



# The Post-Apostolic Fathers: Ignatius of Antioch

## Who was Ignatius of Antioch?

Ignatius was the overseer of the Assembly at Antioch in toward the end of 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. He was martyred by the Romans for his faith in the Messiah toward the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. According to the account of his martyrdom, he, like his friend Polycarp of Smyrna, was a disciple of the Apostle John.

Over the course of the Messianic movement, a handful of passages from the Greek manuscripts of Ignatius' letters have been used to discredit him as belonging to the rank of the Apostolic fathers of our Hebraic faith. These passages in question support blatant Antisemitism, the abrogation of God's Torah, and an unquestioning submission to the authority of Christian leaders, pioneering a new religion that was to be distinct and separate from Judaism. This position, though unfortunate, is entirely understandable. I contend, however, that Ignatius has been the victim of an elaborate set-up, and was framed as having written numerous letters that he did not legitimately write.

This theory has been put forth by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Syriac scholar William Cureton— to whom we are indebted for his work on the Old Syriac versions of the Gospels— who wrote in his 1845 work *The Ancient Syriac Version of the Epistles of St. Ignatius*, "...That he (Ignatius) wrote several letters to various Churches, on his way to Rome to suffer martyrdom for the Faith, is a fact than which none is better attested; but how far those Epistles, which have come down to our times bearing his name, are to be regarded as his genuine productions, has been a subject of the greatest dispute. Indeed, there are no writings, either of Christian or Heathen antiquity, concerning which a greater variety of opinion has prevailed and more discussion taken place: and yet perhaps there are scarcely any, which have been less the subject of that calm, unbiased, and sober criticism, which alone can be the sure method of searching for the truth under circumstances of similar doubt and uncertainty."

## Authorship of the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch.

At least fifteen letters bearing Ignatius' name have come down to us today; however, it is commonly accepted that only seven of these should be rightly attributed to Ignatius.<sup>1</sup> Even for those seven which are accepted, there are shorter and longer versions of the Greek manuscripts which seem to vary substantially from one another in terms of both content and theology.

Fortunately, three of his letters have survived in a Syriac manuscript, and they are substantially shorter than even the short version of their Greek counterparts.

## What makes the Syriac Manuscripts so special?

Church scholar William Killen wrote on the subject in his 1859 work, *The Ancient Church*. In his book, Killen drew attention to the publication of the Syriac text of Ignatius' letters, noting that it is of special interest that the Syriac manuscript containing Ignatius' letters only contains three of the traditional seven writings, those being to his friend Polycarp, to the Assembly at Ephesus, and to the Assembly at Rome. Excerpts from his argument are as follows:

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I The seven letters that are assumed to be authentic are his letters to the Ephesians, to the Magnesians, to the Trallians, to the Romans, to the Philadelphians, to the Smyrnaeans, and to Polycarp of Smyrna. Of those, only three are trusted by the editor of this edition: those to the Ephesians, the Romans, and to Polycarp of Smyrna, presented in this volume as translations of the Syriac manuscript. A fragment of a fourth letter is presented as well, that to the Smyrnaeans, which has been diligently compared with the Coptic by its translator, J. H. Sawley, in his 1900 work *The Epistles of St. Ignatius*. The remaining eight letters considered to be spurious are his letters to the Tarsians, to the Antiochians, to Hero of Antioch, to the Philippians, from a proselyte named Maria, to Mary at Neapolis, two to John, and one to the Virgin Mary.

“In the year 1845 a new turn was given to this controversy by the publication of a Syriac version of three of the Ignatian letters... Dr Cureton, the editor, has since entered more fully into the discussion of the subject in his ‘Corpus Ignatianum..’ in which the claims of the three recently discovered letters, as the only genuine productions of Ignatius, are ingeniously maintained. In the Syriac copies, these letters are styled ‘The Three Epistles of Ignatius, Bishop, and Martyr,’ and thus the inference is suggested that, at one time, they were the only three epistles in existence. Dr Cureton’s statements have obviously made a great impression upon the mind of the literary public, and there seems at present to be a pretty general disposition in certain quarters to discard all the other epistles as forgeries, and to accept those preserved in the Syriac version as the veritable compositions of the pastor of Antioch...”

