THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

Scripture: I Corinthians 15:1-11; cf. Ignatius: Romans IX

Prayer: Ignatius: Smyrnaeans X, XI, XII, XIII

Hymn: 413 "In the Hour of Trial"

THE SETTING: The reign of Trajan (A.D. 98-117)
Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, was martyred c. 105 A.D.
Trajan celebrated his successful military campaign in Dacia in
107 A.D. with prolonged and extensive gladiatorial games--
he boasted that 10,000 gladiators perished and 11,000 wild
beasts. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, was arrested and
brought to Rome to be eaten by the beasts. He was escorted
to Rome by ten brutal guards whom he describes as "ten
leopards." The guards chose the northern route through
Asia Minor which ran through Smyrna, Sardis, Philadelphia
to Troas. They missed Tralles, Magnesia, and Ephesus on
the southern route. At Smyrna the guards let Ignatius visit
Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. Messengers from the churches
in Ephesus, Magnesia and Tralles came to Smyrna to comfort
and encourage Ignatius. From Smyrna he wrote letters to
these churches. Also from Smyrna he wrote a letter to the
church in Rome. When he arrived at Troas he wrote letters
to Philadelphia and Smyrna which he had visited and also to
Polycarp who had been his host.

KEY IDEAS OF IGNATIUS: He is the champion of the monarchical bishop.
He is an outspoken foe of the Docetists and the Judaizers.

IGNATIUS' LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS:
Onesimus their bishop and Burrhus their deacon I, II
Church a choir: should be attuned to the bishop as the strings
of a harp. IV. 2
Church a sanctuary: outside the church one lacks bread of God. V
Regard the bishop as the Lord himself. VI
Heretical preachers are wild beasts and ravening dogs. VII
An early attempt at theology: the Trinity. IX
His chains are spiritual pearls—through their prayers hopes to
rise to God.
Church should come together more frequently—destroys power of
Satan. XIII
Christ baptized to purify the water. XVIII
A beautiful commentary on the star of Bethlehem. XIX
The Lord's Supper the medicine of immortality. XX

IGNATIUS' LETTER TO THE MAGNESIANS
Damas their godly bishop, Bassus and Apollonius are presbyters,
and Zotion is deacon. II
Do not presume on youth of bishop; to wrong the bishop is to
wrong the invisible God. III
Regard the bishop in actions and words. IV
Do everything in harmony with the bishop: bishop represents
God, presbyters represent the apostles, and deacons are
ministers of Christ. VI
Do nothing without the bishop: hasten to come to the one
temple of God—to one altar. VII
Ignatius: Letter to Magnesians (cont.)
Do nothing without the bishop: hasten to come to the one temple of God—to one altar. VII

Warnings against Judaism:
If live according to Judaism have not received grace. VIII
No longer live for Sabbath, but for the Lord's Day. IX
Prophets were disciples in the Spirit and looked to Christ. IX.12
Put away old sour leaven: monstrous to talk of Jesus Christ
and to practice Judaism. Christianity did not base its faith on Judaism, but Judaism based its faith on Christianity. X

LETTER TO THE TRALLIANS:
Polybius their bishop visited Ignatius in Smyrna. I
Be subject to the bishop as to Jesus Christ: do nothing without the bishop. II
Without bishop, presbyters, deacons the name 'church' is not given. III
Avoid strange food which is heresy. VI
Anything done outside the sanctuary or without the bishop is not pure. VII
Early credal formula. IX
Warning against Docetism: Jesus suffering only a simblance.
Docetists are a mere semblance. X
Pray for Syria. XIII

LETTER TO THE ROMANS:
No bishop mentioned but Church in Rome has the presidency in the land of the Romans. I
Begs Roman Church not to try to save him. Beautiful language. II
Pray for me not to be called a Christian but to be found to be one. III
Wants the beasts to be his tomb. Peter and Paul were free;
he is a slave. IV
The ten leopards taking him to Rome. Will entice beasts
to devour him so that he may attain to Christ. V
Better to die with Christ than to be king. VI
Do not speak of Jesus and desire the world. VII

LETTER TO THE PHILADELPHIANS:
Knows their bishop and amazed at his gentleness: can do
more by silence than others with vain words. Bishop
is attuned to commandments as a harp to its strings. I
Flee division and wrong doctrine. II
Those who belong to God are with the bishop. A man who
walks in strange doctrine has no part in the passion. III
One Eucharist, one cup, one altar, one bishop. IV
Do not listen to Judaizers: Better to hear Christianity
from the circumcised than Judaism from the uncircumcised.
Circumcised and uncircumcised are tombstones and
sepulchres if do not speak of Jesus Christ. VI
Do nothing without the bishop. VII
The charters. VIII
Old and New Dispensations. IX
Send a deacon to Syria. X

LETTER TO SMYRNEANS:
Credal formula: The faith of the church. I
Warning against Docetism:
Docetists say passion only a semblance. II
Christ was in the flesh after the resurrection. III
Ignatius not a prisoner in semblance. IV
Ignatius: Letter to the Smyrnaeans (Con.)

To deny Lord was clothed in flesh is to deny him absolutely. Will not list their unbelieving names. V Heretics do not care for widows and orphans. VI Heretics abstain from Eucharist and prayer. VII

Follow the bishop as Jesus Christ follows the Father and the presbyters as the apostles. VIII Do nothing pertaining to the church without the bishop A valid Eucharist is one celebrated by the bishop Where the bishop appears let the congregation be present; where Jesus Christ is there is the Catholic church. It is not lawful to baptize or hold agape without bishop. Honor the bishop; it is good to know God and the bishop. Anyone who does anything without the knowledge of the bishop is serving the devil. IX

Salutes their godly bishop (Polycarp). Salutations to house of Alce. XII, XIII

IGNATIUS' LETTER TO POLYCARP:

Exhortation to diligence: be like an anvil. I-III
Duty to members of church: IV

Protect widows
Let the meetings be more numerous
Seek all by their name
Do not free slaves at the expense of the church

Duty of husbands and wives. V
Marriage with consent of bishop.
The Christian Armor. VI

Summon a godly council and elect a bishop of Syria. VII
Greet Alce. VIII

POLYCARP'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

SETTING: c. 108-110 A.D. the church in Philippi wrote Polycarp asking for information about death of Ignatius and begging for a complete collection of the writings of Ignatius. Polycarp wrote a letter to Philippi sending them the letters of Ignatius and urging them to send him the details of Ignatius' martyrdom should they hear them before he does.

CONTENTS:
Mentions only presbyters and deacons. V.3
Exhortation to virtue. I-II
Exhortation to study Paul's letters. III
Warning against love of money. IV
Warning against Docetists: first-born of Satan. VII
Examples of the martyrs: Ignatius, Zosimus, Rufus, Paul. IX
Prayer for the presbyter Valens and his wife who have been disfellowshipped.