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## Justin Martyr

G. LeRoy White

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JUSTIN MARTYR

A

Thesis

Submitted to the

Faculty of the School of Religion

of

Wesley College

Affiliated with the University of North Dakota

By

G. LeRoy White

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the

Degree of Master of Arts

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## PREFACE

This thesis has no theory to defend. It is merely a survey of the times, character, work and influence of Justin Martyr. The subject is an old one and has frequently interested students of Church History. An immense literature has accumulated on the subject much of which is in other than the English language. One author alone cites a bibliography of four hundred and eighty-eight titles. No new discoveries of importance have been made which seriously change the traditional portrait of this Apologist.

This essay gathers material from more than fifty works and seeks to piece all the facts into a composite story. The only thing original is, perhaps, the arrangement, larger emphasis upon the Conversion of Justin Martyr and the manner and matter of his apologetic. Some pains have been taken to understand the thought world of Justin's time and to show how this affected his theology and apology. No claim is made for complete consistency of view since material has been gathered from so many sources. If this work will help to popularize the subject in the minds of the present generation I shall be satisfied.

Acknowledgement is ungrudgingly given to Wesley College and especially to my major professor, Dr. George Albert Henry, for many kindnesses and helpful co-operation. Likewise I feel indebted to the University of North Dakota for exceptional Library favors as well as to those members of the faculty of the University under whom I have taken courses. I refer particularly to Dean Joseph V. Breitwieser, Dean Emeritus Joseph Kennedy, Dr. J. M. Gillette, and Dr. George R. Geiger. I am grateful to



the University of Minnesota for the privilege of using its Library. My thanks are hereby tendered to Garrett Biblical Institute and Hamline University for the privilege of borrowing certain books which have been of much assistance in writing this essay.

The sources used are the works of Justin Martyr especially The First Apology, The Second Apology, The Dialogue With Trypho. The citations in the footnotes to these works refer to "The Ante-Nicene Fathers," Vol. I in English translation and edited by Roberts and Donaldson. The abbreviations are as follows: First Apology, 1 Ap.; Second Apology, 2 Ap.; The Dialogue With Trypho, Dial.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Justin Martyr was undoubtedly the leading Apologist of second century Christianity. He flourished from 135 to 165 A.D. No historian of early Christianity dare ignore the part he played in the drama of world evangelization. In the days antedating critical scholarship the praise of Justin was fulsome and extravagant. In fact it was of the hero-worship type. Within the last century writers have become more discriminating. His defects and limitations have been, if anything, overstressed. Despite the usual statement found in almost all histories of the period, "Justin was no genius, nor had he a first rate mind", we find such tributes as the following:

Eusebius calls him, "Ambassador of the Truth";<sup>1</sup> to Tatian, disciple of Justin, he is the "Admirable Justin";<sup>2</sup> he is "Philosopher, Martyr and earliest antagonist of heretics"<sup>3</sup> to Tertullian; Methodius speaks of him as "Justin of Neapolis, a man not far removed from the times or from the virtues of the Apostles";<sup>4</sup> George Leopold Hurst regards him as the "bright light of his age";<sup>5</sup> Herbert Kelley praises him for having "led the Christian mind into a new world";<sup>6</sup> James Marshall Campbell credits him with being the "first to attempt to justify Christianity to Paganism on the ground of reason";<sup>7</sup> to Phillip Stafford Moxon he is the "true founder of Christian Apology";<sup>8</sup> while all would accept Alvan Lamson's characterization as "Eminent Apologist".<sup>9</sup>

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1. Eecl. Hist. IV, xi, 8.
  2. Ibid., IV, xvi, 7.
  3. Adv. Valen. V.
  4. Resurrection VI, 364.
  5. Outline Hist. Christian Literature.
  6. Hist. Christian Church IV.
  7. Greek Fathers, I.
  8. Jerusalem to Nicaea IV.
  9. Church First 3 Centuries, pp. 1-68.



We are interested in Justin for the following reasons: First he was a saint and martyr. Both branches of the Christian Church canonized him -- Rome observing his festival on April thirteen and the Greek Church on June the first. His life after his conversion was exemplary and beautiful. He was able to draw a comparison between his manner of living as a Christian and the impurity and sensuality he practiced before becoming a Christian.<sup>1</sup> Evidence of his great courage before Emperor and Prefect is to be found in his Apologies. He tells Antoninus Pius, "We forewarn you, that you will not escape the coming judgment of God, if you continue in your injustice".<sup>2</sup> He assures the Emperor, "You may kill us but you cannot hurt us". The boldness with which he defended the Christians against the unsupported calumnies has won the admiration of all his readers. His zeal for the cause of Christianity is unsurpassed by any of the Fathers. That he suffered in martyrdom rather than repudiate his faith is well attested.<sup>3</sup> The heart of humanity beats in sympathy and appreciation of all who prefer death with loyalty to a cause, to life with repudiation of the cause.

Second, he belongs to the second century of our era. This is comparatively a dark period in the history of the Church. The first century was a brilliant one in which the Apostles flourished and, of course, the one in which our Lord founded the Church. We have the brilliant work of the Apostle Paul interpreting the new faith to Judaism, and the author of the Fourth Gospel suggesting the identification of Christ with

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1. 1 Ap. 14.

2. Ibid., p.

3. See chapter three.



the Logos. This century is very well known to all students of the Christian faith. Also the third century is well known. We have abundant extant writings of this century. It was a time of literally marvelous increase<sup>1</sup> in the membership of the church. Furthermore, the greatest minds of that time were officers of the church. Politics and business had few men to compare with Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian of Carthage, and Origin of Alexandria. These men completed the triumph of Christianity over the pagan world. Their deeds are sung by every scholar. But the second century is drab in comparison with its predecessor and successor. Surely fuller knowledge is bound to reveal the beginnings of the dogma, organization and sacraments of the church as observed in the period of Justin Martyr. We are anxious to know more about this most important period of church history.

Third, Justin was one of the first trophies won from the cultured classes of the Graeco-Roman world. He was not the first Gentile to become a Christian but he was a sort of "first fruits" of the intelligentsia who were later to come over to Christianity in larger numbers.<sup>2</sup> Justin was regarded as a philosopher and wore the garb of his profession. He brought a certain prestige to the new religion. He was the first real thinker to be called to the Church after the time of the Apostles. We are interested in knowing the appeal which won him to Christ and also the arguments considered worthy of presentation to the Greek public of his day.

Fourth, Justin was the founder of Christian Apology. Other writers like Clement of Rome, the author of the Epistle to Diognetus, Polycarp, and Ignatius, had written on Christian themes before Justin's

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1. Harnack, Mission and Exp. Christianity, Vol. II. 2. Dial. 8.  
\* Clement wrote toward the end of the second century but is classed by Cadoux among great thinkers. Early Church, p. 287.

time, but these men were primarily interested in developing the piety of those who were already in the church. They made no appeal to the non-Christian world. There had been a few attempts at apologetic writing but these works are almost totally lost. Quadratus, bishop of Athens in 126,<sup>1</sup> presented an address to Hadrian in behalf of the Christians. He is spoken of as "famous for his prophetic gifts".<sup>2</sup> His main contribution was the public character of Christ's works and the testimony that some of those who had<sup>been</sup> healed were still living. Aristides addressed an apology to Hadrian "a systematic statement of our doctrine..... still extant ..... regarded by philologists as a monument to his genius".<sup>3</sup> The reading of this work does not impress me as deeply as it did Jerome. In fact both of the above mentioned Apologists do not seem to have the ability, the courage, or the learning exhibited in Justin's works. In Justin we have the first example of a man who had the learning, courage, and missionary passion to come to grips with the best minds of the heathen world. He was the equal of any man of his day. His interpretation of the Gospel, his methods of evangelism, and his ability to build a bridge connecting Christianity with the Greek culture of his time fascinate the inquiring student of ancient history.

Fifth, Justin furnishes practically the only reliable portrait of the church of his day. He has described in the First Apology, the manner of conducting church worship, the organization of the church, the places of meeting, the celebration of the Eucharist, Baptism and relief of the poor. From this account we get almost our only picture of what the

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1. Rainy, Robert, The Ancient Catholic Church, Ch. 3.
  2. Ibid.
  3. St. Jerome, Lives of Illustrious Men, No. 367.

the worship of the Christians of this century was like. With exquisite charm he depicts the piety of the early church.<sup>1</sup>

Sixth, Justin was a child of his age. The tendency of the early church to glorify all its saints twisted their pictures into those of unreal people. We are not interested in half-human persons. Justin had many limitations. He shared in the habits of thought of his day. He was careless in his style of writing. His historical facts were treated philosophically after the custom of the times. He lacked the critical spirit. He was far too credulous to be an accurate scholar. But all these faults were common to men of that century. We must think of him in the environment of the Graeco-Roman world of the second century. He was understood by men of his own generation and profoundly influenced them. It is through the eyes of his contemporaries we would view him.

Seventh, Christianity "turns a corner" during Justin's life time. The problem of each generation is to interpret the Christian message in terms of the thought forms, scientific interests, and philosophical outlook of its own time. Saint Paul was confronted with the question of the relation of Christianity to Judaism. How well he pointed out both similarities and differences is a matter of common knowledge. Augustine was later to create the theology for the middle ages. Justin's age was a period of transition from the <sup>age of the</sup> Apostles. Shall Christianity remain an insignificant sect, or shall it master the intellectual and political world? The answer to this question depends upon how broadly it is interpreted. Without anticipating what we shall later stress in its proper place permit us to say Justin gripped the Greek cultural world and was a determining

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1. 1 Ap. 65-67.



factor in winning the heart of Greece to the Gospel. But in doing this the simple Gospel of the days of the Apostle passed away. It became the "true philosophy" which so powerfully gripped Justin. As the years went by the church became more and more a different institution from the simple band of disciples of Christ. Justin's part in this transformation is what keeps the interest of students of church history in his work. "For the first time in Christian literature many conceptions and phrases are found which are later used by the theologians with great effect."<sup>1</sup>

In 1860 Lamson wrote the following estimate of Justin Martyr, which after seventy years still stands as a true portrait of this church Father:<sup>2</sup>

He was not, as we have seen, an exact or polished writer; he was not critical; he had not a logical intellect; he wrote in a harsh, rambling, and somewhat impulsive style. He was not wholly free from credulity; indeed, had a large measure of it. And many of his opinions will now be pronounced extravagant and absurd. But so, in reality, will many of those entertained at the present day to future ages, yet, whatever his defects, his merits were very great. We honor his courage, his sincerity, his ardent thirst for truth, his moral elevation, his boldness in defending the cause of Christ, and pleading for the rights of common humanity before thrones, --- looking death calmly in the face. In such men we can overlook intellectual defects, and pardon some errors of opinion, and some absurd fancies. These are thrown into the shade by great qualities. It may be cause of gratitude to any of us, if, through God's help, we are enabled to walk as firmly on the way of duty, and be as faithful to our convictions, as was the philosopher and martyr of the elder days of the church.

Let the succeeding pages fill in the details of the portrait thus far sketched.

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1. Goodenough, Edwin R., The Theology of Justin Martyr, Preface.
  2. Lamson, Alvan, The Church of the First Three Centuries, p. 68.

## CHAPTER II

### JUSTIN'S WORLD

"The Graeco-Roman world was the soil upon which the sower went forth to sow the Christian seed; the growth depended not only on the vital forces inherent in the seed but on the preparation and fertility of the soil. The Christian ecclesia is best appreciated when observed at work in an intensely religious world in competition with the Synagogues of the Dispersion, the Guilds of the Mystery Religions, and the Schools of Greek Philosophy<sup>1</sup>". The world of Justin's day was far from being an empty world so far as thought and religion are concerned. It was an intensely eclectic age. Everybody borrowed from his neighbor. Plagiarism was the rage. Whatever the religion which sought to win followers it soon became a hodgepodge of the views of all other religions in competition with it. It almost came to the point that it did not make very much difference what religion a man accepted; in reality, he came to believe what all the others taught as well. We shall find that Christianity was no exception to this universal habit of borrowing its tenets from its neighbors. Dean Inge is authority for the statement, "Christianity borrowed from the Mystery Religions --- notions of secrecy, of symbolism, mystical brotherhood, sacramental grace, and the three stages of the Christian life -- ascetic purification, illumination, and the epopteia"<sup>2</sup>. That we may the better understand the work of Justin Martyr and his place in history let us analyze this world into which Justin came to preach the

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1. Angus, S., The Religious Quest of the Graeco-Roman World, p.ix.

2. Quoted by Angus in The Mystery Religions and Christianity, Foreword.



Gospel of the Incarnate Logos.

A. The Crisis of the Greek World

At the beginning of the Christian era the Greek world was in a sorry plight. It continued in this condition until after Justin's day. First, the City-State had long since collapsed. In the days of Greece's glory Athens, Sparta and other cities ruled as pure democracies. The government was a strong social bond which stabilized life. With the destruction of the City-State this sense of solidarity vanished. Undisciplined individualism took its place. In many cases this individualism was without restraint and led to immorality and insecurity.

Second, the reign of Alexander the Great changed the face of the world. His conquest was perhaps the most far reaching event in human history.<sup>1</sup> A great military leader, he soon conquered the "world". He overthrew insecure governments, arrested the spread of oriental sentimentalism, established the adoption of the Greek language everywhere, fostered travel throughout the then known world and even instituted colonization. All barriers were burned away and people of varying religions, languages, customs, met each other on a common footing. There was an interchange of cultures which made for cosmopolitanism. Theocrasia, the blending of different religions, was carried on with his active support. Complete toleration of all religions was enforced by the Emperor. There were no nationalistic customs left. All was united under the one Emperor. The concept of one ruler easily favored the religious idea of monotheism. The marriage<sup>2</sup> of the East and West was an epochal achievement.

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1. Angus, S., Mystery Religions, Ch. 1.  
2. Angus, S., Religious Quest, Ch. 1.

Third, the break up of the Diadochian kingdoms and the conquest of Rome. The successors of Alexander -- Antigonous, Ptolemy, Seleucus and Lysimachus -- partitioned the Empire and it lost its independence to the superior power of Rome. Fourth, the devastating wars of conquest and the changes of provincial boundaries served to add to the despair in which the people found themselves. All is change and decay. Nothing is dependable and there is no God. Fifth, in this state the Philosophical Schools were founded. Contemporaneously the Academy, the Porch, the Lyceum, and the Garden were engaged in teaching philosophy to youth. <sup>1</sup> Political rulers endowed the schools in the interest of education. But, as Plato observed, not all are born philosophers. These schools reached only a few. The masses remained untouched by the learning of that day.

Sixth, the Greek and Roman religion had decayed. <sup>2</sup> Homer and Hesiod had built their cosmology and their galaxy of gods and goddesses. But they were too human to lift men to a higher life. Not a sin possible to man but what had been popularized by one of the gods. Religion had become mere aesthetics. In Rome Emperor worship was perfunctory and of a political nature. It was like singing our national anthems when the people stand out of respect. Morals declined to the plane of hedonistic sensuality. The Graeco-Roman world was without a real Saviour. She was being prepared for the barbarian invasion of the fifth century when the uncultured but hardy men of the north conquered Rome. Thus, at the time of Justin, the world was hopeless, without satisfying religion, uplifting ethics, or stabilized government. If ever a generation needed the pure ethics and

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1. Cushman, Herbert E., History of Philosophy, I.

2. Atkins, Gaius Glenn, Procession of the Gods, p. 400.

holy living of Christianity, it was the generation of Justin Martyr.

### B. The Refuge of Philosophy

In the limited space of this essay only a bare summary of Greek philosophy can find a place. The earliest philosophers were cosmologists. They speculated as to the irreducible element of the world. Usually one of the four elements - fire, water, earth and air, was conceived as the ultimate material atom. Very soon one of the ancients, Anaxagoras by name, conceived the ultimate as theos. He did not think of a personal God. Theos was merely some divine, living material something. Socrates turned the minds of the philosophers away from the physical world to man. His contribution was conscience and the power of the moral ideal.<sup>1</sup>

Plato made the greatest contribution to the world of philosophy of all the Greek thinkers. He conceived the doctrine of Ideas -- forms or archetypes of all real material things. These forms or ideas are real and incorporeal. The material objects are mere copies of the ideas. Hence, he was a dualist -- matter and spirit. His ideas, of which the Good was supreme or God, were motionless and hence gave stability to the world. Men felt here is something stable at last. The world is the overflow of the Good and is relatively unimportant. The soul in man has affinity with God and immortality is the constitutional privilege of all. God was thus conceived as transcendent and the world became of less and less consequence.

The Stoics exercised great influence in the realm of ethics. Their God was sometimes conceived as material pantheism<sup>2</sup> and sometimes he

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1. Angus, S., Religious Quest, Ch. IV.  
2. Goodenough, op. cit., pp. 22-27.



was denied. The Stoics gave a moral ideal - live according to nature. Character, the inner control of the self, is the highest quest of man. Self conquest overcomes the world. To become "God's athlete" is the ideal life. No social classes were permitted in Stoicism. Marcus Aurelius the Emperor, and Epictetus the slave, are on a common level. Stoicism posited a logos as the great principle of divine reason in the world.