Now some would be quick to point out here that the 4<sup>th</sup> century church historian Eusebius attributed seven letters to having been genuinely written by Ignatius; however, Killen addresses this argument as well:

“In his Ecclesiastical History, which was published as some think about A.D. 325, he asserts that Ignatius wrote seven letters, and from these he makes a few quotations. But his admission of the genuineness of a correspondence, bearing date upwards of two hundred years before his own appearance as an author, is an attestation of very doubtful value. He often makes mistakes respecting the character of ecclesiastical memorials; and in one memorable case, of far more consequence than that now under consideration, he has blundered most egregiously; for he has published, as genuine, the spurious correspondence between Abgarus and our Saviour... His reference to them is decisive as to the fact of their existence in the early part of the fourth century; but those who adopt the views propounded in the ‘Corpus Ignatianum,’ are not prepared to bow to his critical decision; for, on this very occasion, he has given his sanction to four letters which they pronounce apocryphal.”

Killen’s line of reasoning makes sense here. By the middle ages, there were some fifteen letters thought to have been attributed to Ignatius. Now almost immediately, we can discount eight of these fifteen as much later forgeries, as they were wholly unknown before the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Of the remaining seven which are believed to have been written by Ignatius, both longer and shorter recensions are available; and of these two recensions, the longer form shows clear and obvious signs of having been added to by later editors. Thus far we have seen a clear line of regression as we move backward in time, to a point when fewer and fewer of Ignatius’ letters were known, and when those that were known were known only in a shorter form. This line of regression also points out that, although such forgeries were relatively commonplace in ancient religious circles, Ignatius himself was singled out from many ecclesiastical writers as the victim of such prolific falsehoods.

This brings us back to the subject of the Syriac editions of three of the seven letters which Ignatius is believed to have written. As has already been shown, many letters have gone out into circulation falsely under the name of Ignatius. It is by no means a stretch to assume that out of the seven letters which were known by Eusebius, only a handful of those were genuinely written by Ignatius himself. The Syriac manuscripts of Ignatius’ writings witness directly to this very real possibility, especially given the pro-Torah theology of the much shorter Syriac versions compared with the downright anti-Semitic theology of even the shorter recensions of the Greek versions.

Additionally, about two thirds of the text of Ignatius’ letter to the Smyrnaeans is preserved in a Coptic manuscript, which Lightfoot suggested to be an early manuscript. The portions of this letter which can be corroborated with the Coptic are presented in this edition as an appendix to the writings of Ignatius which we deem trustworthy.

## **Vindicating Ignatius**

Perhaps the strongest testimony in favor of Ignatius is the endorsement he received from Polycarp of Smyrna, who spoke favorably of Ignatius’ writings in the end of his letter to the Philippians. Now if Polycarp is traditionally reckoned as having been a fervent Sabbath keeper, then why would he have vouched for someone who is traditionally reckoned as one who advocated for the abrogation of God’s Torah, and rejection of the Jewish people? Perhaps it is possible— even *probable*— that the accusations against Ignatius are unfounded, and that the writings attributed to Ignatius which support such anti-Semitic notions were forged in his name. This is the opinion of the editor of this volume, which is why the Syriac manuscripts of three of Ignatius’ letters, and the Coptic fragment of a fourth, are presented here as authentic; and the Greek manuscripts of his writings, which contain such anti-Semitic additions, cannot be rightly attributed to him.

### **Textual support for the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch.**

As has been previously mentioned, there are several forms of the Greek version of the Letters of Ignatius. The “longer form” is known primarily from Codex Hierosolymitanus, (II<sup>th</sup> century CE) the Jerusalem Codex, and contains many obvious later additions, as well as a handful of letters known to be fabrications forged in Ignatius’ name. Because it is among the oldest manuscripts containing any trace of Ignatius’ works, the translations presented here are taken from the Syriac version of his letters to the Ephesians, to the Romans, and to Polycarp of Smyrna. The translation of his letter to the Smyrnaeans is taken from Srawley’s translation of the Greek, with his notations from the Coptic version implemented into the text.

### **What do the writings of Ignatius of Antioch mean to us today?**

Ignatius serves as an excellent example of one who is steadfast in his faith; he was ardently committed to the principals he held dear, to Yeshua the Messiah, even to the point of death. Ignatius emphasizes diligence and perseverance, even in the face of overwhelming adversity. He frequently utilizes the comparison of the believer who lives out his faith to the athlete who strives in a contest, teaching us today that we should stand fast in our faith, even while being smitten by the pains of the contest.

