bible and another god of the Christian Testament locked in equal opposition. Rather, it teaches that the deity portrayed in the Hebrew Bible is a false and counterfeit deity, unworthy of Christian worship, and that the Hebrew scriptures are neither divinely inspired nor religiously binding upon Christians. They are viewed as filled with contradictions, failed prophecies, and fables that may have limited historical or moral value but no spiritual authority.

Notably, even the heresiologists are inconsistent in how they frame the charge. Some accuse Marcionites of teaching two principles; others describe three; still others multiply the accusation further. This instability shows that “dualism” was often used as a loose polemical label rather than as a precise description of Marcionite doctrine. Hostile writers regularly confused a hierarchy of lower angelic powers with a doctrine of rival eternal gods.

This same problem appears in the treatment of later movements often labeled “neo-Marcionite,” especially the Paulicians. Modern reassessments have increasingly challenged the older claim that Paulicians were absolute dualists, arguing that hostile Byzantine sources used “Manichaean” and “dualistic” labels as polemical and juridical weapons rather than as accurate descriptions of Paulician self-confession. The same caution should be applied to the Marcionites. A hostile source calling a movement “dualistic” does not prove that the movement taught two co-eternal, co-equal gods.

The canonical Evangelicon and Apostolicon affirm that the one true God was revealed through Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul makes this clear:

“As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and

that there is none other God but one."

I Corinthians 8:4

Thus, the Marcionite Church upholds strict monotheism. There is only God the Father, revealed by Christ and proclaimed by Paul. Beneath him are lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions, including the 'prince of this world' and Satan. But none of these is a second co-eternal, co-equal god. None is worthy of worship. None rivals the Father. They are lower angelic powers, not rival deities. Marcionite Christianity is therefore not dualism, but a confession of one supreme God over all.

See also: Question 9.03, "What is matter?"; Question 9.14, "How does the Church distinguish physical and visible creation from spiritual and invisible creation?"; Question 9.04, "What is the origin of matter?"

18.06. How does Marcionism differ from Protestantism?

Marcionism differs fundamentally from Protestantism, although certain ideas associated with the Marcionite tradition later appeared in Protestant thought. Throughout the twentieth century, renewed scholarly attention to Marcion led many Christian thinkers to recognize him as a foundational figure in the development of several concepts now associated with modern Christianity, particularly within Protestantism. Marcion has been credited with articulating early forms of sola fide, dispensational distinction, "New Testament Christianity" as distinct from the Hebrew tradition, and the very concept of a New Testament as a separate and authoritative body of inspired writings. He also advanced a form of prima scriptura: the principle that Christian doctrine must be grounded first and foremost in scripture. An additional similarity is that Marcionism recognizes only three Holy Mysteries—Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and Holy Communion—while some Protestant denominations likewise recognize only three sacraments. Yet Marcionism is not a branch of Protestantism, for it predates the Reformation by more than a millennium and possesses its own canon, ecclesiology, order of the Holy Mysteries and liturgical worship, and theological tradition. While the Marcionite Church affirms that tradition, reason, and experience may support the faith, it maintains that these must never contradict or supersede the authority of scripture.

It is for these reasons that the prominent scholar Adolf von Harnack famously referred to Marcion as "the first Protestant."

18.07. How does the Church confess the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

The Marcionite Church confesses God the Father, Jesus Christ his Son, and the Holy Spirit. In this essential and practical sense, Marcionite Christianity is effectively Trinitarian, even though it does not derive this confession from the metaphysical definitions or authority of specific ecumenical councils. We receive baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, yet we do not bind ourselves to the later conciliar formulations of the Catholic churches.

Early evidence suggests that Marcion of Sinope and the first-generation Marcionite Church practiced a simple Christological baptismal formula. Cyprian of Carthage reports that Marcionite converts had been baptized solely "in the name of Jesus Christ." This reflects the earliest Marcionite emphasis on Christ as the revealer of God the Father, and on baptism as entrance into the Gospel proclaimed by Paul.

Despite this, in the 250s C.E., Stephen I, Bishop of Rome, held that Marcionite baptisms were valid. This position sits at the heart of the third-century disputes over rebaptism, which were opposed by Cyprian of Carthage and Firmilian of Caesarea. The controversy shows that Marcionite baptism was recognized by some outside the Marcionite Church as a real Christian baptism, even when its formula and theology differed from Catholic practice.

By the third and fourth centuries C.E., Marcionite language concerning the Holy Mysteries, like that of other early Christians, developed toward more explicit triadic expression. This does not mean that the Marcionite Church abandoned its original confession of God the Father. Rather, it means that Marcionite Christians came to articulate more clearly the relationship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in teaching, worship, and the Holy Mysteries.

This development followed the same broad historical pattern seen elsewhere in early Christianity. The earliest Christian communities often used simpler Christological or binitarian language, especially in baptismal and confessional contexts. Over time, as theological questions became more precise and liturgical forms became more fixed, Christians increasingly used triadic formulas naming the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Marcionite Christianity participated in this broader development while retaining its distinctive canon, Gospel, Apostle, and rejection of the Hebrew Bible as Christian scripture.

By the fourth century C.E., this triadic baptismal practice was explicit. Augustine of Hippo notes that the Marcionites of his day baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." This shows that Marcionite communities had moved from the earlier Christological baptismal formula into a fuller baptismal confession of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Evangelicon itself preserves the baptismal command:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Evangelicon 24:73

The Apostle Paul also witnesses to the same triadic order:

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen."

II Corinthians 13:14

The Psalmicon likewise echoes this confession without any hint of subordinationism:

"And upon it was the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, to rule for ever and ever. Amen." Psalmicon 23:20

Therefore, the Marcionite Church affirms the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in worship and in the life of the Holy Mysteries, but rejects the authority of later ecumenical councils to define the faith over against the Evangelicon and Apostolicon. The movement from baptism in the name of Jesus Christ to baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was not a rejection of Marcionite Christianity. It was the maturation of its language concerning the Holy Mysteries and confession.

Marcionite Christians continue to confess God the Father, revealed through Jesus Christ his Son, with the Holy Spirit given to the Church in worship, communion, and the Holy Mysteries.

18.08. Does the Marcionite Church recognize the Holy Spirit as feminine?

Not universally. The Marcionite Church confesses the Holy Spirit as divine and as one with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in the trinitarian life of the Church, but it does not require every Marcionite Christian to understand the Holy Spirit as literally female.

The Apostle Paul speaks of "the same Spirit," "the same Lord," and "the same God," and concludes that all spiritual gifts are wrought by "that one and the selfsame Spirit" (I Corinthians 12:4–11). He likewise gives the trinitarian blessing: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" (II Corinthians

13:14). Paul identifies the Spirit by divine activity, communion, adoption, intercession, and sanctification, but does not assign the Spirit a universally binding male or female sex. Indeed, the Apostolicon says that “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit” and that “the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us” (Paul’s Epistle to the Romans 7:16, 26).

The Psalmicon, however, sometimes employs explicitly feminine grammar and imagery for the Holy Spirit. It says that the Holy Spirit “opened her bosom, and mingled the milk of the two breasts of the Father” (Psalmicon 19:4). Elsewhere, “The Dove fluttered over the Christ, because He was her Head; and she sang over Him” (Psalmicon 24:1), and Psalmicon 28:7 declares of the Spirit within the believer, “she cannot die, for she is life.” Such language permits a Marcionite Christian to speak poetically—and, where conscience and theological conviction allow, maternally—of the Holy Spirit.

This language is partly explained by the history of the Psalmicon. The Marcionite Church understands Marcion to have compiled these psalms from hymns circulating among several ancient Pauline churches rather than to have composed every psalm himself. Some arose within Syriac-speaking communities, while others reflect Greek forms or were transmitted through Greek, Syriac, and Coptic witnesses. In Syriac, the word for spirit, ruḥā, is grammatically feminine. The feminine pronouns of the Psalmicon therefore need not always signify a doctrine that the Holy Spirit is a female being; they may preserve the natural grammar and poetic imagination of eastern Semitic Christianity.

Nevertheless, some eastern Marcionites may have developed this grammatical and poetic femininity into a more definite theological belief. Early Syriac Christians frequently used feminine and maternal language for the Holy Spirit, and similar conceptions appeared among other eastern Semitic and Gnostic Christian communities. Certain believers may therefore have understood the Trinity as possessing a harmonious relation of Father, Son, and maternal Spirit, with the feminine Spirit completing or balancing the divine triad.

Such a belief may have been especially plausible among eastern Marcionite circles associated with Prepon the Assyrian, whose teaching arose in a Syriac environment, or among earlier Syriac Christians associated with Cerdo, a proto-Marcionite teacher, and the Cerdonians, a proto-Marcionite community. It is possible that members of these

communities interpreted the Holy Spirit not merely as grammatically feminine but as the maternal divine presence through whom the life of the Father is communicated to the children of God. No surviving testimony, however, expressly attributes this doctrine to Prepon, Cerdo, or the Cerdonians; it remains a reasonable historical possibility rather than an established fact.

The Marcionite Church therefore allows both readings. A believer may understand the Psalmicon's language as grammatical and poetic, without declaring the Holy Spirit literally female. Another may receive its maternal imagery more theologically and confess the Holy Spirit as the feminine or motherly person of the Trinity. Neither interpretation changes the essential confession that the Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father, bears witness to the Lord Jesus Christ, gives life, distributes spiritual gifts, and unites the faithful in one body.

Accordingly, the femininity of the Holy Spirit is an ancient and permissible Marcionite interpretation, particularly within Syriac forms of the tradition, but it is not a universal dogma required of every member of the Marcionite Church.

18.09. Why does the Church reject the label "Judeo-Christian"?

The Church rejects the label "Judeo-Christian." The doctrine of Christian independence from Judaism found its earliest and most decisive advocate in Marcion of Sinope. It was Marcion who first made explicit the radical distinction between the God revealed in Jesus Christ and the false deity depicted in the Hebrew Bible.

By preserving Jewish monotheism as its foundational dogma—as reflected in later creeds—the emerging Catholic Church left open the door for a reabsorption of Hebrew Bible traditions. Over time, this led to a gradual adoption of many of the same features found in ancient Israel's religious system, including an increasingly complex clerical hierarchy, formalized ritualism, and a hostility toward theological dissent. In this way, the trajectory of Catholicism moved away from the liberating message of the Gospel and toward the legalism Marcion opposed.

Before Marcion, Christianity was widely perceived by Pagans as little more than a sect within Judaism. Marcion's proclamation of the original Testamentum marked a turning point—establishing Christianity as a distinct faith with its own canon, doctrine, and God. Following this, the Judaizing

factions within the early church, whose beliefs and practices aligned more closely with Mosaic law, became increasingly marginalized and eventually formed separate sects. This was inevitable, for the covenant of Moses was incompatible with the revelation brought by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by Paul.

Prior to Marcion's influence, many Christians had begun reverting to Hebrew customs and using the Hebrew scriptures as authoritative. But with the publication of the original Testamentum, the landscape of Christianity shifted, and four main currents emerged: the Gnostics, who pursued hidden wisdom; the Catholics, who sought a synthesis with Judaism; the Judaizers, who remained loyal to Mosaic tradition; and the Marcionites, who proclaimed the new and true covenant revealed by Christ and preserved in Paul's Gospel.

"Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth."

Titus 1:13

18.10. Why does the Church reject the category of Abrahamic religion?

Marcionite Christianity does not claim any lineage from Abraham nor any connection to his so-called covenant. It recognizes no spiritual or theological inheritance from Abraham, Moses, or the Hebrew patriarchs, because the true covenant was revealed only through Jesus Christ and proclaimed by the Apostle Paul.

