

First and Second Apology

Modern English version · SermonIndex

Justin Martyr · c. AD 155–165

Justin, a philosopher turned Christian teacher in Rome, wrote the First Apology about AD 155 to the emperor Antoninus Pius, his sons and the Roman senate. He argues that Christians should be judged by their lives and not by their name, explains what they believe, and describes baptism, the Lord's Supper and Sunday worship in Rome. The Second Apology is a shorter follow-up, written a few years later after Christians were put to death in Rome. Justin himself was martyred about AD 165.

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First Apology

Chapter 1

1 Apol. 1 To the Emperor Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Pius Augustus Caesar; to his son Verissimus, the Philosopher; to Lucius, natural son of Caesar the Philosopher and adopted son of Pius, a lover of learning; to the sacred Senate; and to the whole Roman People. I am Justin, son of Priscus and grandson of Bacchius, from Flavia Neapolis in Syria Palestine. On behalf of people of every nation who are unjustly hated and mistreated, I make this address and petition. I am one of them.

Translator's note. The older translation leaves out "Syria" before "Palestine." Flavia Neapolis (modern Nablus) was a Roman city founded in AD 72 near ancient Shechem.

Chapter 2

1 Apol. 2 Reason directs those who are truly devout and philosophical to honor and love only what is true. They should refuse to follow the opinions of the ancients if those opinions are worthless. Sound reason does not only direct us to refuse to follow

those who have done or taught something unjust. The lover of truth must also choose, by every means and even in preference to his own life, to say and do what is right, even if death is threatened. You, then, are called devout and philosophers, guardians of justice and lovers of learning. You hear this said everywhere, but whether you really are so will be shown. We have not come to flatter you with this writing, or to win your favor with our words. We have come to demand that you pass judgment after an exact and searching examination. Do not be ruled by prejudice, or by a wish to please superstitious people. Do not be driven by irrational impulse or by an evil rumor that has been believed for a long time, and so pass a verdict against yourselves. As for us, we are convinced that no one can do us any harm unless we are proved to be doers of evil or shown to be wicked. You can kill us, but you cannot harm us.

Translator's note. "Devout" translates eusebeis. This is the same Greek word used for Antoninus's Latin title "Pius" (Greek Eusebes), so Justin is pointing to the emperor's own title.

Chapter 3

1 Apol. 3a Someone might think this is an unreasonable and reckless thing to say. So we ask that the charges against these people be examined. If the charges are proved true, let them be punished, as it is right to punish those found guilty. But if no one can prove anything, true reason does not allow you to wrong innocent people because of an evil rumor. Or rather, you would be wronging yourselves, since you think fit to conduct affairs by passion and not by judgment. Every sensible person will declare this a good proposal and the only just one. Those who are ruled should give an account of their own life and teaching that cannot be faulted. Likewise those who rule should give their verdict by following piety and philosophy, not force and tyranny. In this way both rulers and ruled would enjoy the good. For one of the ancients somewhere said, "Unless rulers and ruled alike philosophize, it is not possible for cities to be happy."

Translator's note. The older translation has "or rather, indeed, we ourselves will punish them." That is not in the Greek, which says "or rather [you will wrong] yourselves." The saying of "one of the ancients" recalls Plato's Republic (473c-d) on philosopher-rulers, but Justin words it in his own way.

1 Apol. 3b So it is our task to give everyone the chance to examine our life and our teachings. Otherwise we would bring on ourselves the penalty for the wrongs that people commit in their blindness, because they do not know us. It is your task, as reason requires, to listen and be found good judges. For once you have learned the truth, if you do not do what is just, you will have no defense before God.

Chapter 4

1 Apol. 4a Nothing, good or evil, is decided by the mere application of a name, apart from the actions that go with the name. As far as the name we are accused of goes, we are most excellent people. Still, we do not think it just to ask to be let off because of the name if we are shown to be evildoers. On the other hand, suppose we are found to do no wrong, either in what we are called or in our conduct as citizens. Then it is up to you to take great care not to bring just punishment on yourselves by unjustly punishing people who have not been convicted. Neither praise nor punishment could reasonably come from a name alone, unless something good or bad can be shown by actions. You do not punish any of the others who are accused before you until they are convicted. But in our case you take the name itself as proof against us. Yet as far as the name goes, you ought rather to punish our accusers.

Translator's note. "Most excellent" translates chrestotatoi, a play on words: in the Greek of Justin's day chrestos ("good, kind") sounded almost the same as Christos ("Christ"), so the name "Christians" could be heard as "good people."

1 Apol. 4b We are accused of being Christians, and it is unjust to hate what is "chrestos," good. Again, if one of the accused denies it with his voice and says he is not a Christian, you let him go, since you have nothing to prove against him as a wrongdoer. But if someone admits that he is one, you punish him for the admission. You ought to examine the life of the one who confesses and of the one who denies, so that each man's actions show what kind of person he is. Some have received from the teacher, Christ, the command not to deny him when questioned, and they urge others to hold firm. In the same way, perhaps, those who live badly give an opening to people who are all too ready, without good reason, to charge all Christians with impiety and injustice. This too is not done rightly. For some put on the name and the dress of philosophy though they do nothing worthy of what they profess. You know that the ancients who held and taught opposite opinions are all called by the one name, philosophers. Some of them taught atheism. And the poets of old proclaim that Zeus was immoral, along with his children. Yet those who follow such teachings are not stopped by you. Instead you offer prizes and honors to those who insult these gods in fine-sounding words.

Translator's note. The Greek word allōs, translated "without good reason," can mean either "otherwise" or "idly, without reason"; the older translation's "without consideration" takes it the second way. The older version also has "Jupiter" (the Latin name) for Zeus, and says the poets "raise a laugh," where the Greek says they "proclaim" Zeus to be immoral.

Scripture: [Matthew 10:33](#)

Chapter 5

1 Apol. 5a What, then, can this mean? We promise to do no wrong and not to hold these godless opinions. Yet you do not examine our cases in court. Driven by unreasoning passion and by the lash of evil demons, you punish us without trial and without a thought. For the truth will be told. In ancient times evil demons made appearances. They committed adultery with women, corrupted boys, and showed men terrifying sights. People who did not judge what was happening by reason were struck with dread. Seized by fear, and not knowing that these were evil demons, they called them gods. They gave each one the name that he had chosen for himself. Then Socrates tried, with true reason and careful examination, to bring these things into the open and to draw people away from the demons. The demons worked through men who delighted in wickedness and had him put to death as an atheist and an impious man. They said he was bringing in new divinities. They are working the same way against us.

Translator's note. "New divinities" translates "kaina daimonia," part of the charge against Socrates recorded in Plato's *Apology* and Xenophon's *Memorabilia*. Justin plays on the word: the "daimonia" behind the charge were the demons themselves.

1 Apol. 5b For it was not only among the Greeks that reason (the Logos) exposed these things through Socrates. It was also among the barbarians, by the Logos himself, who took form and became man and was called Jesus Christ. We have been persuaded by him. So we say not only that the demons who did these things are not upright, but that they are wicked and unholy demons, whose deeds are not even like those of people who long for virtue.

Translator's note. The older translation says "we deny that they are gods"; the Greek simply says these demons are "not upright, but wicked and unholy." "Logos" means both "reason" and "Word"; Justin means both here.

Scripture: [John 1:14](#)

Chapter 6

1 Apol. 6 This is why we are also called atheists. We admit that we are atheists as regards gods of that kind. But we are not atheists toward the most true God, the Father of righteousness, self-control and the other virtues, in whom there is no mixture of evil. We revere and worship him, and the Son who came from him and taught us these things, and the host of the other good angels who follow him and are made like him, and the prophetic Spirit. We honor them in reason and truth, and we hand this on freely to anyone who wishes to learn, just as we were taught.

Translator's note. As the Greek stands, the angels are listed together with the Father, the Son and the Spirit as those we "revere and worship." The older translation puts the Son and the angels in parentheses, and it says "knowing them" where the Greek says "honoring them." This sentence is much debated. Some scholars take the angels as part of what the Son

“taught us,” not as objects of worship. Justin himself elsewhere quotes
“You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only” (1 Apology 16).

Scripture: [John 4:24](#)

Chapter 7

1 Apol. 7 Someone will say, “But some Christians have already been arrested and convicted as criminals.” Indeed, you often condemn many people when you examine the life of each of the accused. But you do not condemn them on account of those who were convicted before. We also admit this in general. Among the Greeks, those who teach whatever pleases them are all called by the one name, philosophy, even though their teachings are opposed to each other. In the same way, among the barbarians, the name now brought against us is shared by those who have become wise and by those who only seemed wise. For all are called Christians. So we ask that the actions of all who are reported to you be judged. Then the one who is convicted as a wrongdoer will be punished as a wrongdoer, and not as a Christian. And if anyone is shown to be clear of guilt, he should be released as a Christian who does no wrong. We will not ask you to punish our accusers. They are punished enough by the wickedness they already have and by their ignorance of what is good.

Translator’s note. The older translation reads “those of whom we have been speaking” for the people you do not condemn; the Greek means those convicted earlier.

Chapter 8

1 Apol. 8 Consider that we have said all this for your sake. For when we are examined, it is in our power to deny that we are Christians. But we do not want to stay alive by telling lies. We long for the eternal and pure life, and we lay claim to a life in the company of God, the Father and Maker of all. So we hurry to make our confession. We are persuaded and believe that this life can be reached by those who have shown God by their works that they followed him and loved to live with him, in the place where no evil stands in the way. That, to put it briefly, is what we expect, what we have learned from Christ, and what we teach. Plato likewise said that Rhadamanthus and Minos would punish the unjust who came before them. We say that the same thing will happen, but at the hands of Christ. The wicked will appear in the same bodies, joined again to their souls, and will be punished with an eternal punishment, not only for a period of a thousand years, as Plato said. Now if someone says this is unbelievable or impossible, then the error is ours and affects no one else, so long as we are not proved to be doing any wrong.

Translator’s note. Plato presents Minos and Rhadamanthus as judges of the dead in the *Gorgias* (523e–524a). The thousand-year period of

| punishment appears in the myth of Er (Republic 10, 615a).

| Scripture: [Matthew 25:46](#)

Chapter 9

1 Apol. 9a We also do not honor with many sacrifices and garlands of flowers those images that men have shaped, set up in temples, and called gods. We know that these are lifeless and dead, and that they do not have the form of God. We do not think that God has the kind of form that some claim to have copied in order to honor him. Rather, they have the names and shapes of those evil demons who have appeared. Why should I tell you, who already know, how the craftsmen handle their material, planing and cutting, casting and hammering? Often they take vessels made for dishonorable uses, change only their shape by their skill, give them a new form, and call them gods. We consider this not only senseless but an insult to God. His glory and form are beyond description, yet his name is attached to perishable things that need constant care.

1 Apol. 9b You know very well that the craftsmen who make these things are licentious and, not to list them all, are filled with every vice. They even corrupt their own slave girls who work alongside them. What madness! Immoral men are said to shape and remake gods for you to worship. And you appoint such men as guardians of the temples where the images are set up. You do not see that it is unlawful even to think or say that men are guardians of gods.

Chapter 10

1 Apol. 10a We have received the teaching that God does not need material offerings from men, since we see that he himself provides everything. We have been taught, and are persuaded and believe, that he accepts only those who imitate the good qualities that belong to him: self-control, righteousness, love for humanity, and whatever else is proper to God, who is called by no given name. We have also been taught that in the beginning he, being good, made all things out of formless matter for the sake of human beings. If they show by their works that they are worthy of his plan, we have received the teaching that they will be counted worthy to live with him and to reign with him, made incorruptible and free from suffering. For just as he made us in the beginning when we did not exist, so we believe that those who choose what pleases him will, because of that choice, be counted worthy of incorruption and of fellowship with him. Coming into being at the start was not our doing. But he persuades us to follow what pleases him, choosing it by the rational powers he himself has given us, and he leads us to faith.

Translator's note. "Formless matter" reflects Justin's wording. He does not here say "out of nothing." He says "did not exist" only of human beings. Later in this Apology (ch. 59) Justin claims that Plato took the idea

| of God shaping formless matter from Moses.

| Scripture: [Acts 17:25](#)

1 Apol. 10b We also think it is in the interest of all people that they not be kept from learning these things but be urged to do so. What human laws could not achieve, the divine Word would have accomplished, if the wicked demons had not scattered many false and godless accusations. They took as their ally the evil desire in each person, which by nature is drawn to everything and takes many forms. None of these accusations applies to us.

Chapter 11

1 Apol. 11 When you hear that we expect a kingdom, you assume without any inquiry that we mean a human kingdom. But we mean the kingdom that is with God. This is clear from the fact that, when you examine us, we confess that we are Christians, though we know that death is the penalty for anyone who confesses this. If we were expecting a human kingdom, we would deny it so that we would not be killed. We would also try to stay hidden so that we could obtain what we looked for. But our hopes are not set on the present. So we are not concerned when people put us to death, since death is a debt that must be paid in any case.

Translator's note. The older translation says "we should also deny our Christ." The Greek says only "we would deny," with no object. The context implies denying that we are Christians.