# The First Letter of Ignatius of Antioch To Polycarp of Smyrna

## Chapter One

<sup>1</sup> Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to Polycarp, overseer of Smyrna; or rather, to he who has, as his own overseer, God the Father, and our Lord Yeshua the Messiah: wishes of abundant happiness.

<sup>2</sup> Because your mind is welcome to me, as it is established in God, as if it were on an immovable rock, I glorify God all the more, since I have been counted worthy of seeing your face, for which I have, in God, long hoped for. <sup>3</sup> Now I plead with you, by the grace with which you are clothed, to make haste in your course, to pray for all men that they may be saved. <sup>4</sup> Diligently make demands for things which are prudent, both of the flesh and of the spirit. Be mindful of unity, of which nothing is more precious. Bear with all men, even as our Lord bears with you. <sup>5</sup> Show patience toward all men in love, as indeed you already do. Be steadfast in prayer. Ask for more understanding than that which you already have. Be watchful, as if you possessed a spirit which does not sleep. <sup>6</sup> Speak with every man, according to the will of God. Bear the infirmities of all men as a perfect athlete, for where the labor is great, the gain is also great. <sup>7</sup> If you love the good disciples only, you do not possess grace; but rather bring calmness to those who are evil by means of gentleness.

<sup>8</sup> Now most wounds are not healed by the same medicine. Mitigate the pain of cutting by tenderness. *“Be wise as the serpent”* in everything, *“and innocent,”* with respect to those things which are requisite, *“even as the dove.”* <sup>9</sup> For this reason you are made up of both flesh and spirit, that you may entice <sup>4</sup> those things which are visible before your face, <sup>10</sup> and may ask about the things which are concealed from you, that they too may be revealed, in order that you may be deficient in nothing, and may abound in all gifts.

<sup>11</sup> As a pilot does a ship, or as one facing a storm does a haven, the time demands that you should be worthy of God. <sup>12</sup> Be watchful as an athlete of God, for that which is promised to us is eternal life, which cannot be corrupted; of these things, you are already convinced. In all things my soul will be for yours, and my bonds also, which you have loved.

<sup>13</sup> Do not be apprehensive about those who seem credible, but teach strange doctrines. Stand in the truth, as an athlete who is smitten, for it is the place of a great athlete to be smitten, and yet conquer. <sup>14</sup> It is even more especially fitting that we should bear everything for the sake of God, that He also may bear us. <sup>15</sup> Be even more diligent than you already are. Be discerning of the times. Look for He who is above the times, He who has no times, He who is invisible, He who became visible for our sakes, He who is beyond the scope of our comprehension, He who is unsurpassed, He who suffered for our sakes, He who endured all things in every form for our sakes.

## Chapter Two

<sup>1</sup> Do not overlook the widows; rather, on account of our Lord, be their guardian. <sup>2</sup> Let nothing be done without your will, even as you yourself do nothing without the will of God. Stand rightly. <sup>3</sup> Let there be frequent assemblies, and ask every man to them by name. <sup>4</sup> Do not despise slaves, either male or female, nor let them be scornful; but let them labor as for the glory of God, that they may be counted worthy of a more precious freedom, which is of God. <sup>5</sup> Let them not desire to be set free out of the common fund, lest they be found the slaves of lust.

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2 Isaiah 53:4, Matthew 8:17.

3 Matthew 10:16, Thomas 39.

4 Literally, “flatter.” Figuratively, “deal tenderly with.”

<sup>6</sup> Flee from the wicked arts; but educate concerning them. <sup>5</sup><sup>7</sup> Speak to my sisters, that they love in our Lord, and that their husbands should be sufficient for them, both in the flesh and the spirit. <sup>8</sup> Then, again, instruct my brethren in the name of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, that they love their wives, as our Lord loves His Assembly. <sup>6</sup> <sup>9</sup> If any man has the ability to continue in purity, to the honor of the flesh of our Lord, let him continue to do so without boasting; if he boasts, he is undone; if he becomes known apart from the overseer, he has corrupted himself. <sup>10</sup> It is right, therefore, for men and women who marry, that they marry with the counsel of the overseer, so that the marriage may be in our Lord, and not in lust. <sup>11</sup> Let everything, therefore, be done for the honor of God.