The prevailing philosophy at the beginning of the Christian era had several defects: first, it had no personal God with whom man could commune. God was vague, impersonal, far away, unknown and unknowable. Sometimes he was conceived as pantheistic. There can be no love and personal loyalty to such a God. Second, the philosophy had no doctrine of love as a motivating power. God did not love man and He had not taught nor empowered man to love in the Christian sense. Events happened in accordance with fate. What could not be changed by man must be endured. Third, there was no example of the wise man like Christ. The crowning glory of Christianity and the power which finally won the Greek world to Christianity was the example of the historic Christ. Fourth, there was no hope of immortality. The Greeks and Romans never had this hope. It came to men from the Mystery Religions and Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

This sketch of philosophy would not be complete without reference to the mystical philosophy. True, this flourished just after Justin's death, but it was emerging at the time Justin preached. This philosophy<sup>2</sup> later developed into Neoplatonism under Plotinus. According to this view knowledge of God comes by the actual indwelling presence of God in the heart.

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1. Angus, S., Religious Quest, Ch. 4.  
2. Ibid.

This is mystical. Before knowledge of God is possible there must be a purification of the soul. Stoic Pantheism led men to yearn for full absorption into deity. A passage from Cleanthes Hymn to Zeus is as follows: <sup>1</sup>

"Lead me, O Zeus, and lead me, Destiny!  
Whither ordained is by your decree  
I'll follow, doubting not, or if with will,  
Recreant I falter and I shall follow still."

Porphry declares that Plotinus was united with God four different times in one day. The avenues of knowledge to the mystics were the senses, reason, contemplation and ecstasy. Mystical philosophy is philosophy which has been syncretised with the Mystery Religions.

Philosophy helped to form the Zeitgeist of Justin. But it had its limitations. It was too intellectual and, therefore, limited to the intelligentsia. The masses were untouched by it. Philosophers were not flaming evangelists as were Christian Apologists. They were naturally aristocratic and sometimes cruel. Witness Plato's Republic. His philosophers were a relentless group. Inferior babies are exposed as unfit. <sup>2</sup>  
God in Plato's teaching was too difficult to know and to preach. The Stoic's God was too unsympathetic and tied up with the cosmic forces. Then, too, the people might find God if they searched long and hard, but the God of philosophy never sought man. Here is the great difference between Philosophy <sup>3</sup> and Christianity which declared, "God so loved the world that he gave.....". The Christian preachers presented God under the terms of Thompson's "Hound of Heaven".

Philosophy accomplished much for the world of Justin's day.

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1. Angus, op. cit., Ch. III.
  2. Republic Book V.
  3. John 3:16.



It acted as a bulwark against the sentimentalism of the oriental influences which came in like a flood following Alexander's conquests. The power of the intellect and the demand for a rational faith was a needed brake for human thought. The Greek Philosophy was a preparation for effective understanding of the Christian Religion. Angus thinks the Church suffered when it repudiated its appreciation of Greek culture under the influence of Augustine and the later theologians.<sup>1</sup> Greek Philosophy gave the Church a spiritual basis for the world. It presented God as transcendent, far away and unknowable, but stable and eternal. It made man akin to God and endowed with a soul. It presented a high ethical ideal. It posited an intermediary God between the transcendent God and the world. These conceptions it laid at the feet of Jesus Christ.

### C. The Refuge of Judaism

To Judaism Christianity owes an unpayable debt. It's founder and earliest preachers were Jews. The book upon which Christianity is founded is the product of Jewish brains. The church has not always expressed its gratitude to Judaism. In Justin's day it still was a rival for the allegiance of the people. Later it crystallized into an intolerant sect when it found it had some insuperable limitations. The Judaism of Justin's day was different from that of Old Testament times. In order to understand the problem of the early apologists we need to take a quick survey of this religion.

The Hellenic influence had modified Judaism just as it had all

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1. Angus, op. cit., Cha III.

other sects with which it came into<sup>14</sup> contact. Philo, an Alexandrian Platonist, tried to harmonize the Law and Greek Philosophy. He had the one indispensable method of allegory which enabled him to read into the Biblical statements current philosophical tenets. Many of the conceptions of Justin were borrowed from Philo. God, under Philo's influence, became an incorporeal, absolute, transcendent and unknowable God.<sup>1</sup> The angels, who formerly were temporary disguises of God, now became separate personifications. It is not quite certain whether Philo actually made them independent beings. He seemed to vacillate between the determination to defend the monotheism of God and to people the world with intermediary beings. The Law, once the basis of salvation to the Jew only, now had become the universal truth. All philosophy was by allegory read into the statements of the law.<sup>2</sup> Man now had, as in Plato, three souls - - - the pneuma, the psyche and the soma. It was the duty of the highest soul or pneuma to direct human activity. This highest soul could see God by remembering its presence with God in the pre-existent life. We see the influence of Plato at every turn. The Logos was identified with Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs. Thus the Logos became the intelligible world which was created first by the Absolute. This Logos then created the physical world.<sup>3</sup> The Logos was the only God man could know. Philo was not consistent in his conception of the Logos. Sometimes he speaks of Him as a personal God and at other times as impersonal force. The Logos was called a hostage which guaranteed to God the moral conduct of man and also

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 40.

2. Ibid., p. 44.

3. Ibid., p. 49.

assured man of the dependability of God. Alexandrian Judaism let down the bars somewhat in the admission of a group into the Synagogue known as "god fearers". They accepted the monotheism and morality of Judaism but rejected circumcision and the ritual of the law. Paul went a step farther than Philo when he admitted the godfearers into full fellowship by disregarding the obligation of men to keep the law. Justin goes still farther by asserting that the law was given as a punishment because of the<sup>1</sup> hardheartedness of the Jews. To Justin the Law was something to be avoided. The Judaism of the second century, then, was a cross between the teaching of the Old Testament and the philosophy of Plato. In this modified form it made a desperate effort to win the allegiance of the world.

While it did not succeed in its ambitious design it did make an appeal which was not to be despised. It pleaded the antiquity of its Scriptures in an age when the ancient was far more revered than the recent. It stressed a high form of morality. Its righteousness was clear-cut and exacting. It stimulated men to strive to better their mode of living. Judaism had a congregational form of worship with stated meetings. This service of worship permitted instruction of all ages in accordance with a system of education.<sup>2</sup> The Rabbis explained the Law and urged compliance with its teachings. Judaism, like Christianity, was a religion of a book. This could be read at leisure and had a high value for evangelistic purposes. The Jewish leaders had a passion for God and a love for man. They were zealous to make proselytes.<sup>3</sup> The mystical tendencies of

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1. Dial. 18.
  2. Angus, op. cit., Ch. III.
  3. Ibid.



the day were incorporated into Judaism by the teachers.

The Judaism of Justin's day offered its devotees authority. Its book was inspired by God. Its antiquity argued for historicity and dependability. Here was a religion in which the voice of God spoke to men. It offered a religion of redemption to the proselytes. After the analogy of the Mystery Religions it too promised salvation. One of the advantages of Judaism, in the opinion of its Rabbis, was its legalism. Here was a religion that was clear in its demands upon its followers. One does not have to guess or be in fear. It is all written in the commandments. "This do and thou shalt live". Likewise, it was prophetic. "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The Prophets predicted events which had come to pass with remarkable accuracy. This demonstrated its superiority above all other religions. Judaism asserted a providence in history.<sup>1</sup> We do not need to wait until the next life to witness the punishment of evil and the reward of good. In this life God metes out judgment. The Stoics taught that the world moves in cycles after the completion of which all things begin again. Plato pushed all retribution into the hereafter. Judaism said God distributes justice now while men live. A good life will be blessed of God here and now. One of the strong points in Judaism was its insistence upon morality as the mark of true religion.<sup>2</sup> To it morality and religion are one and inseparable. Judaism had the advantage over Christianity in that it claimed to be the creator of both the Old and New Testaments. In reality Judaism presented a strong case. The marvel is that it did not win more followers. It was

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., pp. 40-56.

2. Ibid.

unsocial and clannish. It rejected the Christ, persecuted the Christians,<sup>1</sup> and after realizing it could not win turned toward Asia and the past. Not only did Christianity turn toward the Gentiles but the nations turned toward Christianity with a zeal which won the world.

#### D. The Refuge of the Mystery Religions

The Mystery Religions were powerful rivals of Christianity. As philosophy appealed to the aristocrats so the Mysteries won the hearts of the masses. Beginning about the sixth Century B.C. the Mysteries grew in number and influence until 307 A.D. when Diocletian made Mithraism the official religion of the Empire.<sup>2</sup> Originally the Mysteries were nature myths. In the days before the policy of Alexander inaugurated travel and exchange of ideas the various countries lived secluded lives. Their religions arose about the worship of the functions of mother nature. During and after the days of colonization these religions sought new fields of conquest. In contact with other religions they each borrowed from the other until they all came to possess the same characteristics and ceremonies.

The Mystery Religions are true to their name in that they were and have remained mysteries. The vow of secrecy imposed upon all initiates with heavy penalties for violation of the vow kept their rites from the uninitiated.<sup>3</sup> A few hymns and some vague testimonies are about all the remains we have of them. Plutarch, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Julian and Proclus wrote about them.<sup>4</sup> Angus lists the following as Mystery Religions: The Orphic

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., pp. 40-56.

2. Angus, S., The Mystery Religions, Ch. VI.

3. Ibid., Ch. II.

4. Ibid.



and Pythagorean Fraternities, The Great Mother and Attis, Serapis and Isis of Egypt, The Baals and Adonis of Palestine, The Kabiri of Samothracia, Mithraism of Persia, The Eleusinian Mysteries of Greece, the Gnostic Fraternities, Sabazios of Phrygia, and Dionysius, the Theosophical Hermeticists.<sup>1</sup>

Taken as a group the Mystery Religions had several characteristics which permitted them to live. First, they offered redemption to a sin-burdened world. Many factors conspired to develop the consciousness of sin. Plato's antithesis between God and the world made the physical body to be looked upon as evil. The body of man was a load upon the soul. There was the Gnostic-Philosophic view of sin inspired by Plato. According to this view sin is due to ignorance and can be cured with reason. No one is willingly bad. The Orphic-Mystical view influenced by Plotinus, held sin to be a falling away from union with God. Salvation meant the return to God in union and identification. This is mystical. There was the ethical view of Aristotle which held sin to be a deviation from the golden mean. Excess in either direction was a sin. Sin is thus in the will and is done intentionally.<sup>2</sup> The Mysteries promised salvation from all sin and provided formulae for the penitent to repeat. Men were afflicted by magic, the fear of the stars and the cosmic forces. Men were terrified in this situation. They welcomed the beautiful promises of the Mysteries.

Second, the lavish use of symbolism and drama. All sorts of material objects were used in the initiatory rites.<sup>3</sup> Like certain initiations of present day Fraternal Orders, I presume, were the ceremonies of the

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1. Angus, S., Religious Quest Ch. V.  
2. Angus, S., Mystery Religions, Ch. V.  
3. Ibid., Ch. II.

Mysteries. Every act and saying had a significance and was meticulously explained. The life drama of the god worshipped was enacted by a "team" before the eyes of the candidate. The gods were very sympathetic. Unlike the far away god of philosophy they were close at hand and entered very sympathetically into the sorrows and joys of the people. In imagination the candidates reproduced the scene of the struggles of the deity worshipped. The taurobolium - - - the initiate drinks and is baptized in the freshly flowing blood of the sacrificial bull - - was a very significant drama-sacrament. Allegory, that ever-tried friend of those who are in a tight place theologically, came to the rescue and permitted them to read into the symbols any ideas desired. Nevertheless symbolism has ever fascinated the mind of man.

Third, the gnosis offered to the initiated special knowledge. Salvation was restricted to membership. It may be that Cyprian got his doctrine - no salvation outside of the Catholic Church - from this practice of the Mysteries. Knowledge of God was the great quest of man from the second century B. C. to the fourth century A.D. This gnosis promised union with the god. It was believed the initiate could unite with God mentally. No education was required for this knowledge of God. It was easy and within reach of the humble people.

Fourth, immortality was assured. The religions of Greece and Rome offered no hope beyond the grave. Judaism likewise was hazy and hesitant. But the mind of man wanted to know about the other world. The governments were changing and very insecure. On the tombs of the mystae

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1. Angus, S., op. cit., Ch. III.

2. Angus, S., Religious Quest Ch. V.

occur frequently the epitaph "Reborn for Eternity".<sup>1</sup> The initiate was elevated to deity himself by his god. What an exalted picture to hold out to the outcaste peasants of the ancient world!

Fifth, democracy in religion was inculcated. The old national religions were dead. The time had passed when a man must espouse the religion of his king. He may now choose for himself what religion he will accept. This made for individualism. It dignified and exalted the worth of man. All caste and social classes were abolished. The highest office<sup>2</sup> in the priesthood was open to the humblest member.

Sixth, ecstasy and asceticism were fostered. One of the reasons the Mysteries were popular was because the members had a "good time" at their meetings. They lived for emotional thrills. The worshippers were in a state of constant expectancy. Some theophany of their god will occur. The devotees worshipped with all their faculties alert. The priests were ever present to make appropriate suggestions which would increase their emotion. They were surrounded by other worshippers who were also in a state of great excitement. Fasting and abstinence were enjoined upon all. This practice had the merit of concentration, physical weakness and susceptibility to mental excitement.<sup>3</sup> Asceticism grew out of the depreciation of the body under the influence of Greek Philosophy. If the soul may find God only upon purification and abstract thinking the only thing to do is to curtail the bodily appetites and passions. Vigils, prayers, abstinence, flagellations are valuable in accomplishing this purpose. The devotees of Isis walked every morning in winter across the Campus Martius on their

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1. Angus, S., op. cit., Ch. II.  
2. Ibid., Ch. V.  
3. Ibid.



bleeding knees to bathe in the frozen Tiber. <sup>1</sup>

Seventh, the growth of sacramentarianism. Much depended upon preparation for and correct observance of the rites of initiation. This required a priesthood. Likewise baptism, the taurobolium, and the sacramental drama needed a priest who had been trained in the proper administration of the rite. Hence, the door to salvation had to be opened by the priest. Mithraism enjoined its priests to celebrate daily offices, maintain the perpetual holy fire, invoke the planet of the day, offer the sacrifices of the adherents, and preside at initiations. <sup>2</sup> In addition to these duties there were weekly meetings for strengthening the membership. <sup>3</sup>

Eighth, institutionalism created. The Mysteries organized guilds of their members which provided social life, assisted in getting and holding their jobs, purchased cemeteries for their dead. They did the work of modern churches and lodges. Politicians used them to further their ambitions. Women were on an equality with the men. These guilds sometimes incited mob rule as in the case of a mining camp under the reign of Marcus Aurelius when seven thousand were massacred. <sup>4</sup>

Since the Mysteries had so many excellent characteristics one wonders why they failed. Why did they not win the field against Christianity? First, they were naturalistic. The worship of nature has never created a very high type of character. It has degenerated into sensuality and esthetics. Witness the influence of Astrology upon the country of Babylonia. Philosophy tries in vain to purify naturalism and excessive ritualism tries to cover

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1. Angus, S. Mystery Religions, Ch. III.
  2. Ibid., III.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Ibid., Ch. V

up its weakness.<sup>1</sup> Second, false science cursed the Mysteries. Astrology begat fatalism with its blight upon the soul. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera".<sup>2</sup> "Magic, that bastard sister of religion, ruined the Mysteries".<sup>3</sup> Third, there was no system of ethics. Morality was divorced from religion. Hence, the wildest extravagances of worship and grossest immoralities eluded the eye of the priest. The individual only was to be considered. The fact that man has obligation to society was not admitted by them. What was needed was the emphasis upon social conduct to correct the excesses of individualism. Hegel's formula for evolution is in point here; Thesis -- social religions of Greece and Rome, Antithesis -- the individual mystery religions with emotion and ecstasy, Synthesis -- ethics and mystical union which is found only in Christianity.<sup>4</sup> Fourth, the Mysteries had no system of education. They stressed ritual only. Aristotle said an initiate did not need to know anything; he was only to have feeling.<sup>5</sup> Pagan writers including Porphyry, Celsus, and Proclus, tried in vain to invent a theology which would support the Mysteries. Christianity could not win until she demonstrated there was as much reason here as anywhere.<sup>6</sup> Fifth, the superiority of Christianity defeated the Mysteries. They could not stand the comparison. The preachers of Christianity did probably borrow some customs from the Mysteries, still it was essentially intolerant. There is ~~one~~ God and one mediator - Christ.<sup>7</sup> Faith was a personal trust in a living God. It was a religion of a book.

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1. Angus, S., op. cit., Ch. VI.

2. Judges, 5: 20.

3. Angus, S., Ibid.

4. Ibid.,

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., Ch. VII.

Furthermore, the book was in the wonderful Greek tongue. Best of all there was the personality of the Historic Christ. His life, teachings and personality captivated the world. Julian, the apostate Emperor, was compelled to say at the end, "Thou hast conquered, O Gallilean."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the Mysteries exercised a powerful influence upon the Graeco-Roman world. They succumbed to Christianity but they left their impress upon the conquering faith -- soteriology, sacramentalism, hope of immortality, three stages of church membership, use of symbolism,<sup>2</sup> sacerdotalism and institutionalism.

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1. Angus, S., op. cit. Ch. VI.  
2. Angus, S., Religious Quest, Ch. I.



CHAPTER III  
JUSTIN'S LIFE

The details of the life of Justin Martyr are unknown. No biography of this eminent Father has come down to us. Writers on Justin have dwelt upon his theology, his apologies and his place in history. None of the ancients who knew him took the trouble to write his life, or, if they did, it has passed into oblivion. How we wish we might draw aside the curtain and peer into the secrets of this man's life. What we know of him is gathered from occasional references in his own writings.<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, a historian of the beginning of the fourth century, makes reference to Justin as the author of several treatises and one who "labored<sup>2</sup> powerfully against the Gentiles".