Chapter 12

1 Apol. 12a We are also your helpers and allies in keeping the peace, more than any other people. We hold that no evildoer, no greedy man, no plotter, and no virtuous man can escape God's notice, and that each person goes to eternal punishment or to salvation according to what his deeds deserve. If everyone knew this, no one would choose wickedness even for a short time, knowing that he was heading for the sentence of eternal fire. He would restrain himself in every way and adorn himself with virtue, so that he might receive the good things that come from God and be free of his punishments. Some people try to hide their wrongdoing because of the laws and penalties you have laid down. They do wrong because they know that you are only men, and that they can escape your notice. But if they had learned and been convinced that nothing can escape God, whether it is done or only planned, they would in every way keep themselves in order because of the punishments awaiting them. You yourselves will agree with this.

1 Apol. 12b But you seem to fear that everyone will start doing right and that you will no longer have anyone to punish. That would be the worry of public executioners, not of good rulers. We are convinced, as we said earlier, that these things are driven by evil

demons, who demand sacrifices and service even from people who live without reason. But we assume that you, who reach for piety and philosophy, will do nothing unreasonable. If, however, you also, like the foolish, honor custom above truth, then do what you are able to do. But rulers who honor opinion above truth have only as much power as robbers in a desert. And that you will not succeed is shown by the Word. After God who begot him, we know of no ruler more kingly and more just than he. For as all men refuse to inherit the poverty, the sufferings or the disgrace of their fathers, so a sensible man will not choose whatever the Word tells him he must not choose.

Translator's note. "The Word" (ὁ λόγος) is Christ. "Will not succeed" translates οὐ καλλιερήσετε, a word from sacrifice: omens will not be favorable, so "you will not prosper."

1 Apol. 12c Our teacher foretold that all these things would happen. He is Jesus Christ, the Son and Apostle of God, the Father and Master of all, and from him we have received the name Christians. So we become firmly convinced of everything he taught us, since everything he said beforehand would happen is seen actually happening. This is the work of God: to speak of something before it happens, and then to show it happening just as it was foretold. We could stop here and add nothing more, since we are asking for what is just and true. But we know it is not easy to change quickly a soul held by ignorance. So, to persuade those who love the truth, we are eager to add a few things, knowing that when the truth is set before them it is not impossible for people to escape ignorance.

Translator's note. "Apostle" here means "one sent" by God the Father; [Hebrews 3:1](#) likewise calls Jesus "the Apostle and High Priest of our confession."

Scripture: [Hebrews 3:1](#)

Chapter 13

1 Apol. 13 Who that is sober-minded will not agree that we are not atheists? We worship the Maker of this whole universe. As we have been taught, we say that he has no need of blood, libations or incense. We praise him as best we can with words of prayer and thanksgiving for everything we receive. We have learned that the only honor worthy of him is not to burn up what he has made for our nourishment, but to use it ourselves and share it with those in need. In gratitude to him we offer up, in words, solemn praises and hymns for our creation, for all the things that give us health, for the qualities of the different kinds of things and for the changing of the seasons. And we send him our requests that we may live again in incorruption through faith in him. Our teacher in these things is Jesus Christ, who was born for this purpose and was crucified under Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea in the time of Tiberius Caesar. We have learned that he is the Son of the true God, and we

hold him in second place, and the prophetic Spirit in the third rank. We will show that we are right to honor them. People call us mad on this very point. They say that we give second place, after the unchanging and ever-existing God, the Father of all, to a crucified man. They do not know the mystery in this, and as we explain it we urge you to pay attention.

Translator's note. "Solemn praises" translates a Greek word that literally means "processions," the kind held in pagan worship. Justin seems to mean that Christians honor God with words, not with ceremonies and burnt offerings.

Scripture: [John 18:37](#)

Chapter 14

1 Apol. 14a We warn you in advance to be on guard, in case the demons we have been denouncing deceive you and keep you from reading and understanding what we say at all. They are fighting to keep you as their slaves and servants. Sometimes they appear in dreams, and sometimes they use magical tricks, and so they take control of everyone who makes no effort at all for his own salvation. This is what we ourselves did: after we were persuaded by the Word, we withdrew from them, and now we follow the one unbegotten God through his Son. We once took pleasure in sexual immorality, but now we embrace self-control alone. We once practiced magic arts, but now we have given ourselves to the good and unbegotten God. We loved the ways of getting money and possessions above everything, but now we bring what we have into a common fund and share with everyone in need. We hated and killed one another, and because of differences in custom we would not even share a hearth with people of another tribe. But now, since Christ appeared, we live at the same table with them. We pray for our enemies, and we try to win over those who hate us without cause, so that they too may live by Christ's good instructions and share our good hope of receiving the same things from God, the Master of all.

Translator's note. "The Word" translates logos. The Greek can mean Christ the Word, or the message or reason that persuaded them. Justin may intend both.

Scripture: [Matthew 5:44](#)

1 Apol. 14b So that we do not seem to be using clever arguments on you, we think it right, before the proof itself, to recall a few of the teachings of Christ himself. It is for you, as powerful rulers, to examine whether we have truly been taught these things and truly teach them. His sayings were brief and concise, for he was no sophist. His word was the power of God.

Translator's note. A "sophist" was a professional teacher of clever, persuasive argument, often viewed with suspicion.

Chapter 15

1 Apol. 15a About self-control he said this: “Whoever looks at a woman in order to desire her has already committed adultery in his heart before God.” And: “If your right eye causes you to stumble, cut it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of heaven with one eye than to be sent into the eternal fire with two.” And: “Whoever marries a woman divorced from another husband commits adultery.” And: “There are some who were made eunuchs by men, some who were born eunuchs, and some who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. But not everyone can accept this.” So those who marry twice under human law are sinners in the eyes of our Teacher, and so are those who look at a woman in order to desire her. Not only the man who commits adultery in deed is cast out by him, but also the man who wants to commit adultery, since not only our deeds but also our thoughts are open to God.

Translator’s note. What Justin means by marrying twice (“digamy”) is debated. He may mean remarriage after divorce, which Roman law allowed, and that would follow from the saying he just quoted. Or he may mean any second marriage.

Scripture: [Matthew 5:28](#); [Matthew 5:29](#); [Matthew 5:32](#); [Matthew 19:12](#)

1 Apol. 15b Many men and women, now sixty or seventy years old, who were made disciples of Christ from childhood, have stayed pure. I am proud to say I could show such people among every race of men. And what can we say of the countless multitude who have turned from a life of self-indulgence and learned these things? For Christ did not call the righteous or the self-controlled to repentance, but the ungodly, the self-indulgent and the unjust. He said: “I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” For the heavenly Father desires the sinner’s repentance rather than his punishment. About loving everyone, he taught this: “If you love those who love you, what is new in that? Even the sexually immoral do this. But I say to you: pray for your enemies, love those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you.”

Translator’s note. “I did not come to call...” matches [Luke 5:32](#) (compare [Matthew 9:13](#)). The saying about the Father echoes [Ezekiel 18:23](#) and [33:11](#). The love sayings resemble [Matthew 5:44-47](#) and [Luke 6:27-28](#), 32. Where Justin has “the sexually immoral,” Matthew has “tax collectors” and Luke has “sinners,” and his wording differs in other places too.

Scripture: [Luke 5:32](#); [Matthew 5:46](#); [Matthew 5:44](#); [Luke 6:28](#)

1 Apol. 15c About sharing with those in need, and doing nothing for show, he said this: “Give to everyone who asks, and do not turn away anyone who wants to borrow. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what is new in that? Even the tax collectors do this. But you, do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and rust destroy and thieves break in. Store up

treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his soul? Or what will he give in exchange for it? So store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys.” And: “Be kind and compassionate, as your Father also is kind and compassionate, and makes his sun rise on sinners, and on the righteous, and on the wicked.

Translator’s note. Justin joins sayings from different parts of the Gospels and does not always follow their wording. Compare [Matthew 5:42](#); [Luke 6:34](#); [Matthew 6:19-20](#); [Matthew 16:26](#); [Luke 6:36](#); [Matthew 5:45](#). This last quotation continues into the next section.

Scripture: [Matthew 5:42](#); [Matthew 6:19-20](#); [Matthew 16:26](#); [Matthew 5:45](#)

1 Apol. 15d “Do not worry about what you will eat or what you will wear. Are you not worth more than the birds and the wild animals? And God feeds them. So do not worry about what you will eat or what you will wear, for your heavenly Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of heaven, and all these things will be added to you. For where the treasure is, there also is the mind of a person.” And: “Do not do these things in order to be seen by people. If you do, you have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

Translator’s note. Compare [Matthew 6:25-33](#) and [Luke 12:22-31](#). The Gospels speak only of birds, and Justin adds “wild animals.” The Greek says “the mind (nous) of a person” where the Gospels have “heart” ([Matthew 6:21](#); [Luke 12:34](#)). The last saying echoes [Matthew 6:1](#).

Scripture: [Matthew 6:25-26](#); [Matthew 6:31-33](#); [Matthew 6:21](#); [Matthew 6:1](#)

Chapter 16

1 Apol. 16a Concerning being patient with wrongs, ready to serve everyone, and free from anger, these are the things he said: “To the one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also. Do not stop the one who takes your shirt or your coat. Whoever is angry is liable to the fire. Whoever forces you to go one mile, go two with him. Let your good works shine before people, so that when they see them they may marvel at your Father in heaven.” For we must not strike back, and he does not want us to imitate wicked people. Instead, he urged us to lead everyone, by patience and gentleness, away from shame and from the desire for evil things. We can prove this from many who were once among you. They changed from being violent men and tyrants. Some were won over by watching the steady lives of their neighbors. Some noticed the remarkable patience of fellow travelers who were being cheated. Some had personally experienced the conduct of those they did business with.

Translator’s note. Compare [Matthew 5:39-41](#), 22, 16 and [Luke 6:29](#). The Greek says people “marvel at” (or “admire”) the Father, where [Matthew 5:16](#) and the older translation have “glorify.” The older translation also

says these men “once were of your way of thinking,” but the Greek says only that they were “among you.” And where the older English has “the honesty of those with whom they transacted business,” the Greek says only that they “had experience of” their business partners.

Scripture: [Luke 6:29](#); [Matthew 5:22](#); [Matthew 5:41](#); [Matthew 5:16](#)

1 Apol. 16b Concerning not swearing at all, and always speaking the truth, he commanded this: “Do not swear at all. Let your yes be yes and your no be no. Anything more than these comes from evil.” And he persuaded us that God alone must be worshiped, saying: “The greatest commandment is: You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone, with all your heart and with all your strength”—the Lord God who made you. And when someone came to him and said, “Good teacher,” he answered, “No one is good except God alone, who made all things.” Those who are not found living as he taught should be recognized as not being Christians, even if they repeat Christ’s teachings with their tongue. For he said that it is not those who only talk who will be saved, but those who also do the works.

Translator’s note. The older translation runs on into the quotation “Not every one who saith to Me, Lord, Lord...”, which in the Greek begins the next section.

Scripture: [Matthew 5:34-37](#); [Mark 12:30](#); [Mark 10:18](#); [Matthew 7:21](#)

1 Apol. 16c For he said this: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. For whoever hears me and does what I say hears the one who sent me. Many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not eat and drink in your name and do mighty works?’ And then I will say to them, ‘Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ Then there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when the righteous shine like the sun, but the unrighteous are sent into the eternal fire. For many will come in my name, clothed outwardly in sheepskins but inwardly ravenous wolves. You will know them by their works. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” And we ask that those who do not live in line with his teachings, and are only called Christians, be punished by you as well.

Translator’s note. The verb (axioumen) can mean “we ask” or “we think it right.” The older translation’s “we demand” is stronger than the word requires. “As well” (Greek kai) probably means punishment by the emperors in addition to the judgment Christ has just described.

Scripture: [Matthew 7:21-23](#); [Matthew 13:42-43](#); [Matthew 7:15-16](#); [Matthew 7:19](#)

Chapter 17

1 Apol. 17 Everywhere, and before all others, we try to pay the taxes and special levies to those you have appointed, as we were taught by him. For at that time some people came and asked him

whether one should pay tribute to Caesar. He answered, “Tell me, whose image does the coin have?” They said, “Caesar’s.” And he answered them again, “Then give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” So we worship God alone, but in everything else we gladly serve you. We acknowledge you as kings and rulers of men, and we pray that along with your royal power you will also be found to have sound judgment. But if you pay no attention to us, even when we pray and lay everything openly before you, we will suffer no harm. We believe, or rather are convinced, that each person will pay the penalty in eternal fire in keeping with the worth of his deeds. We also believe that each will be required to give account in proportion to the abilities he received from God, as Christ made clear when he said, “From the one to whom God gave more, more will also be required.”

Translator’s note. The closing saying echoes [Luke 12:48](#). Justin’s wording adds “God,” which is not in Luke.

Scripture: [Matthew 22:17-21](#); [Luke 12:48](#)

Chapter 18

1 Apol. 18 Look at the end of each of the kings who have lived. They all died the death that is common to everyone. If death led to a loss of all awareness, that would be a windfall for the wicked. But sensation remains for everyone who has been born, and eternal punishment is stored up. So do not neglect to be persuaded and to believe that these things are true. Let the following persuade you that souls are still aware after death: necromancy, divination by means of uncorrupted children, the calling up of human souls, the so-called dream-senders and familiar spirits among the magicians, and the things done by those who know these arts. Let these also persuade you: the people who are seized and thrown about by the souls of the dead, whom everyone calls demon-possessed and mad; the oracles you have, as they are called, of Amphilochus, Dodona and Pytho, and others like them; the teachings of your writers, Empedocles and Pythagoras, Plato and Socrates; the pit in Homer, and Odysseus’s descent to look into these things; and the words of others who said the same things. Accept us at least as you accept these, since we believe in God no less than they do, indeed more. We expect to receive back our own bodies, even though they have died and been thrown into the earth, for we say that nothing is impossible with God.