<sup>12</sup> Look to the overseer, that God also may look upon you. My soul will be for theirs, of those who respect the overseer, and the elders, and the servants; may I have, with them, a share in the presence of God! <sup>13</sup> Labor together with one another, contend together, <sup>7</sup> run together, suffer together, rest together, and rise together. <sup>14</sup> As stewards of God, as sons of His household, and as His servants, please Him and serve Him, that you may receive from Him the wages promised. Let none of you be rebellious. Let your baptism be as armor, and your faith as a spear, and your love as a helmet, and your patience as a complete array of armor. <sup>15</sup> Let good works be your treasures, that you may receive the gift of God, as is right. Let your spirit be long-suffering towards one another with meekness, even as God is toward you. <sup>16</sup> As for me, I rejoice for you at all times.

### Chapter Three

<sup>1</sup> A Christian does not have power over himself, but is ever-ready to be subject to God. <sup>2</sup> As such, I salute he who is counted as worthy to go to Antioch in my place, as I have commanded of you to supply.

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5 Some Greek texts say, “...do not educate concerning them.”

6 See Ephesians 5:25.

7 Literally, “make the contest together”, or “be athletes together”.

# The Second Letter of Ignatius of Antioch *To the Ephesians*

## Chapter One

<sup>1</sup> Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Assembly which is blessed in the greatness of God the Father, and perfected; to her who was set apart from eternity, that she might at all times be for unchangeable glory, abiding, perfected, and chosen for the purpose of truth by the will of the our God, the Father of Yeshua the Messiah; to her who is worthy of happiness; to her who is at Ephesus, in Yeshua the Messiah, in blameless joy: wishes of abundant happiness.

<sup>2</sup> Your name is greatly beloved, and is well known to me in God. Your name has been acquired by doing those things which come naturally to you: by a right and just will, and by the faith and love of our Savior, Yeshua the Messiah. <sup>3</sup> You are imitators of God, and are fervent in the blood of God, <sup>8</sup> and have speedily completed a work suitable to you. <sup>4</sup> I was bound, so that I was unable to do nothing for the sake of the common name and hope. I hope, through your prayers, that I may be devoured by the beasts at Rome, so that by this means I will have been counted as worthy, and I may be endowed with strength to be a disciple of God. When you heard of this, you were diligent to come and see me.

<sup>5</sup> We have become acquainted in unspeakable love with your multitude, in the name of God, by your overseer Onesimus. I pray that you love him in Yeshua the Messiah our Lord, and that you imitate his example; blessed is He who has given you such an overseer, whom you deserve to have.

## Chapter Two

<sup>1</sup> Since love does not permit me to be silent concerning you, I have been forward to beseech you on this account to be diligent in doing the will of God. <sup>2</sup> For so long as there is not even a single lust implanted in you which is able to torment you, behold, you live in God!

<sup>3</sup> I rejoice in you, and offer supplication on your behalf. O Ephesians, you are an Assembly which is renowned in all ages! For those who are carnal are not able to do spiritual things, nor those who are spiritual able to do carnal things; <sup>4</sup> in like manner, as faith cannot do those things which are foreign to faith, neither can a lack of faith do that which belongs to faith. <sup>5</sup> Because you have done all things in Yeshua the Messiah, even the things which you have done in the flesh are spiritual.

<sup>6</sup> You are prepared for the building of God the Father, and are raised up on high by the instrument of Yeshua the Messiah, which is the cross. <sup>7</sup> You are drawn up by the rope, which is the Holy Spirit; your pulley is your faith, and your love is the way which leads up on high to God.

## Chapter Three

<sup>1</sup> Pray for all men; for there is hope of repentance for them, that they may be counted worthy of God. Let them be instructed especially by your works. <sup>2</sup> Be conciliatory against their harsh words, by meekness of mind and gentleness. Give yourself to prayer against their blasphemies, and be armed with faith against their ignorance. <sup>3</sup> Be peaceful and quiet against their fierceness, and do not be astounded by them. <sup>4</sup> Let us be imitators of our Lord in meekness, and strive to see who shall be more especially injured, oppressed, and defrauded.