18.11. How does the Church regard Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism?

The doctrine set forth in the modern Testamentum contains no hatred of Hindus, Muslims, or Jews. The Marcionite Church rejects the scriptures, theologies, and deities of false religions as sources of Christian doctrine, but rejection of false religion is not hatred of persons.

The Evangelicon and Apostolicon alone constitute the supreme written authority of the Marcionite Church. They reveal God the Father through Jesus Christ and preserve the apostolic witness of Paul. We therefore do not draw Christian doctrine from the scriptures of other religions, nor do we recognize their deities as true gods.

This must not be confused with hostility toward the people who belong to those religions. Rejecting a scripture is not rejecting a people. Rejecting a covenant is not rejecting a people. Rejecting a deity is not rejecting a people. A god is not a people, and a religious text is not a human body. Marcionite Christianity refuses to collapse theology into ethnicity.

For that reason, our rejection of the Hebrew Bible as Christian scripture is not a rejection of Jewish people. Our rejection of Yahweh as God the Father is not hatred of Jews. The same principle applies universally: rejecting Zeus is not hatred of Greeks; rejecting Thor is not hatred of Scandinavians; rejecting the Qur'an as Christian scripture is not hatred of Muslims. These are theological judgments, not ethnic or personal condemnations.

Marcionite Christians pray for all people to turn to Christ and receive salvation. We hold no doctrine that treats any person as cursed by birth, ranked by ethnicity, or condemned by ancestry. The Gospel is offered to Jew and Gentile alike, not through the laws or scriptures of other religions, but through Jesus Christ, who reveals God the Father.

Thus, while we respect the dignity of all people, we do not affirm all religions as true. We have no interest in incorporating their theologies, acknowledging their deities, or treating their scriptures as part of Christian revelation. The Marcionite faith is public, clear, and canonically defined: one Gospel, one Apostle, one canonical rule, gathered within one ordered Testamentum, and God the Father revealed through Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the Didascalicon is not knowledge alone, but faithful confession and life in Jesus Christ. Doctrine must lead to worship, prayer, charity, discipline, and obedience to the law of Christ, through which the faithful bear witness to the Gospel revealed by the Lord and preached by Paul.

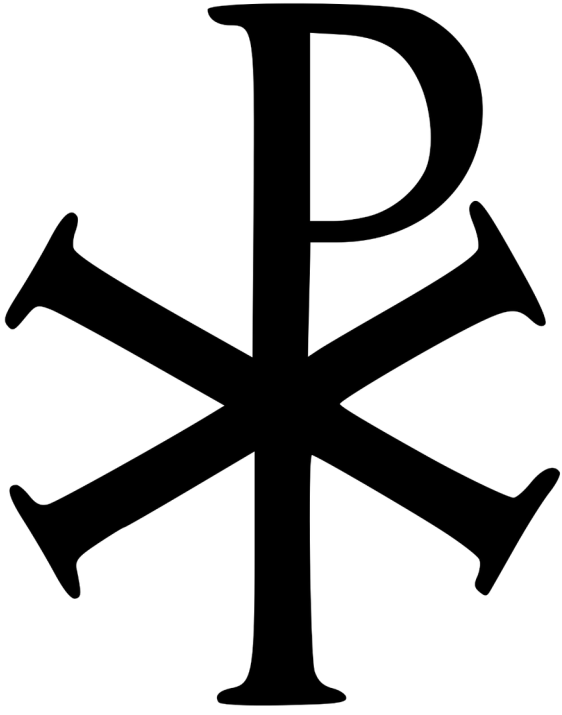
Those who receive this instruction are called to remain united with the Marcionite Christian community, strengthening one another through fellowship, encouragement, common prayer, participation in the Holy Mysteries, and the liturgical life of the Church. May they hold fast to the canon, discern every subordinate witness according to it, and preserve the faith in truth and love until every soul called by the Gospel is brought into the Kingdom of God.

Here endeth the Didascalicon.

THE TESTAMENTUM

LITOURGICON

THE LITURGY OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCH



THE TESTAMENTUM

LITOURGICON

THE LITURGY OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCh

The Litourgicon is the liturgical service book of the Marcionite Church. Because no complete order of ancient Marcionite worship has survived, the forms contained herein are reconstructions and do not claim to reproduce, word for word, the services celebrated by Marcion or by every congregation of the early Marcionite Church.

The name Litourgicon is the Church's Latinized form of the Greek leitourgikon, meaning "liturgical book" or "service book," from leitourgia, the common worship and service of the Church. In this book, the word liturgy is reserved for the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Holy Mysteries. The word rite is used for the Church's other sacred observances and for the constituent actions within a liturgy.

The Marcionite Church recognizes three Holy Mysteries: Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and Holy Communion. A believer becomes fully initiated into the Church upon receiving all three. The Church also recognizes nine Holy Rites: Holy Reconciliation, Holy Matrimony, Holy

Anointing, Holy Ordination, Holy Footwashing, Holy Veiling, the Holy Lovefeast, the Holy Kiss, and the Holy Sign.

The Litourgicon provides the liturgical forms ordinarily required for a believer to enter and complete initiation into the Marcionite Church. It contains the Liturgy of Holy Baptism, the Liturgy of Holy Chrismation, and the Divine Liturgy in which the newly baptized and chrismated receive Holy Communion. No separate rite of First Holy Communion is required. The Divine Liturgy also incorporates the Holy Footwashing, the Holy Kiss, the Holy Veiling, the rites of the Holy Lovefeast, and the Holy Sign. Together, these orders contain all three Holy Mysteries and five of the nine Holy Rites.

The Holy Mysteries are not received without repentance, faith, and confession. Holy Baptism is administered to those who repent and believe; Holy Chrismation seals the baptized with the earnest of the Spirit; and Holy Communion

gives the faithful the body and blood of Christ. Repentance is therefore not numbered as a separate Holy Mystery in this Litourgicon, but is the necessary turning of the soul by which the faithful approach the Holy Mysteries in truth.

The fixed prayers, hymns, proclamations, and theological content of these liturgies and rites are drawn from, or closely arranged out of, the canonical Scriptures of the Marcionite Church—the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon—in order to keep the worship of the Church firmly Pauline. The few concise consecratory and ceremonial formulas express doctrines and practices grounded in those canonical texts and in established Marcionite tradition. The Psalmicon is not part of the canonical Scriptures, but serves as the Church's authorized liturgical collection from which appointed psalms may be taken.

The rubrics are written in modern English for clarity, while the fixed prayers, proclamations, confessions, and responses are written in the scriptural and Jacobean register of the Testamentum.

These forms are intentionally simple. They may be celebrated in a church, chapel, private home, or another suitable place, according to the requirements stated in their rubrics. They provide everything necessary for the proclamation of the Gospel and the Apostle, the offering of prayer and thanksgiving, the administration of Holy Baptism and Holy Chrismation, the celebration of the Eucharist, the reception of Holy Communion, and the observance of the Holy Rites contained herein without requiring an elaborate building, choir, or ceremonial establishment.

These orders should be regarded as basic forms and models rather than exhaustive limits upon Marcionite worship. Appropriate psalms from the Psalmicon, together with additional hymns, prayers, intercessions, readings from the Evangelicon or Apostolicon, and ceremonial actions, may be added according to the season, feast, needs of the local church, or local custom. On appointed commemorations, a supplementary reading from an authorized noncanonical book of the Church may be prescribed in addition to, but never in place of, the readings from the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon. Every addition shall remain consistent with the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon, accord with the teaching of the Marcionite Church concerning the Holy Mysteries and Holy Rites, and preserve the orderly and reverent character of Christian worship. Nothing should be added merely for

ornament, novelty, or imitation of another tradition. Let all things be done unto edifying, and let all things be done decently and in order.

On the Feast of Marcion, Marcion's Homily to Diognetus shall be read as the homily.

On August 24, after the appointed reading from the Apostolicon and before the Second Psalm, a reading from Marcion's Epistle to the Romans in the Synaxicon shall be read, in addition to the appointed readings from the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon, commemorating its writing on that date, "the ninth day before the Kalends of September."

During Holy Week and the days immediately following, the appointed reading from the Evangelicon shall correspond to the event commemorated on each day:

Holy Sunday — Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem (Sunday, March 29, 33 C.E.).

Holy Monday — The Parable of the Minas (Monday, March 30, 33 C.E.).

Holy Tuesday — The cleansing of the Temple and Jesus' response to the questioning of his authority (Tuesday, March 31, 33 C.E.).

Spy Wednesday — The betrayal of Jesus by Judas (Wednesday, April 1, 33 C.E.).

Holy Thursday — The Last Supper (Thursday, April 2, 33 C.E.).

Good Friday — The Crucifixion of Jesus (Friday, April 3, 33 C.E.).

Black Saturday — Jesus laid in the sepulcher (Saturday, April 4, 33 C.E.).

Easter Sunday — The Resurrection (Sunday, April 5, 33 C.E.).

Ascension Monday — Jesus' Ascension (Monday, April 6, 33 C.E.).

On Christmas, the appointed reading from the Evangelicon shall be taken from the material in chapter 2 describing the descent of Jesus and the immediate beginning of his ministry.

THE DIVINE LITURGY

The Preparation for the Divine Liturgy

The Divine Liturgy is ordinarily celebrated on the Lord's Day by a celebrant.

The Divine Liturgy may be celebrated in a church, chapel, or private home wherever a celebrant and at least two communicants are gathered.

In these rubrics, "the celebrant" means the bishop or presbyter presiding at the Divine Liturgy. "The communicants" means the fully initiated Christians admitted to participate in the rite and receive Holy Communion.

The Fast and the Ritual Preparation

At the ninth hour on Saturday, the celebrant and the communicants recite the Lord's Prayer three times. The Eucharistic fast begins after the third recitation and continues until they receive Holy Communion on Sunday.

Before the Divine Liturgy, the celebrant and the communicants wash their hands and faces.

The Holy Footwashing

The celebrant washes the feet of the communicants. The communicants may also wash one another's feet.

The Holy Veiling

Men worship with their heads uncovered. Women cover their heads during the Divine Liturgy and whenever they pray or prophesy.

The Posture and Language of the Celebrant and the Communicants

The Divine Liturgy is celebrated using a language understood by the communicants.

The celebrant and the communicants pray facing west. When space permits, they stand with their arms extended in prayer.

At every mention of the name Jesus, the celebrant and the communicants bow their heads.

The Preparation of the Bread and the Chalice

Whenever possible, one loaf should be prepared upon the holy table. If pastoral need requires more than one loaf, no more than five loaves may be prepared.

The holy table may be covered with a clean veil until the Presentation of the Gifts. Nothing common or unclean should be placed upon it.

The celebrant prepares either leavened or unleavened bread upon the holy table.

The celebrant prepares a chalice of wine mixed with a few drops of water, recalling the blood and water that came forth from the side of the Lord.

I. THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

The Holy Sign

The celebrant and the communicants make the Sign of the Cross.

The first three fingers are joined together in confession of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The remaining two fingers are folded into the palm in confession of the twofold nature of Christ.

The right hand is moved from the forehead to beneath the breast, then from the left shoulder to the right shoulder, and finally placed

over the heart with a bow of the head.

The celebrant and the communicants say:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Opening Proclamation

Celebrant:

Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever.

Communicants:

Amen.