A. Early Life

In the dedication of his First Apology Justin says he was born<sup>3</sup> in Flavia Neapolis, in Syria Palaestina. His approximate dates are as follows: born about 100 A.D., converted 135, wrote first Apology 153, was<sup>4</sup> martyred 165. He tells us his father's name was Priscus and that his grandfather's name was Bacchius. From the form of his ancestors names we<sup>5</sup> know he was not a Jew. Further he says he was a Samaritan though we find no trace of the Samaritan religion in his teachings. Evidently his people came over into Palestine as Greek or Roman colonizers. The policy of

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1. Dial. 1 -9; 28; 120; 142; 1 Ap. 1; Martyr 1 - 5.
  2. Hist. Eccl. IV, 18.
  3. 1 Ap. 1.
  4. Catholic Encyclopedia, Article, Justin Martyr.
  5. Dial. 120.

Alexander the Great was to colonize the countries he conquered. There was free travel from province to province under the inspiration of his leadership. <sup>1</sup> We know that Justin did not know the Old Testament until he had reached manhood. <sup>2</sup> We may assume that he was brought up as a pagan. His familiarity with the mythology of the Greeks is evidenced in his writings. <sup>3</sup> He probably was brought up just about as any other child of Greek parentage. The religion of the Greeks was bankrupt <sup>4</sup> and that of the Romans had degenerated into Emperor worship which had nothing more than a political significance. The love of beauty, the precious heritage of the Greeks, without the restraint of high ethical standards had degenerated into sensuality and other forms of vice. According to writers the morals of the people were low. <sup>5</sup> We cannot expect very high standards from Justin reared in such an atmosphere.

It is fairly certain that Justin inherited a competence which relieved him from the privation of poverty. He never complains of "hard times". He wore a philosopher's cloak, showing he had given time to <sup>the</sup> study of philosophy. This required leisure and some money to pay for his instruction. We gather from his writings that he was quite a traveller. He speaks of having seen the stalls where the Seventy translated the Scriptures into the Septuagint. <sup>6</sup> He must have been in Egypt. At the trial which ended <sup>7</sup> in his martyrdom he says he was then living for the second time in Rome.

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1. Angus, S., Mystery Religions, Ch. I.
  2. Dial. 1-9.
  3. 1 Ap. 21.
  4. Dill, Samuel, Roman Society, Ch. I.
  5. Sihler, Ernest G., From Augustus to Augustine, Ch. I.
  6. Hortatory Address to Greeks, 13.
  7. Martyrdom, 5.

Eusebius says Justin conducted his Dialogue with Trypho in the city of Ephesus.<sup>1</sup> He was credited with having brought the Ephesian type of Christianity to Rome.<sup>2</sup>

### B. Education

We learn Justin was an educated man from reading his books. He quotes Homer, Hesiod, Euripides, Xenophon, Plato. He refers to the Mystery Religions and the various heresies current in his day.<sup>3</sup> Where he received his education we do not know. Evidently his travels, the lessons taken with the peripatetic teachers after the fashion of the day, gave him a better than average education.

In the opening chapters of the Dialogue Justin tells the story of his experience with the four popular schools of Philosophy. Scholars are of the opinion that this is not an account of an actual experience. Rather, it is an idealization on the part of Justin of the popular opinion of the schools.<sup>4</sup> Let Justin speak for himself:<sup>5</sup>

"I surrendered myself to a certain Stoic; and having spent a considerable time with him, when I had not acquired any further knowledge of God (for he did not know himself, and said such instruction was unnecessary), I left him and betook myself to another, who was called a Peripatetic, and as he had fancied, shrewd. And this man, after having entertained me for the first few days, requested me to settle the fee, in order that our intercourse might not be unprofitable. Him, too, for this reason I abandoned, believing him to be no philosopher at all. But when my soul was eagerly desirous of hearing the peculiar and choice philosophy, I came to a Pythagorean, very celebrated -- a man who thought

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1. Hist. Eccl. IV, xviii, 6.
  2. Lake, Kirsopp, Landmarks in History of Early Christianity, pp. 75-105.
  3. 1. Ap. 25; 27.
  4. Goodenough, op. cit., pp. 59-68.
  5. Dial. 2.



much of his own wisdom. And then, when I had an interview with him, willing to become his hearer and disciple, he said, 'Are you acquainted with music, astronomy and geometry?' Having commended many of these branches of learning, and telling me that they were necessary, he dismissed me when I confessed to him my ignorance.

Accordingly I took it rather impatiently, as was to be expected when I failed in my hope, the more so because I deemed the man had some knowledge; but reflecting again on the space of time during which I would have to linger over those branches of learning, I was not able to endure longer procrastination. In my helpless condition it occurred to me to have a meeting with the Platonists, for their fame was great. I thereupon spent as much of my time as possible with one who had lately settled in our city, - a sagacious man, holding a high position among the Platonists, - and I progressed, and made the greatest improvements daily. And the perception of immaterial things quite overpowered me, and the contemplation of ideas furnished my mind with wings, so that in a little while I supposed I had become wise; and such was my stupidity, I expected forthwith to look upon God, for this is the end of Plato's philosophy."

In the above quotation Justin voices the well-known criticism of the schools. The Stoics were known not to have any clear idea of God but devoted their time to ethics. The Aristotelians were known to be greedy and unprofessional in their dealing with students. The Platonists broke off relations with them for this reason.<sup>1</sup> The Pythagoreans were well and favorably regarded by the public but were criticised for their excessive insistence upon studies of astronomy, geometry and music as prerequisite for enrollment in philosophy. Their policy was walled in and covered up in red tape. The Platonists welcomed Justin. The doctrine of Ideas influenced him. In fact it was destined to dominate the middle ages for a thousand years. Plato's *Timaeus*, *Phaedo*, *Apology* and *Republic*

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 60.

were known to Justin. He says of himself, "When I was delighting in the doctrines of Plato".<sup>1</sup> Students of the Dialogue grant to Justin considerable knowledge of Hellenic Judaism.<sup>2</sup>

### C. Justin's Conversion

The most important event in Justin's life was his conversion to Christianity. This experience is almost the only one he dwells upon in his writings. Nine chapters of the Dialogue are devoted to this great change.<sup>3</sup> This experience transformed his own life and changed the course of history. Without it we should not have had Justin, and without Justin the history of Christianity would have been different. Conversions like Justin's have focused the attention of psychologists upon the phenomena of conversion. Today there is a branch of Psychology called the Psychology of Religion which has come into existence largely to study the phenomena of conversion.<sup>4</sup> James Bissett Pratt defines conversion as "the new birth by which adolescents grow out of thinghood into selfhood. The moral self is a group of powers united in the service of a harmonious system of purposes. The essential thing about conversion is just the unification of character, the achievement of a new self".<sup>5</sup> Conversion, then, is the change which comes into a life which enables it to build a personality about an ideal which seems worthy of realization. Note the phrase "achievement of a new self."

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1. 2 Ad. 12

2. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 95.

3. Dial. 1 - 9.

4. Hickman, Frank S., Introduction to the Psychology of Religion, Ch. Con- (version.

5. Religious Consciousness, Ch. Conversion.

If we analyze the process of conversion we find four facts or steps in the experience: first, life is the evolution of a self or personality. This grows daily and is a product of all our experiences. Usually this development is arrested by conflicting appetites, impulses and desires, all demanding gratification and expression. The problem of life is to unify or integrate one's life about one dominant ideal. Otherwise there is confusion. Second, the presence of conflicting ideals, habits, or policies causes a conflict in the ego. The habituated neural pathways of the nervous system seem to struggle for domination. That is why our former passions and appetites seem so strong. Against this trend in our lives the new and better ideal struggles for mastery. The soul of man is a battleground for the mastery of an ideal. "When I would do good, evil<sup>1</sup> was present with me," is the testimony of all who are engaged in such a battle. This conflict may be expressed in more than one way. For example, it may be a struggle for power to conquer the vice in one's life. Augustine is an illustration. He had contracted habits of sensuality and dissipation which he was powerless to conquer. The prayers of his mother, the sermons of Ambrose, the story of the conversion of Antony, the growing dissatisfaction with manichaeism, all combined to create in him a love for the Christian life. His conflict was virtue versus vice.<sup>2</sup> Again, the conflict may be over joy or mental satisfaction. John Wesley illustrates this sort of struggle. He was carefully raised in the Church of England. He was a prodigious worker but a strict formalist. Religion consisted in ritualistic conformity to the rubrics of the church. He was without joy and

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1. Romans, 7: 21.

2. Augustine, Confessions, Chs. 1-8.



happiness in his service. Repeatedly he faced his inadequate equipment for his life work. His contact with the Moravians in America and at Hernhut, his ceaseless prayer and study finally turned him from a formalist to a "fanatic" when at Aldersgate Street prayer meeting he felt his "heart strangely warmed". He believed the Gospel but could not trust his Saviour.<sup>1</sup> His fears were dissolved into sweet trustfulness. Still again, the conflict may be centered about one's belief. This was the case with Justin Martyr. He was a seeker but could not find the truth. There was a restlessness and hunger which seemed insatiable. Thus the conflict is an inevitable struggle in the soul of man as he struggles to enthrone the highest ideal he knows over all other desires. Man cannot continue always in this warfare. One ideal or the other must ultimately win. Whichever wins becomes the focal point around which he builds his new self.

Third, there must be a victory in this struggle. Either the lower ideal or the higher will win. The mental process is the same in either case. In this paper, however, we shall apply conversion only to the change from a lower to a higher life. The individual struggles in study, prayer, meditation to reach a conclusion. Likewise, there is what some psychologists call the subconscious. Experiences are not all focal in our consciousness. There is a periphery of consciousness. Many of our thoughts and experiences seem to slip into the unconscious. While we sleep, and while we attend to other matters the unconscious mind works. Associational areas of the mind are built up and, when some accident or suggestion arises the unconscious suddenly becomes focal and we realize the victory of the ideal which we had previously begun to love but had not

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1. Lunn, Arnold, John Wesley, Ch. on Conversion.

the power to fully realize. Suggestion is a powerful factor in accomplishing<sup>1</sup> the final victory. Fourth, the climax is now reached. The previously darkened mind now exclaims, "I see!!" Augustine cries out, "I can". Wesley began to feel love toward God and man. Justin felt a flame leap in his mind. Rest and peace became the possession of previously tormented<sup>2</sup> souls. This is conversion.

How do the above four points apply to the conversion of Justin? First, Justin was unable to unify his personality. He had contracted<sup>3</sup> habits of sexual vice, ambition, greed and hatred. He had seen the life of the Christians and had learned from Platonism that there was a better life. Second, we see the conflict in his mind between the pagan ideal and the Christian ideal. Factors composing the new ideal were as follows: the mystery religions were everywhere present and were very extravagant in their promises of a Saviour God, immortality, and the ecstatic joy produced in the initiatory rites. Justin must have been influenced by<sup>4</sup> these religions.

Furthermore, he had witnessed the trial and execution of Christian martyrs. He says it made him feel they were not guilty of the<sup>5</sup> charges made against them. Their testimonies and their statement of the Gospel undoubtedly made a profound impression upon him. Thus Plato's dream, the promises of the Mystery Religions and the attainment of the Christian martyrs, created a new ideal in Justin's mind. Hence, the

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1. Burr, Anna Robeson, Confessions and Confessants, Ch. on Conversion.  
2. Coe, George A., Psychology of Religion, Ch. on Conversion.  
3. 1. Ap. 14.  
4. Angus, S., The Mystery Religions and Christianity, Ch. 2.  
5. 2 Ap. 12.

struggle as to which shall gain the victory. Third, Justin seems to have unconsciously set the stage for his conversion. He wanders by the sea shore. He is surprised by an old man with a winsome face and charming manner.<sup>1</sup> In Justin's anxiety the old man was a godsend. The long and unsuccessful quest of God in Platonism, the subconscious working of the experiences with the Mysteries, and the vision of Christian martyrs seem to leap now into consciousness and overpower the old ideal. The old man destroys the remaining confidence in Platonism. He demonstrates that the soul is not naturally immortal but will be immortal only as a gift of God for virtuous conduct.<sup>2</sup> He assures Justin the philosophers do not know much. Reason cannot by searching find God. That only comes through revelation. Fortunately, we are not without a revelation. The Prophets have spoken in the Old Testament. They are more ancient than the works of philosophy. They were good and holy men, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and surpass all other writers in that they predicted events which are now being fulfilled in our presence.<sup>3</sup> This particular fulfillment was in the incarnation of the Logos in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Fourth, Justin accepts the revelation by a venture of the soul. The battle is now over, peace of mind has come. But hear him speak: "When he had spoken these and many other things, he went away.... Straightway a flame was kindled in my soul; and a love of the prophets, and of those men who are friends of Christ, possessed me; and whilst revolving his words in my mind, I found this philosophy alone to be safe and profitable. Thus and for this reason I am a philosopher".<sup>4</sup> The words of

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1. Dial. 3.
  2. Dial. 5.
  3. Dial. 7.
  4. Dial. 8.



the Saviour now possess a "terrible power in themselves" and "bestow the sweetest rest upon those who practice them".<sup>1</sup> Justin is forever the disciple of Christ. He will still wear his philosopher's cloak but he will philosophize for the benefit of Christianity. Conversion did not destroy his previous training and interest. He henceforth built his personality or "self" around the center of Christ as the full flower of the Logos and his teachings as the "true philosophy."

The subsequent career of Justin will be treated under the discussion of his writings, theology and apologetic. We learn that he travelled about and probably conducted schools as opportunity offered.<sup>2</sup> About all we know about him is contained in his works. We have an authentic account of his martyrdom under Rusticus, a prefect of Rome in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, somewhere about the year 165 A.D.<sup>3</sup> The probability is that Justin's fears concerning Crescens instigating his arrest<sup>4</sup> were carried out, for Eusebius says Crescens was responsible for the authorities making the arrest.<sup>5</sup> A group of companions with Justin was brought before the prefect for examination, a digest of which follows:

#### The Examination of Justin by Rusticus

Rusticus: "What kind of doctrines do you profess?"

Justin: "I have acquiesced at last in the true doctrines, those namely of the Christians, even though they do not please those who hold false opinions".

Rusticus: "Are those the doctrines that please you, you utterly wretched man?"

Justin: "Yes, since I adhere to them with the right dogma."

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1. Dial. 8.
  2. Martyr, Justin. 2.
  3. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 75.
  4. Hist. Eccl. IV. 16.
  5. Ibid.

Rusticus: "What is the dogma?"  
Justin: "That according to which we worship the God of the Christians .... and the Lord Jesus Christ ..... the Son of God."

Rusticus: "Where do you assemble?"  
Justin: "Where each one chooses and can .... I live above one Martinus, at the Timiotinian Bath; and during the whole time (and I am now living in Rome for the second time) I am unaware of any other meeting than his. And if anyone wished to come to me, I communicated to him the doctrines of the truth."

Rusticus: "Are you not, then, a Christian?"  
Justin: "Yes, I am a Christian."

At this point Rusticus examines his companions -- Chariton, Charito, Euelpistus, Hierax, Paeon and Liberianus -- as to whether they also are Christians. They all say they are. He inquires whether Justin has been instrumental in their conversion. He was but with their consent. He addresses Justin.

Rusticus: "Hearken, you who are called learned, and think that you know the doctrines; if you are scourged and be-headed, do you believe you will ascend into heaven?"  
Justin: "I hope that, if I endure these things, I shall have His gifts. For I know that to all who have thus lived, there abides the divine favor until the completion of the whole world."

Rusticus: "Let us, then, now come to the matter in hand, and which presses. Having come together, offer sacrifice with one accord to the gods."  
Justin: "No right-thinking person falls away from piety to impiety."

Rusticus: "Unless ye obey, ye shall be mercilessly punished."  
Justin: "Through prayer we can be saved on account of our Lord Jesus Christ, even when we have been punished, because this shall become to us salvation and confidence at the more fearful and universal judgment seat of our Lord and Saviour..... Do what you will, for we are Christians, and do not sacrifice to idols."

Rusticus: "Let those who have refused to sacrifice to the gods and to yield to the command of the emperor be scourged, and led away to suffer the punishment of decapitation, according to the laws."

Thus Justin was "adorned with divine martyrdom. The Philosopher, Crescens, a cynic, instigated the plot against him, for Justin had often defeated him in debate in the presence of hearers, and finally bound on himself the trophies of victory by his martyrdom for the truth of which he was an ambassador."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. IV, xvi.



CHAPTER IV  
JUSTIN, THE WRITER

The oral preaching and teaching of Justin probably were considerable. He says he visited Egypt and was twice a resident of Rome. The Dialogue took place, says Eusebius,<sup>1</sup> at Ephesus. As a traveller he undoubtedly did much private teaching. But it is as a writer that he has come down through history. For some reason his works have escaped the ravages of time. Almost all of the contemporary Apologists --- Quadratus, Aristides, Melito, Tatian, Miltiades, Athenagoras -- are known only to us through Eusebius and St. Jerome. These historians wrote long after the date of the Apologists, whose writings were allowed to be destroyed. We are dependent upon Justin for our knowledge of the period.

Scholars find considerable fault with Justin as a writer. First, his style is discursive and without system. He seems to have in mind what he wants to say but apparently never made an outline before he began nor revised his work after he had finished. He is guilty of many digressions. His style is "rambling and fanciful, abounding in digressions, repetitions, and parentheses."<sup>2</sup> Some have argued that his style was purposely neglected to express the contempt of Apologists for the rhetoric and poetry of the Greeks. But this hypothesis does not meet with general acceptance. There is no doubt Justin wrote in accordance with his own standards. There were in existence pamphlets by Jewish authors.<sup>3</sup> Justin probably copied them and undoubtedly imitated Plato's dialogues.

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1. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. IV. xviii, 6.
  2. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 84.
  3. Ibid.