<sup>5</sup> Now this work is not of promise, unless a man be found in the power of faith, even to the end. <sup>6</sup> It is better for a man to be silent while he is something, than to talk when he is not, so that by the things which he speaks he should act, and by the things of which he is silent he should be known. <sup>7</sup> My spirit bows in adoration to the cross, which is a stumbling-block to those who do not believe, but to you it is for salvation and eternal life.

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<sup>8</sup> When Yeshua shed his blood as a divine human to atone for the sins of mankind, it was as if God Himself had shed His blood.

## Chapter Four

<sup>1</sup>The virginity of Mary, the birth of our Lord, and His death were all concealed from the ruler of this world; these three of mysteries, though mysteries of renown, were done in tranquility by God from the star. <sup>2</sup>Here, at the manifestation of the Son, sorcery began to be destroyed, and all bonds were loosed; the ancient kingdom was destroyed, as was the error of evil. <sup>3</sup>From then on, all things were brought together, and the destruction of death was devised, and there was the commencement of that which was perfected in God.

# The Third Letter of Ignatius of Antioch

## *To the Romans*

### Chapter One

<sup>1</sup> Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to the Assembly which has received grace through the greatness of the Most High Father; to her who presides in the region of the Romans; to her who is worthy of God; to her who is worthy of life, happiness, praise, and remembrance; to her who is worthy of prosperity, presiding in love; and to her who is perfected in the blameless Torah of the Messiah: <sup>9</sup> wishes of abundant peace.

<sup>2</sup> From of old have I prayed to God, that I might be counted worthy to behold your faces which are worthy of God. Now, being bound in Yeshua the Messiah, I hope to meet you and salute you, if it be the will of God that I should be counted worthy to the end. <sup>3</sup> For the beginning is well arranged, that I be counted worthy to endure to the end, so that I may receive my portion through suffering without hindrance. <sup>4</sup> But I am afraid of your love, lest it should injure me. As for you, it is indeed easy for you to do whatever you wish; but as for me, it is difficult for me to be counted worthy of God, if you spare me. <sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> There is no other time such as this, that I should be counted worthy of God; neither will you, if you are silent, ever be found in a better work than this. If you leave me alone, I will be as a Word from God; <sup>6</sup> but if you love me in this life, I will be only my own voice. You cannot give me anything more precious than this, that I should be sacrificed to God, while the altar is ready. <sup>7</sup> May you be unified in love, and praise God the Father through our Lord, Yeshua the Messiah, because He has deemed an overseer worthy to be God's, having called him from the east to the west. <sup>8</sup> It is good that I should depart from this world in God, that I may also raise to life in Him.

<sup>9</sup> You have envied no one, and you have taught others. <sup>10</sup> Pray for strength to be given to me from within and from without, that I may not only speak, but may also be willing, and that I may not merely be called a Christian, but may also be found to be one. <sup>11</sup> If I am found to be so, may I then be called as such. Then I will be found faithful, when I am no longer seen in the world; <sup>12</sup> for there is nothing that is seen that is good. <sup>13</sup> This work is not a matter of persuasion, but Christianity is a great thing when it is hated by the world.

### Chapter Two

<sup>1</sup> I write to all the Assemblies, and declare to all men, that I willingly die for the sake of God, if you do not hinder me. <sup>2</sup> I beseech you not to be compassionate toward me out of season. Permit me to become the prey of the beasts, that by their means I may be counted as worthy of God. <sup>3</sup> I am the wheat of God, and by the teeth of the beasts I will be ground, so that I may be the pure bread of God.

<sup>4</sup> Greatly provoke the wild beasts, that they may bring me to my grave, and leave nothing of my body, in order that, when I have fallen asleep, I will not be a burden upon any one. <sup>5</sup> Then I will truthfully be a disciple of Yeshua the Messiah, when the world cannot even see my body. Plead with our Lord on my behalf, that by these means I may be a sacrifice to God.

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<sup>9</sup> Paul uses this same phrase in Galatians 6:2.

<sup>10</sup> Going with the shorter Greek recension. The Syriac literally reads "if you do not spare me", as does the longer Greek recension. The longer Greek also adds for clarification, "under the pretense of carnal affection."