The Hymn of Christ

The celebrant and the communicants kneel and sing:

Who, being in the form of God,
Thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

But made himself of no reputation,
And took upon him the form of a servant,
And was made in the likeness of men:

And being found in fashion as a man,
He humbled himself,
And became obedient unto death,
Even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him,
And given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
Of things in heaven,
And things in earth,
And things under the earth;

And that every tongue should confess
That Jesus Christ is Lord,
To the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

II. THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Pauline Blessings

The communicants stand. The celebrant extends his arms and says:

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The God of peace be with you all; and the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Communicants:

And with thy spirit. Amen.

The Reading from the Gospel

The communicants sit.

Celebrant:

Let us attend unto the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The appointed passage from the Evangelicon is read.

At the conclusion:

Celebrant:

The Gospel of the Lord.

Communicants:

Praise be unto thee, O Lord Jesus Christ.

The First Psalm

The celebrant and the communicants sing or read an appointed psalm from the Psalmicon responsorially.

The Reading from the Apostle

Celebrant:

Let us attend unto the words of the Apostle Paul.

The appointed passage is read from one of the following books of the Apostolicon: Galatians, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Romans, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, Laodiceans, Colossians, Philippians, or Philemon.

At the conclusion:

Celebrant:

The word of the Apostle.

Communicants:

Thanks be unto God.

The Second Psalm

The celebrant and the communicants sing or read an appointed psalm from the Psalmicon responsorially.

The Homily

The celebrant gives a homily based upon the readings and applies them to the faith and life of the Church and to the needs and circumstances of the communicants.

The Intercessions

Intercessions may be offered that are consistent with the Evangelicon and the Apostolicon, and with the needs of the Church.

Celebrant:

Let us make our requests known unto God with prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving.

For the Marcionite Church, for her bishops and presbyters, for all communicants, and for all who preach the Gospel of Christ:

Communicants:

O God our Father, hear our prayer.

Celebrant:

For rulers and all who bear authority, that they may do that which is good, and that peace may abound among all men:

Communicants:

O God our Father, hear our prayer.

Celebrant:

For the sick, the afflicted, the poor, the imprisoned, and all who suffer in body or soul:

Communicants:

O God our Father, hear our prayer.

Celebrant:

For all communicants, that they may be strengthened by the Holy Spirit, and may abound in faith, hope, and charity:

Communicants:

O God our Father, hear our prayer.

Celebrant:

O God our Father, who art able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, receive these prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Communicants:

Amen.

III. THE OFFERTORY RITES

The Admission to the Holy Table

The Marcionite Church practices open communion. Christians who have received Holy Baptism by full triple immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and who have received Holy Chrismation or Confirmation and admission to Holy Communion, may be received as communicants, even if they are not formal members of the Marcionite Church.

Open communion does not mean reception without Baptism, without sealing, without faith, or without admission to the holy table. Catechumens, those outside the Christian faith, the unbaptized, the unchrismated, and all others not admitted to Holy Communion may hear the Gospel, the Apostle, the psalms, the homily, and the intercessions, but shall not receive the Holy Mysteries.

The Pauline Creed

The celebrant and the communicants stand.

Celebrant:

Let us attend and confess the faith delivered by the Apostle.

The celebrant and the communicants say:

But to us there is but one God, the Father,
Of whom are all things, and we in him;

And one Lord Jesus Christ,
By whom are all things, and we by him.

And no man can say that Jesus is the Lord,
But by the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Holy Kiss

Celebrant:

Let us salute one another with an holy kiss.

The celebrant and the communicants exchange the Holy Kiss with those nearest to them, reverently kissing one another on the cheek.

The Presentation of the Gifts

The celebrant presents the bread and mixed chalice upon the holy table.

Offerings for the Holy Lovefeast and the relief of the poor may also be presented.

Celebrant:

Behold the table of holiness, prepared for the faithful and beloved of the Lord.

Communicants:

We draw near in faith, repentance, hope, and love.

IV. THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant:

The Lord be with you.

Communicants:

And with thy spirit.

Celebrant:

Lift up your hearts.

Communicants:

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Celebrant:

Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God.

Communicants:

It is meet and right so to do.

The Thanksgiving for Salvation in Christ

The celebrant extends his arms and says:

We give thanks unto God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son;

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were created all things that are in heaven and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers.

And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself.

For God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

He gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.

Christ died for our sins, and was buried, and rose again the third day.

Therefore we give thanks unto thee, O God our Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Words over the Bread and the Chalice

The celebrant takes the bread and says:

Giving thanks unto thee, he blessed it, brake it, and gave it unto his disciples, saying:

This is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.

Communicants:

Amen.

The celebrant takes the chalice and says:

Likewise also, after supper, he took the cup, wherein wine and water were mingled; and when he had given thanks, he gave it unto them, saying:

This cup is the testament in my blood, which is shed for you. This do in remembrance of me.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

Communicants:

Amen.

The Memorial and the Thanksgiving Offering

Celebrant:

Wherefore, calling to remembrance his death and resurrection, we present before thee this bread and this chalice in thanksgiving.

Thou also hast made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit.

The Invocation of the Holy Spirit

The celebrant bows over the bread and the chalice.

Celebrant:

O God our Father, who stablishest us in Christ, and hast anointed us, who hast also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts:

Send down thy Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts set before thee in thanksgiving.

Sanctify this bread, and make it the holy body of thy Christ.

Communicants:

Amen.

Celebrant:

And make this cup the precious blood of thy Christ.

Communicants:

Amen.

Celebrant:

Grant that the cup of blessing which we bless may be unto us the communion of the blood of Christ, and that the bread which we break may be unto us the communion of the body of Christ.

Unite us by thy Holy Spirit; for we, being many, are one bread and one body, being all partakers of that one bread.

Fill us with thy Spirit, strengthen us in faith, and establish us in the truth.

For all things are of thee, who hast reconciled us to thyself by Jesus Christ.

Unto thee be glory through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto all ages.

Communicants:

Amen.

V. THE COMMUNION RITES

The Lord's Prayer

The celebrant and the communicants make the Sign of the Cross.

Celebrant:

As children of God, and as those who have received the Spirit of adoption, let us pray in the words which the Lord delivered unto us.

The celebrant and the communicants say:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Let thy Holy Spirit come upon us, and cleanse us.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

Give us day by day thy daily bread.

And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is in-debted to us.

And suffer us not to be brought into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Amen.

The celebrant and the communicants make the Sign of the Cross.

The Breaking of the Bread

The celebrant breaks the consecrated bread into portions for the communicants.

The Communion Proclamation

The celebrant takes the chalice and says:

Celebrant:

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?

The celebrant takes the broken bread and says:

Celebrant:

The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

Communicants:

For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Amen.

The Examination before Communion

Celebrant:

Let us draw near in fear, with care, and with right confession of faith, discerning the body and blood of the Lord.

Let no man eat of this bread, nor drink of this cup, without examining himself before God.

The celebrant and the communicants keep a brief silence, examining themselves before God.

The Warning before Communion

The celebrant says:

Beloved, discern the body and blood of the Lord. These gifts are not common bread and common drink, but the communion of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Let every communicant receive in faith, repentance, thanksgiving, and love.

A brief silence is kept.

Celebrant:

The holy things are for the holy.

Communicants:

One is holy, one is Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Communion of the Celebrant

The celebrant makes the Sign of the Cross before receiving the consecrated body and blood of Christ.

The celebrant first receives the consecrated body and blood of Christ.

After receiving, the celebrant makes the Sign of the Cross.

The Communion of the Communicants

Before approaching the celebrant, each communicant makes the Sign of the Cross. The communicants then approach in order, and each communicant kneels before the celebrant.

The celebrant dips a portion of the consecrated bread in the chalice and places it directly upon the communicant's tongue.

The celebrant says to each communicant:

Celebrant:

The body of Christ, given for thee, and the blood of Christ, shed for thee.

Communicant:

Amen.

After receiving, each communicant makes the Sign of the Cross and reverently returns to his or her place.

The Consuming of the Holy Gifts

The celebrant reverently consumes all that remains of the consecrated body and blood of Christ. None shall be discarded or used for any common purpose.

The celebrant cleanses the chalice with water and consumes the cleansing water. The holy table and vessels are left clean and orderly.

VI. THE CONCLUDING RITES

The Thanksgiving after Communion

The celebrant and the communicants stand.

Celebrant:

Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son;

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

Communicants:

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as we have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Celebrant:

May ye be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.

Communicants:

Amen.

Celebrant:

May the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

And may God supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever.

Communicants:

Amen.

The Hymn of Victory

The celebrant and the communicants sing:

Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy sting?
O grave, where is thy victory?

The sting of death is sin;
And the strength of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, Which giveth us the victory Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

The Prayer for Sanctification and Perseverance

Celebrant:

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly;

And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

Communicants:

Amen.

The Blessing

Celebrant:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

Communicants:

And with thy spirit.

The Dismissal

Celebrant:

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity.

Go forth in peace, continuing steadfastly in faith, hope, and charity.

Communicants:

Thanks be unto God.

The celebrant and the communicants make the Sign of the Cross.

The celebrant and the communicants say:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

VII. THE RITES OF THE HOLY LOVEFEAST

Following the Concluding Rites, the celebrant and the communicants participate in the Holy Lovefeast, a sacred communal meal and a Holy Rite.

Each household or communicant contributes according to ability. The food is gathered and shared without preference for the wealthy over the poor. No one begins before the others are ready, but all wait for one another.

The Blessing of the Holy Lovefeast

Before the meal, the celebrant and the communicants make the Sign of the Cross.

Celebrant:

The Lord be with you.

Communicants:

And with thy spirit.

Celebrant:

Let us give thanks unto God.

O God our Father, we give thee thanks for this food and for the fellowship of thy holy Church.

Grant that we, being many, may be one bread and one body in Christ; that we may tarry one for another; and that none may hunger while another hath abundance.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Communicants:

Amen.

The Sharing of the Holy Lovefeast

The celebrant and the communicants share the meal in charity and peace.

The Distribution to Absent Communicants

A portion of the Holy Lovefeast meal shall be reserved for an absent communicant who could not attend because of sickness or infirmity. When appropriate, a portion may also be reserved because of imprisonment, distance, or another serious necessity.

This distribution concerns the Holy Lovefeast meal only. The consecrated body and blood of Christ are not reserved, carried away, or used for any common purpose.

The celebrant or a communicant appointed by the celebrant may carry it to that person as a sign that he or she remains joined to the fellowship of the Church.

The Conclusion of the Holy Lovefeast

Celebrant:

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Communicants:

Amen.

THE LITURGY OF HOLY BAPTISM

The Preparation for Holy Baptism

Holy Baptism is especially fitting on the Marcionite Holy Days, especially Christmas, Hallowmas, and Easter Sunday. It may also be administered at any fitting time when a catechumen is prepared, repentant, and ready to confess Jesus Christ as Lord.

Holy Baptism should ordinarily be administered before the congregation, or before sufficient witnesses of the Church, so that the catechumen's repentance, confession, and baptism may be openly testified.

Holy Baptism is administered only to a catechumen capable of repentance, faith, and personal confession. Infant baptism is not practiced.

The catechumen fasts for the full day preceding Holy Baptism, unless prevented by sickness or another serious necessity. The catechumen's Christian name

should be spoken aloud before the baptism.

A font, pool, or body of clean water sufficient for three full immersions is prepared. The celebrant is ordinarily a bishop, presbyter, or deacon. A deaconess may baptize a woman.

Holy Baptism is followed without delay by Holy Chrismation, unless grave necessity prevents it. The ancient post-baptismal anointing and the offering of milk and honey are administered in the Liturgy of Holy Chrismation.