Second, Justin was not a profound scholar. He was guilty of many inaccuracies in his historical data. He saw in Rome a statue to <sup>1</sup> Simon a Sabeian deity and immediately ascribed it to Simon the Magician from his own country of Samaria. He says Ptolemy of Egypt desired to have <sup>2</sup> the Old Testament Scriptures in the Greek language. So he sent to Herod and asked for seventy scholars to come and translate them into Greek. He was wrong, as we know from Josephus and Philo, by 200 years. It was Eleazar who sent the scholars. He says Moses kept the flocks of his maternal uncle. <sup>3</sup> He confused Moses with Jacob. He accepts the Sibylline oracles and the writings of Hystaspes as authentic and inspired. Justin's chronology was inaccurate. He says Jesus "was predicted before He appeared, first 5,000 years before, and again 3,000, then 2,000, then 1,000, and yet again 800; <sup>4</sup> for in the succession of generations prophets after prophets arose. Moses did not live 5,000 years before Christ. Likewise the other figures are inaccurate.

Third, Justin was very credulous. In this he was not different from the people of his day. It was an uncritical age. The miraculous was commonly believed. Miracles were being performed by everybody. Justin believed the story that the Seventy scholars who translated the Old Testament into Greek were separated and compelled to work alone. When <sup>5</sup> they finished and compared their translations they agreed verbally. Likewise in his description of the wanderings of the Children of Israel in the wilderness he states that the buckles on the shoes never wore out and that

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1. Lamson, Alvin, The Church of the First Three Centuries, Ch. 3.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.
  4. 1 Ap. 31.
  5. Hortatory Address to the Greeks. 13.

the children's shoes grew as fast as their feet.

Fourth, Justin makes many quotations from the Old Testament. His citations are long and for the most part accurate. But he made many slips in exact quotation and in some cases assigned the wrong author. Some scholars think it is because he quotes from memory. But Goodenough,<sup>2</sup> assuming Justin wrote the Dialogue after the example of Plato, thinks he had the Old Testament before him from which he copied his quotations. He quotes passages not found in any manuscripts.<sup>3</sup> He ascribes Jeremiah 9;26 to Isaiah.<sup>4</sup> A passage in Daniel was credited to Jeremiah.<sup>5</sup> The indications are that Justin had the Scriptures before him and could have been accurate but, after the custom of the time, did not feel it to be important to exercise such care.

Fifth, Justin was guilty of fanciful exegesis. He sees prophecies where such do not exist. In an eclectic age when borrowing is common, allegory becomes the refuge of writers. The probability is that Justin got his allegorizing habit from Philo who in turn received it from the Stoics who allegorized Homer. Homer had some activities of the gods which could not be approved in an enlightened age; hence the Stoics interpreted the polygamy, lust, greed, and cruelty of the pantheon in an entirely different sense. Philo, the Jewish Platonist, sought to unite Judaism with Platonic Philosophy. To do this he held the Old Testament had a hidden meaning as well as a plain meaning. Under the "hidden meaning" conception Philo could introduce any ideas which ap-

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1. Dial. 131.
  2. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 96.
  3. Dial. 72; 81.
  4. 1 Ap. 75.
  5. 1 Ap. 51.



pealed to him. Allegory was popular in Justin's time. His successors, especially Origin, made a very extended use of it. This is the way they united Christianity and Greek Philosophy. Paul, in the Epistle to the Galatians, refers to Abraham's two sons, - Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael, <sup>1</sup> the son of promise, refers to the Christians. This is an allegory. An example of Justin's use of allegory is his interpretation of the polygamy <sup>2</sup> of Jacob. He says, "dispensations of weighty mysteries were accomplished in each act of this sort". "The marriages of Jacob were types of that which Christ was about to accomplish." His wives, Leah and Rachel, refer to the Jews and Christians respectively. "Leah is your people and synagogue; but Rachel is our church." <sup>3</sup> Jacob serving for the speckled cattle is a type of Christ serving for the many colored races of mankind.

Justin makes a great deal of the typology of the cross. In his opinion every piece of wood mentioned in the Old Testament referred to Christ's cross. He cites the sail crossing the boat and forming a cross. Likewise the nose on a man's face, the standards of the Emperor used in parade, the plow preparing the soil for seeding, axes, and digging tools, <sup>4</sup> all suggest the cross to him. The brazen serpent in the wilderness was in the form of a cross. <sup>5</sup> Justin argues that the inspiration of the Scriptures was given to teach these meanings which he, himself, has read into the verses and incidents. To us, this method of allegory is unintelligible. But to the ancients it was accepted as a proper method of interpretation. Of course the enemies of Christianity could use

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1. Galatians, 4: 24.
  2. Dial. 134.
  3. Ibid.
  4. 1 Ap. 55.
  5. Ibid., 60.

allegory as well. It was sometimes an embarrassment to the Apologists as well as an assistance.

Lest we make the case too strong against Justin, consider some favorable elements in his authorship. Here, again, we must judge him in relation to his contemporaries and not in comparison with writers today. First, Justin was better informed than most of his contemporaries. He quotes Homer,<sup>1</sup> Euripides,<sup>2</sup> Xenophon, Menander, Timaeus, and most of the poets. He evidently had more than an amateur's acquaintance with Plato. He had high and lofty plans in his writings.<sup>3</sup> He has lived in the affection of the church because of his candor, his transparent sincerity and pastoral passion. He was a true Christian in that he had the evangelistic passion. In the Dialogue he several times expresses his desire to help Trypho. And he concludes his work with a most impassioned plea for the Jews' conversion to Christianity, "Assent, therefore, and pour no ridicule on the Son of God".<sup>4</sup> Critics usually comment on Justin's freedom from rhetorical exaggeration. He was not flamboyant. He has a simple blundering irregular style, but it is sincere, full of courage and honest. His saintly heart beats in every word he writes. He impresses his readers with the fact that he believes what he says, and has staked all on its truthfulness. Furthermore, his life is thrown into the balance and is cheerfully risked upon the consequences of his ministry. He lives in constant expectation of arrest and martyrdom.<sup>5</sup> The truth of what he says is to him of the greatest importance. It is demonstrated by the word of God,

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1. Catholic Encyclopedia, Article, Justin Martyr.
  2. 1 Ap. 39.
  3. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 90.
  4. Dial. 137.
  5. 2 Ap. 3.

the heroic martyrdom of the followers of Christ, the moral purity and beauty of the Christian ethic. The fact that the works of Justin have been preserved and the writings of his contemporary Apologists lost testifies to the esteem in which Justin was held by the early church. They must have recognized him as one of their greatest Apologists. Eusebius may well be taken as representing the opinion of the general church when he characterizes Justin's works as "the treatises of an educated intelligence trained in theology, which are full of helpfulness."<sup>1</sup>

Justin Martyr has been one of the outstanding Christian authorities since his own generation, and it is natural that many forgeries and anonymous writings should traditionally have been ascribed to him.<sup>2</sup> Several works of his have been entirely lost -- Against Heresies, Against Marcion,<sup>4</sup> On the Soul,<sup>5</sup> On Nature,<sup>6</sup> A Refutation of the Chief Reproaches Against Christianity,<sup>7</sup> and A Psalter.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the above there are<sup>9</sup> works ascribed to Justin Martyr which are still extant as follows:

1. Apology for the Christians to Antoninus Pius
2. Apology for the Christians to the Roman Senate
3. Dialogue with Tyrpho the Jew
4. Hortatory Address to the Greeks
5. Address to the Greeks
6. On the Unity of God
7. To Diognetus
8. A Fragment on the Resurrection
9. Exposition of the True Faith
10. Letter to Zenas and Serenus
11. Refutation of Certain Aristotelian Doctrines
12. Questions and Answers to the Orthodox
13. Christian Questions asked of the Greeks.

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1. Eusebius, op. cit., IV. 18.
2. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 78.
3. 1 Ap. 26.
4. Irenaeus, Haer. IV, xi, 2.
5. Hist. Eccl. IV, xviii, 5.
6. Bib. cod., 125.
7. Ibid.
8. Hist. Eccl. IV. xviii, 5.
9. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 79.



The question of the authenticity of the works of Justin has<sup>1</sup> been thoroughly dealt with by Semisch and Harnack. The consensus of opinion now is that only the first three works listed above are demonstrably Justin's -- the First Apology, the Second Apology, and the Dialogue with Trypho. The text of the genuine works is confined to a single Manuscript -- Paris 450, written in 1364. The spurious writings are preserved in the same document. The basis for rejecting the spurious writings is the difference in style and in some cases historic statements which could not apply to the time of Justin. So far as this thesis is concerned we shall recognize only the three admittedly genuine works.

### The First Apology

The salutation of the First Apology reads as follows: "To the Emperor Titus, Aelius, Adrianus, Antoninus Pius Augustus Ceasar, and to his son, Verissimus the Philosopher, the natural son of Caesar, and the adopted son of Pius, a lover of learning, and to the sacred Senate, with the whole people of the Romans, I, Justin, ..... present this address and petition in behalf of those of all nations who are unjustly hated and wantonly abused, myself being one of them."<sup>2</sup> Verissimus is Marcus Aurelius and Lucius is Commodus. Goodenough, discussing the date, comes to the conclusion that it was written soon after 150 A.D.<sup>3</sup> At the time Justin wrote this Apology there was comparative quiet as to persecution though the government was officially against Christianity. As soon as Marcus Aurelius came to the throne persecutions were resumed. This Stoic Emperor was known

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 79.
  2. 1 Ad. 1.
  3. Goodenough, Ibid., p. 81.

for his fine ideals and yet he was active against the church. He regarded Christians as obstinate, and for that reason, worthy of death. The position of the Christians was always more or less precarious. When there was no official persecution there were minor sallies of local opposition. To bolster his defense Justin adds a Rescript of the Emperor Hadrian wherein he decrees Christians be not punished unless convicted of crime. Goodenough holds the theory that Justin intended the apology for the non-Christian public. He merely ascribed it to the Emperor to attract attention to it. The practice of writing apologies to the Emperors was in vogue among the Hellenistic Jews.

The outline of the First Apology is as follows:

- I. Chs. 1 - 12 Refutation of Charges.
  - " 4 - 5 Being a Christian is no crime.
  - " 6 - 12 Denies charge of atheism and immorality. Pagans commit immoral deeds with impunity. Christianity is the highest morality.
  
- II. Chs. 13- 68 Exposition of Christianity.
  - " 13 Worship the Trinity -- not equality in Godhead.
  - " 14- 20 The moral beauty and power of Christ's teachings. Sundry teachings of Jesus -- continency, turning other cheek, honesty, avoidance of demons, etc.
  - " 21- 22 Doctrine of the Logos: Life of Jesus not stranger than demon's claim for the gods.
  - " 23- 26 Work of the demons.
  - " 27- 29 Christian righteousness further defined.
  - " 30- 50 Sonship of Christ proved from Old Testament prophecy.
  - " 54- 57 Pretences of Evil Spirits.
  - " 58- 60 Plato learned philosophy from Moses (in Egypt).
  - " 61- 67 Worship and daily life of Christians described.

The First Apology is perhaps Justin's ablest work. In this work he is most direct and least discursive. The ideas presented in it are few and direct. The Christians are peaceful citizens, pay taxes

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 82.
  2. Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, Article, Justin Martyr.
  3. 1 Ap. 12.
  4. Ibid., 17.

practice virtue, avoid sexual vice, worship God first in authority, Christ second in prestige, and the Holy Spirit as third. To Justin the Trinity was not equal. The main ideas in the teachings of Jesus were emphasized. The authorities are urged to place the Christians on the same basis before the law as any other class of citizens. He attacks pagan idolatry and immorality. He attributes the evil confronting Christians to the work of the demons. He threatens eternal punishment to all foes of the Gospel if they do not cease to punish Christians.

### Second Apology

The Second Apology was written much later than the first. Persecutions of Marcus Aurelius were in vogue. A pagan husband of a Christian woman became enraged because his wife insisted upon being a Christian and reported her to the authorities. The result was she, with two others, was executed under Urbicus, prefect of Rome. This incident inspired the writing of this second appeal. It is addressed to the Roman Senate. This is a short apology.

The Apology opens with an account of the Urbicus Persecution. From that it elaborates on a few of the points mentioned in the First Apology. The Logos doctrine is further discussed introducing for the first time the "spermatic logos" idea. The reason found in man is a fragment of the universal reason in the world. A germ of it is in all people. Great men have more of it than insignificant people. In Christ the Logos is in full power.

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1. 1 Ap. 15.
  2. 2 Ap. 2.
  3. Ibid.



There has been much discussion among scholars as to the origin of the Second Apology. <sup>1</sup> Some have argued for the second being only an appendix of the first. In the Paris MSS. it is published as the beginning of the First Apology. <sup>2</sup> Eusebius said there were two Apologies by Justin. Summing up the discussion of Goodenough we may say there probably was a Second Apology much longer than the present treatise. There are two references to things supposed to be said elsewhere in this Apology but which are not in the present Apology. Probably this portion was the most original of the longer Apology and was thus preserved because of that fact. The lost portion was only a repetition of material already in the First Apology. Goodenough does not prove his case but makes a very reasonable hypothesis.

#### The Dialogue with Trypho.

The Dialogue is very long and dull. For these reasons it has not attracted the attention of scholars like the Apologies. It is undoubtedly a genuine work of Justin. His style shows up here as being truly his own. There are so many digressions, such profuse and tedious quotations from the prophets that we cannot doubt it's being Justin's work. Justin conceived a grand design in the Dialogue but failed to carry it out as well as he conceived it. <sup>3</sup>

Several views have been held as to the personality of Trypho. First, some have held this dialogue to be historical. They contend there was a real debate which took place for two days between Justin and Trypho.

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., pp. 86-87.
  2. Hist. Eccl. IV, xviii, 2.
  3. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 87.

Eusebius inclines to that view. The Dialogue seems to be a collection of all possible arguments assembled into one work. Trypho is a straw man. It is not likely a Jew of education would be so submissive while Justin pours out his condemnation of him and his people. Second, Trypho has been identified with Rabbi Tarphon. Eusebius says Trypho was one of the most famous Jews of the day.<sup>2</sup> Rabbi Tarphon was one of the most anti Christian men of antiquity. It is inconceivable that he should be so meek and mild as Justin's antagonist. While the person may be a straw man the arguments which Trypho voices are exactly those of the Jews of that time.<sup>3</sup> Trypho has read the Gospels and conversed with Christians both acts having been forbidden by orthodox Judaism.<sup>4</sup> Trypho is the ideal Jew who embodies in himself both the Palestinian and Alexandrian types of Judaism. It seems Goodenough makes his point that Justin is writing a dialogue after the model of Plato. It is not a report of an actual discussion. Trypho is a fictitious character but one remarkably true to life.

Third, the Dialogue was probably written to appeal to the Gentiles. It is addressed to Marcus Pompey. This is a Gentile name. It could not be intended for the Jews for there would not be the need for such detailed quotation from Scripture. The Jew knew his Old Testament. When Justin quotes from one of the Minor Prophets he calls him "one of the twelve".<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Justin's charges of immorality, crucifixion of Christ, hardheartedness, against the Jews would have been discourteous had he been writing to a Jew. Evidently Marcus Pompey was interested in

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1. Hist. Eccl. IV, 18, 6.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 95.
  4. Ibid., p. 94.
  5. Dial. 19, 5.

philosophy. This fact would explain Justin's introduction in which he recounts his quest of philosophy and conversion from Platonism to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> He argues that the higher mind in man is a part of the universal reason but that it is so blurred by the body that apart from Revelation man cannot see God. The prophets have given this Revelation. The writings of the Jews and the teachings of Christ are part and parcel of the same plan of Divine Revelation. Marcus Pompey must have been affected by the argument but, like the Jews, he remained stubborn and unyielding to the appeal. But the Jews' blindness is not to be considered as proof of the unworthiness of the message. The path to light is not philosophy but the Revelation which comes through the Prophets and is fully realized in Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

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A condensed outline of the Dialogue is as follows:

- I. Chs. 1 - 9 The Conversion of Justin.
- II. Chs. 11 -31 The Mosaic Law -- its Nature and Obligation.
- III. Chs. 32 -110 Jesus Christ -- His Nature and Significance.
- IV. Chs.111 -142 The True Israel -- The Christians.

The first division has been discussed in chapter three where we gave some space to the Conversion of Justin.

The discussion of the Mosaic Law would naturally occupy Justin's time. There were many pamphlets current on the controversy between the Jews and the Christians. Trypho criticises Justin for pretending to know God and failing to keep the law -- circumcision, sabbaths, etc. Justin replies by saying the Law was given for a reproach against the Jews because of their hardheartedness. Originally the Jews were not compelled to observe the law. Circumcision was instituted so that the Jew could be

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1. Dial. 9.

2. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 100.

3. See Ante Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1. Text of Dialogue, Chs. 1 - 142.



identified for punishment. This punishment came when Hadrian forbade the Jews to live in Jerusalem. The obligations to keep the meats, sabbaths, special days were burdens placed upon them by God for their sins. The Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. were obedient and righteous and hence saved without the law. The law is done away in Christ. The righteousness demanded by Him is that of the heart and life, not ceremonial observance. The Christians offer sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving and holy living. Their sacrifices are more acceptable to God than those of the Jews because they eventuate in martyrdom. Hence the Mosaic Law is no longer binding upon Christians.