<sup>6</sup> Unlike Peter and Paul, I do not issue orders to you. They are Apostles, but I am one condemned; they are indeed free, but I am a slave, even until now. <sup>7</sup> But if I suffer, I will be a free man in Yeshua the Messiah, and I will rise up from the dead in Him as a free man. Now, being in bonds, I have learned to desire nothing. <sup>8</sup> From Syria, and to Rome, I am cast among wild beasts, by sea and by land, by night and by day, being bound between ten leopards, which are the band of soldiers; even when I do good to them, they repay me with evil all the more. <sup>9</sup> I, however, am all the more instructed by their injurious treatment, but I am not justified on account of this.

<sup>10</sup> I rejoice for the beasts which are prepared for me, and I pray that they may be hastily found for me. <sup>11</sup> I will speedily provoke them to devour me, and will not be like other men who are afraid, who will not approach them. Even if they are not be willing to approach me, I will go against them with violence.

<sup>12</sup> I know, for myself, what is best for me. Let no one be envious of me for those things which are both seen and unseen, that I should be counted as worthy of Yeshua the Messiah. <sup>13</sup> The fire, the cross, the beasts that are prepared, the cutting off of the limbs, the scattering of the bones, the crushing of the whole body, and the harsh torments of the devil—let all these come upon me, as long as I am counted as worthy of Yeshua the Messiah.

### Chapter Three

<sup>1</sup> The pains of the birth have come upon me. <sup>2</sup> My love is crucified, and there is no fire within me for another love. I do not desire the food of corruption, neither the lusts of this world; rather, I seek the bread of God, which is the flesh of Yeshua the Messiah; and I seek His blood, a drink which is incorruptible love.

<sup>3</sup> My spirit salutes you, and the love of the Assemblies which received me in the name of Yeshua the Messiah; for those also who were near to my way in the flesh preceded me in every city.

### Chapter Four <sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Being about to arrive shortly in Rome, I know many things in God; but I keep myself within measure, so that I may not perish through boasting. <sup>2</sup> I am now required to be all the more reverent, not regarding those who puff me up. Those who say such things to me scourge me; for I desire to suffer, but I do not know if I am worthy.

<sup>3</sup> Though zeal is not visible to many, with me it has war. I have need, therefore, of meekness, by which the prince of this world is destroyed. <sup>4</sup> I am able to write to you of heavenly things, but I fear that I may injure you in doing so. <sup>5</sup> Trust me in this: I am cautious, in case you may not be able to receive such knowledge, and you would be perplexed by it.

<sup>6</sup> Although I am in bonds, and although I am able to know heavenly things, and although I know the places of angels, and although I know the stations of the powers that are seen and unseen, <sup>7</sup> I am still a disciple on this account, that I am far short of the perfection which is worthy of God. Be perfectly strong in the patience of Yeshua the Messiah, our God.

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11 The text which follows is not found in any version of the Greek manuscripts of Ignatius' letter to the Romans, but is similar in content to the Greek text of chapters 4-6 of his letter to the Trallians.

# A Fragment of the Letter of Ignatius of Antioch *To the Smyrnaeans*

## Chapter One

<sup>1</sup> From Ignatius, who is also Theophorus, to the Assembly of God the Father and Yeshua the Messiah, the Beloved, to her that has been mercifully blessed with every gift, filled with faith and love, lacking in no gift, most highly revered, the bearer of sacred vessels, to the Assembly which is at Smyrna in Asia, in a blameless spirit and in the Word of God heartiest greeting.

<sup>2</sup> I render glory to Yeshua the Messiah, who has given you such wisdom. <sup>3</sup> For I have perceived that you are firmly settled in unwavering faith, being nailed, as it were, to the Cross of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah in flesh and spirit, and firmly planted in love in the blood of Christ, being fully convinced as touching our Lord, <sup>4</sup> that He is truly of the race of David after the flesh, and Son of God after the Divine will and power, truly born of a virgin, baptized by John, that all righteousness might be fulfilled by Him, <sup>5</sup> truly nailed for us in the flesh under Pontius Pilate and Herod the Tetrarch— of whose fruit are we, even of His most blessed Passion— <sup>6</sup> that He might raise up an ensign <sup>12</sup> to the ages through His resurrection, for His saints and believers, whether among Jews or Gentiles, in one body of His Assembly. <sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> For all these sufferings He endured for our sakes, that we might be saved. And He truly suffered, as also He truly raised Himself up. Nor is it the case, as some unbelievers affirm, that He suffered in appearance— for it is they who are mere appearance. <sup>8</sup> And according to their opinions, so shall it happen to them; for they are unsubstantial, and vapid. <sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> For I know and believe that He was in the flesh even after the resurrection. <sup>10</sup> And when He came to Peter and those who were with him, He said to them, “*Take, handle Me, and see that I am not a bodiless spirit.*” <sup>15</sup> And straightway they touched Him and believed, being united with His flesh and spirit. <sup>16</sup> <sup>11</sup> Therefore also they despised death, and were found to rise above death. <sup>12</sup> Moreover after His resurrection He ate with them and drank with them, <sup>17</sup> as living in the flesh, although spiritually united with the Father.