Translator’s note. “The pit in Homer” is the trench Odysseus dug to call up the spirits of the dead in Book 11 of the Odyssey.

Chapter 19

1 Apol. 19a Consider carefully: what would seem harder to believe than this? Suppose we were not in a body, and someone said that from a tiny drop of human seed it is possible for bones, sinews and

flesh to be formed into the shape we see. Let us put it now as a hypothetical. Suppose you were not yet such as you are, and not born of such parents. Suppose someone showed you human seed and a painted picture, and insisted that from this kind of thing such a being could come. Would you believe it before you saw it happen? No one would dare to say that you would. In the same way, you are now unbelieving because you have never seen a dead man rise. But at the beginning you would not have believed that such people could come from a tiny drop, and yet you see that they do. In the same way, then, consider that it is not impossible for human bodies, once dissolved and scattered in the earth like seeds, to rise at the proper time by God's command and "put on incorruption."

Translator's note. "Put on incorruption" echoes [1 Corinthians 15:53](#). The older translation added the bracketed words "[and causes]" and "[that such a statement would surpass belief]." It also wrote "a picture of a man" where the Greek says only "a painted picture." "Not born of such parents" renders the Greek "nor of such," with "parents" implied.

Scripture: [1 Corinthians 15:53](#)

1 Apol. 19b What power worthy of God can they mean, those who claim that each thing goes back into what it came from, and that beyond this even God can do nothing? We cannot say. But this we do see: they would never have believed it possible that they themselves and the whole world could become what they now see, or come from the materials they see them come from. We have received the teaching that it is better to believe even what is impossible by nature and for human beings than to be unbelieving like everyone else. For we know that our teacher Jesus Christ said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God." He also said, "Do not fear those who kill you and after that can do nothing more. Fear the one who, after you have died, is able to throw both soul and body into Gehenna." Gehenna is the place where those will be punished who have lived unjustly and do not believe that the things God taught through Christ will happen.

Translator's note. The two sayings are close to [Luke 18:27](#) (compare [Matthew 19:26](#)) and to a blend of [Luke 12:4-5](#) and [Matthew 10:28](#), quoted freely.

Scripture: [Luke 18:27](#); [Matthew 10:28](#); [Luke 12:4-5](#)

Chapter 20

1 Apol. 20 The Sibyl and Hystaspes also said that perishable things would be destroyed by fire. The so-called Stoic philosophers teach that even God himself will be dissolved into fire, and they say that the world comes into being again through this change. But we understand God, the maker of all things, to be greater than the things that change. So if on some points we say the same things as the poets and philosophers you honor, and on other points say things that are greater and more divine, and we alone give proof,

why are we hated unjustly above everyone else? When we say that God ordered and made all things, we will seem to be repeating the teaching of Plato. When we say that the world will be burned up, we will seem to be repeating the Stoics. When we say that the souls of the unjust are punished, still aware, even after death, while the souls of the upright are freed from punishment and live well, we will seem to say the same as the poets and philosophers. When we say that people should not worship the works of human hands, we say the same as the comic poet Menander and others who said this, for they declared that the craftsman is greater than what he makes.

Translator's note. The older translation says "a dissolution by God". The Greek printed here says the destruction will be "by fire", and this version follows the Greek.

Chapter 21

1 Apol. 21a We say that the Word, who is the first offspring of God, was born without sexual union. We say that he is Jesus Christ, our Teacher, and that he was crucified, died, rose again and went up into heaven. In this we bring nothing new compared with what you say about those you call sons of Zeus. You know how many sons of Zeus your esteemed writers name. There is Hermes, the word who interprets and the teacher of all. There is Asclepius, who was a healer, was struck by lightning, and went up into heaven. There is Dionysus, who was torn to pieces. There is Heracles, who gave himself to the fire to escape his labors. There are the Dioscuri, the sons of Leda, and Perseus, the son of Danae. There is Bellerophon, who, though born of human parents, rose on the horse Pegasus. And what shall we say of Ariadne and of those who, like her, are said to have been set among the stars?

Translator's note. The older translation uses the Roman names (Jupiter, Mercury, Aesculapius, Bacchus, Hercules). This version uses the Greek names Justin wrote. The older version also says "the sons of Leda, and Dioscuri" as though these were two groups, but in the Greek the Dioscuri are the sons of Leda.

1 Apol. 21b And what of your emperors who die? You always think it right to make them immortal, and you bring forward someone who swears he has seen the burned Caesar rise from the funeral pyre into heaven. There is no need to tell people who already know what deeds are recorded of each of these so-called sons of Zeus. It is enough to say that these stories are written to corrupt students and spur them on, for everyone thinks it good to imitate the gods. But let no sound-minded soul think such a thing about the gods. Let no one think that Zeus himself, by their account the ruler and begetter of all, killed his father and was the son of such a father. Let no one think that he was overcome by desire for evil and shameful pleasures, went after Ganymede and the many women he seduced, and approved the same conduct in his children. But, as we said before, it was the wicked demons who did these things. We

have been taught that only those who live near God in holiness and virtue are made immortal. And we believe that those who live unjustly and do not change their ways are punished in everlasting fire.

Translator's note. The older translation says the stories are written “for the advantage and encouragement” of students. The Greek word here (diaphora) is uncertain. It can mean “advantage”, but many scholars understand it as “corruption” (or read diaphthora, “corruption”), which fits Justin’s criticism of these stories. This version follows that reading.

Chapter 22

1 Apol. 22 Jesus is called the Son of God. Even if he were only a man in the ordinary sense, he would be worthy to be called Son of God because of his wisdom, for all writers call God the father of men and gods. And if we say, as we said before, that he was born from God in a special way, beyond ordinary birth, as the Word of God, let this be something you share with us, since you call Hermes the word who brings messages from God. If anyone objects that he was crucified, this too he shares with the sons of Zeus, as you call them, who suffered as listed above. Their sufferings in death are recorded as different from one another, not alike. So even in the particular kind of his suffering he does not seem inferior to them. As we promised, as the discussion goes on we will show that he is even superior. Or rather, this has already been shown, for the superior one is seen from his deeds. And if we say he was born of a virgin, let this too be something you share with us, as in the case of Perseus. And when we say that he healed the lame, the paralyzed and those disabled from birth, and raised the dead, we will seem to be saying things like what is said to have been done by Asclepius.

Translator's note. The older translation says “those born blind”. The Greek says “those in bad condition from birth” (ek genetês ponêrous), a general term for people disabled from birth. The older translation also leaves out “and raised the dead”, which is in the Greek.

Chapter 23

1 Apol. 23 Now I want this also to become clear to you. First, everything we say that we learned from Christ and from the prophets who came before him is alone true, and is older than all the writers who have lived. We do not ask to be accepted because we say the same things as they do, but because we speak the truth. Second, Jesus Christ alone has been begotten as Son of God in a special sense, being his Word, firstborn and power. By God’s will he became man and taught us these things for the change and restoration of the human race. Third, before he became man among men, some got in ahead of him. I mean the evil demons mentioned earlier. Through the poets they told stories they had invented as though these things had really happened. In the same way they are behind the slanderous charges of impious deeds made against us,

for which there is no witness and no proof. Of all this we will now give proof.

Translator's note. The older translation says the poets were “influenced by the demons”. The Greek says the demons themselves acted ahead of time and spoke through the poets.

Chapter 24

1 Apol. 24 First, though we say things like what the Greeks say, we alone are hated, because of the name of Christ. Though we do no wrong, we are put to death as sinners. Meanwhile other people in other places worship trees and rivers, mice, cats, crocodiles and many of the animals that have no reason. Not everyone honors the same things; one group honors one, another group another, so that all are godless in one another's eyes because they do not worship the same things. This is the only charge you can bring against us: that we do not worship the same gods as you, and do not bring to the dead libations, the smoke of burnt fat, crowns at their tombs, and sacrifices. You know very well that the same creatures are counted gods by some, wild beasts by others, and sacrificial victims by others.

Translator's note. The older translation has “crowns for their statues”. The Greek says crowns “at their tombs”, which is followed here.

Chapter 25

1 Apol. 25 Second, we come from every race of people. We once worshiped Dionysus, son of Semele, and Apollo, son of Leto, who in their passions for males did things that are shameful even to mention. We worshiped Persephone and Aphrodite, who were driven wild with desire for Adonis (you also celebrate their mysteries), and Asclepius and others called gods. But through Jesus Christ we have come to despise all these, even though we are threatened with death. We have given ourselves instead to the unbegotten God, who feels no passions. We do not believe that he ever rushed in lust upon Antiope and others like her, or upon Ganymede. We do not believe that he was set free by that hundred-handed giant, whose help came through Thetis. We do not believe that he was anxious on that account that Thetis's son Achilles should destroy many Greeks because of his concubine Briseis. We pity those who believe such stories, and we recognize that the demons are the ones responsible for them.

Translator's note. Justin is mocking a story in Homer's Iliad, book 1. Achilles recalls that Thetis once saved Zeus from being bound by the other gods by summoning the hundred-handed Briareus. Thetis then asks Zeus to honor Achilles, and Zeus agrees to let the Greeks suffer losses after Achilles is robbed of Briseis.

Chapter 26

1 Apol. 26a Third, after Christ went up into heaven, the demons put forward certain men who claimed to be gods. Far from being persecuted by you, these men were even thought worthy of honors. One was a Samaritan named Simon, from a village called Gitta. In the reign of Claudius Caesar, by the craft of the demons working in him, he performed magical acts in your imperial city of Rome and was regarded as a god. You honored him as a god with a statue, which was set up in the river Tiber between the two bridges, with this inscription in Latin: SIMONI DEO SANCTO (“To Simon, the holy God”). Almost all the Samaritans, and a few people in other nations, worship him and acknowledge him as the first god. They also say that a certain Helena, who went about with him at that time and had earlier stood on display as a prostitute, was the first thought that came from him.

Translator’s note. The Greek says literally that Helena “had stood on a roof”, an expression for working as a prostitute. The older translation’s “had been a prostitute” gives the meaning.

1 Apol. 26b We also know of a man named Menander, another Samaritan, from the village of Capparetaea. He became a disciple of Simon, was likewise worked upon by the demons, and came to Antioch, where he deceived many by magical arts. He persuaded his followers that they would never die, and even now there are some who come from him and profess this. There is also a man of Pontus named Marcion, who is still alive and teaching his followers to believe in some other god greater than the Creator. With the help of the demons he has led many people of every nation to speak blasphemies. They deny that the maker of this universe is God, and claim that some other god, being greater, has done greater works than he. All who take their start from these men are called Christians, as we said before. In the same way, philosophers who do not share the same teachings still have in common the name of philosophy.

Translator’s note. The older translation says that those who disagree “with the philosophers” still share their name. The Greek means that philosophers who disagree with one another all still bear the name of philosophy. That is followed here.

1 Apol. 26c Whether these people also do those shameful deeds that the stories tell of (overturning the lamp, indiscriminate intercourse, and eating human flesh), we do not know. But we do know that you do not persecute or kill them, at least not for their doctrines. We also have a treatise written against all the heresies that have arisen. If you wish to read it, we will give it to you.

Translator’s note. Justin’s treatise against all heresies has not survived.

Chapter 27

1 Apol. 27 As for us, we have been taught that to expose even newborn children is the practice of wicked men. We have been

taught this so that we do no wrong and commit no impiety. First, because we see that almost all of them, girls and boys alike, are led into prostitution. The ancients are said to have raised herds of cattle, goats, sheep, or grazing horses, and in the same way you now raise children only for shameful use. In every nation a crowd of women, effeminate men, and people who practice unspeakable acts stands ready for this defilement. You collect fees, levies, and taxes from them, when you ought to root them out of your world. Besides the godless, shameful, and unrestrained act itself, a man who uses such people may happen to be having intercourse with his own child, relative, or brother. Some even prostitute their own children and wives. Some are openly castrated to be used sexually by men. They trace these mysteries to the Mother of the gods, and beside each of the gods you recognize a serpent is depicted as a great symbol and mystery. What you do openly and honor, as though the divine light were overturned and absent, you charge against us. This does us no harm, since we keep clear of doing any such thing. Instead it harms those who do these things and bear false witness against us.

Translator's note. The “light overturned” echoes the “overturning of the lamp” in the slander mentioned in the previous section (1.26).

Chapter 28

1 Apol. 28 Among us, the leader of the evil demons is called the serpent, Satan, and the devil. You can learn this by searching our writings. Christ foretold that he would be sent into the fire with his army and with the people who follow him, to be punished for endless ages. God has not yet done this, and he delays for the sake of the human race. He foreknows that some will be saved through repentance, some perhaps not yet even born. From the beginning he made the human race able to think, able to choose the truth and to do right. So all people are without excuse before God, for they have been made rational and able to reflect. If anyone does not believe that God cares about these things, he will either admit by a clever argument that God does not exist, or he will say that God exists but delights in evil, or that he stays unmoved like a stone. He will say that virtue and vice are nothing, and that people only suppose these things to be good or bad. This is the greatest impiety and injustice.

Translator's note. The phrase rendered “admit by a clever argument” (διὰ τέχνης ὁμολογήσει) is obscure. The older translation has “insinuate”. The sense seems to be that such a person ends up denying God by a roundabout argument.