Whenever possible, Holy Baptism and Holy Chrismation are celebrated immediately before the Divine Liturgy, so that the newly chrismated may receive Holy Communion without delay and complete initiation into the Church.

The Examination of the Catechumen

The catechumen should not be baptized hastily. Before Holy Baptism, the celebrant should examine the catechumen concerning faith, repentance, confession of Jesus Christ as Lord, and readiness to walk in newness of life.

If the catechumen is not yet prepared, the celebrant should delay Holy Baptism and continue instruction.

Celebrant:

Hast thou been taught the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul?

Catechumen:

I have been taught.

The Free Desire of the Catechumen

The catechumen shall come freely and shall not be compelled. The celebrant asks:

Celebrant:

What dost thou seek?

Catechumen:

I seek Holy Baptism, that I may confess Jesus Christ as Lord, receive the grace of God the Father, and walk in newness of life.

The Fruit of Repentance

Celebrant:

What fruit of repentance dost thou bring before God and his Church?

Catechumen:

I turn from sin, from the god of this world, and from the bondage of the elements. I confess Jesus Christ as Lord, and I seek the grace of God the Father, that I may walk in faith, hope, love, and newness of life.

Celebrant:

Wilt thou continue in the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul, holding fast the faith once delivered unto the Church?

Catechumen:

I will, God helping me.

The Holy Sign

The celebrant and the catechumen make the Sign of the Cross according to the form prescribed in the Divine Liturgy.

The Renunciation, Repentance, and Confession of Faith

Celebrant:

Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of. Dost thou repent of thy sins and turn unto God the Father through Jesus Christ?

Catechumen:

I do.

Celebrant:

Dost thou renounce the god of this world, his works, his dominion, and every bondage of sin?

Catechumen:

I renounce them.

Celebrant:

Dost thou turn from the elements of this world unto God the Father revealed by Jesus Christ?

Catechumen:

I do.

Celebrant:

Dost thou believe in God the Father, revealed through Jesus Christ?

Catechumen:

I believe.

Celebrant:

Dost thou confess Jesus Christ as Lord, who descended, suffered, died, was buried, rose again, and appeared to Paul?

Catechumen:

I confess Jesus Christ as Lord.

Celebrant:

Dost thou receive the Gospel revealed by Christ and preached by Paul?

Catechumen:

I receive it.

Celebrant:

Dost thou believe in the Holy Spirit, by whom we are all baptized into one body?

Catechumen:

I believe.

Celebrant:

Dost thou desire Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and Holy Communion in the Church of Christ?

Catechumen:

I desire them.

The Prayer over the Water

The celebrant extends his hand over the water and says:

Celebrant:

O God our Father, who hast delivered us from the power of

darkness, and hast translated us into the kingdom of thy dear Son: grant that this water may be unto this thy servant a burial with Christ into death, and a rising with him through faith of thine operation, who didst raise him from the dead.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Catechumen and those present:

Amen.

The Triple Immersion

The catechumen enters the water. The celebrant calls the catechumen by name and immerses the catechumen fully three times.

At the first immersion, the celebrant says:

Celebrant:

I baptize thee in the name of the Father;

At the second immersion, the celebrant says:

Celebrant:

And of the Son;

At the third immersion, the celebrant says:

Celebrant:

And of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The newly baptized is raised from the water.

The Lord's Prayer and the Peace

The celebrant and all present say:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Let thy Holy Spirit come upon us, and cleanse us.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

Give us day by day thy daily bread.

And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is in-debted to us.

And suffer us not to be brought into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Amen.

The celebrant says to the newly baptized:

The peace of God the Father, the peace of Jesus Christ his Son, and the peace of the Holy Spirit be with thee.

Newly Baptized:

Amen.

The Proclamation of New Life

Celebrant:

Knowest thou not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Therefore thou art buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so thou also shouldest walk in newness of life.

Buried with him in baptism, thou art also risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Newly Baptized:

Amen.

Holy Chrismation follows immediately.

THE LITURGY OF HOLY CHRISMATION

The Preparation for Holy Chrismation

Holy Chrismation ordinarily follows Holy Baptism immediately. It may also be administered separately to a believer whose previous Trinitarian credobaptism through three full immersions has been received as valid by the Church.

The celebrant is a bishop or presbyter. A vessel of holy oil and a small cup containing milk mixed with honey are prepared.

The anointing with holy oil in Holy Chrismation belongs to the sealing of initiation and is distinct from Holy Anointing, the separate Holy Rite administered to the sick.

The Laying on of Hands

The newly baptized or candidate kneels. The celebrant lays his right hand upon the head and says:

Celebrant:

Now he which stablisheth us in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

O God our Father, because this thy servant is thy child, send forth the Spirit of thy Son into the heart of this thy servant, crying, Abba, Father.

Strengthen thy servant with might by thy Spirit in the inward man, that Christ may dwell in the heart by faith.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Candidate and those present:

Amen.

The Anointing with Oil

The celebrant anoints the forehead of the candidate with holy oil in the form of the Cross and says:

Celebrant:

God hath anointed thee, and hath also sealed thee, and given the earnest of the Spirit in thine heart.

Newly Chrismated:

Amen.

Celebrant:

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Newly Chrismated:

Jesus Christ is Lord.

Celebrant:

Thou hast received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Walk therefore as a child of

God, sealed in Christ, and filled with the earnest of the Spirit.

Newly Chrismated:

Amen.

The Milk and Honey

The celebrant gives the newly chrismated the cup of milk and honey and says:

Celebrant:

As thou hast therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk thou in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

The newly chrismated drinks from the cup.

Celebrant:

Thou art Christ's; and Christ is God's.

Newly Chrismated:

Amen.

The Admission to Holy Communion

Celebrant:

Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a child; and if a child, then an heir of God through Christ.

Newly Chrismated:

Amen.

The newly chrismated is admitted to Holy Communion. Upon receiving Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, and Holy Communion, the believer is fully initiated into the Marcionite Church. No separate rite of First Holy Communion is used.

Whenever possible, the Divine Liturgy follows immediately, and the newly chrismated receives Holy Communion therein. When this is impossible, Holy Communion is received at the next Divine Liturgy.

The Blessing

Celebrant:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.

Newly Chrismated:

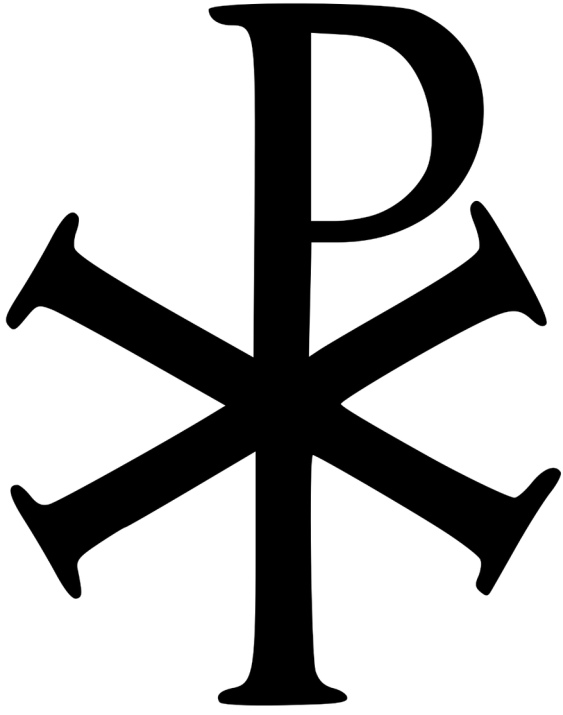
Amen.

Here endeth the Litourgicon.

THE TESTAMENTUM

CHRONICON

THE HISTORY OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCH



THE TESTAMENTUM

CHRONICON

THE HISTORY OF THE MARCIONITE CHURCH

The Chronicon is the historical record of the Marcionite Church, tracing its foundations in Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul, the life and ministry of Marcion of Sinope, and the development, persecution, and endurance of Marcionite communities throughout the ancient world.

Its name comes from the ancient term Chronicon, meaning a chronicle or account arranged according to time. The title places this work within the early Christian tradition of recording ecclesiastical history year by year, while presenting that history from the perspective of the Marcionite Church.

28 C.E. or 29 C.E.

On either Friday, December 31, 28 C.E., or Saturday, January 1, 29 C.E., Jesus descended from Heaven into Capernaum—either date corresponding with the Sabbath as described in the Evangelicon, depending on whether one follows civil dating (placing the event on the daylight Sabbath) or sunset-to-sunset reckoning (placing it at the Sabbatical boundary).

33 C.E.

Jesus was crucified on Friday, April 3rd, 33 C.E. This corresponds with a ‘Blood Moon’ lunar eclipse that started at 2:01 P.M., about an hour before Jesus’ death on the cross and concluded at 7:34 P.M., lasting exactly 333 minutes. “And it was about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the sanctuary was rent in the midst.” Evangelicon 22:59-60

34 C.E.

After the resurrection, the risen Christ appeared to the Apostle Paul and called him by direct revelation. Paul’s apostleship did not come from men, from catechesis, from Ananias, or from the Jerusalem apostles, but from Christ Himself. He did not go up to Jerusalem to receive authority from those who were apostles before him; he went into Arabia and then returned to Damascus, proclaiming the Gospel he had received from Heaven. From this heavenly disclosure, Paul’s mission was grounded in revelation from Christ rather than in the Hebrew Bible, the Twelve, or any human commission.

37 C.E.

After three years of preaching following his revelation, Paul went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and remained with him fifteen days, seeing no other apostle except James. This was Paul's first direct contact with the Jerusalem leadership after Christ had already called him, yet he did not receive his Gospel from them, nor was his apostleship dependent upon their authority. The visit confirmed the distinction Paul himself maintained: his Gospel came by revelation from Christ, while his contact with Peter and James came only afterward.

37 C.E. to 48 C.E.

After Paul's brief visit with Peter and James, the theological war among the first Christians continued to harden. Paul carried his Gospel through the regions of Syria and Cilicia, proclaiming grace apart from the Law, while the Judaizing party associated with Peter and James pressed for Christian submission to the Hebrew Bible and its ordinances. These years formed the first great period of Pauline mission: the Gospel revealed by Christ was preached independently of Jerusalem oversight, and the dispute between grace and Law deepened into an open division within the young church.

48 C.E.

When the conflict over Law and grace erupted publicly at Antioch, the Apostle Paul withstood Peter to the face for withdrawing from table fellowship with Gentile believers under Judaizing pressure from men associated with James. The dispute then came to a head at the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem, where Paul went up with Barnabas and Titus because of a revelation and set before Peter, James, and John the Evangelion which he preached among the Gentiles.

Titus, though Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised, and the pillars added nothing to Paul's Gospel. They gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, asking only that they remember the poor. Thus the Church remembers this council not as Paul's submission to Jerusalem, but as the confirmation of his independent apostleship and the exposure of the continuing division between grace and Law.

49 C.E.

While in Ephesus, the Apostle Paul pens his first Epistle, the Epistle to the Galatians, using Titus as his courier.

50 C.E.

Written from Ephesus, the Apostle Paul issues the First Epistle to the Corinthians to correct disorder and division within the Corinthian

assembly, reaffirming the Gospel of grace against factionalism, and dispatches Timothy as its courier. In this same period, Paul also directs the collection for the poor, extending to Corinth the same charitable obligation he had already appointed in Galatia. This relief effort joined the assemblies of Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia in material charity while preserving their freedom from the yoke of the Law of Moses.