The third section - Jesus Christ as the Messiah - is the longest and most tiresome section of the Dialogue. His quotations are so long, so minute and his exegesis so fanciful that one becomes weary before the section is finished. When analyzed we find only a few conceptions actually discussed. Justin represents Trypho as desiring proof that Jesus is the Christ. In the discussion Trypho offers several objections and difficulties. He understands that Jesus' disciples eat meat offered to idols. This is contrary to Jewish procedure. The preexistence of Jesus is also unthinkable to him. The Scriptures convince Trypho that Elijah must come and announce the Messiah. This does not seem to have been done in this case. How can God become man? The passage where the virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son can be interpreted as a young woman and could refer to a married woman. The greatest obstacle of all is the crucifixion of Jesus. The Scriptures say "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree". How is it possible to accept a man as Saviour who is cursed of God?

Justin's method of proof is to cite all the passages in the Old Testament which have ever been applied to Christ and claim them as his evidence. There is not space for a detailed description of his argument. In general he takes all the passages which indicate power, glory, or honor, to any individual and ascribes them to Christ. Just a sample - "Lift up your heads, O ye gates and let the king of glory come in". This is the voice of God commanding the servants in Heaven to admit Christ to enter. Justin distinguishes between the two advents. The prophecies which were not fulfilled at the first will be reserved for the second. He makes the lamb, oblation of flour, the priests robes, Moses holding up his arms in battle, riding upon an ass and the foal of an ass, the blood of the grape, all typify Christ in his death and atonement.

The fourth section deals with the True Israel. Justin argues that the chosen people of God are henceforth to be the Christians. The Jews have forfeited their position through the crucifixion of Christ. The seed promised to Isaac refers to Christians and not human offspring. He says Psalm 82 calls Christians sons of God. Wrestling Jacob is best fulfilled in the contest between Jesus and the Devil. Deuteronomy 32:43 refers to the conversion of the Gentiles. Justin ends his argument with

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1. Psa. 24:7.
  2. Dial., 40.
  3. Ibid., 41.
  4. Ibid., 42.
  5. Ibid., 90.
  6. Ibid., 53.
  7. Ibid., 54.
  8. Dial., 120.
  9. Ibid., 123.
  10. Ibid., 123.
  11. Ibid., 130.

a statement of appeal to the Jews. He says to reject Christ is to re-  
ject God and also the Prophets. <sup>1</sup> The time is short before the second  
Advent.

It is easy to criticise Justin as a writer. That is because of the increased heritage which we have through the progress of science and scholarship since his day. Whatever his defects he is the brightest light of his century. To his own generation his message had an appeal which transformed life and developed character.

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1. Dial., 136.



## CHAPTER V

### THE THEOLOGY OF JUSTIN MARTYR

#### A. God

Justin's idea of God was derived from three sources --<sup>1</sup> Palestinian Judaism, Hellenic Judaism, and Christianity. At different times he taught all three conceptions. These influences were not exclusive of but complimentary to each other. They thus make his total message on God.

First, the Hellenic influence. Justin believed God to be transcendent, unbegotten, impassive, perfect, self-contained, unmoved,<sup>2</sup> unchanging, unnamed First Cause. He rejected the Stoic idea of material immanence<sup>3</sup> because he wanted a God who was unmoved and unchangeable. "The Ineffable Father neither has come to any place, nor walks, nor sleeps, nor rises up, but remains in his own place, wherever that is, having neither eyes nor ears."<sup>4</sup> Justin asserted the stability of God. His character is fixed.<sup>5</sup> He is not identified with the world. Undoubtedly Justin was affected by Plato and Aristotle in thus making God the unmoved mover of things in the world. God had some sort of a form but not the form idol makers use. They copy the images of the demons and then describe<sup>6</sup> their work as the portrait of God. Justin calls God unbegotten but uses the Greek word agennatos in a confused sense. The Greeks used agenatos

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 138.

2. Ibid.

3. 2 Ap. 7.

4. Dial., 127.

5. Ibid., 3.

6. 1 Ap., 9.

for the uncreated God. But the word with two n's means unbegotten. The two n's (agennatos) refers to Christ as unbegotten but not eternal. Justin used them interchangeably.<sup>1</sup> The namelessness of God arises from his unbegottenness. There was no one to name him since he was the first of all beings. Yet Justin did not go so far as to say God was absolute. Men were dependent upon revelation for their knowledge of God. This revelation was given through the prophets and Christ. God was active after the fashion of Aristotle's conception of the Unmoved First Cause as mover of all else in the world.<sup>2</sup> "God maintains the same nature and is the cause of all other things."<sup>3</sup> Justin clearly shows his familiarity with Hellenic Judaism. The Greek Philosophy, coming through Platonism and Alexandrian Judaism, gave him this conception of God.

Second, the influence of Judaism. Justin was a deeply religious man. God was also the creator and preserver of the world. In this mood he thought of God as somewhat like a father in a human form with some differences. Contest with the Gnostics forced Justin to emphasize the creative function of God. He denied that God delegated the creation to some lower form of being. He is somewhat vague here. He seems to say that the Logos did the creating yet insists that God did it. He insists upon the freedom of God in creation.<sup>4</sup> His righteousness is maintained. In some moods Justin writes like a Jew.

Third, we see traces in Justin of the Christian conception of a loving God. Von Englehardt tried to prove that Justin knew nothing

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 123.  
2. Ibid., p. 133. Cf. Aristotle Meta L.7.  
3. Dial. 3, 129.  
4. 2 Ap. 7.

of the love of God and even denied the personality of God.<sup>1</sup> There are references in his writings which disprove Von Engelhardt's thesis.<sup>2</sup> In the First Apology we read of an "utterance from God the Father and Lord of all". In chapter 28 he says all who assert God is not interested in man utters the greatest blasphemy of all. He dwells upon the grace of God by which men are saved. He expresses the "hope that some of you (Jews) may be found to be of the remnant which has been left by the grace of the Lord of Sabaeth for the eternal salvation".<sup>3</sup> While Justin taught the love of God he did not assign to it a very large part of his message. He dwells more on the punishment which will come to those who disobey God.

Justin's doctrine of God, then, may be said to be somewhat confused. In general he held to the transcendence and unchangeableness of God who was far away from the world. Yet, through the Logos, God creates and comes into contact with the world. At last he became incarnate in the Christ. At the same time God was a creator and preserver of the world who was very holy and righteous. The forgiveness of God was not prominent. The power to regenerate man and to keep him true was dominant in Justin's theology.

#### B. The Logos

The doctrine of the Logos is perhaps Justin's most significant contribution to the Christian thought of the second century. The Logos idea was not original with him. We know that the Stoics taught the Logos doctrine but with them it was identical with God and a material substance at that. Plato posited the Logos as an intermediary between the

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 136.  
2. 1 Ap. 44.  
3. Dial. 32.



Absolute God and the world of matter. Christianity, in Justin's time, was confronted with a very practical problem. Jesus Christ was real in the Christian's experience and regarded as a divine personality. The church desired to have Him presented as an historic person in terms of a cosmic deity. Then, too, they wished to make a nexus between the far away Absolute God and the material world. The Logos for Justin became the explanation of the Christian doctrine of the Son of God. Several elements entered into his doctrine of the Logos.

First, the pre-existence of the Second God. Justin seeks to persuade Trypho that "there is a God and Lord beside the creator of the universe who is also called an angel because he announces to men whatsoever the creator wishes; but there is no other God higher than the creator."<sup>2</sup> His proof is of two kinds. He appeals to theophanies in the Old Testament.<sup>3</sup> Three strangers appear to Abram under the oak in Mamre.<sup>4</sup> Two are angels and one is God. We know one is God because he is the messenger to announce to Sarah she shall have a son. Later, this same being returns and is called in the Scriptures God. He receives power from the God of Heaven to rain down fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah. This being seems to have an independent personality and also a divine nature. Again, Justin uses Genesis 1:25 as evidence of the pre-existence of the Logos. "Let us make man" is addressed by the Father to somebody --to whom? Some have interpreted it as applying to himself as a monologue, others to the elements, still others

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 139.
  2. Dial. 56.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Genesis, 18:2.

<sup>1</sup>  
to angels. Justin holds that the Father addressed another being differing numerically from Himself but identical in intelligent initiative.

Second, the origin of the Logos. Justin uses two conceptions to express his idea of the origin of the Logos. First, he calls Him the begotten of the Father. <sup>2</sup> He seems to have seen the distinction which later came to be made by the church between "begotten" and "made". He wished to guard against a too anthropomorphic conception of begotten. Likewise he denied that the Christ was begotten by abscission. His second conception was emanation. A few years later Irenaeus was to write his great work against the Gnostic heresy wherein he denounces the doctrine of emanation. He expresses his thought in three figures: (1) light from the sun -- the rays of light are dependent upon the source so is Christ dependent upon the Father; (2) fire from fire -- a candle is lighted from a fire without the original fire becoming diminished in size or power; (3) thought begets speech but does not decrease the original thought any. A person may think thoughts and actually give them to people without impoverishing his own thinking. In this way the Logos came from the Father. Angels and Christ, according to Justin, are alike emanations from God. Christ seems to be of the same metaphysical substance as the angels. He, <sup>3</sup> however, has been greatly elevated in rank above the angels. Justin is inconsistent in regard to his conception of the Logos. He sometimes leans toward the idea that the Logos is a separate personality. But when he comes in contact with the Gnostics he swings back to make God the creator

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1. Dial. 62.

2. 1 Ap. 53.

3. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 149.

and the Logos a sort of personalized attribute of the Father.

Third, the nature of the Logos. Justin conceived the Logos<sup>2</sup> to have been begotten not long before the creation of the world. The Logos is subordinate to the Father. Monotheism is not based upon the unity of the ousia in the Godhead as was the case among theologians of the Nicaean controversy; it was based by Justin upon a subordination in the Godhead. The Heteros Theos of Justin became an emphasis upon the heteros rather than upon the theos. There was a difference in number but not in nature. "The Second God is distinct from Him who made all things, I mean<sup>3</sup> He is distinct in number and not in intellectual initiative". The Logos is sometimes asserted to be a distinct being and at other times to be like the angels. The elevation of the Logos to a rank next to the Father was accomplished by the will of God. Dialogue 86 tells about the titles given the Logos by the Father. In Dialogue 93 we are told that God wishes the Son to be worshipped.

Fourth, the cosmic significance of the Logos. Justin calls Him the first born of God.<sup>4</sup> In a very interesting passage in the Dialogue<sup>5</sup> the cross is given a cosmic significance. The sails which drive the boats, the plows which cultivate the soil, the arms of the human body, the nose on the face, the banners of royalty in parades -- are all in the form of the cross. This suggests that the Logos is master of the sea, the earth, the human body, and political governments. The great conception is

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 151.

2. Dial., 67.

3. Dial., 56.

4. 1 Ap. 53.

5. Dial., 159, 160.



the spermatic logos. It was not original with Justin. The Stoics used it as the dynamic principle of life. The original idea refers to the living germ in the seed of the male which impregnates the female and thus begets life. The Platonists called it a "gaseous effluence from God" which took on form and grew. Philo regarded it as the substance of all things which had creative and ruling power.<sup>1</sup> Justin conceived of the Logos "as the spiritual effulgence from God bringing the life and intelligence of God into the world of matter."<sup>2</sup> Creation was brought about as follows: the spermatic logos entered the womb of Mary and beget Christ; it entered the rib of Adam in Eden and beget Eve; it enters the unformed matter of the universe and creation is begotten. Of course, the figure of intercourse does not apply literally to the projection of the spermatic logos into matter. It is merely suggestive. In the matter of creation of the material world God accomplished it by word (logos) of mouth. He said, "let there be light and there was light". Following Philo, Justin held that the Logos both created and ruled the world. As has been said the Logos was sometimes thought of as personal and at other times regarded as impersonal.

Fifth, many titles were ascribed to the Logos. Theos, Kurios,<sup>3</sup> Angelos, Dunamis, The East, A stone or Rock, Archa, Day, Light, Wisdom,<sup>4</sup> Man,<sup>5</sup> Israel,<sup>6</sup> Sufferer,<sup>7</sup> First Born, Priest and King.<sup>8</sup> The Stoics had a habit of ascribing names to the Logos, thinking they were thus defining

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 161.

2. Ibid., 162.

3. Dial. 62.

4. Ibid.

5. Dial. 17.

6. Dial. 62.

7. Dial. 123.

8. Dial. 123.

9. Dial. 126.

10. Dial. 118.

the term. Philo followed in their tracks and Justin seems to be possessed with a special veneration for Philo.

Sixth, if we summarize the situation confronting Justin we find he had three traditions in which to fit his doctrine of the Logos. There was the synoptic tradition presenting a Logos as a distinct personality. The Greek-Jewish tradition presented the Logos as impersonal attribute of the Absolute God. Then there was the Gnostic influence which insisted upon making the Logos an intermediary person between the exalted God and the evil world. This Logos did the creating because God was too pure to soil his hands with evil. Justin opposed the Gnostics and insisted upon the supreme God as creator. He held that the Logos was pre-existent but not eternal. He identified the Logos with Christ. He claimed that the Logos was available for all men of all religions and ages. All the good that the ancient worthies had done was due to the fact that they had a part of the Logos in them. <sup>1</sup> Socrates and Heraclitus as well as Abraham and Moses were counted worthy due to this cause. <sup>2</sup> But the full manifestation of the Logos is to be found in the historic Christ. Justin helped to vindicate Christianity to the Greek world by his doctrine of the Logos.

### C. Christ

The term "Logos" was used to describe the pre-existent Christ. We now come to discuss Justin's conception of the historic Christ. In the second century philosophy was being discredited in that it failed to give men the communion with God they so much desired. <sup>3</sup> Reason, while

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1. 2 Ap. 10.

2. Ibid., 8.

3. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 232.

valuable, is insufficient when taken alone. Revelation is necessary to satisfy the needs of man. God has revealed Himself to the world through the Old Testament Scriptures and in still completer form in the incarnate Christ. The early Christians shouted from crosses, arenas and execution blocks their unshakable faith in Christ. This conviction amazed the ancient world. Nothing like it was ever seen before and quite seldom since. To Justin Christ was the Son of God, the incarnate Logos, a person-<sup>1</sup> ality revealing the mercy and will of God. The pre-incarnate Logos who created the world, appeared as a messenger of God in the Old Testament theophanies, was in the hearts of the noblest of the ancients in fragmentary form, was foretold by the Prophets, but now bursts into full glory in the personality of Jesus of Nazareth.

If we ask how did this incarnation take place, Justin has<sup>2</sup> two answers: first, the power of God (dunamis Theou) or the Holy Spirit (pneuma hagian) overshadowed Mary, the Virgin. Justin accepted the act as the work of the power of God but was not content to ascribe it to the Holy Spirit because that would ascribe fatherhood to the third person of the Trinity and give Him precedence over Christ. Second, the agent was<sup>3</sup> the pre-existent Logos. The power belonged to the Father, was given to the Logos for this special purpose, and was regarded as still belonging to God.<sup>4</sup> No mediating personality was needed. God impregnated the Virgin. The virgin birth was accepted by Justin but not with the same confidence with which he held other doctrines. In two places he doubts

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 234.
  2. 1 Ap. 23.
  3. 1 Ap. 46; Dial. 139.
  4. Dial. 101.



his ability to prove the virgin birth. The sonship of Christ is not dependent upon it but can be accepted on the basis of the teaching of Christ, the fulfilled prophecy concerning him and upon his miracles.

The nature of Christ is thus divine. Mary did not give him any of her blood or flesh. She was merely the instrument used by God operating through the Logos.<sup>2</sup> Christ did not have human connections. Undoubtedly Justin is trying to avoid any contamination of Christ arising from being born through natural human process. Christ had a full human nature, however. He did not merely assume the nature of man and remain a divine personality in the shell of a human body. He was changed into a man with body, soul and logos or spirit.<sup>3</sup> In Justin's thought "Jesus Christ is the Son and Messenger of God, who formerly, being the Logos, appeared at one time in the form of fire, and in another in the likeness of bodies; now, by the will of God he has become man for the sake of the human race."<sup>4</sup>

But Christ was in all essential points human. He was arbitrarily made such by the power of God. He grew normally from infancy to manhood.<sup>5</sup> He had flesh and blood,<sup>6</sup> ate food,<sup>7</sup> worked for his father in the carpenter shop at Nazareth. In his temptation Christ accomplished one of his many victories over Satan.<sup>8</sup> His crucifixion was the great event in

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1. 1 Ap. 22; Dial. 48.
  2. Dial. 76.
  3. Goodenough, op. cit., 241.
  4. 1 Ap. 63.
  5. Dial. 84.
  6. 1 Ap. 66.
  7. Dial. 88.
  8. Dial. 125.

his life. In death he was in the power of Satan. He had to be resur-<sup>1</sup>  
rected to become released and to be admitted into the heavens.

#### D. The Holy Spirit

It is very difficult to determine just what Justin believed about the Holy Spirit. The reason for this is not hard to find. The conception of the Spirit was clear in Judaism; it was also accepted by<sup>2</sup> pagan philosophy. In fact it was likely to be too commonly accepted. Furthermore, the topic of absorbing interest to the early Christians was the Logos-Christ. Hence, there was but little speculation concerning the Holy Spirit. Scholars have differed on Justin's doctrine as follows:<sup>3</sup>

(1) He has a full doctrine of the Trinity. This was held by Stahlin.<sup>4</sup> But in his reference to the Trinity in the First Apology he places Christ second and the Holy Spirit third. In the formula for baptism the candidate is baptised in the name of all three.<sup>5</sup> Manifestly Justin did not place the three persons upon the same equality. He had no doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>6</sup> (2) The Logos and Holy Spirit are identical. There is confusion in the function of the Logos and the Spirit in Justin's mind. The baptismal formula seems to indicate they are not interchangeable. (3) Von Englehardt held that the personality of the Spirit was taught by Justin<sup>7</sup> but no assertion of divinity was made. Justin certainly classes the Spirit with the Father in the baptism formula. This is unintelligible

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1. Dial. 122.

2. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 177.

3. Ibid.

4. 1 Ap. 13.

5. 1 Ap. 62; 65.

6. Paul quoted by Goodenough, op. cit., p. 176.

7. Ibid.

except on the theory of His divinity.

Several functions are ascribed to the Spirit by Justin. First, the inspiration of prophecy. In the matter of prophecy he is confused; sometimes he says the Spirit moved the Prophets and at other times he says it was the Logos. . The Holy Spirit empowered Christ at baptism. Justin held that from that time on the Holy Spirit identified Himself with Christ and was given by Christ to His own followers. When Christians were baptized they were baptized in the Spirit. It was the Spirit who gave the gifts of the Charisma to the Christians. The power to understand the Scriptures was imparted by the Spirit.

Was the Holy Spirit personal or impersonal in the thought of Justin? We cannot say definitely. Some passages incline toward the impersonal conception: Justin says only the Logos inspired the prophets; the Dialogue never mentions the Spirit as a divine personality; conceptions of "pouring the spirit", "baptism in the spirit", seem to favor impersonality. On the other hand Justin argues for the personality of the Spirit in baptism formulas and the different rank of the three in the Godhead. Unquestionably he meant to convey the idea of the Spirit's personality. He confused the matter in his description of functions.

The Holy Spirit was generated by what Justin calls emanation from the Father. He had only one mode for the Logos, the Holy Spirit and the angels. They differed in rank but not in the manner of their origin.

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1. Paul quoted by Goodenough, op. cit., p. 176.
  2. 1 Ap. 33.
  3. Dial. 87.
  4. Ibid., 29.
  5. Ibid., 87.
  6. Ibid., 4.
  7. 1 Ap. 33.



All are described as dunameis Theou.

E. The Lower Powers

1. The Angels

Justin was a child of his age and accepted the reality of angels though he could not account for their existence. He follows the Palestinian tradition in this respect rather than Philo.<sup>1</sup> He taught that there were both temporary and permanent angels.<sup>2</sup> The idea of temporary angels was a special act of God to send a messenger upon an errand. After the mission was completed the angel returned to the father and ceased to be. The angels were made rather than created. They came into being the same way the Logos was begotten. They emanated from the Father by divine will. Justin thought of them as something between corporeal and immaterial beings. Immateriality was a conception which had not yet been conceived by man. That honor was reserved for Origin. In some way fire seemed to be the best figure under which to conceive of the angels.<sup>3</sup> Manna was called the food of the angels which they consumed not as a man eats food but as a fire burns wood. What was the attitude of the early Christians toward the angels? Justin makes one strange statement, "Both Him and the Son (who came forth from Him and taught us these things, and the host of other good angels who follow are made like to Him) and the Prophetic Spirit, we worship and adore".<sup>4</sup> In this passage he places the angels above the Holy Spirit

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 189.

2. Dial. 128.

3. Dial. 57.

4. 1 Ap. 6.

and claims to worship them. Scholars feel that the general attitude of Justin cannot be predicated upon this single passage. In all probability he regarded angels as ministering servants of God, personal and worthy of respect but not on a level with deity.

## 2. Demons

The existence of demons was likewise unquestioned by the ancient world and occupied a far more prominent place in the thought of the people than did that of good angels. Demons originated from angels. Originally Satan rebelled in Heaven and was cast out drawing a large number of other angels with him who became associated with him in seducing the world to evil.<sup>1</sup> Church Fathers speculated much upon the origin, motive, work, and final overthrow of the Devil.<sup>2</sup> Justin does not single out Satan for his wrath to such a degree as became common among later theologians. He does speak of him as falling when he deceived mother Eve.<sup>3</sup> Justin dwells principally upon demons rather than Satan. They originated through angels cohabiting with daughters of men whose offspring became demons who dwelt upon earth and occupied their time seducing men to evil. "The angels transgressed this appointment, were captivated by women, and begat children who are those that are called demons; and besides, they afterward subdued the human race to themselves, partly by magical writings, and partly by fears and punishments they occasioned, and partly by teaching them to offer sacrifices.. of which things they stood in need after they were enslaved by lustful

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1. Father Coulange, The Life of the Devil, Ch. 1.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Dial. 124.

passions; and among them sowed murders, wars, adulteries, intemperate  
deeds, and all wickedness.<sup>1</sup> The spirits of the wicked dead were also  
demons.<sup>2</sup>

The methods by which demons carry on their wickedness are many, among which we may mention the following: First, they seduce men by riveting their attention upon earthly and material things. Having heard the Prophets read, the demons, knowing the prophecies which are to be fulfilled when Christ came, inspired pagan religious to incorporate these same stories into their literature. The stories about Aesculapius healing the sick, Perseus being born of a virgin, etc. are all crass forgeries and imitations of the true events in the life of Christ.<sup>3</sup> Especially the Virgin Birth, the temptations and the crucifixion of Christ were objects of attack.<sup>4</sup> Satan, knowing he is doomed is especially angry and anxious to do all the hurt he can.

Second, demons seek to destroy the truth. They raise up heresies to draw away the church from following Christ.<sup>5</sup> They desire sacrifices and appeal to men through that medium. Demons copied the rite of baptism and the eucharist. Heathen temples instituted washings and libations in their ceremonies.<sup>6</sup> They even take off their shoes in imitation of the command of Moses at the burning bush.<sup>7</sup> The mysteries of Mithra have imitated the Eucharist.<sup>8</sup> Failing in these methods to

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1. 2 Ap. 5.
  2. 1 Ap. 18.
  3. 1 Ap. 53,54,64.
  4. 2 Ap. 5,7,8.
  5. Dial. 82.
  6. 1. Ap. 62.
  7. Ibid.
  8. 2 Ap. 1.



destroy the band of Christians, they instigate persecution.<sup>1</sup> Justin's Second Apology was written because of the persecuting activity of Urbicus,<sup>2</sup> inspired by demons to hate the Christians.

Justin believed in demoniacal possession. In this he followed the Synoptic tradition. The apostles believed demons possessed people and caused disease, especially of the epileptic type. The situation was not hopeless, however, for the name of Christ was a powerful exorcising force. "Every demon, when exorcised in the name of this very Son of God .... is overcome and subdued."<sup>3</sup> Recital of the creed accompanied the exorcism.<sup>4</sup> Justin calls attention to the fact that the names of Emperor or statesmen will not cause demons to leave. They are afraid of the name of Christ.<sup>5</sup> The cross triumphed over the demons, and subdued them and will damn them.<sup>6</sup> Exorcism grew into an office in the church. It is hard for us to really appreciate the terrible pall the presence of demons cast upon second century peoples. The coming of modern science and biblical criticism has broken the grip of this fear upon the hearts of men.<sup>7</sup>

#### F. The World

To Justin the manner of creation was of no very great interest. He did not connect evil with matter as later theologians were wont to do. He assumed the material universe. Creation was all done by God

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1. Dial. 131.
  2. 2 Ap. 1.
  3. Dial. 85.
  4. 2 Ap. 66.
  5. Dial. 94.
  6. 1 Ap. 45.
  7. Dial. 76.

and the Logos. Justin, after the custom of Platonism, seems to assume the existence of matter but scholars do not think he went all the way in dualism. He was not sufficiently versed in philosophy to trace matter to an "existential antithesis to God". He does say, "He in the beginning did of His goodness, for man's sake, create all things out of unformed matter"<sup>1</sup>. This quotation says about all Justin thought on the subject, viz., that God created because of His own goodness and made the world and the heavenly forces for the ministry of man.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps Justin's interest as apologist caused him to neglect his thought on the matter of the origin of the physical world. Had he been writing to Christians he might have dwelt upon items of interest to them. At any rate speculation upon the reality of matter had not yet dawned among theologians.

#### G. Man

Scholars are inclined toward belief that Justin held to the doctrine of trichotomy -- the three part man.<sup>3</sup> His discussion of the body was rather meagre. He held that man was made from "the earth and other similar substances"<sup>4</sup>. He held that man was shaped by God<sup>5</sup> and not by angels.<sup>6</sup> Since evil was placed in the freedom of man Justin did not connect evil and matter. The flesh was, therefore, not a serious problem with Justin. Apparently the body was the least important part of man. The second part of man, the soul, received a larger treatment

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1. 1 Ap. 10.
  2. 2 Ap. 4:5
  3. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 219.
  4. Dial. 62.
  5. Dial. 29.
  6. Dial. 62.

at the hands of Justin. The soul (psyche) was the seat of the personality,<sup>1</sup> the home of emotions and desires,<sup>2</sup> and the hopes of man.<sup>3</sup> Some mentality seemed to be reposed in the soul for Justin warns that it is very difficult to change the soul.<sup>4</sup> The soul preserved sensations after death.<sup>5</sup> The will of man was placed in the soul and the business of the individual was to keep the soul pure so that it might continue to be fit for the indwelling of the spirit.<sup>6</sup> The origin of the soul is not clear.<sup>7</sup> He denied its pre-existence and transmigration and taught that it was begotten by God but separate from the body. He differed from Aristotle at this point.

The most important part of man Justin called interchangeably the spermatik logos or pneuma.<sup>8</sup> This was the higher reason in man which preserved the life of the soul, inspired man to noble things and revealed the true God. This spermatik logos was a part of the true logos. It was in every man in some degree though often veiled and thwarted by demons and human sin. Justin was careful to insist upon the fact that the Logos was not divisible. The presence in millions of men did not lessen the Logos left.<sup>10</sup> The figure was that of a spiritual flow rather than a kernel. This Logos in man gave him his rationality. Since the Logos was in all, great men of the past, like Socrates, who lived up to this light, were

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1. Dial. 105.
  2. Ibid., 8.
  3. Ibid., 44.
  4. 1 Ap. 12.
  5. Ibid., 18.
  6. Dial. 14.
  7. Ibid., 4.
  8. 2 Ap. 10.
  9. Dial. 6.
  10. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 216.



followers of Christ. Man can see God because he was in himself the Basilikos Nous which is part of God. Because all achievement is made through the Logos in man Justin could claim as belonging to Christians the wisdom of ancient worthies. This pneuma in man persuades him but does not coerce him into righteousness. Demons constantly oppose the pneuma in man. In fact the soul is the battleground of demons and the pneuma. Usually demons win, apart from Christ, but not always. Man is free to choose evil or good and the sole responsibility for the choice is his. He is surrounded by an evil environment, and the added work of demons usually persuades him to sin. Hell is provided as punishment for the wicked. After God is satisfied with the length of punishment the pneuma is withdrawn from the soul and personality is extinguished. The good await resurrection into eternal life. For Justin, man had a body, soul, and spirit.

#### H. Sin

Justin had no such doctrine of sin as was held by the Apostle Paul. To Paul sin was a very real and terrifying experience. His conception of Christ was in terms of forgiveness of sin. In Justin we see the influence of his Greek training. He was thinking more of immortality, the power of Christ to thwart demons, the incarnation and

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1. 2 Ap. 10.

2. Dial. 4.

3. 2 Ap. 13.

4. 1.Ap. 10.

5. Ibid. 28

6. Rainey, Robert, The Ancient Catholic Church, V.

mystery of the Logos. He accepted the reality of sin but was not distressed by it. In the story of his conversion<sup>1</sup> sin played no part. He was seeking truth and it was the belief that Christianity was the true philosophy that won him to the Christian faith. Justin believed in personal responsibility for his acts and that sin was committed by man's yielding to the suggestions of demons. Sin was conquered when Christ destroyed the power of demons. Sin was thus an act of rebellion against God rather than a state of corruption of the life. With rare exceptions he included the entire race among the sinners.

#### I. Redemption

Justin's view of redemption was largely eschatological. Forgiveness was experienced here but only to be fully enjoyed when Christ wrests the individual from the power of Satan at the Judgment. They have lost their "old filthy garments" but do not get their new ones until the establishment of the eternal kingdom.<sup>2</sup> In this redemption Christ had the following tasks to perform: first, he conquered the demons; second, He revealed the will of God, the power of demons, and man's destiny in hell or heaven; third, Christ dwells in Christians here and now. He calls them robes of Christ.<sup>3</sup> Just as the body dwells in a coat so Christ dwells in Christians. Here Justin is somewhat mystical though usually his conception was that of the ethical life. In the "illumination" the entire Logos comes

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1. Dial. 8,9.  
2. Ibid. 116.  
3. 1 Ap. 32.

<sup>1</sup>  
to man. He has much to say about the cosmic significance of the cross but does not link it up with any view of the atonement. He had no doctrine of the atonement. Salvation seems to be the high act of God. Christ smashes demons, conquers death and raises to immortality. Christ "served even to the slavery of the cross, for the various and many formed races of mankind, acquiring them by the blood and mystery of the cross."<sup>2</sup>

Man's part in redemption involved the following: first, belief in Christ. Christian revelation was preached by the apologists must be intellectually accepted. This included the doctrine that heretics and sinners are lost. To disbelieve is to be lost. Second, repentance was expected.<sup>3</sup> It was a prerequisite for baptism.<sup>4</sup> Third, baptism was the outward sign of acceptance of the new faith.<sup>5</sup> The candidate makes his profession of faith, fasts and prays, assisted by the congregation and brought to the water where he is baptized. He does not achieve purification, he receives it.<sup>6</sup> It is a washing unto rebirth. It seems Justin believed in baptismal regeneration as did many of his successors among the church fathers. To him salvation was possible without baptism, despite the statement just made. Old Testament worthies such as David were forgiven immediately upon repentance without baptism.<sup>7</sup> Baptism did not guarantee final salvation of the candidate. It put him in touch with a force by means of which he might attain salvation. At the judgment nothing

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1. Dial. 122.
  2. Ibid., 134.
  3. Ibid., 26.
  4. 1 Ap. 61.
  5. Ibid., 61
  6. 1 Ap. 66.
  7. Dial. 141.



counts but a man's moral life. Perhaps this had much to do in produc-<sup>1</sup>  
ing the marvelous piety of Christians of the second century.

### J. Eschatology

Since many references have been made throughout this essay to the eschatological views of Justin only a mere statement will be necessary here. In common with the humble Christians of his time, he believed in the Second Advent of Christ. He took the Old Testament prophecies which were not fulfilled at the First Advent and assigned them to his return. It was a glorious picture of personal and material power. It served to hearten Christians who were suffering ostracism and persecution. The usual increase of evil, coming of Elijah<sup>2</sup> and the preceding Parousia<sup>3</sup> antedates the Second Advent. The resurrection of the saints occurs at the Parousia.<sup>4</sup> Justin believed in the restoration of the decayed body.<sup>5</sup> He is not clear as to the reign of the thousand years. He indicates it will be in Jerusalem.<sup>6</sup> He limits it to the thousand years in one place<sup>7</sup> and in another speaks of the reign from Jerusalem as eternal.<sup>8</sup> The damned go at once to their own place. He is not clear on the eternality of punishment. He thinks they will be annihilated after God is satisfied with the time served. Perhaps the only thing we can say about his eschatology is to treat it in vague terms. He staked much upon the return of the Lord. It was to be a glorious reign though his conception of the details were not worked out.

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 268.

2. Dial. 49.

3. Ibid., 28.

4. 1. Ap. 19.

5. Ibid., 18.

6. Dial. 80.

7. Dial. 81.

8. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 280.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHURCH IN JUSTIN'S DAY

#### A. The Spread of Christianity

The conquest of the pagan world by the Christian Gospel is a fascinating story. It is difficult to see how a Christian can read that story without feeling his heart strangely warmed. Harnack has compiled the first references in Christian literature to the spread of Christianity<sup>1</sup> in what he regards as their chronological order. In Acts, 21:20 we read, "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed". Pliny in his letter to Trajan, written about the year 96, says "The infection of the superstition has spread not only through the cities but into villages and country districts." Justin begins his message to Antonius Pius with the statement, "On behalf of those in every race who are unjustly hated and abused, I being one of them."<sup>2</sup> Irenaeus says about the year 180, "Though scattered throughout the whole world, the church carefully keeps this preaching and faith."<sup>3</sup> Clement of Alexandria says, "The word of our teacher was poured out over the whole universe."<sup>4</sup> Eusebius quotes Polycrates who flourished about 190 as saying, "He met with Christian brethren from all over the world."<sup>5</sup> About 200 Tertullian boasts, "We are but of yesterday, yet we have filled all the places you frequent - cities, lodging houses, villages, townships, market places, town councils, palaces, senate and forum."<sup>6</sup> Origin in 250, after recounting some of the triumphs

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1. Harnack, Adolf, Mission and Expansion of Christianity, Ch. I. p. 1.
  2. 1 Ap. 1.
  3. Adv. Haer. I. x.2.
  4. Protrept. x.
  5. H. E. Bk. V. 24,7.
  6. de Princ. IV. 1, 1.

of the Gospel, says "The result is beyond human power."<sup>1</sup>

The number of Christians at any given period is impossible to compute accurately. Gibbon estimates the number at the time of Decius as one twentieth of the population; Satudlin raised the percentage to one half. The number was not equally distributed throughout the Empire. The most populous Christian centers during the first two centuries were Asia Minor, Bithynia, Thrace, Cyprus, and Edessa. By the time of Justin the Christians had exceeded the number of the Jews. But until after Constantine<sup>2</sup> they were not a majority of the population. Harnack estimates the other countries had fewer Christians than had Asia Minor. Antioch and Coele Syria, Alexandria and North Africa came in the second class, Palestine in the third,<sup>3</sup> while Persia and the East were last in numerical strength. However, growth was most rapid in the third century. In the century discussed in this essay the accessions to the church were not so rapid. Foundations were still being laid. More and more converts were coming from the intellectual classes during this period.