Scripture: [Revelation 12:9](#); [Matthew 25:41](#)

Chapter 29

1 Apol. 29 And again, we fear that some exposed child might not

be picked up and might die, and we would be murderers. Rather, we either marry only to bring up children, or we refuse marriage and live in complete self-control. To persuade you that promiscuous intercourse is no mystery rite of ours, one of our people recently submitted a petition in Alexandria to Felix the governor. He asked him to allow a doctor to remove his testicles, for the doctors there said they were forbidden to do this without the governor's permission. Felix would not sign it at all, so the young man stayed as he was. He was content with his own conscience and that of those who shared his convictions. We also think it fitting to mention here Antinous, who lived recently. Out of fear everyone was eager to worship him as a god, though they knew who he was and where he came from.

Translator's note. Antinous was the emperor Hadrian's favorite. He drowned in the Nile around AD 130 and was then deified at Hadrian's command.

Chapter 30

1 Apol. 30 Someone might object: what prevents the man we call Christ, a man born of men, from having done the mighty works we speak of by magical art, and so seeming to be the Son of God? We will now give the proof. We do not trust those who merely say these things. We are compelled to be convinced by those who prophesied before the events, since we see with our own eyes that things have happened and are happening just as they were foretold. We believe this will seem to you, too, the greatest and truest proof.

Chapter 31

1 Apol. 31a There were, then, certain men among the Jews who were prophets of God. Through them the prophetic Spirit announced beforehand what was going to happen, before it happened. The kings of the Jews at various times obtained these prophecies and kept them with care. The prophecies were written just as they had been spoken, in the prophets' own Hebrew language, in books the prophets themselves had put together. When Ptolemy, king of the Egyptians, was setting up a library and trying to collect the writings of all people, he learned about these prophecies. He sent to Herod, who was then king of the Jews, asking that the books of the prophecies be sent to him. King Herod sent them, written in the Hebrew language mentioned above. But the Egyptians could not understand what was written in them, so Ptolemy sent again and asked him to dispatch men to translate them into the Greek language.

Translator's note. Justin's account is historically confused. According to the traditional story (the Letter of Aristeas), the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures known as the Septuagint was made under Ptolemy II in the third century BC. That story has Ptolemy dealing with the high priest Eleazar, not a king. Herod the Great reigned much later (37–4 BC). Justin

names Herod as written.

1 Apol. 31b When this was done, the books stayed with the Egyptians down to the present, and they are also everywhere in the hands of all the Jews. But the Jews, even when they read them, do not understand what is said. They consider us their enemies and foes, and like you they kill and punish us whenever they can, as you can verify. In the recent Jewish war, Barchochebas, the leader of the Jewish revolt, ordered that only Christians be led off to terrible punishments unless they denied Jesus the Christ and blasphemed. In the books of the prophets we found it announced beforehand that Jesus our Christ would come, be born of a virgin, grow to manhood, heal every disease and every sickness, and raise the dead. He would be envied, not recognized, and crucified. He would die, rise again, and go up into heaven. He would be, and be called, the Son of God. We also found that certain people would be sent out by him to every race of humankind to proclaim these things, and that people from the nations would believe in him more. This was prophesied before he appeared, sometimes 5,000 years before, sometimes 3,000, sometimes 2,000, then 1,000, and then 800. For as the generations followed one another, one prophet after another arose.

Translator's note. Barchochebas is Bar Kokhba, who led the Jewish revolt against Rome of about AD 132–135. The older translation's "[than among the Jews]" is its own addition. The Greek says only that people from the nations would believe "more."

Scripture: [Matthew 4:23](#); [Matthew 9:35](#)

Chapter 32

1 Apol. 32a Moses, the first of the prophets, said in these very words: "A ruler will not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his loins, until he comes for whom it is reserved. He will be the expectation of the nations, binding his foal to the vine and washing his robe in the blood of the grape." It is for you to inquire carefully and find out how long the Jews had a ruler and king of their own. They had one until the appearing of Jesus Christ, our teacher, who explained the prophecies that were not understood. The holy, divine Spirit of prophecy had said through Moses that a ruler would not fail from the Jews until he came for whom the kingdom was reserved. (Judah was the forefather of the Jews, and they get their name from him.) After Christ appeared, you ruled over the Jews and took control of all their land.

Translator's note. The quotation is [Genesis 49:10–11](#) in the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint), which reads "ruler... leader from his thighs" (meaning his descendants, given here as "loins"), where the Hebrew, followed by familiar English versions, has "sceptre... lawgiver from between his feet."

Scripture: [Genesis 49:10-11](#)

1 Apol. 32b The words “He will be the expectation of the nations” showed that people from all the nations would look for him to come again. You can see this with your own eyes and be convinced by the facts. For people of every race look for the one who was crucified in Judea. Right after his crucifixion the land of the Jews was captured in war and handed over to you. The words “binding his foal to the vine and washing his robe in the blood of the grape” were a symbol pointing to what would happen to Christ and what he would do. A donkey’s foal was standing tied to a vine at the entrance of a village. He ordered his disciples to bring it to him then. When it was brought, he mounted it, sat on it, and entered Jerusalem, where the greatest temple of the Jews stood, which you later destroyed. After this he was crucified, so that the rest of the prophecy might be fulfilled.

Translator’s note. See [Matthew 21:1-7](#), [Mark 11:1-7](#) and [Luke 19:29-35](#). The Gospels say the colt was tied at the village ([Mark 11:4](#) says by a door). They do not mention a vine. That detail comes from Justin’s reading of [Genesis 49:11](#).

Scripture: [Genesis 49:10-11](#); [Matthew 21:2](#); [Mark 11:2](#)

1 Apol. 32c The words “washing his robe in the blood of the grape” announced in advance the suffering he was going to undergo, cleansing with his blood those who believe in him. For what the divine Spirit through the prophet calls his “robe” is the people who believe in him, in whom dwells the seed from God, the Word. The “blood of the grape” shows that the one who would appear would have blood, yet not from human seed but from the power of God. The first power after God, the Father and Lord of all, is the Word, who is also his Son. How he was made flesh and became man we will explain in what follows. Just as it was not man but God who made the blood of the vine, so this was a sign that his blood would not come from human seed but from the power of God, as we said before.

Scripture: [Genesis 49:11](#)

1 Apol. 32d Isaiah, another prophet, prophesying the same things in other words, said: “A star will rise out of Jacob, and a flower will come up from the root of Jesse, and the nations will hope in his arm.” A bright star has risen, and a flower has come up from the root of Jesse: this is the Christ. For by the power of God he was born of a virgin from the seed of Jacob, who became the father of Judah, the one I have shown to be the father of the Jews. And Jesse, according to the saying, was his forefather, while by line of descent he was a son of Jacob and Judah.

Translator’s note. The first line of this quotation matches [Numbers 24:17](#), and the second matches [Isaiah 11:1](#). The last line resembles the Greek of [Isaiah 11:10](#) and 51:5. Justin gives all of it to Isaiah. The older version says “conceived” where the Greek says “born.”

Scripture: [Numbers 24:17](#); [Isaiah 11:1](#); [Isaiah 51:5](#)

Chapter 33

1 Apol. 33a Hear again how Isaiah foretold, in so many words, that he would be born of a virgin. He said: “Behold, the virgin will conceive in the womb and will bear a son, and they will say for his name, ‘God with us.’” God announced beforehand, through the Spirit of prophecy, things that people thought unbelievable and impossible. He did this so that when they happened, they would not be disbelieved but would be believed because they had been foretold. But some people may not understand this prophecy. They may accuse us of the very things we charged against the poets, who say that Zeus went in to women for sexual pleasure. So we will try to make the words clear. “Behold, the virgin will conceive” means that the virgin conceived without intercourse. If she had had intercourse with anyone at all, she would no longer have been a virgin. Rather, the power of God came upon the virgin and overshadowed her, and caused her to become pregnant while she was still a virgin.

Translator’s note. The quotation is [Isaiah 7:14](#), in a form close to [Matthew 1:23](#). “Overshadowed” echoes [Luke 1:35](#).

Scripture: [Isaiah 7:14](#); [Matthew 1:23](#); [Luke 1:35](#)

1 Apol. 33b The angel of God who was sent to that same virgin at that time brought her the good news, saying: “Behold, you will conceive in the womb by the Holy Spirit and bear a son. He will be called Son of the Most High, and you will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” This is what those who recorded everything about our Savior Jesus Christ taught, and we believed them. We believed because the Spirit of prophecy had also said through Isaiah, whom I mentioned above, that he would be born in this way, as we showed before. So it is not right to understand the Spirit and the power that come from God as anything other than the Word, who is also the firstborn of God, as Moses, the prophet mentioned earlier, made known. It was this that came upon the virgin and overshadowed her, and made her pregnant, not through intercourse but through power.

Translator’s note. Justin is probably referring back to chapter 32, where he quoted Moses’ prophecy in [Genesis 49:10-11](#) and explained that the first power after God the Father is the Word.

Scripture: [Luke 1:31-32](#); [Matthew 1:21](#); [Luke 1:35](#)

1 Apol. 33c Jesus, a name in the Hebrew language, means “Savior” in Greek. That is why the angel said to the virgin, “And you will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” And I suppose you yourselves will agree that those who prophesy are inspired by no one other than the divine Word.

Translator’s note. The Greek word for “inspired” (*theophoreomai*) literally has to do with “bearing God.” It means being possessed or moved by God.

Scripture: [Matthew 1:21](#)

Chapter 34

1 Apol. 34 Hear also in what place on earth he was to be born, as another prophet, Micah, foretold. He said: “And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people.” Now there is a village in the land of the Jews, thirty-five stadia from Jerusalem, where Jesus Christ was born. You can also learn this from the registers of the census taken under Quirinius, who was your first procurator in Judea.

Translator’s note. Thirty-five stadia is about four miles. Quirinius was actually governor of Syria. Judea’s first Roman governor is usually said to be Coponius, so Justin’s description of Quirinius is not exact.

Scripture: [Micah 5:2](#); [Matthew 2:6](#); [Luke 2:2](#)

Chapter 35

1 Apol. 35a Christ was also going to remain hidden from other people after his birth until he grew to manhood, and this is what happened. Hear what was said beforehand about it: “A child has been born to us, and a young man has been given to us, whose rule is upon his shoulders.” This points to the power of the cross, for when he was crucified he put his shoulders to it, as will be shown more clearly as the discussion goes on. Again the same prophet Isaiah, inspired by the prophetic Spirit, said: “I spread out my hands to a disobedient and contradicting people, to those who walk in a way that is not good. They now ask me for judgment and dare to draw near to God.” And again, in other words, through another prophet, he says: “They dug my hands and feet, and cast lots for my clothing.”

Translator’s note. “They dug” follows the Greek version of [Psalm 22:16](#) (Psalm 21:17 in the Greek numbering), where many English Bibles have “pierced” and the standard Hebrew text reads “like a lion”; the casting of lots is from [Psalm 22:18](#).

Scripture: [Isaiah 9:6](#); [Isaiah 65:2](#)

1 Apol. 35b Now David, the king and prophet who said these things, suffered none of them. But Jesus Christ had his hands stretched out when he was crucified by the Jews, who contradicted him and said he was not the Christ. And as the prophet said, they mocked him, set him on the judgment seat, and said, “Judge for us.” The words “They dug my hands and feet” referred to the nails that were driven into his hands and feet on the cross. After they crucified him, those who crucified him cast lots for his clothing and divided it among themselves. You can learn that these things happened from the official records made under Pontius Pilate. Now we will give the words of another prophet, Zephaniah, who foretold

expressly that he would sit on the colt of a donkey and enter Jerusalem. These are the words: "Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion; proclaim it, daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king comes to you, gentle, mounted on a donkey and a colt, the foal of a beast of burden."

Translator's note. By the "records made under Pontius Pilate," Justin means official Roman records he believed existed. No such records survive. The later "Acts of Pilate" is a different, much later work.

Scripture: [Zechariah 9:9](#); [Isaiah 65:2](#)

Chapter 36

1 Apol. 36 When you hear the words of the prophets spoken as if by a person, do not suppose that the inspired men themselves are speaking, but the divine Word who moves them. Sometimes he speaks by way of announcing what will happen in the future. Sometimes he speaks as from the person of God, the Master and Father of all. Sometimes he speaks as from the person of Christ. Sometimes he speaks as from the person of peoples answering the Lord or his Father. You can see the same thing in your own writers, where one man writes the whole work but brings in different persons in conversation. The Jews, who have the books of the prophets, did not understand this. So they did not recognize Christ even when he came. They even hate us who say that he has come and who show that, as had been announced beforehand, he was crucified by them.

Chapter 37

1 Apol. 37a To make this clear to you as well, here are words spoken from the person of the Father through Isaiah, the prophet I mentioned: "The ox knew its owner, and the donkey knew the manger of its lord. But Israel did not know me, and my people did not understand. Woe to the sinful nation, a people full of sins, an evil seed, lawless sons. You have forsaken the Lord." And again in another place, when the same prophet speaks in the same way from the person of the Father: "What kind of house will you build for me?" says the Lord. Heaven is my throne, and the earth is the footstool for my feet." And again in another place: "My soul hates your new moons and your sabbaths. I cannot bear the great day of fasting and the day of rest. Even if you come to appear before me, I will not listen to you.