51 C.E.

Written from Troas, Paul sends the Second Epistle to the Corinthians as a follow-up letter of reconciliation and authority, defending his apostleship and strengthening the Corinthian church; Titus serves as its courier.

52 C.E.

Written from Corinth, Paul composes the Epistle to the Romans as his fullest doctrinal exposition of justification by faith and the righteousness revealed apart from the Law, setting forth the Pauline foundation that later Marcionite churches would treat as central.

53 C.E.

Written from Athens, Paul addresses the Thessalonian believers concerning perseverance, holiness, and the hope of Christ's return; it is dispatched jointly by Tychicus and Onesimus as its couriers.

54 C.E.

Written from Athens, Paul issues the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians to correct confusion about the Day of the Lord and to reinforce apostolic instruction; Tychicus and Onesimus, as its couriers, carry it. In this epistle Paul also marks the danger of forged letters written in his name, warning the church not to be troubled by any spirit, word, or epistle falsely claiming to come from him. He therefore gives the assemblies his autograph sign: "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write." This practice became an internal witness to the integrity of the Apostolicon and a safeguard against later pseudepigraphal writings issued under Paul's name.

55 C.E.

The Apostle Paul issues his Epistle to the Laodiceans (commonly identified as Ephesians), his first letter, composed in imprisonment; written from Ephesus and dispatched by Tychicus, the deacon, as its courier.

56 C.E.

Written from Ephesus during imprisonment, Paul sends the Epistle to the Colossians to defend the supremacy of Christ and guard the churches from corrupting teachings; Tychicus and Onesimus, as its couriers, dispatch it.

60 C.E.

The Apostle Paul writes his Epistle to Philemon from Rome in prison, the first Epistle he issues after being transferred in chains from Ephesus to Rome, dispatched by Onesimus as its courier. It is also his first Pastoral Epistle.

61 C.E.

Written from Rome during imprisonment, Paul writes the Epistle to the Philippians as a letter of joy, encouragement, and steadfastness under persecution; Epaphroditus carries it as its courier.

62 C.E.

After his release from prison, the Apostle Paul writes his Epistle to Titus from Nicopolis.

63 C.E.

Written from Laodicea, the First Epistle to Timothy was issued by the Apostle Paul to establish church order and pastoral discipline, instructing Timothy in the oversight of doctrine and ministry; Tychicus dispatched it as its courier. The Apostle also ordained Ignatius as the first Pauline bishop of Antioch, while the Apostle Peter, around the same time, appointed Evodius as the first Petrine bishop of the city.

64 C.E.

During his second imprisonment at Rome, the Apostle Paul writes the Second Epistle to Timothy. Also, according to Marcionite tradition, the Apostle Paul appoints Linus as the first bishop of Rome, establishing the original Pauline foundation of the Roman Church. This early episcopacy stood in contrast to the later Petrine succession claimed by the Catholic tradition.

66 C.E.

Written from Italy as his final Epistle and dictated through his amanuensis—Tertius, his scribe and secretary—the Apostle Paul issues his Epistle to the Alexandrians (Later identified as Hebrews), dispatched by Phoebe of Cenchrea as its courier; within it he names Philologus, the father of Marcion, and possibly Julia, Marcion's mother, among his companions at Rome.

67 C.E.

The Apostle Paul dies as a martyr in Rome.

70 C.E.

Marcion was born sometime around 70 C.E. in Sinope, a city in Pontus. Marcion was the son of the bishop of Sinope, Philologus of Sinope, who was one of the 70 Disciples, and a companion of the Apostle Paul.

80 C.E.

Following the martyrdom of Linus, Anacletus is appointed as the second and final Pauline bishop of

Rome, continuing the apostolic foundation laid by Paul.

92 C.E.

Anacletus's martyrdom brought the Pauline succession to an end. The Pauline line is eclipsed as the Petrine faction consolidates control, leading to the rise of a single, episcopal succession in Rome under the already reigning Petrine bishop, Clement, who now governed alone.

96 C.E.

The Roman church sent the letter later known as First Clement to Corinth, intervening in a dispute over deposed presbyters and urging the restoration of ecclesiastical order. Though not Marcionite, this letter marks an early stage in the consolidation of Roman ecclesiastical authority, presbyterial succession, and appeal to Hebrew-scriptural examples. In the memory of the Marcionite Church, it stands as an early witness to the Roman mind that would later oppose the Pauline canon and Gospel preserved by Marcion.

98 C.E.

Marcion of Sinope began his ministry in Ephesus as a disciple of the Apostle John. Marcion presents an early compilation of the Pauline Epistles to the Apostle John. This would later be fully transcribed, compiled, and canonized into the Apostolicon. Ignatius, the Pauline bishop of Antioch, is martyred under Emperor Trajan. His death marks the end of the Pauline line of succession in Antioch for many decades.

100 C.E.

John the Apostle dies peacefully in Ephesus.

102 C.E.

Marcion leaves Ephesus to return to his hometown of Sinope to succeed Phocas as the bishop, who himself succeeded Marcion's father, Philologus, as bishop of the city. Phocas was martyred during the persecution of Christians under Emperor Trajan.

110 C.E.

Marcion leaves Sinope and begins traveling to compile more of the Apostle Paul's epistles. During this time, Marcion began to evangelize throughout Anatolia. Polycarp, in his Epistle to the Philippians, makes a veiled reference to Marcion's evangelistic activity in Anatolia, casting it in a negative light.

112 C.E.

Pliny the Younger, governing Bithynia and Pontus, writes to Trajan describing Christian practice in Pontus during the episcopate of Marcion of Sinope: believers meet on a fixed day before dawn, sing a hymn to Christ "as to a god," bind themselves by oath to avoid crimes, and later share

an ordinary meal; he also interrogates two female deaconesses in the course of his inquiry.

117 C.E.

Marcion of Sinope begins founding and organizing Pauline congregations across Anatolia.

120 C.E.

Marcion of Sinope fully assembles and transcribes the original Epistles of Paul into a single corpus known as the Apostolicon.

125 C.E.

Marcion of Sinope completes the compilation of the forty-two-psalm Psalmicon, the first Christian hymnbook. Composing some psalms himself and gathering others from the worship of Greek- and Syriac-speaking Pauline churches, and orders them into a common collection for liturgical use.

128 C.E.

Marcion of Sinope combines the Apostolicon with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (the Evangelicon) into a single codex—the Testamentum, the first Christian Bible—excluding the Hebrew Bible. This date is justified by Eznik of Kolb's report that Marcion fixed Christ's appearance roughly 100 years before Marcion canonized his Bible. If Christ's descent is dated to December 31st 28 C.E. (or January 1st 29 C.E.), then roughly one hundred years later marks the point at which Marcion bound Gospel and Apostle together as a single canon.

132 C.E.

Marcion of Sinope delivered his Homily to Diognetus at one of his churches in the city of Smyrna in Anatolia. This popular homily would later be transcribed and circulated across the Christian world. It is considered the earliest piece of Christian apologetic literature.

135 C.E. to 138 C.E.

Sometime in the late 130s C.E., Marcion of Sinope arrived in Rome, joined the Roman church, publicly taught, and secured influence with a reported donation of 200,000 sesterces. Jerome records that Marcion sent a woman ahead of him to Rome to prepare the community for his arrival and win adherents in advance. She is commonly identified as Philumena, described in later sources as a deaconess and prophetess associated with Marcionite circles. In this same Roman setting, Marcion advanced his Apostolicon, a defined collection of Pauline epistles, marking the earliest clear record of a structured Pauline corpus publicly circulating in the capital.

138 C.E.

During Hyginus's episcopate, Cerdo of Syria was expelled from the Roman church. Portrayed by later sources as repeatedly feigning repentance before returning to his doctrine, Cerdo stands as a clear proto-Marcionite and contemporary of Marcion himself, advancing in Rome the theology that would soon erupt into the broader Marcionite schism. His removal marks an early and decisive confrontation between Roman ecclesiastical authority and the emerging Marcionite current.

139 C.E.

The Chronicle of Edessa preserves a terse local notice (Seleucid year 449 = 139 C.E.): "In the year 449 Marcion forsook the Catholic Church." Marcionite chronology treats this remembered "forsaking" as the date of composition of the Antitheses. Yet Marcion's formal separation as an institution would not occur until July 15th, 144 C.E., when he was summoned before the Roman presbytery, expelled, and then organized his own Pauline church.

142 C.E.

Following the death of Bishop Hyginus, Marcion of Sinope sought to become Bishop of Rome in an effort to restore the church to its original Pauline foundation. Despite his growing influence and generous donation of 200,000 sesterces, his bid was rejected in favor of Pius, a proponent of the emerging Petrine-Catholic tradition. After his rejection in Rome, Marcion traveled east and was appointed Bishop of Antioch. There, he restored the Pauline faction to power, reclaiming a see that had been dominated by Petrine influence since Ignatius died in 98 C.E. Under Marcion's leadership, Antioch once again became a center of Pauline theology and ecclesiastical independence.

144 C.E.

Conflicts with the Church of Rome escalated, and Bishop Pius formally excommunicated Marcion of Sinope on July 15th, 144 C.E., denouncing him as a heretic and returning his donation of 200,000 sesterces. Tertullian preserves the date indirectly by counting Marcion's separation as 115 years and six and a half months after the crucifixion of Jesus. Thus even hostile Catholic chronology preserved the formal date of the Marcionite schism. Following his trial of excommunication, Marcion is said to have declared to the assembled Roman presbyters and bishops: "I will divide your Church and cause within her a division, which will last forever." After his excommunication, Marcion fully broke from Rome, transforming his Pauline faction into a separate church independent of the Petrine

hierarchy. He based this new Church in Antioch, where he assumed the title of Archbishop and established an ecclesiastical structure grounded in the authority of Paul alone. From there, Marcion led a growing network of congregations throughout Anatolia, Syria, and beyond, proclaiming the Gospel of grace, rejecting the Hebrew Bible as Christian scripture, and refusing to identify the false deity portrayed therein with God the Father revealed by Jesus Christ. Sometime later, in response to Marcion's growing influence in the East, Rome appointed Heron II as a competing Petrine bishop in Antioch, directly opposing Marcion's episcopacy and attempting to reassert Catholic control over the see. This dual episcopate in Antioch became a symbol of the wider schism between the Church of the Law and the Church of grace.

150 C.E.

During the episcopate of Bishop Pius I, his brother Hermas circulated the Shepherd of Hermas, with the Book of Similitudes framed as a deliberate response to Marcion and his Antitheses, offering a rival "visionary" and moral-theological counter-program to Marcionite contrasts.

154 C.E.

Marcion of Sinope is arrested in Antioch and taken back to Rome to be martyred in the Colosseum. During his journey, he pens seven epistles for some of his churches and disciples in Anatolia. His Epistle to the Romans was written on August 24th.

After arriving in Rome, he confronts his archnemesis, Polycarp of Smyrna, who exclaims: "I recognize thee as the firstborn of Satan." Writing within Marcion's own lifetime, Justin Martyr provides early-datable references to Marcionite Christianity in the First Apology, complaining that Marcion's teaching had already spread among every race of men, and he is also associated with a now-lost work, Against Marcion. Justin's testimony confirms how rapidly Marcionite assemblies spread across the Roman world and forced the Catholic party into public apologetic damage control.

By the middle of the second century, the Marcionite Church was not merely a school of opinion but a visible ecclesiastical network. Hostile witnesses place its reach from Rome and Carthage in the west, through Gaul, Corinth, and Antioch, and into Edessa, Nisibis, Armenia, and Persia. These assemblies possessed bishops, presbyters, deacons, catechumens, scriptures, liturgy, property, copyists, and lines of communication between cities.