## Chapter Two

<sup>1</sup> Now these things I urge upon you, beloved, knowing that you also are thus minded. <sup>2</sup> But I watch over you to guard you from wild beasts in the form of men, whom you must not only refuse to receive, but, if possible, not even meet. <sup>3</sup> Only pray for them, so it may come to pass that they may repent. Though this is difficult, yet Yeshua the Messiah, our true Life, has power to effect it. <sup>4</sup> For if these deeds were wrought by our Lord in mere semblance, then too are my bonds mere semblance. <sup>5</sup> Why, moreover, have I surrendered myself to death, to face fire, sword, and wild beasts? <sup>6</sup> Yet he that is near to the sword is near to God, and he that is in the presence of wild beasts is in the presence of God— <sup>18</sup> <sup>7</sup> only may it be in the name of Yeshua the Messiah, that we may suffer with Him. All things I endure, since He, the perfect Man, makes me strong.

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12 Isaiah 5:26. See also Isaiah 49:22 and 52:10.

13 This echoes the Apostle Paul's thought process in Ephesians 1:23, 2:16, and 3:6.

14 Literally, “spirit-like,” indicating they are void of substance.

15 Not quoting any of the canonical Gospels, but this citation is known from the Gospel according to the Hebrews. (Jerome, *Of Illustrious Men* 16)

16 Following the Greek, Coptic, and Latin. The Armenian version has here “flesh and blood.”

17 Luke 24:30, 35, 42; John 21:13.

18 Echoing a passage attributed to Yeshua, but not found in any canonical Gospel: “He who is near Me is near the fire; but whoever is far from Me is far from the kingdom.” (Origen, *Homily on Jeremiah* 20:3; Didymus, *Commentary on Psalm* 88:8)

<sup>8</sup> Yet Him certain persons ignorantly deny, or rather they have been denied by Him; for they are advocates of death rather than of the truth. They have not listened to the Prophecies, nor to the Torah of Moses, <sup>19</sup> nor even until now to the Besorah, nor to the sufferings which we all endure. <sup>9</sup> And they have the same thoughts also about us. For what profit is it to me if a man praises me, but speaks evil of my Lord, refusing to confess that He has borne our flesh? <sup>10</sup> But he that will not assert this has completely denied Him, and he bears a corpse around with him. Now their names, since they are unbelievers, I have not thought good to write. <sup>11</sup> May I not even remember them, until they have repented and turned to the Passion, which is our resurrection.

<sup>12</sup> Let no man be deceived. Even the heavenly powers and the glory of the angels and the principalities both visible and invisible, except they believe in the blood of the Messiah, have a judgment awaiting them. <sup>13</sup> He that is able to receive it, let him receive.

Let no office puff up any man; for faith and love are everything, and there is nothing better than these. <sup>14</sup> Mark those who hold strange doctrine with regard to the grace of Yeshua the Messiah, which came to us, how opposed they are to the mind of God. <sup>15</sup> They have no thought for love, nor for the widow, the orphan, the afflicted, the prisoner, the hungry, or the thirsty. <sup>16</sup> They withhold themselves from the thanksgiving and from prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Yeshua the Messiah, whose flesh was suffered for our sins, which in His loving-kindness, the Father raised up. <sup>20</sup>

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19 Although Ignatius lists them in a different order, he is essentially echoing the same thought process as Hegesippus, who records that in early cases of Apostolic succession, "the state of affairs was in accordance with the teaching of the Torah, and of the Prophets, and of the Lord."

20 The Greek text of this letter continues for a little over another chapter, but regrettably, the Coptic manuscript (with which it must be compared) ends at this point.