Translator's note. The quotations are from [Isaiah 1:3-4](#), [Isaiah 66:1](#) and [Isaiah 1:12-15](#). The last quotation continues into the next section.

Scripture: [Isaiah 1:3-4](#); [Isaiah 66:1](#); [Isaiah 1:12-14](#)

1 Apol. 37b Your hands are full of blood. Even if you bring fine flour or incense, it is an abomination to me. I do not want the fat of lambs or the blood of bulls. For who has asked for these things from

your hands? Instead, undo every bond of injustice. Tear apart the knots of forced contracts. Shelter the homeless and the naked. Break your bread for the hungry.” From these words you can understand what kind of things are taught through the prophets from the person of God.

Translator’s note. Justin runs together several parts of Isaiah as one quotation: [Isaiah 1:11-15](#) (the sacrifices and the hands full of blood) and [Isaiah 58:6-7](#) (undoing injustice and feeding the hungry).

Scripture: [Isaiah 1:11-15](#); [Isaiah 58:6-7](#)

Chapter 38

1 Apol. 38 When the prophetic Spirit speaks from the person of Christ, he says: “I spread out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people, to those who walk in a way that is not good.” And again: “I gave my back to the whips and my cheeks to the blows. I did not turn my face away from the shame of spitting. And the Lord became my helper. Therefore I was not disgraced. Instead I set my face like solid rock, and I knew that I would not be put to shame, for the one who justified me is near.” And again, when he says: “They cast lots for my clothing, and they pierced my feet and hands. But I lay down and slept, and I rose again, because the Lord upheld me.” And again, when he says: “They spoke with their lips, they shook their heads, saying, ‘Let him rescue himself.’” You can learn that the Jews did all these things to Christ. For when he was crucified, they twisted their lips and shook their heads, saying, “Let the one who raised the dead rescue himself.”

Translator’s note. The Gospels record the mocking at the cross ([Matthew 27:39-43](#); [Mark 15:29-32](#)), but the words “Let the one who raised the dead rescue himself” are Justin’s own wording. They are not a quotation from the Gospels.

Scripture: [Isaiah 65:2](#); [Isaiah 50:6-8](#)

Chapter 39

1 Apol. 39a When the prophetic Spirit speaks as one prophesying things that are going to happen, he says: “For out of Zion will go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and rebuke many people. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into sickles. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and they will not learn war any more.” You can be convinced that this has happened. For twelve men went out from Jerusalem into the world. They were uneducated and untrained in speaking, but by the power of God they made it known to every race of people that they had been sent by Christ to teach everyone the word of God. And we who once murdered one another now do not make war on our enemies. More than that, so that we will not lie or deceive those who question us, we gladly die confessing Christ.

Translator's note. The prophecy is [Isaiah 2:3-4](#) (compare [Micah 4:2-3](#)). The description of the apostles as “uneducated” uses the same Greek word applied to Peter and John in [Acts 4:13](#).

Scripture: [Isaiah 2:3-4](#)

1 Apol. 39b For we could have acted on the well-known saying, “The tongue has sworn, but the mind is unsworn,” to get out of this. The soldiers you enlist and enroll value their oath to you above their own lives, their parents, their country and all their relatives, even though you cannot give them anything that does not decay. So it would be ridiculous if we, who love what does not decay, would not endure everything in order to receive what we long for from the one who is able to give it.

Translator's note. The saying is a famous line from Euripides’ play *Hippolytus* (line 612). Justin does not name its source.

Chapter 40

1 Apol. 40a Now hear how it was foretold concerning those who would preach his teaching and announce his appearing. The prophet and king mentioned above spoke by the Spirit of prophecy in these words: “Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. There are no utterances and no words whose voices are not heard. Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world. In the sun he has set his tent, and he, like a bridegroom coming out of his bridal chamber, will rejoice like a giant to run his course.” In addition to these, we have thought it good and fitting to recall other words prophesied through David himself. From them you can learn how the Spirit of prophecy urges people to live. You can also learn how he reveals the gathering that took place against Christ: Herod, king of the Jews, the Jews themselves, and Pilate, your governor among them, together with his soldiers. He reveals that Christ was going to be believed in by people of every race. He reveals that God calls him Son and has promised to put all his enemies under him. He shows how the demons, as far as they can, try to escape the authority of God, the Father and Master of all, and the authority of Christ himself. And he reveals that God calls everyone to repentance before the day of judgment comes.

Translator's note. The quotation is [Psalm 19:2-5](#), which Justin quotes from the Greek Old Testament, so the wording differs a little from English Bibles. Paul applies the same psalm verse (“their sound has gone out into all the earth”) to the preaching of the gospel in [Romans 10:18](#).

1 Apol. 40b They were spoken like this: “Blessed is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the pestilent, but his desire is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he will meditate day and night. He will be like a tree planted beside the streams of water, which will give its fruit in its season, and its leaf will not fall off, and

everything he does will prosper. Not so the ungodly, not so; they are like chaff that the wind sweeps from the face of the earth. Therefore the ungodly will not rise up in the judgment, nor sinners in the council of the righteous, for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, and the way of the ungodly will perish.”

Translator’s note. This is [Psalm 1](#), quoted from the Greek Old Testament. The Greek has “seat of the pestilent” (loimōn), where the older English has “scornful.” Where the text has “streams,” the Greek literally says “channels” or “outflows” of the waters.

1 Apol. 40c “Why did the nations rage, and the peoples plot new things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ, saying, ‘Let us tear apart their bonds and throw off their yoke from us.’ He who lives in the heavens will laugh at them, and the Lord will mock them. Then he will speak to them in his anger, and in his fury he will terrify them. But I was appointed king by him over Zion, his holy mountain, to proclaim the Lord’s decree. The Lord said to me, ‘You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession. You will shepherd them with an iron rod; you will shatter them like a potter’s vessels.’”

Translator’s note. The Greek verb for “shepherd” (poimainō) is the verb for tending sheep; the older English renders it “herd.” Revelation uses the same verb when it echoes this verse ([Revelation 2:27](#); 12:5; 19:15).

1 Apol. 40d “And now, you kings, understand; be instructed, all you who judge the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in him with trembling. Take hold of instruction, lest the Lord become angry and you perish from the righteous way, when his anger is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who trust in him.”

Translator’s note. “Take hold of instruction” follows the Greek Old Testament ([Psalm 2:12](#)). English Bibles translated from the Hebrew have something quite different here, such as “Kiss the Son.”

Chapter 41

1 Apol. 41 Again, in another prophecy, the Spirit of prophecy, through the same David, showed that Christ would reign after being crucified. He spoke like this: “Sing to the Lord, all the earth, and day after day announce his salvation. For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised, to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols of demons, but God made the heavens. Glory and praise are before his face, and strength and boasting are in the place of his sanctuary. Give glory to the Lord, the Father of the ages. Receive grace and come into his presence, and worship in his holy courts. Let all the earth fear before his face; let it be established and not be shaken. Let them rejoice among the nations: the Lord has reigned” from the tree.

Translator’s note. The words “from the tree” are not in the Psalm as we

have it. Justin, and some later Christian writers, read them as a reference to the cross. In his Dialogue with Trypho (ch. 73), Justin claims the Jews had removed these words from the Psalm.

Chapter 42

1 Apol. 42 Sometimes the Spirit of prophecy speaks of things that are going to happen as though they had already happened. This can be seen even in the passages I have just quoted. So that readers have no excuse for misunderstanding it, we will make this point clear as well. The Spirit speaks of things he knows with certainty will happen as if they had already happened. If you think carefully about what is said, you will see that this is how it must be taken. David spoke the words quoted above 1,500 years before Christ became a man and was crucified. No one who lived before him was crucified and brought joy to the nations, and no one after him did so either. But our Jesus Christ was crucified and died, and he rose again. He went up into heaven and reigned. And because of what he proclaimed through the apostles among all the nations, there is joy for those who look forward to the immortality he announced.

Translator's note. "The words quoted above" are the psalm Justin quoted in the previous chapter ([Psalm 96](#), also found in [1 Chronicles 16](#)). Justin's text of that psalm includes the phrase "the Lord has reigned from the tree." The phrase is not in the Hebrew or in the standard Greek Old Testament, but Justin treats it as a prophecy of the cross.

Chapter 43

1 Apol. 43a Some people might think from what we have said that we claim everything that happens happens by the necessity of fate, because we say it was foretold and known beforehand. We will deal with this too. We have learned from the prophets, and we declare it to be true, that punishments, chastisements and good rewards are given to each person according to what his actions deserve. If this were not so, and everything happened by fate, then nothing at all would be up to us. For if it were fated that this man be good and that man bad, the first would not deserve approval and the second would not deserve blame. Again, unless the human race has the power, by free choice, to flee what is shameful and choose what is good, people are not responsible for anything they do, whatever it may be. But we can show that it is by free choice that a person both walks uprightly and stumbles.

1 Apol. 43b We see the same man pass over to opposite conditions. But if it had been fated that he be either bad or good, he could never have been capable of both opposites, nor changed so many times. Nor would some people be good and others bad. For then we would be declaring fate to be the cause of both good and evil, acting against itself. Or else we would have to accept what was mentioned earlier as true: that there is no such thing as virtue or vice, and that things are only thought good or bad by opinion. As

the true reason shows, that would be the greatest impiety and injustice. But there is a fate we say cannot be avoided: those who choose what is good receive the fitting reward, and those who likewise choose the opposite receive the fitting wages. For God did not make man like the other creatures, such as trees and four-footed animals, which cannot act by choice. Man would not deserve reward or praise if he had not chosen the good himself but had simply been made that way. And if he were evil, he would not justly be punished, since he would not be so of himself and could be nothing other than what he was made.

Translator's note. The words "good and" in "the cause of both good and evil" are an editor's addition to the Greek text. The older translation, which lacks them, reads "the cause of evil."

Chapter 44

1 Apol. 44a The holy Spirit of prophecy taught us this. Through Moses he tells us that God spoke to the first man he formed, saying: "See, before your face are good and evil. Choose the good." And again, through Isaiah, the other prophet, the Spirit spoke to this end as from the person of the Father and Lord God of all: "Wash yourselves, become clean, remove the evils from your souls. Learn to do good. Give justice to the orphan and vindicate the widow. Come, let us reason together, says the Lord. Even if your sins are like scarlet, I will make them white as wool. And if they are like crimson, I will make them white as snow. And if you are willing and listen to me, you will eat the good things of the land. But if you do not listen to me, the sword will devour you. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken this."

Translator's note. Genesis does not record these words as spoken to Adam. They are closest in sense to [Deuteronomy 30:15](#), 19, where Moses sets good and evil before Israel and urges them to choose life. The Isaiah passage is [Isaiah 1:16-20](#), quoted fairly closely from the Greek Old Testament.

Scripture: [Deuteronomy 30:15](#); [Deuteronomy 30:19](#); [Isaiah 1:16-20](#)

1 Apol. 44b When it says, "The sword will devour you," it does not mean that those who disobey will be killed with swords. The sword of God is fire, and those who choose to do wicked things become its food. That is why it says, "The sword will devour you, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." If he had meant a sword that cuts and ends a life at once, he would not have said "devour." So when Plato said, "The blame belongs to the one who chooses, but God is blameless," he took it from Moses the prophet. For Moses is older than all the Greek writers. And everything the philosophers and poets have said about the immortality of the soul, about punishments after death, about the contemplation of heavenly things, and about similar teachings, they were able to understand and explain because they took their starting points from the prophets.

Translator's note. Justin's claim that Plato borrowed from Moses reflects an argument common among early Christian writers and some Hellenistic Jews. The Plato quotation is from the Republic (X, 617e).

Scripture: [Isaiah 1:20](#)

1 Apol. 44c This is why seeds of truth seem to be found among all people. But they are proved not to have understood accurately when they contradict themselves. So when we say that future events were prophesied, we do not mean that they happen by the necessity of fate. God foreknows everything that all people will do. It is also his decree that each person will be repaid according to the worth of his actions. So through the prophetic Spirit he foretells that people will receive from him what their deeds deserve. In this way he keeps calling the human race to attention and remembrance, and shows that he cares for them and provides for them. By the working of the wicked demons, death was decreed against those who read the books of Hystaspes, or of the Sibyl, or of the prophets. The demons wanted fear to keep those who read these books from gaining knowledge of what is good, and so to keep people enslaved to themselves. But in the end they were not able to do this. For we not only read these books without fear, but, as you see, we even bring them to you for examination, knowing that they will appear pleasing to all. Even if we persuade only a few, our gain will be very great. For like good farmers, we will receive our reward from the Master.

Translator's note. The Oracle of Hystaspes, named after a legendary Persian king, and the Sibylline Oracles were prophetic books under the names of pagan seers. The Sibylline material known in Justin's day included Jewish and Christian additions. Justin cites both in chapter 20 as foretelling the destruction of the world.

Chapter 45

1 Apol. 45a Now God, the Father of all, was going to bring Christ up into heaven after raising him from the dead. He was going to keep him there until he strikes down the demons who are hostile to him, and until the number is complete of those whom he foreknows will become good and virtuous. It is for their sake that he has not yet brought about the final burning. To see that this was foretold, listen to what was said by the prophet David. His words are these: "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. The Lord will send out to you a rod of power from Jerusalem, and rule in the midst of your enemies. With you is the rule in the day of your power, in the splendors of your holy ones. From the womb, before the morning star, I begot you."