While the majority of converts were of the slave and ignorant classes it was not entirely so. "Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many of noble birth"<sup>4</sup> was true of the early church in the main but there were a few of the upper classes sprinkled in the group. Even the Apostle Paul had among his followers Sergius Paulus,<sup>5</sup> Dionysius

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1. Harnack, op. cit., p. 325.
  2. Ibid., and 1 Ap. 326.
  3. Ibid.
  4. I Corinthians, 1:26.
  5. Acts, 13:7.



the Areopagite and noble women not a few, Erastus the chamberlain of the city, Aquilla and Priscilla. James complains of the churches in his day that they catered to the rich as against the poor. Pliny testifies that many of all ranks had gone over to the Christians. Justin cites as the reason for his second Apology the conversion of a prominent woman in Rome who was martyred through the intrigue of her pagan husband. Marcion, the heretic, presented the church at Rome with a gift of 200,000 sesterces. Aristides hints that there were city magistrates in the church in his day (140). Under Commodus we hear of Carpophorus whose slave became Bishop Callistus. The royal concubine Marcia befriended Christians, especially Pope Victor. Tertullian tells us Septimus Severus favored the Christians, and we also know that Caracalla had a Christian woman for a wet nurse. Julia Mommaea summoned Origen to Antioch and Hippolytus dedicated a book to her. Philip, the Arabian, was called a secret Christian. Cyprian complains that the bishops catered too much to the court. Diocletian's wife and daughter were Christians. While much of the court favor was not extended until the third century there were the beginnings of it in the second.

Women have ever been the loyal supporters of Christianity.

Despite Paul's attitude toward women in the church he yet mentions many

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1. Romans, 16:23.
  2. Pliny ad Trajan.
  3. 2 Ap. 2.
  4. Harnack, op. cit., II, p. 36.
  5. Ibid., p. 47.
  6. Ibid., p. 48.
  7. Ibid., p. 49.
  8. Ibid., p. 50.
  9. Ibid., p. 51.
  10. Romans, 16; 2 Timothy.

of them -- Phoebe, Mother of Rufus, Mary, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Julius, Lydia and Aquilla. Clement of Rome speaks of the women martyrs. Acta Pauli speaks of many women. Dionysius of Corinth wrote to a certain Chrysophora, a most faithful sister. In 180 women were teachers and deaconesses working in the church without protest from the ecclesiastics.<sup>1</sup> Among the heresies women were even more active. Tertullian complains, "the very women of the heretics actually dare to teach, to debate, to exorcise, to promise cures, probably even to baptize."<sup>2</sup> Because of this fact the church, in combating heresies, lessened the freedom given to women in the service of the church.<sup>3</sup> Harnack gives the names of many prominent women who were known to be members of the Christian Church.<sup>4</sup> Many prominent women are listed among the martyrs.

### B. Christian Life and Piety

The life of the early Christians was their greatest apology. Some one has said, "The Christians outlived, outpreached and out-died the pagans." Justin states the case very forcibly and beautifully in the following passage:<sup>1</sup>

We who formerly delighted in fornication, but now embrace chastity alone; we who formerly used magical arts, dedicate ourselves to the good and unbegotten God; we who valued above all things the acquisition of wealth and positions, now bring what we have into a common stock, and communicate to every one in need; we who hated and destroyed one another, and on account of their different manners would not live with men of a different tribe, now, since the coming of Christ, live familiarly with them, and pray for our enemies, and endeavor to persuade those who hate us unjustly to live conformably to the good precepts of Christ, to the end that they may become partakers with us of the same joyful hope of reward from God the ruler of all.

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1. Harnack, op. cit., p. 74.  
2. de Praescr. 41.  
3. Harnack, op. cit., p. 76.  
4. Ibid., pp. 78-79.

5. 1. Ap. 14.

In the above passage Justin enumerates the principal virtues practiced by the Christian -- chastity, devotion to God, charity to all in need, fellowship with the races, evangelistic passion toward all, even one's<sup>1</sup> enemies. In the matter of sensuality Christians lived continently before marriage and only for procreation after marriage. Second marriage<sup>2</sup> was prohibited by Justin, and Tatian even frowns upon all marriage. The heresies were either violently opposed to sex indulgence or were inordinately indulgent. In both cases it was because of depreciation of the<sup>3</sup> flesh.

Pagan writers slandered Christians partly through ignorance and partly through perversity. Minucius Felix in his Octavius enumerates the opinion of pagans regarding Christians. They were accused of obscenity in worshipping the genital organs of the bishop, of becoming intoxicated at the Eucharist, of cannibalism in that they murdered a little child and used its blood for baptism at the initiations, of tying a dog to the lamp so that at a certain point in the worship he might upset the lamp and plunge the assembly into darkness, the members then engaging in shameful<sup>4</sup> immoralities. Tacitus regarded Christians as atrocious criminals and guilty of abominable superstition.<sup>5</sup> Marcus Aurelius punished them for their stubbornness in continuing to be Christians. Christians were accused of atheism in that they refused to worship the gods, sedition in that they did not take part in the patriotic exercises of Emperor worship, immorality

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1. 1. Ap. 29.

2. 1 Ap. 15.

3. Adv. Haer. I. xxiii,4.

4. Sihler, Ernest G., From Augustus to Augustine, Ch. II.

5. Duchesne, Monsignor Louis, Early History of the Christian Church, Ch. XII.



in the libelous charges concerning their modes of worship. To refute these charges Justin wrote his apologies. For the same reason Quadratus, Aristides, Melito and others, wrote their apologies.

The Christians did absent themselves from social and patriotic festivals of the pagans. They held themselves aloof from public gatherings. They were forced to do this because of fear of being arrested and persecuted. Emperors were importuned to persecute Christians. Furthermore, Christians believed the world was soon ~~going~~ to an end in the return of Christ and, therefore, there was not much to do but to get ready for that event. Their unsociableness was not due to race prejudice but to the situation in which they found themselves as under the ban of government. To become a Christian was an invitation to possible martyrdom.<sup>1</sup> The acts of Martyrdom reveal how steadfast Justin and his associates were in the face of martyrdom.<sup>2</sup> The boldness and fortitude of other martyrs was one of the principal factors in the conversion of Justin.<sup>3</sup>

Christians called themselves the "true Israel", "The new people", "the original people", "the people of eternity".<sup>4</sup> They held that the world was created for their sakes; that the world was saved from destruction because of them; everything in the world was subject to them and must serve them; they were to take part in the judgment of the world but were themselves to enjoy eternal bliss.<sup>5</sup> The Greeks, Jews and Christians were three races recognized by the Christians.<sup>6</sup> Clement of Alexandria

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1. Duchesne, op. cit.
  2. Martyrdom of Justin Martyr.
  3. 2. Ap. 12.
  4. Harnack, op. cit., I. p. 241.
  5. Ibid.
  6. Ibid.

taught that God had trained the Greeks and Jews in the past in order that now, after the coming of Christ, he might admit them into the third race. Being a third race Christians had a characteristic life of their own, had the original religion from which Plato and others had plagiarized their tenets, and were destined to play an increasingly important role<sup>1</sup> in history.

Christians looked upon death as a release from misery. Hounded by government, ostracised and hated by pagan communities, in constant fear of martyrdom, Christians centered their hearts upon the next world. Justin comments that the Emperor cannot hurt them though he may kill them. He says suicide is impossible because they are to fulfill the destiny which God marked out for them. If they suicided<sup>2</sup> who would carry on the evangelistic work of winning people to live the Christian life? Death<sup>3</sup> is man's natural lot anyway, to send it a little earlier than normally makes no difference to Christians. Then, too, the soul goes to the everlasting abode of the good.

### C. Worship and Ordinances

Unfortunately the only record of the form of worship practiced by Christians of the second century which has come down to us is that described by Justin in his First Apology.<sup>4</sup> "Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God,

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1. Harnack, op. cit., I. p. 251.

2. 2 Ap. 4.

3. 2 Ap. II.

4. 1 Ap. 61; 65; 66; 67.

having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and  
Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead"<sup>1</sup>. "On the day called Sun-  
day all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place."<sup>2</sup>  
For the most part the place of assembly was a home. A little later  
churches were built. But persecution, fewness of numbers, and expecta-  
tion of the Millenium, delayed the erection of church buildings. The  
first church known was destroyed by a flood in 201 A.D.<sup>3</sup> It seems that  
the church grew rapidly during the reign of Commodus and that about the  
year 200 churches were being erected in great numbers.<sup>4</sup> Justin gives the  
following order of service, writing about 153:

#### Order of Worship

Assembled on Sunday in a given place  
Scriptures read -- either memoirs of Apostles or  
Prophets, as there was time.  
Sermon -- verbal explanation and exhortation by  
the President. (Bishop) 5  
Prayer - all standing, President praying and the  
congregation saying Amen.  
Lord's Supper -- (administered weekly)  
President in charge --receives bread, wine and  
water from someone -- deacon probably  
Prayer and thanks offered according to ability  
by the President  
Amen -- by congregation  
Distribution by deacons to those present and  
reservation for the absentees.  
Offering -- people giving according to willingness and  
ability. President is treasurer and dispenses  
funds for widows, orphans, sick, poor, and  
those in prison, strangers,-- in fact all who  
are in need.

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1. 1. Ap. 67.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Harnack, op. cit., II. p. 86.
  4. Ibid.
  5. Kaye, John, First Apology of Justin Martyr, p. 92.



It appears from the foregoing that the church had a presiding officer, who conducted the service. This officer was usually the Bishop or ordained pastor. The congregation had very little part in the service except to respond Amen to the prayers. Apparently the reader of the Scripture was not the President. The Lord's Supper was observed weekly and was in charge of the President. Justin's explanation of the Eucharist is not clear.<sup>1</sup> All the variant interpretations of the meaning of the Eucharist have claimed his explanation as favoring their own view.

We have seen that Justin held that Baptism was necessary to salvation but that it alone did not achieve it. A pure life was required as preparing the individual for the final state of the blessed. Baptism was highly prized. The basis of Baptism is explained by Justin to be a method of changing human beings, who were born by ignorance and necessity in human generation, to a birth of choice and knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Regeneration was the result of baptism. Candidates were required to confess their belief in the teachings of the preachers, willing to live the life laid down by Christ, and to present themselves at the proper place for the administration of the rite. Prayer was offered for the candidate, for the members, and for all the world. Candidate and congregation had undergone a fast in preparation for this service. The following formula was pronounced over the candidate: "In the name of God, the Father and Lord of the Universe, and in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under

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1. 1. Ap. 66.

2. 1. Ap. 61.

Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, who through the prophets foretold all things about Jesus." <sup>1</sup> Nothing is said about the officer who administers the rite of baptism. Justin does not dwell very much upon the officers of the church but we know from other sources that <sup>2</sup> the baptizer was probably the bishop.

#### D. Church Organization

"In the Primitive Church there was no single system of Church Order laid down by the Apostles, During the first hundred years of Christianity, the Church was an organism alive and growing -- changing its organization to meet changing needs. Clearly in Asia, Syria, and Rome, during that century the system of government varied from church to church, and in the same church at different times. Uniformity was a later development; and for those times it was, perhaps, a necessary development." <sup>3</sup>

It would be folly to say there was no system of order, however. Dr. Streeter, from whom the above quotation has been taken, has brilliantly discussed the form of government in the metropolitan centers during the first two centuries. He comes to the conclusion regarding Rome that about the year 125, when Ignatius was martyred, the government at Rome was that of bishops and deacons with one bishop acting as president. The monarchical bishop had not yet arrived. But Clement of Rome, the Shepherd of Hermes, and the letters of Ignatius all stress obedience to the bishop in order to avoid heresy. Somewhere between 125 and 155 the monarchical bishop was created. In the latter year Polycarp visited Rome to adjust the dispute over the observance of Easter. He found Victor

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1. 1. Ap. 61.

2. Kaye, John (Bishop), First Apology of Justin Martyr, p. 90.

3. Streeter, Burnett Hillman, The Primitive Church, p. 267.

claiming extreme powers as bishop of Rome. <sup>1</sup> In 165 Hegesippus visited Rome and constructed the list of bishops of Rome from the beginning to that date. <sup>2</sup> This is about the date of the martyrdom of Justin. Hence, if Streeter be right, the monarchical episcopacy was forming during the very time Justin was writing.

A second reading of the First Apology reveals a close knit organization. The days of the charisma of the Holy Spirit have passed. The growth of heresies has forced the church to develop a system of government to which such matters may be referred for adjustment. Justin says in his description of the Sunday worship, the President preaches, prays, administers the Eucharist, acts as treasurer and almoner to the poor and needy. <sup>3</sup> Other officers bring the elements of the Eucharist for the President's blessing and consecration. Some one, other than the President, apparently reads the Scripture. The congregation listens, says Amen, and participates in the offering. There is no mention of singing unless the reference to the praise offered by the President be meant as a hymn. Evidently the President is the bishop or, in his absence, the ordained pastor. Certain it is that the prophet has disappeared and the pastor has taken his place. <sup>4</sup>

Justin refers to the fact that he had a school in Rome over the Timiotinian Bath where he communicated the doctrines of truth. <sup>5</sup> Justin was probably a teacher, never ordained, who went from city to city and conducted short courses in the true philosophy. His lack of interest in

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1. Streeter, op. cit., pp. 187-236.
  2. Ibid., p. 192.
  3. 1. Ap. 67.
  4. Streeter, op. cit., p. 234.
  5. Martyrdom II.



the priestly function is to me quite significant of the fact that he was not himself a priest.

E. The Empire and the Church

The New Testament Church chose to obey God rather than man in resisting the strictures of the officials upon their preaching services.<sup>1</sup> From the days when Nero, in order to escape suspicion himself, charged the Christians with burning Rome, the government was not friendly to the new faith.<sup>2</sup> During the reign of the Flavian Emperors there was general dislike for the Christians on account of their anti-social habits, their suspected participation in Thyestean banquets and Oedopodeian intercourse,<sup>3</sup> and their opposition to Emperor worship and pagan religion in general.<sup>3</sup> While there was no systematic policy of persecution rigidly carried out,<sup>4</sup> yet the church was in fear of arrest and punishment at all times.<sup>4</sup> The reign of Antoninus Pius was one of comparative peace but his successor, Marcus Aurelius, the Stoic Emperor, instituted severe restraint upon the Christians. Justin cites the rescript of Hadrian as a reminder to Antoninus to see that the Christians get a square deal. This rescript,<sup>5</sup> which Merrill considers genuine, was addressed to a Governor of a Province in Asia. He replied that Christians were not to be punished merely for the name which they bore, but for conviction of crime only. Informers

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1. Acts, 4:19.
  2. Cadoux, Cecil John, The Early Church and World, p. 102.
  3. Ibid., p. 171.
  4. Ibid.
  5. Merrill, Elmer Truesdell, Essays in Early Christian History, pp. 202-217.

who could not sustain their accusation were to be punished instead. <sup>1</sup>

Christianity seems not to have been proscribed and condemned by law, but on other grounds, such as refusal to worship the Emperor, or unseemly immorality. Actual persecution broke out from time to time in different localities. The Church came to look upon persecution as something to be expected. <sup>2</sup>

There is a remarkable spirit of defiance to the Empire running through the writings of the early Apologists. They seek to obey the laws but they are indifferent to what the rulers can do to them. <sup>3</sup> The Church and the Empire have entered into a contest to the death of one or the other and we know it was not the church.

#### F. Gnosticism

The greatest peril the early church faced was heresy. The second century was noted for the struggle against heresies in many forms and under many leaders. Perhaps one of the reasons we know so little about this century is because of this battle and the deliberate policy of the victorious faction in destroying all traces of the heresies. We have enough records to know it was a very active century. The heresies are all traceable to common sources. Marcion, who began his work about 140, went to Rome to live and was welcomed with enthusiasm. He gave a donation of money to the church. He formed the first canon of the New Testament.

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1. 1 Ap. Appendix.
  2. Cadoux, op. cit., p. 251.
  3. 1 Ap. 11.

He had a great following and threatened the very existence of the church. He was opposed to the Old Testament God because he created matter. A very elaborate treatise of Irenaeus, "Against the Heresies", has come down to us.<sup>1</sup> Justin says he wrote also against the heresies but his work is lost. Justin refers to Simon Magus, Menander, Valentinus, Basilides, Saturnilius. "They style themselves Christian ... and partake in nefarious and impious rites".<sup>2</sup> Apparently all the heresies have certain elements in common and may, for our purposes, be included under the name of Gnosticism.<sup>3</sup>

Gnosticism has been described by Harnack as "the acute Hellenizing of Christianity," by Reitzenstein as "the orientalizing of Christianity", by Farnell as a "combination of Christian and Pagan Creeds", and by Dean Inge as "the reconcillation of speculative and revealed religion."<sup>4</sup> Gnosticism is no single doctrine but rather a conglomeration of many elements of truth. We see in Gnosticism Babylonian mythology, Persian dualism, Egyptian mysticism, Orphic cosmology, Jewish theology, Greek philosophy, Astral ideas, and mystical practices.<sup>5</sup> It is thus a syncretism of the many currents of thought flowing during the early centuries of our era. Gnosticism was popular for a time because it dealt with the origin of the world and matter, the origin and destiny of man, the origin and suppression of evil, the descent and ascent of the soul, and deliverance from fate and immortality.<sup>6</sup> Man was interested in cosmic

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1. Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. II.
  2. Dial. 36.
  3. Campbell, James Marshall, The Greek Fathers, pp. 3-85.
  4. Angus, The Religious Quest of the Graeco-Roman World, Ch. XX.
  5. Ibid.
  6. Ibid.



themes. Government was no longer stable enough to inspire confidence, ancestral religions were gone, the world seemed unfriendly to man, the stars in their ascendancy and declension boded good or ill to all. The metaphysical systems of mind and matter had depreciated matter until it was despised. Evil was bound up in the flesh. Where shall deliverance be found?