After Marcion's martyrdom, the Marcionite Church did not fragment into unrelated sects. Rather, distinct internal schools emerged within the same broad ecclesial body. The two principal schools were the Apelleans, founded by Apelles of Alexandria, and the Lucanists, founded by Lucanus or Lucianus of Rome. Later developments included the Severians, associated with Severus, and the Preponian refinement within the Lucanist stream. These schools differed chiefly in how they described the lower powers beneath God the Father, not in confessing rival co-eternal gods.

155 C.E.

Shortly after Marcion of Sinope's death, a pre-ecumenical Roman synod was held where Polycarp of Smyrna conferred with Bishop Anicetus over the Paschal (Easter) dispute—a Judaic Nisan 14 observance versus a Sunday rule—explicitly rejecting the Marcionite astrological method of calendrical calculation, which embraces celestial computations anchored to the April 3rd, 33 C.E. lunar eclipse visible at Jerusalem. Apelles of Alexandria succeeds Marcion of Sinope, following his martyrdom, as Archbishop of the Marcionite Church. Apelles becomes the chief preserver and theological successor of Marcion's original teaching, giving rise to the Apellean school. The Apelleans preserved the confession of God the Father above all. They understood the lower maker of the physical world as the being called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." This lower power was not a second co-eternal, co-equal god, but a subordinate, begotten, limited, and derivative power beneath God. Marcionite tradition holds that Apelles continued the collection and transcription of Pauline letters after Marcion's death and received Titus, I Timothy, II Timothy, and Alexandrians for Marcionite use. The Marcionite Church preserves these writings in the Antilegicon as deuterocanonical and subordinate to the original Apostolicon. Apelles may also have composed prologues for these epistles after the manner of Marcion's prologues.

156 C.E.

Metrodorus, the Marcionite bishop of Smyrna, was burned alive along with Polycarp, the Catholic bishop of Smyrna, during the persecutions of Christians in Asia Minor under Antoninus Pius.

157 C.E.

Lucanus, also known as Lucianus of Rome, emerges as an important disciple of Marcion and the founder of the Lucanist school. The Lucanists preserved the confession of God the Father above all, but developed Marcionite cosmology

by distinguishing the just “god of this world” from Satan. In this structure, the “god of this world” is the just lower power associated with the making and governance of the physical world, while Satan is the evil adversary. This was not dualism, for neither the “god of this world” nor Satan was treated as co-eternal or co-equal with God the Father.

160 C.E.

Theodotion, originally a Marcionite Christian proselyte from Ephesus, produced a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, most notably a recension of Daniel that later supplanted the older Septuagint form in wider church use. Circulating within Marcionite circles, his Greek scriptures would have supplied a usable textual base for anti-Mosaic polemics. They may have been employed in the composition of Apelles’ Syllogisms, the systematic critique of contradictions attributed to the Mosaic law. The first generation after Marcion includes several named disciples and teachers preserved by hostile heresiological witnesses: Potitus, Basilicus, and Syneros. Potitus and Basilicus are best placed within the Apellean stream, preserving the simpler distinction between God the Father and the lower powers associated with the making and governance of the physical world. Syneros is best placed within the Lucanist stream, since the hostile report of “three natures” fits the Lucanist tendency to distinguish among lower powers rather than collapse them into a single figure. These differences represented internal theological tendencies within the Marcionite Church rather than formal schisms.

167 C.E.

Apelles begins circulating his Syllogisms, a multi-volume anti-Hebrew Bible project that later writers attest ran to at least 38 books. Building on Marcion’s earlier Antitheses, the work extends the same polemical program by systematically cataloging contradictions and arguing that the Hebrew Scriptures’ testimony about God is false. Apelles also articulates a distinctly Marcionite doctrine of deferred demiurgy, describing the lower maker of the physical world as a fiery angel who attempted to imitate the higher realm but failed to reproduce its perfection. Against hostile accusations of docetism and crude dualism, Apelles affirmed Christ’s real manifestation. They clarified that the lower maker of the physical world was subordinate to God the Father, not a second co-eternal, co-equal god.

169 C.E.

Theophilus of Antioch begins to rework and alter the Evangelicon, adding new material, removing

other material, and changing passages he regarded as necessary for a Gospel. The resulting text would later circulate under the title Gospel of Luke. Eusebius also reports that Theophilus of Antioch wrote a now-lost discourse “of no common merit” against Marcion, evidence that Antioch’s Catholic leadership treated Marcionism as a major public threat even while competing textual and doctrinal claims were hardening into rival canons.

170 C.E.

The distinction between the ‘Old’ and ‘New’ testaments started around 170 C.E. when Melito of Sardis coined those terms. This was done as a direct response to the teachings of Marcion of Sinope.

171 C.E.

Dionysius of Corinth pens a letter to the Nicomedians against Marcionism, preserved only through a later notice in Eusebius’ Ecclesiastical History. Sometimes described as a refutation circulated toward Rome as well, the work itself is lost and survives only in mediated report. Nevertheless, it demonstrates that by the 170s, Marcionism had achieved sufficient prominence to provoke coordinated campaigns of episcopal correspondence aimed at doctrinal containment.

172 C.E.

Philip of Gortyna wrote a treatise, now lost, against Marcion.

175 C.E.

A Catholic presbyter in Anatolia composes the Acta Pauli cycle, including the forged and pseudigraphical Corinthian correspondence (3 Corinthians), as a counter to the popularity of Marcionite teaching rooted in the Apostle Paul.

180 C.E.

According to Jerome, Modestus wrote a work, now lost, entitled Adversus Marcionem, attacking Marcion of Sinope. According to Eusebius, this work exceeded all other confutations of Marcion.

181 C.E.

The Acts of Peter began to take form as a Petrine romance against Marcion and the Marcionite churches. In this writing, Paul first preaches at Rome and then departs for Spain; afterward Simon Magus enters the city, deceives many, and lodges in the house of Marcellus, a wealthy Roman patron whose house serves widows, orphans, strangers, and the poor. Marcellus, whose name means “little Mark,” functions as a literary mask for Marcion, and his house represents a Pauline Roman church-house reclaimed by Peter.

The work answers Marcionite Pauline priority by granting that

Paul first formed the Roman mission, but making Peter the apostle who rescues it after Paul's departure. Simon is made the open mask of heresy, honored as a "new god" and set against the confession of Christ; Marcellus preserves the deeper anti-Marcionite target. The story also answers a rival Gospel-reading in which Peter's denial, doubt upon the waters, and failure to understand Christ were used against the Petrine claim.

185 C.E.

Megethius presents a Marcionite disputation against Hermogenes, arguing that matter is not eternal, that no second uncreated principle exists beside God, and that evil arises not from matter itself but from disordered will, corruption, and misuse.

189 C.E.

Writing only decades after Marcion's death, Irenaeus, the earliest substantial witness to Marcionite Christianity, provides crucial context for Marcionite theology and preserves readings closer to the original Marcionite texts than any later source. His testimony establishes the baseline against which all other witnesses are measured.

190 C.E.

Palut arrives in Edessa and finds that Marcionites constitute the overwhelming majority of the city's Christian population and are known simply as "Christians." Palut's Catholic followers are therefore labeled "Palutians," a designation that reflects their minority status and their organization under the Catholic Bishop of Antioch, Serapion. Palut's mission represents an effort to introduce a Catholic structure into a city whose Christian identity had already developed within a Marcionite framework.

192 C.E.

Rhodon, often Latinized "Rhodo," publishes a now-lost treatise against Marcionite Christianity. Eusebius preserves fragments in which Rhodo debates Apelles and reports internal Marcionite distinctions among Apelles, Potitus, Basilicus, and Syneros. Although Rhodo frames these differences in hostile terms of "principles" and "natures," the testimony is valuable because it preserves evidence of distinct schools within a single Marcionite body: the Apellean tendency associated with Apelles, Potitus, and Basilicus, and the Lucanist tendency associated with Lucanus and Syneros. These differences did not amount to formal schisms from the Marcionite Church, but to internal schools of interpretation concerning the order of lower powers beneath God the Father.

193 C.E.

Apelles of Alexandria, the foremost disciple and theological successor of Marcion, dies in Alexandria, Egypt. His death marks the close of the first major phase of post-Marcionite leadership. Still, the Apellean school continues as the principal continuation of Marcion's original teaching: public Gospel, Pauline canon, rejection of the Hebrew Bible as Christian scripture, real manifestation of Christ, and deferred demiurgy beneath the sovereignty of God the Father.

194 C.E.

Severus, a disciple and successor of Apelles, gives rise to the Severians, a stricter ascetic development within the broader Apellean stream. Like the traditional Apelleans, the Severians identified Satan with the being called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world" and called in the Evangelicon "the prince of this world." Unlike traditional Apelleans, however, they treated this lower maker of the physical world not merely as just, limited, and inferior, but as evil. This led the Severians toward a more ascetic, world-denying posture, while still rejecting the Hebrew Bible as a false authority and denying the fleshly resurrection.

196 C.E.

Jerome, in his work De viris illustribus, mentions two Christian theologians, Appion and Candidus, who jointly wrote a treatise defending the six-day creation myth from the Book of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. This treatise was directed against the theology of Marcion, who denied the creation story in the Book of Genesis.

200 C.E.

Bardesanes of Edessa composed Syriac dialogues against Marcion's followers, later translated into Greek by his circle. Eusebius presents him as a learned regional counter-voice in the Syriac milieu where Marcionite churches were especially entrenched.

203 C.E.

Clement of Alexandria—the learned Alexandrian theologian—completes the Stromata ("Miscellanies") as an early Alexandrian witness that, in the midst of the broader second-century contest over canon and doctrine, engages (among many targets) Marcionite teaching and exegesis; his scattered references offer valuable glimpses of how Marcionite interpretation was received and contested within the intellectual circles of Alexandria.

204 C.E. to 212 C.E.

Tertullian's Adversus Marcionem —the most extensive anti-Marcionite treatise extant, spanning five books—was composed and repeatedly revised roughly sixty

years after Marcion's death: begun around 204, expanded as Books I–III circa 207–208, and completed in its familiar five-book form with Books IV–V in the period 208–212; and though fiercely polemical, it quotes the Marcionite Evangelicon and Apostolicon extensively (often verse-by-verse), yielding the densest concentration of recoverable Marcionite readings, with Latin renderings that preserve textual variants otherwise lost and thereby making the work, ironically, a major source for reconstructing much of Marcion's Testamentum.

Tertullian also shows that Marcionite communities in his own day were organized churches with clergy, canon, liturgy, and institutional memory. His argument is not that the Marcionites lacked bishops, scriptures, or succession, but that their succession and scriptures should be rejected. His polemic therefore preserves evidence of a serious ecclesiastical body rather than a loose private sect.

212 C.E.

Tertullian composed the now-lost Adversus Apelleiacos ("Against the Apelleians"), directed against Apelles, the chief disciple of Marcion, and his followers. The existence of this work confirms that the Apellean school remained a distinct and important Marcionite stream after Apelles' death. Around the same period, Ambrose of Alexandria, formerly a Marcionite, enters Origen's school in Alexandria and is converted to Catholicism, later becoming Origen's close companion and a principal patron of his scriptural commentaries. Because Apelles himself was associated with Alexandria, Ambrose's Alexandrian connection makes him a likely former Apellean who later became an Origenist. However, surviving sources do not explicitly label him as such.