Translator's note. The quotation is [Psalm 110:1-3](#) ([Psalm 109](#) in the Greek Old Testament). Where the Psalm says the rod will be sent "out of Zion," Justin has "from Jerusalem."

1 Apol. 45b The words "He will send you a rod of power from

Jerusalem” foretell the mighty word that his apostles preached everywhere after going out from Jerusalem. And although death is decreed against those who teach, or even just confess, the name of Christ, we embrace and teach it everywhere. If you also read these words as enemies, you can do nothing more, as we said before, than kill us. That does us no harm. But for you, and for all who hate us unjustly and do not change their minds, it brings eternal punishment by fire.

Chapter 46

1 Apol. 46a Some people might reason foolishly, to turn others away from what we teach. They might say that we claim Christ was born a hundred and fifty years ago, under Quirinius, and taught what we say he taught later, in the time of Pontius Pilate. They might then protest that all the people who lived before him are not accountable. We will answer this difficulty before it is raised. We have been taught that Christ is the firstborn of God, and we have explained above that he is the Word, in whom every race of people shares. Those who lived with the Word are Christians, even though they were thought to be atheists. Among the Greeks, examples are Socrates, Heraclitus and others like them. Among the barbarians, they are Abraham, Ananias, Azarias, Misael, Elijah and many others. We know it would take too long to list their deeds or names, so we decline to do so now.

Translator’s note. Ananias, Azarias and Misael are Greek forms of Hananiah, Azariah and Mishael, Daniel’s three companions who were thrown into the furnace ([Daniel 1:6](#); 3). “Atheists” refers to the charge brought against both Socrates and the Christians.

1 Apol. 46b So also those who lived before Christ without the Word were useless and hostile to Christ, and were murderers of those who lived with the Word. But those who lived, and now live, with the Word are Christians, fearless and untroubled. Why, by the power of the Word, according to the will of God, the Father and Master of all, he was born as a man of a virgin and was named Jesus, and why he was crucified, died, rose again and went up into heaven, an intelligent person will be able to grasp from all that has been said at such length. Since an argument to prove this is not necessary now, we will move on for the present to the more pressing proofs.

Translator’s note. The older translation’s “But who, through the power...” is probably a misprint for “But why.” The Greek is an indirect question: “for what reason... he was born...” Justin is not saying “for this reason he was born.” The older translation also renders “useless” (achrēstoi) as “wicked.”

Chapter 47

1 Apol. 47 Now hear what the Spirit of prophecy said about the

coming destruction of the land of the Jews. The words are spoken as though by the people, amazed at what had happened. They are these: "Zion has become a desert; Jerusalem has become like a desert. The house has become a curse. Our holy place and the glory that our fathers blessed has been burned with fire, and all its glorious things have fallen in ruins. And in the face of this you held back and kept silent, and you humbled us greatly." You are convinced that Jerusalem has been laid waste, as it was foretold. Isaiah the prophet also spoke of its desolation, and said that none of them would be allowed to live there. He said: "Their land is desolate. Their enemies will devour it in front of them, and there will be no one of them living in it." And you know very well that it is guarded by you so that no one may be in it, and that death is the set penalty for any Jew caught entering it.

Translator's note. The "guard" refers to the Roman ban on Jews entering Jerusalem after the Bar Kokhba revolt (about AD 132-135).

Scripture: [Isaiah 64:10-12](#); [Isaiah 1:7](#)

Chapter 48

1 Apol. 48 Hear also how it was foretold that our Christ would heal every disease and raise the dead. The words are these: "At his coming the lame man will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the stammerers will be clear. The blind will see again, the lepers will be cleansed, and the dead will rise and walk about." You can learn from the Acts that were recorded under Pontius Pilate that he did these things. Now hear what was said through Isaiah, showing how the Spirit of prophecy announced beforehand that he would be put to death together with the people who hope in him. The words are these: "See how the righteous man has perished, and no one takes it to heart. Righteous men are taken away, and no one understands. The righteous man has been taken away from the face of wickedness, and he will be in peace. His burial has been taken away from the midst."

Translator's note. The older English reads "his burial shall be in peace: he is taken from our midst." The Greek says "he will be in peace" and "his burial has been taken away from the midst."

Scripture: [Isaiah 35:5-6](#); [Matthew 11:5](#); [Isaiah 57:1-2](#)

Chapter 49

1 Apol. 49a Hear also how it was said through the same Isaiah that the Gentile peoples who did not look for him would worship him, while the Jews, who were always expecting him, would not recognize him when he came. These words were spoken as if from the person of Christ himself. They are these: "I became visible to those who did not ask for me. I was found by those who did not seek me. I said, 'Here I am,' to a nation that did not call on my name. I stretched out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people, to

those who walk in a way that is not good, but follow after their sins. A people who provoke me to my face.” For the Jews had the prophecies and were always expecting the Christ, yet when he came they did not recognize him. Not only that, they even treated him shamefully. But the people from the nations had never heard anything about Christ until his apostles went out from Jerusalem, told them about him and handed on the prophecies. Then they were filled with joy and faith, renounced their idols, and gave themselves to the Unbegotten God through Christ.

Translator’s note. “Unbegotten” is Justin’s regular term for God the Father, who has no origin.

Scripture: [Isaiah 65:1-3](#)

1 Apol. 49b These slanders against those who confess Christ were foreknown. Those who slander him, and who say it is good to keep the old customs, were also foreseen to be wretched. Hear what was said briefly through Isaiah: “Woe to those who call the sweet bitter and the bitter sweet.”

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Isaiah 5:20](#).

Scripture: [Isaiah 5:20](#)

Chapter 50

1 Apol. 50a Hear also the prophecies about how he became man for our sake, endured suffering and dishonor, and will come again in glory. They are these: “Because they handed his soul over to death, and he was counted among the lawless, he himself took up the sins of many and will make atonement for the lawless. For see, my servant will understand, and he will be lifted up and glorified greatly. Just as many will be astonished at you, so your appearance will be without honor among men, and your glory without honor from men. So many nations will marvel, and kings will shut their mouths. For those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand. Lord, who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

Translator’s note. The Greek verb *exilasetai* means “will make atonement” (or “make propitiation”) for the lawless.

Scripture: [Isaiah 53:12](#); [Isaiah 52:13-15](#); [Isaiah 53:1](#)

1 Apol. 50b “We made our announcement before him like a child, like a root in thirsty ground. He has no form or glory. We saw him, and he had no form or beauty; his appearance was dishonored and fell short of that of other men. He was a man who had been struck, who knew how to bear weakness, for his face was turned away. He was dishonored and counted for nothing. This is the one who bears our sins and suffers pain for us. Yet we considered him to be in pain, under blows, and in affliction. But he was wounded for our

lawless deeds and made weak for our sins. The discipline that brings peace was upon him, and by his bruise we were healed. All of us have wandered like sheep; each man wandered in his own way. And he handed him over for our sins, and because of his affliction he does not open his mouth.

Translator's note. In the last sentence the Greek says only "he handed him over," without naming the subject. The Septuagint of [Isaiah 53:6](#) reads "the Lord handed him over," so the subject is God.

Scripture: [Isaiah 53:2-3](#); [Isaiah 53:4-5](#); [Isaiah 53:6-7](#)

1 Apol. 50c "Like a sheep he was led to slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." After he was crucified, all his acquaintances abandoned him and denied him. Later he rose from the dead and appeared to them. He taught them to read the prophecies in which all these things had been foretold as going to happen. They saw him going up into heaven, and they believed. They received power sent to them from there by him, and went out to every race of human beings. They taught these things and were called apostles.

Scripture: [Isaiah 53:7-8](#)

Chapter 51

1 Apol. 51a The Spirit of prophecy wanted to show us that the one who suffers these things has an origin that no one can describe, and that he rules over his enemies. So he spoke like this: "Who will describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth; because of their lawless deeds he has come to death. And I will give the wicked in exchange for his burial, and the rich in exchange for his death, because he committed no lawless act, and no deceit was found in his mouth. And the Lord wishes to cleanse him from the blow. If you give an offering for sin, your soul will see long-lived offspring. And the Lord wishes to take his soul away from toil, to show him light and to form him with understanding, to justify the righteous one who serves many well. And he himself will carry our sins.

Translator's note. The quotation, which continues into the next section, is [Isaiah 53:8-12](#) in the Greek Old Testament.

Scripture: [Isaiah 53:8-11](#)

1 Apol. 51b "Therefore he will inherit many, and he will divide the spoils of the strong, because his soul was handed over to death, and he was counted among the lawless. He himself carried the sins of many, and because of their lawless deeds he was handed over." Now hear how he was to go up into heaven, as it was prophesied. It was said like this: "Lift up the gates of heaven; be opened, so that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty." And hear also what was said through the

prophet Jeremiah about how he will come from heaven with glory. It is this: “Look, he comes as a son of man on the clouds of heaven, and his angels with him.”

Translator’s note. Justin attributes this last saying to Jeremiah, but no such passage is found in Jeremiah as we have it. The wording is close to [Daniel 7:13](#) and recalls [Matthew 24:30-31](#) and 25:31.

Scripture: [Isaiah 53:12](#); [Daniel 7:13](#)

Chapter 52

1 Apol. 52a We have shown that everything that has already happened was proclaimed by the prophets before it came about. So we must also believe that the things prophesied in the same way, which are still to come, will certainly happen. The things that have already happened were foretold, and they came to pass even though people did not recognize them. In the same way the remaining things will come to pass, even if they are not recognized and are not believed. For the prophets proclaimed two comings of his. One has already happened, when he came as a dishonored and suffering man. The second is when, as has been proclaimed, he will come from heaven with glory, with his army of angels. Then he will raise the bodies of all people who have ever lived. He will clothe the bodies of the worthy with incorruption. But he will send the unrighteous into the eternal fire, together with the evil demons, where they will be conscious of it forever.

Translator’s note. “Incorruption” translates *aphtharsia*; compare [1 Corinthians 15:53-54](#), where the same Greek phrase speaks of the perishable body “putting on incorruption.”

Scripture: [Matthew 25:41](#); [1 Corinthians 15:53](#)

1 Apol. 52b We will show that these things also were foretold as going to happen. This is what was said through the prophet Ezekiel: “Joint will be gathered to joint and bone to bone, and flesh will grow back. And every knee will bow to the Lord, and every tongue will confess him.” Now hear what was said in the same way about the kind of feeling and punishment the unrighteous will have: “Their worm will not cease, and their fire will not be put out.” Then they will repent, when it will do them no good. And here is what the peoples of the Jews will say and do when they see him come in glory. It was prophesied through the prophet Zechariah like this: “I will command the four winds to gather the scattered children. I will command the north wind to bring them, and the south wind not to hold them back.

Translator’s note. The words “the peoples of the Jews” follow the Greek literally.

Scripture: [Ezekiel 37:7-8](#); [Isaiah 45:23](#); [Isaiah 66:24](#); [Isaiah 43:5-6](#)

1 Apol. 52c “And then in Jerusalem there will be a great mourning. It will not be a mourning of mouths or lips, but a mourning of the

heart. They will tear not their garments but their minds. They will mourn tribe by tribe. Then they will look on the one whom they pierced, and they will say, ‘Why, Lord, did you lead us astray from your way? The glory which our fathers blessed has become a disgrace to us.’”

Translator’s note. This passage combines [Zechariah 12:10-12](#) (mourning tribe by tribe and looking on the one they pierced) with echoes of [Joel 2:13](#) (“rend your heart and not your garments”), [Isaiah 63:17](#) (“Why have you made us stray from your way?”) and [Isaiah 64:11](#) (64:10 in the Greek Old Testament: “the glory which our fathers blessed”).

Scripture: [Zechariah 12:10-12](#); [Joel 2:13](#); [Isaiah 63:17](#); [Isaiah 64:11](#)

Chapter 53

1 Apol. 53a I could give many other prophecies, but I have stopped. I judge these enough to persuade those who have ears to hear and understand. I also think such people can see that we do not just make claims without proof, as is done with the myths told about the supposed sons of Zeus. For why would we believe a crucified man to be the firstborn of the unbegotten God, and that he himself will judge the whole human race? We believe it because we found testimonies about him proclaimed before he came as a man, and we saw them fulfilled. We saw the land of the Jews laid waste. We saw people from every nation persuaded by the teaching of his apostles, giving up the old customs in which they had lived in error. We see ourselves among them, and we know that the Christians from the Gentiles are more numerous and more genuine than those from the Jews and Samaritans.

Translator’s note. The older translation says “Jupiter,” the Roman name. The Greek has “Zeus.”

1 Apol. 53b The prophetic Spirit calls all the other human races “nations” (Gentiles). But the Jewish and Samaritan peoples are called the tribe of Israel and the house of Jacob. I will now set out the prophecy which said that more would believe from the nations than from the Jews and Samaritans. It was said like this: “Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear. Break out and cry aloud, you who are not in labor, because the children of the desolate woman are more than those of her who has a husband.” For all the nations were “desolate” of the true God, serving the works of their hands. But the Jews and Samaritans had the word of God handed down to them through the prophets, and they were always expecting the Christ. Yet when he came, they did not recognize him, except for a few. The holy prophetic Spirit foretold through Isaiah that these few would be saved.

Translator’s note. The quotation is from [Isaiah 54:1](#), which Paul also quotes in [Galatians 4:27](#). Justin takes the “desolate” woman to stand for the Gentile nations.