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Gnosticism had a scheme, <sup>1</sup> fantastic to be sure, which placed the battle in the sky. Multitudes of angelic creatures were used by the absolute God to create and manage the world. They made matter and were largely evil themselves. A Logos, called by various names, came upon the scene and destroyed the evil of these angels and promised eschatological salvation to all who were initiated into the mysteries of Gnosticism. The "gnosis" was esoteric knowledge given to those "who belong". Gnosticism hated the body. The best of them practiced continence and rigid chastity. The worst of them, under the guise of abusing the flesh, indulged in the grossest sort of immorality. According to Irenaeus, the latter group predominated. Much of the Old Testament was discarded because it was too corporeal. The God of the Jews was revolting to the gnostic. Paul, on account of his opposition to the Jewish Law, was very acceptable to the Gnostics. The lack of rigid church organization in the early decades of the second century permitted Gnosticism to get a hold upon the people. In fact some of the most prominent Fathers were members of this sect -- Marcion, Tatian, Tertullian, not to mention any more. The age was one which minimized history and exalted philosophy. The most

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1. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer, I. xviii.

definite events were described not as the facts<sup>1</sup> but as to the meaning of the event. The personality of Jesus was so magnetic that people speculated about his cosmic value. The Heavenly Man, The Wise Man, were concepts familiar to that age and what would be more natural than to posit some cosmic significance to Christ? Jesus was the archetypal man of Gnosticism.<sup>2</sup> Mankind has ever had a fascination for the mystical and unknowable. Gnosticism claimed "to apprehend the ineffable things prepared for those who love God."<sup>3</sup>

Gnosticism both hurt and helped the church. It forced the Christians to evaluate their doctrines; it scared the members and welded them together behind their leaders; it consolidated the church and better prepared it for missionary endeavor; it widened its horizon by speculation. Most significant of all, it developed the three institutions which have characterized succeeding centuries of Christianity -- episcopacy, canon, and creed. Gnosticism forced the Church to create these institutions. Had there been no episcopacy it is hard to see how the Church could have stood out against the insidious pull of this heresy. Likewise, the canon was formed to give the Christian an authoritative book and the creed was a cryptic statement of what the orthodox believed.<sup>5</sup> It was not all gain to the Church for it was forced to enter upon a career of compromise followed ever since. To guard against susceptibility to future heresies the hierarchy forbade religious spontaneity. The gifts of the Spirit and ecstatic expression of religious emotion were prohibited.

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1. Angus, op. cit., Ch. XX.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Jones, Rufus M., The Church's Debt to Heretics, pp. 11-85.

5. Angus, Ch. XXI.

Church worship settled down to silence on the part of the congregation and deference to the clergy for all opinions on theology. Apostolic tradition was placed above Biblical history. Conformity to human leadership was essential to salvation. Heretics and orthodox became bitter enemies and manifested hatred for each other. The church became too materialistic in the Passion and Eucharist. The humanity of Christ was won against Gnosticism but at the price of institutionalism, sacramentarianism, and sacerdotalism.<sup>1</sup> The beautiful simplicity of Christian faith, joyful communion with the Lord, charismatic gifts of the Spirit, which were such a joy to the Apostles, passed away and left the church cold and formal.

This, in brief, is the Church of the second century. In this atmosphere and against these forces Justin did his work. Like all strong men, he was moulded by and helped to mould his age.

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1. Angus, op. cit.



## CHAPTER VII

### JUSTIN MARTYR'S APOLOGETIC

Strictly speaking the Apologists sought to do two things: to defend the individuals against the calumnies of Jews and Pagans, and, after that, to commend the Christian Religion to the thinking world. It was ostensibly to abrogate persecution that they addressed their appeals to Roman officials. But their interest in the Gospel was so great that they involuntarily drifted into a rational defense of the whole Christian doctrine. It was in the latter endeavor that they reached their highest mental attainment and widest influence upon the thought of their time.

Justin Martyr was not the only Apologist in the period under discussion. He was the most conspicuous and is best known because the works of the others have been lost. Cadoux gives the following list writing during the period 110-180: Quadratus and Aristides (125), Ariston of Pella (140), author of the Epistle to Diognetus (150), Justin Martyr (153), Tatian (155), Miltiades (160), Apollinaris of Hierapolis (172), Melito (176), Athenagoras (177), Irenaeus (180 plus).<sup>1</sup> Between 180 and 250 the great thinkers of the church did their work, -- Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian of Carthage, Hippolytus of Rome, and Origin of Alexandria.<sup>2</sup> These latter constitute the "big four" of early Church History. However, it is in the earlier group that we see the beginnings of the movement to win the Greek world to the new faith. Of

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1. Cadoux, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-204.  
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 287-292.

the earlier apologists Justin is our best example. Using him as an example we shall study the apologetic of the second century.

#### A. Personal Method of Justin

Justin takes an attitude of appreciation of the past and the view-point of his would-be converts. He places his approval upon some of the teachings of Plato and Socrates. In his Dialogue with Trypho he praises much of the Jewish faith, particularly the conduct of the patriarchs.<sup>1</sup> He is, however, fearless in denouncing what he cannot accept in these systems. The Law he especially attacks as a reproach given by God because of the foreknown hardheartedness of the Jews.<sup>2</sup> The mythology and immorality of pagan life he severely scores.<sup>3</sup> The reader gets the impression that Justin has studied his data and has come to deliberate conclusions. These conclusions are fairly made and fearlessly stated. He gives the impression of candor and moral earnestness.

Justin was dogmatically certain of his position. The long<sup>4</sup> struggle through which he went in his search for the true philosophy, the flame which leapt into his soul,<sup>5</sup> the decision to propagate his philosophy to all the world, were necessary steps in the evolution of his doctrinal certitude. Justin does not betray any uncertainty; he has an answer or explanation for all difficulties. His writings impress one with the strength of his personality. I cannot think of him as being

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1. Dial. 25, 28.
  2. Dial. 16.
  3. 1 Ap. 29.
  4. Dial. 1-9.
  5. Dial. 8.

impulsive like Tertullian, but, on the contrary, of slow mental movement but unshakable loyalty to a conviction once formed. His learning, as we have seen, was the equal of any man of his day. His explanations appealed to his own generation.

One is captivated by the willingness of Justin to accept the consequences of his apologetic activity. He writes to the Emperor Antoninus Pius in terms which have been construed as uncivil and unbecoming a subject.<sup>1</sup> "You can kill but not hurt us."<sup>2</sup> "It is your business,<sup>3</sup> when you hear us, to be found, as reason demands, good judges." In his Second Apology we find these words addressed to the Roman Senate: "Be ashamed, be ashamed ye who charge the guiltless with those deeds which yourselves openly commit .... Be ye converted; become wise."<sup>4</sup> He declares he expects to be plotted against and fixed to the stake by Crescens, that "lover of bravado and boasting."<sup>5</sup> At the trial he tells the official to do what he will for he will not sacrifice to idols.<sup>6</sup> No man can win men to his faith unless he shows himself a willingness to stake all for it. Justin becomes the exemplar apologist.

#### B. Seeks to Meet the Needs of His Age

Running through this essay there have been revealed at least four great needs of the world in Justin's time. First, there is the demand for truth. The Philosophy of the time was influenced most by Platonism

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1. Lamson, op. cit., p.

2. 1 Ap. 2.

3. Ibid., 3.

4. 2 Ap. 12.

5. 2 Ap. 3.

6. Martyr, Justin, 4.



and Stoicism. Christianity must harmonize with this philosophical background and justify itself at the bar of reason. Justin labors to meet this demand. Rainy claims Justin impoverished the true beauty of Christianity by this emphasis; with this judgment many writers agree.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless it is difficult to see how Christianity could have made much of an impression had it not won to its defense Greek Philosophy.

Second, the demand for a high standard of ethics. The age was sensual, discouraged, luxurious and lax. The Stoics held up some very beautiful ideals but did not have the power to realize them. They knew what to do but could not find the inspiration to do it. Judaism held a high, rigid ideal of righteousness based upon a naive view of God very much like a man in form and an oriental King in favoritism. The mysteries had no ethics worthy of the name. The age was hungry for real ethical conduct. Justin offered it in Christianity. His repeated contrasts between the life of Christians and that of pagans is unanswerable.<sup>2</sup>

Third, influenced by the Mystery Religions, the masses had come to expect from religion an emotional thrill. The initiations, rites and ceremonies of the mysteries were said to have become scenes of trance, ecstasy and sometimes debauchery. Religion had come to mean a happy experience. The fears, cares, and sorrows of life were drowned in mystic communion with God.<sup>3</sup> The apologists had to meet this demand of the poorer people in their presentation of Christianity. It is not surprising that many heresies arose which carried ecstasy to excess. The fact that it was overdone shows that it filled a real need of the people.

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1. Rainy, op. cit., Ch. 5.

2. Ap. 12: 29.

3. Angus, The Mystery Religions and Christianity, II.

Fourth, the demand for salvation was strong. The insecurity of political governments, the fear of the stars and other cosmic forces which were popularly believed to control the affairs of life,<sup>1</sup> the dread of fate marked out for each life by the law of reincarnation, the bewildering confusion and vagueness in the current philosophies - all led the masses to flock to any religion which promised salvation from all these ills.

### C. Defends Christian Conduct

The following charges were made against Christians: first, in refusing to offer worship to the Emperor and to attend patriotic ceremonies, they were accused of being anti-social and a menace to community life. Justin replies that Christians are not dangerous for they pay their taxes, obey the officials in all proper matters, and pray for the Emperor.<sup>2</sup>

Second, they were charged with atheism in that they refused to worship the gods. Justin answers this very briefly by saying that Christians do not worship idols which have been made by men in the form of demons. They worship the one and only true God and Jesus Christ, the Logos, good angels, and the Prophetic Spirit.<sup>3</sup> He reminds them that pagan groups reject the idols of all other groups of worshippers except their own.<sup>4</sup> They cannot agree on the reality or value of their own gods. The gods are only demons in disguise. Third, Christians were accused

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1. Angus, The Religious Quest of the Graeco-Roman World. Ch. II.

2. 1 Ap. 17.

3. Ibid. 6.

4. Ibid. 24.

of endangering the government by appealing to and organizing slaves into a political group. Furthermore, the expectation of the Christ returning to earth and setting up a new kingdom in a cataclysmic revolution foreboded ill to the existing forms of government. Justin assures the officials that the kingdom they seek is not material or wordly. He says, "If we looked for a human kingdom, we should also deny our Christ, that we might not be slain." "The presence of slaves in our movement is a proof of its divine authority, for it fulfills the Scripture which prophesied "the poor have the Gospel'".

The truer the doctrines the more demons seek their perversion. The Christian will not hurt the government because he is held in check through fear of eternal punishment if he should do wrong. True, our members are from the lower classes but they are living better lives than the members of the aristocracy. Hence, we are promoters of peace and order in the state. Fourth, Christians were charged with secret meetings at which shameful immoralities, cannibalism, and murder were committed. Presumably evedroppers had reported Christians guilty of killing a child at the Eucharist because they heard the words, "This is my body, take, eat." "This is my blood of the new covenant", suggesting the taurobolium of the mysteries. Hence, they inferred that Christians were murdering a child. Also the charge was made that the light was blown out toward the end of the religious orgy and that all indulged in gross sexual

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1. 1 Ap. 11.
  2. 2 Ap. 10.
  3. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 103.
  4. Farrar, op. cit., pp. 93-118.



<sup>1</sup> immorality. Justin answers these charges by reminding the Senate that pagans engage in such immoral orgies openly and nothing is done about it. Why disturb Christians for supposedly doing the same thing in private? In fact, the charge is false. We have the highest standard of ethics in the world and this code is taught in our meetings.<sup>2</sup> Justin asks that Christians be tried and punished only for crime against the law on the same basis as other persons. It is no crime to be a Christian. Christians who are guilty of the alleged charges are heretics and should be punished.<sup>3</sup> He appeals to their sense of justice and to their fear of the judgment of God to give them justice.

D. Argues for the Christian Religion

As a system of religion Christianity was attacked on several grounds: it was novel and untried; it was a superstition without evidence or proof; its devotees were ignorant fanatics; its worship was conducted by magic and sacrilege.<sup>4</sup> Justin does not answer all these seriatim but he lays down his arguments in accordance with his preference.<sup>5</sup>

First, Christianity is as old as Judaism upon which it is founded and which it completes. There is a continuity of revelation from Moses to Christ. It is completed in Christ and his followers are the "true Israel". Second, Christianity is not a superstition. It ties up with Plato and the best in philosophy. Plato was later than Moses and

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1. Dial. 10.

2. 1 Ap. 12-17.

3. Ibid., 7.

4. Moxom, Philip S., From Jerusalem to Nicaea, pp. 218-276.

5. Ibid.

there is evidence that much of his teaching came from Moses. Philosophy had had its chance and had failed. Christianity is the full realization of what the philosophers were striving for. Thus Christianity is the oldest religion in the world in that it is rooted in Judaism and Greek Philosophy.

It is as the "True Philosophy" that Justin presents Christianity to the world. That was the conviction which he had when he was converted. That is the concept under which he conducted his Apology. We note five points in his development of Christianity as the True Philosophy.

First, Christianity is superior to all other religions in so far as Moses was greater than Plato. Antiquity was a mark of superiority in that day and Moses antedates Plato. Aristobulus said there was a translation of the Pentateuch in Egypt before the Septuagint was made.<sup>1</sup> Plato and Aristotle read this while on a visit to Egypt. It is not easy for us to appreciate this argument but it was effective in Justin's day.<sup>2</sup> We know that Philo used the same argument for the superiority of Judaism.

Second, the Pentateuch is a philosophic treatise. By methods of allegory Philo read Platonism into the Old Testament. Justin was very well acquainted with Philo and Hellenic Judaism. There is no doubt he borrowed this argument from Philo. Justin likewise used allegory to bring out the "true meaning". Philo spoke of the worship of the Synagogue as "philosophising".<sup>3</sup>

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 106.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid., p. 107.

Third, Justin becomes original and argues that the mythologies of Greek religions were originated by poets at the instigation and under the domination of demons. Demons heard the Prophets read where the prediction was made that Christ should be born of a virgin, should cleanse the lepers, give sight to the blind, should die and be raised again and ascend into Heaven. After the fashion of what newspaper men call a "scoop" the demons hurried out and got poets to anticipate the fulfillment of the Scriptures by assigning these events to Jupiter, Perseus, Aesculapius, etc.<sup>1</sup> Goodenough holds that Justin was the first to promulgate this idea.<sup>2</sup> In that age it must have had a strong effect in breaking down any remaining reverence for the wicked gods.

Fourth, all truth is Christian since the universal Logos which was fully incarnate in Christ, is the inspiration of all good men of antiquity. According to Justin there is no other inspirer of men. This Logos has been in the world since creation as the active representative of the Father. He appeared to Moses, Jacob, Abraham in theophany. He gave Plato his ideas. Justin agrees with Philo in saying that the Old Testament had the truth of philosophy. But with the advent of Christ, the Logos manifested himself in full power. He is now the source of real knowledge. Since he was the inspiration of all men of the past, all the good of the past is for him. Hence, Christianity claims all the truth of the past. This ties up Christianity with all the past -- philosophical and religious. It destroys the notion of the novelty of Christianity.

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1. 1. Ap. 107.

2. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 109.



This point was ignored by the Church in later times. They ceased to admit Socrates, Heraclitus and other philosophers into the Christian fold<sup>1</sup>

Justin's greatest contribution to Christian Apologetic was his distinction between reason and revelation. The Greeks worshipped reason. Justin, in the account of his conversion, tells how reason broke down and how he was driven to accept the Old Testament as the revelation of God. The Prophets were more ancient than all teachers, were inspired by the Spirit, were good men in their own character, were vouched for as authoritative by the Jews, and were able to predict events<sup>2</sup> which came to pass identically as prophesied. This revelation was given by overpowering the writer and elevating him into ecstasy. Therefore, it is wholly of God.<sup>3</sup> This principle made Christianity a religion of a book. Its authority is an inerrant book. The church came to rely upon this argument for its subsequent combats with paganism. The reason men need revelation is due to the fact that the universal reason or Logos in them is thwarted by the activity of demons.

All apologetic appeal is thus based upon the Prophets. Now, much depends upon the interpretation of the Prophets. Justin, after the custom of his day both in Christian and Pagan circles, resorted to allegory.

What were the results of the work of the Apologists? The marvelous growth of the Church really dates from soon after Justin's day.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Goodenough, op. cit., p. 110.

2. Dial. 9.

3. 1. Ap. 36.

4. See Harnack's treatment of the expansion of the Church in Vol. II of his Mission and Expansion of Christianity.

Under succeeding theologians the cause of the Church grew apace. Justin was then the inaugurator of the practice of first rate minds dedicating their services to the Christian Cause. To add to what I have said may I be permitted to paraphrase Angus' five great advantages of Christianity over its rivals:<sup>1</sup>

1. A great historic center - the incomparable person of Christ.
2. The genius of Greece given to Christianity.
3. The organizing genius of the Bishops of Rome.
4. Christianity was untrammelled by naturalism; it began anew.
5. Christianity sublimated the emotions of men into high ethical conduct.

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