218 C.E.

In Edessa, Prepon the Assyrian, a follower of Marcion, writes a treatise "inscribed to Bardaisan the Armenian," explicitly defending Marcionite principles against Bardaisan's system and followers, as reported by Hippolytus. Prepon belongs naturally within the later Lucanist stream, since he articulated a threefold distinction between what is good, what is just, and what is evil. Within Marcionite theology, this should not be understood as belief in three co-eternal gods, but as a description of the order of lower powers, principalities, thrones, and dominions beneath God the Father. Prepon's teaching refines the Lucanist distinction between the just "god of this world" and Satan as the evil adversary.

220 C.E.

Callixtus, the Catholic Bishop of Rome, interpolated, readdressed, and expanded Marcion's epistles in 220 C.E. to garner support for a monarchical episcopate. Callixtus reattributed the epistles from Marcion of Sinope to the early Christian martyr, Ignatius of Antioch.

230 C.E.

Hippolytus of Rome, a contemporary of Tertullian, writes against Marcion in his Refutatio Omnium Haeresium, offering independent testimony through a systematic catalog of heresies. His notice concerning Prepon the Assyrian preserves an important witness to later Lucanist cosmology, especially the distinction between the good, the just, and the evil. Although Hippolytus frames these claims polemically, his testimony helps confirm that Marcionite schools continued to refine the doctrine of lower powers beneath God the Father without teaching a second co-eternal, co-equal god.

240 C.E.

Commodian wrote a lengthy poem against Marcion of Sinope in doggerel hexameters. Around the same period, the first anti-Marcionite prologue was appended to the Gospel of Mark. It was composed within a milieu shaped by ongoing resistance to Marcionite textual claims. This preface reinforces traditional narratives of apostolic mediation and succession, thereby stabilizing Mark's connection to Petrine authority. In an environment where Gospel authorship and transmission were contested, such framing served a defensive purpose, firmly embedding Mark within the emerging fourfold Gospel canon.

245 C.E.

The second anti-Marcionite prologue is appended to the Gospel of Luke. It identifies Luke as a Syrian of Antioch, a physician, and a close companion of Paul. By stressing Luke's orthodox credentials and affirming the integrity of his narrative, the prologue counters the Evangelicon's apostolicity and reasserts Luke's place within the broader catholic canon. Its emphasis on authorship, geography, and apostolic association reflects a period when control over textual lineage was central to ecclesiastical authority.

248 C.E.

Origen—the preeminent biblical scholar of the early Catholic Church—treats Marcionites in Contra Celsum as a recognized Christian constituency within the third-century landscape, and in his commentaries and homilies, he engages Marcionite exegesis at length, frequently preserving

variant Marcionite readings even as he argues against their theological implications; his Greek testimony is therefore a crucial control for checking and corroborating the Latin evidence preserved in Tertullian.

250 C.E.

A Johannine anti-Marcionite prologue that explicitly names Marcion as a disciple of John was produced as part of the church's ongoing effort to define the boundaries of the Gospel corpus. By grounding the Fourth Gospel in apostolic testimony and distancing it from heterodox interpretation, the text directly confronts Marcionite theology. Its polemical clarity and canon-conscious framing align with broader 3rd-century attempts to consolidate the fourfold Gospel against rival textual traditions.

254 C.E.

The Catholic Bishop of Rome, Stephen I, recognizes Marcionite baptisms as valid.

256 C.E.

During the baptismal controversy, Cyprian of Carthage fiercely opposed Stephen of Rome's recognition of baptisms administered outside the Catholic Church. In this dispute, Marcionite baptism is named directly, showing that the sacramental practice of Marcionite communities was recognizable enough to be debated as baptism rather than dismissed as no rite at all.

This controversy unintentionally confirms the ecclesial reality of the Marcionite Church in the third century. Its assemblies did not merely possess opinions, but administered sacraments, received converts, and maintained rites sufficiently stable that Catholic bishops were forced to decide whether those rites should be accepted or rejected.

257 C.E.

Eusebius makes mention of an unnamed Marcionite woman—possibly a deaconess—who was executed in the arena of Caesarea around 257 C.E., during the reign of Emperor Valerian.

300 C.E.

Adamantius completes his dialogue De Recta in Deum Fide, one of the most prominent refutations of Marcionite Christianity. Through its disputational format between orthodox and Marcionite spokespeople, it preserves Marcionite exegetical methods and direct scriptural appeals. The dialogue is especially important because it partially preserves the older division between Marcionite schools: Marcus represents the Apellean stream, preserving the simpler structure that identifies the lower maker of the physical world with the power called in the Apostolicon "the god of this world"

and in the Evangelicon “the prince of this world.” In contrast, Megethius represents the Lucanist stream, distinguishing the good, the just, and the evil. The presence of named Marcionite disputants shows that Marcionite teachers were still remembered as public, articulate, and confident defenders of their tradition nearly two centuries after Marcion’s break with Rome. The dialogue also preserves Marcionite ransom logic, in which Christ purchases souls out of bondage and transfers them from the dominion of lower powers into the liberty of God the Father.

304 C.E.

The heresiological catalog Adversus omnes haereses (Pseudo-Tertullian) circulates as an appendix to Tertullian’s De praescriptione, listing dozens of “heresies” (including Marcionites) and drawing (directly or indirectly) on the lost Syntagma associated with Hippolytus of Rome; it is commonly judged non-Tertullianic and is sometimes linked to Victorinus of Pettau. Its notices on Lucanus, Apelles, and the later Marcionite tradition are useful for tracing the memory of distinct Marcionite schools. However, its hostile summaries often compress Apellean, Lucanist, and Severian tendencies into simplified accusations of “principles.”

310 C.E.

On January 10th, 310 C.E., during the Diocletianic Persecution, Asclepius, the Marcionite bishop of Eleutheropolis, was burned alive in Caesarea on the same pyre as Peter Apselamus.

313 C.E.

With the Milan settlement of 313, Constantine and Licinius ended the era of state persecution and inaugurated what later Christians called the “peace of the Church”: Christian assemblies were legalized, and confiscated property was ordered restored (or compensated). For Marcionite congregations—already widespread—this moment marks the first plausible transition from hunted, precarious meetings to open worship under imperial toleration, even as the same imperial “peace” would soon be leveraged by Catholics to police “heresy” and target rival Pauline churches as illicit.

318 C.E.

Paul of Lebaba, a Marcionite presbyter, erected a church in the Syrian village of Lebaba on October 1st, 318 C.E. The inscription within the church is the oldest known surviving inscribed reference to Jesus: “The meeting-house of the Marcionites, in the village of Lebaba, of the Lord and Saviour Jesus the Good – Erected by the forethought of Paul a

presbyter, in the year 630 Seleucid era."

324 C.E.

Eusebius publishes his Ecclesiastical History, preserving multiple early notices about Marcionites and earlier anti-Marcion polemic—an anchor witness for how fourth-century Catholic writers framed Marcionite persistence and opposition.

325 C.E.

Emperor Constantine, a worshipper of the Roman Sun God, convened the Council of Nicaea and ordered the books of the Hebrew Bible to be added to the Christian Bible in a bid to unite citizens under a single state religion. The Evangelicon is excluded from that codex and replaced with scriptures of unknown origin.

331 C.E.

In 331 C.E., six years after the Council of Nicaea disbanded, Constantine ordered 50 copies of the edited Bibles to be published; these contained the Hebrew Scriptures and several new gospels.

332 C.E.

In 332 C.E., Emperor Constantine announced his Edict Against the Heretics. He ordered all Marcionite Christian churches and meeting places to be confiscated by force and handed over to the Catholic Church. This marked the beginning of systematic imperial suppression of Marcionite worship under Christian emperors. Buildings were seized, manuscripts were targeted, public assembly was criminalized, and the material memory of the Marcionite Church was deliberately broken. This was not a theological refutation of Marcionite Christianity, but the beginning of its political suppression under Christian imperial power.

340 C.E.

Hegemonius assembles the Acts of Archelaus, and its core is a recycled anti-Marcion corpus. It hijacks Marcion's own antithesis-style contrasts, flips them into accusations, and then redeploys the package as a broader anti-heretical polemic.

348 C.E.

Cyril of Jerusalem warns catechumens that Marcionite assemblies could be mistaken for "the Church" while traveling, since they, too, styled their meeting places as "the Lord's House." He therefore instructs the faithful to ask for the Catholic Church explicitly. This caution attests to how closely the Divine Liturgy of the Marcionite Church resembled contemporary Catholic worship in its prayers, sacraments, and outward forms.

360 C.E.

At the Council of Laodicea in 360 C.E., it was decreed that no psalms

composed by uninspired men should be used in the Church service. The Marcionite Christian Psalmicon was thus banned despite its growing popularity.

363 C.E.

Ephrem the Syrian composed the Discourses to Hypatius, prose refutations directed against Mani, Marcion, and Bardaisan. The Third Discourse takes up Marcion in sustained argument, demonstrating that in the Syriac world Marcionism remained a live and organized rival well into the fourth century. With Ephrem's relocation to Edessa, his preaching and hymnody unfold within a contested ecclesial environment where Marcionite claims are explicitly targeted—clear evidence of Marcionite strength in Edessa during the later fourth century. His extensive refutations provide crucial testimony both to the Syriac transmission of Marcionite texts and to the tradition's continued independent development beyond Greek and Latin Christianity.

374 C.E.

Epiphanius of Salamis composed the Panarion, a comprehensive heresiological encyclopedia cataloging heresies down to his own time. By dedicating substantial attention to Marcionite Christianity, he becomes the second main source of information on the Testamentum, claiming access to Marcionite manuscripts and preserving textual variants, theological interpretations, and liturgical practices from communities still active in his day. His accounts of Apelles, Severus, Lucanus, and related teachers are hostile and often distorted, but they remain important for reconstructing the Apellean, Lucanist, and Severian streams of Marcionite theology.

375 C.E.

In his First Canonical Epistle to Amphilochius of Iconium, Basil of Caesarea names the Marcionites among the heresies "alien from the faith".

378 C.E.

Ambrose of Milan composed his first work, De Paradiso, which contains some commentary attacking the theology and doctrine of Apelles of Alexandria.

380 C.E.

On February 27th, 380 C.E., Emperors Theodosius I, Gratian, and Valentinian II issued the Edict of Thessalonica, requiring the peoples of the Roman Empire to follow the Nicene faith associated with the bishops of Rome and Alexandria. This law did not yet name Marcionites specifically, but it marked a decisive shift: Catholic orthodoxy was no longer merely one church tradition among others,

but the religious standard favored by imperial law.

381 C.E.

The First Council of Constantinople reaffirmed Nicene theology and gave fuller form to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. From the Marcionite perspective, this council belongs to the later Catholic consolidation of doctrine: a fourth-century imperial and episcopal settlement that arose long after the Evangelicon, Apostolicon, and original Testamentum had already been published by Marcion.

382 C.E.

Following the Council of Rome in 382 C.E., Bishop Damasus I of Rome commissioned Jerome to produce a standardized Latin Bible, later known as the Vulgate, formally codifying the Catholic canon as a 73-book collection: 46 books from the Hebrew Bible, including deuterocanonical books not considered canonical in Judaism, and 27 books in the New Testament. In this process, the canon was expanded from one Gospel to four, from ten Pauline epistles to twenty-one total epistles, and the Hebrew Bible was appended to the Christian scriptures.