Scripture: [Isaiah 54:1](#)

1 Apol. 53c Speaking as if in their person, he said: “If the Lord had not left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom and Gomorrah.” Moses records that Sodom and Gomorrah were cities of ungodly men. God destroyed them by burning them with fire and sulfur. No one in them was saved except a foreigner, a Chaldean by race named Lot, and his daughters were saved with him. Anyone who wishes can still see their whole country, desolate, burned, and remaining barren. I will now cite what was said through the prophet Isaiah to show that those from the nations were foreknown to be more genuine and more faithful. He said: “Israel is uncircumcised in heart, but the nations are uncircumcised in the flesh.” So many things that can be seen are able, with good reason, to bring persuasion and faith to those who welcome the truth, who do not seek glory and are not ruled by their passions.

Translator’s note. Genesis says Lot left Ur of the Chaldeans with Terah and Abram ([Genesis 11:27–31](#)), which probably underlies Justin calling him a Chaldean by race.

Scripture: [Isaiah 1:9](#); [Genesis 19:24](#); [Jeremiah 9:26](#)

Chapter 54

1 Apol. 54a Those who pass on the myths made up by the poets give the young people who learn them no proof. We will show that these stories were told to deceive and mislead the human race, through the working of the evil demons. The demons heard the prophets proclaim that the Christ would come and that the ungodly among men would be punished by fire. So they put forward many men to be called sons of Zeus. They thought they could make people take the things said about Christ as tall tales, like the stories told by the poets. These stories were told among the Greeks and among all the nations, especially where the demons heard the prophets announcing in advance that Christ would be believed. But even though they heard what the prophets said, they did not understand it accurately. Like men who are deceived, they imitated what was said about our Christ. I will make this plain.

Translator’s note. The Greek leaves the subject of “heard” unstated, but the context shows it is the demons.

1 Apol. 54b As I said earlier, the prophet Moses was older than all the writers. Through him, as I also pointed out before, it was prophesied: “A ruler will not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his loins, until he comes for whom it is reserved. And he will be the expectation of the nations, tying his foal to the vine, washing his robe in the blood of the grape.” When the demons heard these prophetic words, they said that Dionysus was a son of Zeus. They handed down that he was the discoverer of the vine, and they record an ass in his mysteries, and they taught that he was torn to pieces and went up into heaven. The prophecy of Moses did not say plainly whether the one who was to come would be the Son of God,

or whether he would ride on a foal and remain on earth or go up into heaven. And the word “foal” could mean the foal of a donkey or of a horse. So they did not know whether the one foretold would bring a donkey’s foal as the sign of his coming or a horse’s. Nor did they know whether he was the Son of God, as I said before, or a son of man. And so they said that Bellerophon, a man born of men, went up into heaven on the horse Pegasus.

Translator’s note. Justin quotes [Genesis 49:10–11](#) in the Septuagint’s wording (“a leader from his loins”), so it differs from English Bibles based on the Hebrew (“from between his feet”).

Scripture: [Genesis 49:10–11](#)

1 Apol. 54c They also heard what was said through another prophet, Isaiah, that he would be born of a virgin and would go up into heaven by his own power. So they put forward the story of Perseus. And when they learned that it had been said, in the prophecies quoted above, “Strong as a giant to run his course,” they said that Heracles was strong and had traveled all over the earth. And when they learned again that it was prophesied that he would heal every disease and raise the dead, they brought forward Asclepius.

Translator’s note. “Strong as a giant to run his course” is from [Psalm 19:5](#) ([Psalm 18:6](#) in the Greek Old Testament), which Justin quoted earlier in the work.

Scripture: [Isaiah 7:14](#)

Chapter 55

1 Apol. 55a But nowhere, in the case of any of the so-called sons of Zeus, did they imitate the crucifixion. They did not understand it, because everything said about it was said symbolically, as I showed above. And this, as the prophet foretold, is the greatest symbol of his power and rule. This is also shown by the things we see before our eyes. Look at everything in the world and consider whether it could be managed, or hold together, without this shape. The sea cannot be crossed unless that trophy called the sail stays intact on the ship. The earth is not plowed without it. Diggers and craftsmen alike cannot do their work except with tools that have this shape. The human form differs from the irrational animals in nothing but this: it stands upright, it can stretch out its hands, and it has on the face, running down from the forehead, what is called the nose, through which the living creature breathes. And this shows nothing other than the shape of the cross.

Translator’s note. Justin calls the sail a “trophy.” A Roman trophy was a victory monument: a post with a crossbar hung with captured armor. A sail spread on its mast and yard makes the same cross shape.

1 Apol. 55b This is why the prophet said, “The breath before our face is the Lord Christ.” Your own symbols also show the power of

this shape. I mean the banners and trophies that your processions carry everywhere. In them you display the marks of your authority and power, even if you do it without understanding. And when your emperors die, you set up their images on this shape and name them gods in your inscriptions. So we have urged you as far as we are able, both by argument and by this visible shape. We know that from now on we are free of blame, even if you do not believe. Our part is done and finished.

Translator's note. The older translation's "all your state possessions are made" is loose. The Greek says your processions go out everywhere with these banners and trophies.

Scripture: [Lamentations 4:20](#)

Chapter 56

1 Apol. 56 Before Christ appeared, the evil demons were not content to say that those called sons of Zeus were born of him. After Christ appeared and lived among men, they learned how the prophets had announced him in advance, and they saw that he was believed in and looked for among every race. So again, as I explained earlier, they put forward other men: Simon and Menander from Samaria. These men worked magical powers and deceived many, and they still keep them deceived. For among you, as I said before, in the imperial city of Rome, in the reign of Claudius Caesar, Simon so astonished the sacred senate and the people of Rome that he was thought to be a god and was honored with a statue, like the other gods honored among you. So we ask that your sacred senate and your people join with you in judging this petition of ours. Then if anyone is held captive by that man's teachings, he can learn the truth and escape the error. And if you wish, tear down the statue.

Translator's note. Simon the magician appears in [Acts 8:9-24](#). Earlier in this work, Justin says Simon's statue stood on the Tiber island, inscribed "To Simon the holy god." A statue base found there in 1574 reads "Semoni Sanco Deo Fidio," a dedication to an old Sabine god. Many scholars think Justin mistook that inscription for one honoring Simon.

Chapter 57

1 Apol. 57 The wicked demons cannot persuade anyone that the burning of the world will not happen as a punishment of the ungodly. In the same way, they were not able to keep Christ's coming hidden. All they can do is this: they can make people who live without reason, who were raised in bad habits and are ruled by their passions, and who love glory, hate us and kill us. We do not hate them. On the contrary, as has been shown, we pity them and want to persuade them to change. For we do not fear death. Everyone agrees that all must die, and nothing in this present order of things is new; it is always the same. If those who share in these

things grow tired of them even after a single year, they ought to pay attention to our teachings, so that they may live forever, free from suffering and from want. But suppose they do not believe that there is anything after death, and declare that the dead pass into a state without feeling. Then in freeing us from the sufferings and needs of this life they do us a kindness, and they show themselves to be wicked, haters of mankind and lovers of glory. For they do not kill us in order to release us. They murder us to rob us of life and pleasure.

Translator's note. The Greek text of this paragraph is uncertain in places: one word in the last sentence is damaged, and editors read the clause about growing tired "even after a single year" differently. This translation follows the generally accepted sense.

Chapter 58

1 Apol. 58 As we said before, the wicked demons also put forward Marcion of Pontus. He still teaches people today to deny that God is the maker of all things in heaven and on earth, and to deny that the Christ proclaimed by the prophets is his Son. He announces some other god besides the Creator of all things, and likewise another son. Many have believed him, as though he alone knew the truth, and they laugh at us. Yet they have no proof for what they say. Without reason they are snatched away like lambs by a wolf, and become food for godless doctrines and for demons. For these so-called demons struggle for nothing else than to draw people away from God who made them and from Christ, his firstborn. Those who cannot lift themselves above the earth, the demons have nailed down, and still nail down, to earthly things and to things made by hands. Those who set out to contemplate divine things they trip up on the way, and they drive them into ungodliness, unless they have sober and pure reasoning and a life free from the passions.

Translator's note. Justin first mentioned Marcion in chapter 26. Marcion came from Pontus on the Black Sea. He taught that the God of the Old Testament, the Creator, was a different and lesser god than the Father of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 59

1 Apol. 59 You should also learn that Plato took from our teachers, that is, from the word given through the prophets, his statement that God transformed formless matter and made the world. So hear the very words spoken through Moses, whom we showed earlier to be the first prophet, and older than the Greek writers. Through him the Spirit of prophecy showed how and from what God first made the world. He spoke like this: "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth. The earth was invisible and unformed, and darkness was over the deep. And the Spirit of God was moving over the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light.' And it was so." So the whole world came into being by the word of God, out of the

underlying matter that Moses had described. Plato and those who say the same things learned this, and so did we, and you too can be persuaded. We also know that what the poets call Erebus was spoken of earlier by Moses.

Translator's note. In Greek poetry, Erebus was the primeval darkness and the dark region beneath the earth. Justin probably links it with the "darkness over the deep."

Scripture: [Genesis 1:1-3](#)

Chapter 60

1 Apol. 60a In his discussion of nature in the *Timaeus*, Plato speaks about the Son of God when he says, "He placed him crosswise in the universe." He likewise took this from Moses. For it is written in the writings of Moses that when the Israelites came out of Egypt and were in the wilderness, they met poisonous beasts, vipers and asps and every kind of snake, which were killing the people. By God's inspiration and working, Moses took bronze and made it into the shape of a cross. He set it up by the holy tent and said to the people, "If you look at this figure and believe, you will be saved by it." Moses wrote that when this was done the snakes died, and he handed down that in this way the people escaped death.

Translator's note. In the *Timaeus* (36b-c), Plato describes the world-soul as two bands crossed in the shape of the Greek letter chi (X). Justin applies the phrase to the Son of God.

Scripture: [Numbers 21:6-9](#)

1 Apol. 60b Plato read this but did not understand it accurately. He did not grasp that it was the figure of a cross. He took it to be a crosswise placing, and so he said that the power next to the first God was placed crosswise in the universe. And he spoke of a third because, as we said before, he read in Moses that the Spirit of God was moving over the waters. He gives the second place to the Word who comes from God, whom he said was placed crosswise in the universe. He gives the third place to the Spirit said to be moving over the water, when he says, "The third things around the third." Now hear how the Spirit of prophecy showed through Moses that there will be a burning of the world. He said this: "An ever-living fire will come down and will devour down to the depths below." So it is not that we hold the same opinions as others. Rather, all of them say what they say in imitation of ours.

Translator's note. Plato's line "the third things around the third" comes from the Second Letter attributed to him.

Scripture: [Genesis 1:2](#); [Deuteronomy 32:22](#)

1 Apol. 60c So among us you can hear and learn these things from people who do not even know the shapes of the letters. They are untrained and uncultured in speech, yet wise and faithful in mind, and some of them are even maimed in their eyes and blind. From

this you can understand that these things did not come about through human wisdom but are spoken by the power of God.

Translator's note. The Greek says these people are “barbarians” in speech. This means they spoke Greek poorly or not at all. It is not a harsh insult here.

Scripture: [1 Corinthians 2:5](#)

Chapter 61

1 Apol. 61a I will also explain how we dedicated ourselves to God when we were made new through Christ. If I left this out, I might seem to be acting dishonestly in my explanation. Those who are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and who promise that they can live accordingly, are taught to pray and to ask God, with fasting, for the forgiveness of their past sins. We pray and fast along with them. Then they are led by us to a place where there is water, and they are born again in the same way that we ourselves were born again. For they are then washed in the water in the name of God, the Father and Master of all things, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit. For Christ said, “Unless you are born again, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.” And it is plain to everyone that those who have once been born cannot go back into their mothers’ wombs.

Translator's note. Justin’s wording of Christ’s saying differs from the Gospel text. [John 3:3-5](#) speaks of being born again (or “from above”) to see or enter “the kingdom of God.” Justin’s phrase “you will not enter the kingdom of heaven” is close to [Matthew 18:3](#). He appears to be quoting loosely or from a variant tradition. I have translated what he wrote.

Scripture: [John 3:3-5](#); [Matthew 28:19](#)

1 Apol. 61b Isaiah the prophet also told how those who have sinned and repent will escape their sins, as we wrote earlier. It was said this way: “Wash yourselves, become clean. Remove the evils from your souls. Learn to do good. Give justice to the orphan and vindicate the widow. Come, and let us reason together, says the Lord. Even if your sins are like purple, I will make them white like wool, and if they are like scarlet, I will make them white like snow. But if you do not listen to me, the sword will devour you, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken this.” And we have learned from the apostles this reason for the rite. At our first birth we were born without knowing it and by necessity, from moist seed, through our parents’ union with each other, and we grew up in bad customs and wicked ways of living. But we should not remain children of necessity and ignorance. We should become children of choice and knowledge, and obtain forgiveness of the sins we committed before. So in the water, the name of God, the Father and Master of all things, is spoken over the one who has chosen to be born again and has repented of his sins. The one who leads the person to be washed to the bath calls on this name alone.

Translator's note. [Isaiah 1:16-20](#), which Justin also quoted in chapter 44. His wording is shorter than the standard Greek (Septuagint) text and reverses “snow” and “wool.” The Septuagint has “like snow” first and “like wool” second. The translation follows Justin’s wording.