384 C.E.

Filastrius of Brescia, a late–fourth-century Latin heresiologist, preserves valuable Western testimony to Marcionite belief and practice—evidence of the tradition's remarkable longevity—in his Diversarum Hereseon Liber; and, writing explicitly against Marcion, he notably reports that Marcionites accepted the Pastoral Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

387 C.E.

Jerome's Commentary on Galatians preserves a concrete textual note about Marcion's Apostolicon, explicitly contrasting Catholic wording with what was "not written in Marcion's Apostolicon." This is one of the clearest late-fourth-century windows into how Marcionite Pauline texts were still being discussed as identifiable textual objects.

388 C.E. to 393 C.E.

In Antioch, John Chrysostom delivers polemical preaching against Marcionites, including the surviving Homily Against Marcionists and Manichaeans, a rare sermon-form specimen of late-fourth-century anti-Marcion agitation in the city where Marcionite presence had long been strongest.

In his Homily 40 on First Corinthians, Chrysostom also preserves a hostile report that Marcionites interpreted "baptized for the dead" through a proxy baptismal rite for catechumens who died before receiving baptism.

Though polemical and mocking, the report is important because it preserves another late-fourth-century witness to Marcionite sacramental controversy and to the continued use of Pauline exegesis among Marcionite communities.

393 C.E.

The Synod of Hippo in 393 C.E. reaffirmed the previous council's list of canonical books.

394 C.E.

Augustine of Hippo composed Contra Adimantum, answering the Manichaean teacher Adimantus and his Disputationes. This Manichaean work set passages of the Hebrew Scriptures against the Gospel and Apostle, presenting contradictions between Law and Gospel, the god of the Jews and the Father revealed by Christ, and the earthly promises of the old writings against the spiritual promises of the new.

Though Manichaean in doctrine, the Disputationes preserved an Antitheses-style method derived from Marcion's earlier work. The Manichaeans did not preserve the Marcionite confession pure, but they adapted Marcion's principal weapon against the Catholic union of Law and Gospel. Augustine's refutation therefore unintentionally witnesses that the Marcionite critique of the Hebrew Scriptures continued to circulate, even when taken up and altered by later sects.

397 C.E.

The Council of Carthage reaffirmed the North African canon tradition, restricting public reading under the name of divine Scripture to the received Catholic canon: the Hebrew Scriptures, four Gospels, Acts, fourteen Pauline epistles, the Catholic epistles, and Revelation.

From the Marcionite perspective, this marks another stage in the late fourth-century closing of the expanded Catholic Bible over against the older Gospel-and-Apostle form of the Testamentum. The canon of the empire and councils was not the primitive Christian canon, but a later ecclesiastical settlement imposed after the Marcionite canon had already stood for centuries.

398 C.E.

Augustine of Hippo composed Contra Faustum against Faustus of Milevis, a Manichaean bishop whose arguments continued the earlier method of Adimantus. Faustus attacked the Catholic use of the Hebrew Scriptures, denied that the prophets foretold Christ, objected to the morality of the Law and the patriarchs, and rejected those parts of the received New Testament that bound Christ to David, birth, genealogy, and the Jewish Messiah.

In this work the old Antitheses-style conflict appears again in Manichaean dress: Gospel against

Law, Christ against the prophets, spirit against flesh, and the Father of Jesus Christ against the god described in the Hebrew books. From the Marcionite perspective, Contra Faustum is valuable not because Faustus preserved Marcion's doctrine faithfully, but because it shows how powerful Marcion's scriptural method remained. Even when distorted by Manichaean mythology, the antithesis between the Gospel and the Hebrew Scriptures still forced Catholic writers to defend the later union of books that Marcion had already separated.

400 C.E.

In writing On Baptism, Against the Donatists, Augustine of Hippo argues that the validity of baptism rests on Christ's sacramental words rather than on the minister's orthodoxy. In the course of that defense, he explicitly names Marcion alongside other "heretics" and treats the baptismal formula—" in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"—as something even Marcion's followers did employ, underscoring how closely Marcionite practice could mirror catholic rites in outward form, including accepting the Trinitarian baptismal formula.

407 C.E.

By the time of Chromatius of Aquileia, the Muratorian Fragment's Latin canon-list tradition appears to be in circulation (his Tractatus in Matthaeum is often argued to borrow from it), providing the latest plausible terminus for the Fragment's late-antique form. The Muratorian Fragment explicitly treats certain Pauline-named writings as Marcionite "forgeries"—including letters "to the Laodiceans" and "to the Alexandrians"—thereby preserving, even while rejecting, a memory of alternative Pauline collections circulating in competition with the emerging Catholic canon.

410 C.E.

Amid the ecclesiastical consolidation surrounding the Persian Council of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, Marutha of Martyropolis recorded that the Marcionites maintained their own distinct corpus of worship and scripture, explicitly naming their Psalmicon—which contained Marcionite hymns—and a collection he calls the Synaxicon (Syriac: Saka). His testimony confirms that organized Marcionite communities in Mesopotamia not only persisted into the early fifth century but retained structured liturgical books and a defined canonical tradition.

428 C.E.

On May 30th, 428 C.E., Eastern Roman Emperor Theodosius II and Western Roman Emperor

Valentinian III officially outlawed Marcionite Christianity, forbidding Marcionite Christians from constructing new churches, proselytizing, ordaining clergy, publicly assembling, serving in government, leaving or receiving inheritance, and even praying. This law was codified in the Codex Theodosianus, Book 16, Title 5, among the imperial laws against heretical assemblies.

The law confirms that Marcionites were still significant enough in the fifth century to require explicit legal suppression. The empire did not legislate against a dead memory, but against communities it still considered visible, organized, and dangerous. Marcionite Christianity had not disappeared through internal failure; it had to be suppressed by imperial command.

429 C.E.

Augustine of Hippo composed De Haeresibus, preserving catalog notices of Marcionites, Apelleans, and Severians. Although written from a hostile Catholic standpoint, the work confirms that the memory of distinct Marcionite schools persisted into late antiquity: Marcionites as the broader body, Apelleans as the continuation of Apelles, and Severians as a stricter ascetic development associated with Severus.

445 C.E.

Eznik of Kolb, an Armenian bishop, pens an exposition and refutation of Marcionite Christianity in Against the Sects (also known as De Deo), providing distinctive Armenian-church testimony that preserves arguments and textual appeals not otherwise found in the Greek or Latin sources.

449 C.E.

Theodoret of Cyrrhus, bishop in northern Syria, writes to Leo I of Rome and boasts that he has reclaimed Marcionite communities within his diocese. In Epistles 81 and 113, he claims to have brought large numbers of Marcionites, including entire rural villages, into Catholic communion. His testimony shows that Marcionite Christianity was not merely a memory preserved in books, but a well-organized church still present in the Syrian countryside three hundred years after Marcion’s expulsion from Rome. These communities had survived imperial suppression, retained their own religious identity, and remained significant enough to require direct episcopal intervention.

450 C.E.

An anonymous Latin hexameter polemic, Carmen adversus Marcionem, circulates as one of the longest surviving anti-Marcionite poems, attacking the theology associated with Marcion of Sinope

and engaging “antitheses”-style contrasts while echoing themes familiar from Augustine of Hippo.

529 C.E.

On April 7th, 529, Emperor Justinian promulgated the first Codex Justinianus as a comprehensive recodification of earlier imperial legislation, drawing especially on the Codex Theodosianus and subsequent constitutions. In doing so, the Code republishes and enforces long-standing anti-heretical measures already in force under prior emperors, including provisions that explicitly classify Marcionites as a prohibited religious community, thereby reaffirming their status as an illegal communion under Justinianic Law.

588 C.E.

John of Ephesus, in his Ecclesiastical History (which runs through 588), lists Marcionites among the still-visible “heretical” sects of his day—a critical late-sixth-century Syriac witness that Marcionites remained a recognized living community in the eastern Christian world.

657 C.E.

The founder of the Paulician sect, Constantine the Armenian, hailed from a Marcionite church in Mananalis, near Samosata. Around 657 C.E., he began to teach a new religious message based on the Marcionite canon. According to the account of Petrus Siculus, a Byzantine chronicler who lived among the Paulicians in Tibrike, Constantine received the Evangelicon and Apostolicon from a Marcionite deacon in Syria. He distributed them among his followers, who initially preserved these texts as their authoritative scriptures.

692 C.E.

The Quinisext Council in Trullo made provisions for the reconciliation of Marcionite Christians in Canon 95: “And the Manichæans, and Valentinians and Marcionites and all of similar heresies must give certificates and anathematize each his own heresy, and also Nestorius, Eutyches, Dioscorus, Severus, and the other chiefs of such heresies, and those who think with them, and all the aforesaid heresies; and so they become partakers of the holy Communion.”

750 C.E.

The earliest surviving manuscript to preserve the Mark, Luke, and John anti-Marcionite prologues as a collected set dates to the 8th century in the Latin West. By this time, their original polemical context had receded, and they functioned as standardized Gospel prefaces within the Vulgate tradition. Their preservation demonstrates how 3rd-century anti-

Marcionite canon defense became embedded in later manuscript culture.

780 C.E.

Nestorian Patriarch Timothy I sent the Arab monk Shubhalishoʿ to Daylam, Persia, specifically to convert the Marcionite Christian community there.

987 C.E.

Ibn al-Nadīm completes the Fihrist and reports that Marcionites were still extant—described as numerous in Khurāsān and publicly known—and notes that they possessed distinctive books and a recognizable script tradition, among the latest pre-modern notices of a living Marcionite community.

1000 C.E.

The Menologion of Basil II, compiled around the year 1000, preserves what is often cited as the earliest surviving explicit reference identifying Philologus of Sinope as Marcion of Sinope's father.

1001 C.E.

Abū Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī composed The Chronology of Ancient Nations in Khwārazm. In his discussion of Christian books and sects, he reported that the followers of Marcion, like the followers of Bardaisan, possessed a distinct Gospel different from the Gospels received by the larger churches. His testimony shows that the name of Marcion and the memory of a separate Marcionite Gospel remained recognizable in the learned religious world of Persia and Islam nearly nine hundred years after the publication of the Testamentum.

1118 C.E.

In the early twelfth century, the Byzantine monk Euthymios Zigabenos completed a major anti-heretical compendium, the Panoplia Dogmatica, composed for the court of Alexios I Komnenos. By treating Marcionites alongside other "classic" heresies in a systematic catalog, the work shows that Marcionism remained a fixed reference point in Byzantine doctrinal policing and memory well into the medieval world.

1153 C.E.

The Islamic heresiographer Muhammad al-Shahrastani preserves an important medieval classification of Marcionites within his comparative work Kitāb al-Milal wa-l-Nihal ("The Book of Religions and Sects"). His treatment—placing Marcionites within the mapped landscape of sects—demonstrates that Marcionism remained sufficiently known in the medieval Near East to merit separate identification and description long after late-antique imperial bans.

1199 C.E.

The Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Michael the Syrian dies, leaving behind his vast Chronicle, one of the most important medieval Syriac universal histories. While recounting early Christian controversies, he preserves heresiological material concerning Cerdo and Marcion, including a reported Marcionite baptismal formula. His testimony demonstrates that, even in the high medieval period, Marcionism remained a clearly defined doctrinal category within the transmitted memory of the Eastern churches.

1286 C.E.

The Syriac theologian Bar Hebraeus dies at Maragha, leaving behind major historical syntheses, including the Chronicon Ecclesiasticum. In the course of surveying ecclesiastical history and heresies, he reiterates Marcion and Marcionite doctrine as a distinct category—evidence that Syriac learned tradition continued to transmit and contest Marcionism as a living polemical template well into the late medieval period.

Here endeth the Chronicon.