Scripture: [Isaiah 1:16-20](#)

1 Apol. 61c For no one can give a name to the God who cannot be spoken of. If anyone dares to say there is such a name, he is raving with hopeless madness. This washing is called “illumination,” because the minds of those who learn these things are enlightened. The person being enlightened is also washed in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who through the prophets announced beforehand everything about Jesus.

Chapter 62

1 Apol. 62 When the demons heard that this washing had been proclaimed by the prophet, they worked to have people sprinkle themselves when they enter their temples and are about to approach them with drink offerings and the smoke of sacrifices. They also bring it about that worshipers wash themselves completely when they come, before they go to the temples where the demons are enshrined. The priests order those who enter the temples and worship there to take off their shoes. The demons imitated this too, after learning it from what happened to the prophet Moses, mentioned above. At that time Moses was commanded to go down to Egypt and lead out the people of Israel who were there. He was tending the sheep of his mother’s brother in the land of Arabia, and our Christ spoke to him in the form of fire from a bush. He said, “Take off your sandals, and come near and listen.” Moses took off his sandals and came near, and he heard that he was to go down to Egypt and lead out the people of Israel there. He received mighty power from Christ, who spoke to him in the form of fire. He went down and led the people out, doing great and marvelous things. If you wish to learn about these, you will find them accurately in his writings.

Translator's note. Justin departs from Exodus here in two ways. Exodus says Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, in Midian ([Exodus 3:1](#)), but Justin says “his mother’s brother” in “Arabia.” Also, in Exodus God tells Moses not to come near ([Exodus 3:5](#)), but Justin’s wording says “come near and listen.”

Scripture: [Exodus 3:2](#); [Exodus 3:5](#); [Exodus 3:10](#)

Chapter 63

1 Apol. 63a Even now all the Jews teach that it was the God who has no name who spoke to Moses. So the Spirit of prophecy, rebuking them through the prophet Isaiah mentioned above, said, as we wrote earlier: “The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its

master's manger, but Israel has not known me, and my people have not understood." And Jesus the Christ rebuked them in the same way, because the Jews did not know what the Father is and what the Son is. He himself said: "No one has known the Father except the Son, nor the Son except the Father, and those to whom the Son reveals him." The Word of God is his Son, as we said before. He is also called Angel and Apostle, for he announces whatever needs to be known, and he is sent to make known whatever is announced. As our Lord himself said: "He who hears me hears the one who sent me."

Translator's note. Justin is playing on words. "Angel" (angelos) means messenger and goes with "announces" (apangellei). "Apostle" (apostolos) means one sent and goes with "is sent" (apostelletai). [Hebrews 3:1](#) also calls Jesus "the apostle."

Scripture: [Isaiah 1:3](#); [Matthew 11:27](#); [Luke 10:16](#)

1 Apol. 63b This will also be clear from the writings of Moses. In them it is written this way: "And an angel of God spoke to Moses in a flame of fire out of the bush and said, I am the One who is, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of your fathers. Go down to Egypt and bring out my people." If you want to learn what follows, you can do so from those writings, for it is not possible to write everything down here. But these words have been given as proof that Jesus the Christ is the Son of God and his Apostle. He existed before as the Word. At one time he appeared in the form of fire, and at another in a bodiless likeness. But now, by the will of God, he became man for the human race, and he endured all the sufferings that the demons caused the senseless Jews to inflict on him.

Translator's note. The Greek printed here says he appeared "in a bodiless likeness"; the older translation reads "in the likeness of angels," apparently following a different reading.

Scripture: [Exodus 3:2](#); [Exodus 3:6](#); [Exodus 3:14](#); [Exodus 3:10](#)

1 Apol. 63c Though they have it plainly stated in the writings of Moses, "And an angel of God spoke to Moses in a fire of flame in a bush and said, I am the One who is, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob," they claim that the one who said this was the Father and Creator of the universe. That is why the Spirit of prophecy rebuked them and said: "Israel has not known me, and the people have not understood me." And again Jesus, as we showed, said while he was among them: "No one has known the Father except the Son, nor the Son except the Father and those to whom the Son reveals him." The Jews, then, always supposed that the Father of the universe had spoken to Moses. But the one who spoke to him was the Son of God, who is called both Angel and Apostle. So they are justly rebuked both by the Spirit of prophecy and by Christ himself, because they knew neither the Father nor the Son.

Translator's note. Jesus' saying is from [Matthew 11:27](#) and [Luke 10:22](#), quoted freely. In the Gospels the Son is mentioned before the Father.

Scripture: [Exodus 3:2](#); [Exodus 3:14](#); [Isaiah 1:3](#); [Matthew 11:27](#)

1 Apol. 63d For those who say that the Son is the Father are shown to know neither the Father nor that the Father of the universe has a Son. Being the Word and firstborn of God, he is also God. In earlier times he appeared to Moses and the other prophets in the form of fire and in a bodiless image. But now, in the time of your rule, as we said before, he became man through a virgin according to the Father's plan, for the salvation of those who believe in him. He endured being despised and suffering, so that by dying and rising again he might conquer death. What was said to Moses out of the bush was: "I am the One who is, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob and the God of your fathers." This signified that those men, though dead, still remain and belong to Christ himself. For they were the first of all people to devote themselves to the search for God: Abraham, the father of Isaac, and Isaac, the father of Jacob, as Moses also wrote.

Translator's note. That the patriarchs were "the first of all people" to seek God is Justin's own claim. Genesis speaks of earlier men who walked with God, such as Enoch and Noah ([Genesis 5:24](#); 6:9).

Scripture: [Exodus 3:14](#); [Exodus 3:15](#); [Matthew 22:32](#)

Chapter 64

1 Apol. 64 From what has already been said, you can understand that the demons were behind the setting up of the image of the one called Kore (the Maiden) at springs of water. They said she was the daughter of Zeus, imitating what was said through Moses. For Moses said, as we quoted above: "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth. And the earth was invisible and unformed, and the Spirit of God was moving over the waters." So, in imitation of what is said about the Spirit of God moving over the water, they called Kore the daughter of Zeus. In the same wicked way they said that Athena was the daughter of Zeus. They did not say she came from a union. Instead, because they knew that God conceived the world in his mind and made it through the Word, they called Athena the first thought. We think this utterly ridiculous: to present the image of a thought in a female form. In the same way, the deeds of the others who are called sons of Zeus condemn them.

Translator's note. In the best-known Greek myth Athena sprang fully grown from the head of Zeus, which fits Justin's point that she was not born from a union.

Scripture: [Genesis 1:1-2](#)

Chapter 65

1 Apol. 65 After we have washed the one who has been persuaded

and has agreed with us, we bring him to those who are called brothers, where they are gathered. We earnestly offer common prayers for ourselves, for the newly enlightened person, and for all others everywhere. We pray that, having learned the truth, we may be counted worthy to be found good citizens in our deeds as well, and keepers of the commandments, so that we may be saved with eternal salvation. When the prayers are finished we greet one another with a kiss. Then bread and a cup of water and mixed wine are brought to the one presiding over the brothers. He takes them and sends up praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. He gives thanks at length that we have been counted worthy of these things from him. When he has finished the prayers and the thanksgiving, all the people present call out their agreement, saying, "Amen." "Amen" in the Hebrew language means "So be it." When the one presiding has given thanks and all the people have responded, those we call deacons give each of those present a share of the bread and wine and water over which thanks have been given, and they carry some to those who are absent.

Translator's note. The Greek word for "thanksgiving" here is *eucharistia*. In the next chapter Justin says this food is called the Eucharist.

Chapter 66

1 Apol. 66 This food is called among us the Eucharist (thanksgiving). No one may share in it except the person who believes that what we teach is true, who has been washed in the washing for the forgiveness of sins and for new birth, and who lives as Christ handed down. We do not receive these as common bread or common drink. Jesus Christ our Savior was made flesh through the Word of God and had flesh and blood for our salvation. In the same way we have been taught that the food over which thanks have been given through the prayer of the word that comes from him is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. This food nourishes our blood and flesh by being changed into them. For the apostles, in the records they composed, which are called Gospels, handed down that Jesus gave them this command. He took bread, gave thanks, and said, "Do this in remembrance of me; this is my body." In the same way he took the cup, gave thanks, and said, "This is my blood." And he gave it to them alone. The wicked demons imitated this in the mysteries of Mithras and handed down that it should be done there too. For you either know or can find out that bread and a cup of water are set out, with certain words spoken over them, in the rites of the one being initiated.

Translator's note. Justin's wording recalls [Luke 22:19](#) and [1 Corinthians 11:24-25](#), where "Do this in remembrance of me" appears. Justin, however, puts that command before "this is my body," which is the reverse of the order in those passages.

Scripture: [Luke 22:19](#); [1 Corinthians 11:24-25](#); [Matthew 26:26-28](#); [Mark](#)

Chapter 67

1 Apol. 67a After this we keep reminding one another of these things. Those of us who have means help all who are in need, and we are always together. For everything we are given, we bless the Maker of all through his Son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit. On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather in one place. The records of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read as long as time allows. When the reader has finished, the one presiding speaks, urging us and calling us to imitate these good things. Then we all stand together and offer prayers. As we said before, when the prayer is finished, bread and wine and water are brought. The one presiding likewise offers prayers and thanksgivings, as well as he is able, and the people call out their agreement, saying “Amen.” Then each person receives a share of what has been given thanks for, and it is sent through the deacons to those who are absent.

Translator’s note. “Those who have means” is the Greek “those who have”; the older English says “the wealthy.” In the Greek, “as well as he is able” can also be read as “with all his strength.”

1 Apol. 67b Those who are well off and willing give, each as he chooses, whatever he wishes. What is collected is placed with the one presiding, and he helps orphans and widows, those who are in need because of sickness or any other cause, those in prison, and foreigners staying among us. In short, he looks after everyone in need. We all hold our common gathering on the day of the Sun. It is the first day, on which God changed the darkness and matter and made the world. It is also the day on which Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead. For they crucified him on the day before Saturn’s day. On the day after Saturn’s day, which is the day of the Sun, he appeared to his apostles and disciples and taught them these things, which we have also handed on to you for your consideration.

Translator’s note. “Saturn’s day” is Saturday and “the day of the Sun” is Sunday; these are the names of the planetary week, which was in common use in the Roman world, and Justin uses them for his pagan readers.

Chapter 68

1 Apol. 68a If these things seem to you reasonable and true, honor them. But if they seem to you nonsense, then despise them as nonsense. Do not decree death, as against enemies, for people who have done no wrong. For we warn you in advance that you will not escape the coming judgment of God if you persist in injustice. And we will cry out, “Let what is pleasing to God be done!” We could demand, on the strength of the letter of the greatest and most illustrious Caesar Hadrian, your father, that you order trials to be

held as we have asked. But we have made this address and explanation not because Hadrian decided it, but because we know that what we ask is just. We have also added a copy of Hadrian's letter, so that you may know we are telling the truth about this as well.

Translator's note. The older translation says "we ourselves will invite you to do that which is pleasing to God." The Greek says they will cry out (to God), "Let what is pleasing to God be done!"

1 Apol. 68b This is the copy: "To Minucius Fundanus. I have received a letter written to me by Serenius Granianus, a most distinguished man, whom you have succeeded. It does not seem right to me to leave the matter uninvestigated, so that people are not harassed and informers are not given room for their mischief. So if the people of the province can clearly support this petition against the Christians, so that they can make their case before a tribunal, let them turn to that course only. But they must not use petitions or mere shouting. For it is much more fitting, if anyone wishes to bring an accusation, that you examine it. So if someone accuses them and shows that they are doing something contrary to the laws, decide the case according to the seriousness of the offense. But, by Hercules, if anyone brings this up merely to slander them, determine how serious that is, and take care to punish him."

Translator's note. Eusebius (Church History 4.8-9) says Justin attached the letter in its original Latin, and that he himself translated it into Greek. The Greek printed here is very likely Eusebius's translation. Minucius Fundanus was proconsul of the province of Asia.

Second Apology

Chapter 1

2 Apol. 1 Romans, what happened yesterday and the day before in your city under Urbicus, and what is being done in the same unreasonable way by governors everywhere, has forced me to write this account for your sake. You are human beings like us, and our brothers, even if you do not know it and do not want to admit it because of the glory of what you consider your high offices. Everywhere, people who are corrected for some failing by a father, a neighbor, a child, a friend, a brother, a husband or a wife are stirred up against those who correct them. This happens because they are hard to change, love pleasure and are slow to move toward what is good. The only exceptions are those who have been persuaded that the unjust and undisciplined will be punished in eternal fire, and that the virtuous and those who have lived like Christ will be with God, free from suffering. I mean those who have become Christians. And the wicked demons hate us. They hold judges like these in their power and have them as their servants. So these rulers are driven by demons, and the demons prepare them to put us to death. But so that the cause of everything that happened

under Urbicus may be clear to you, I will tell you what was done.

Translator's note. Urbicus is Quintus Lollius Urbicus, prefect of the city of Rome at this time.

Chapter 2

2 Apol. 2a A certain woman lived with a husband who was licentious, and she herself had formerly been licentious too. But when she learned the teachings of Christ, she became self-controlled. She tried to persuade her husband to be self-controlled as well. She set before him the teachings, and told him of the punishment in eternal fire that awaits those who do not live with self-control and right reason. But he kept on in the same debauchery, and by his actions he made his wife a stranger to him. She now thought it ungodly to share a bed with a husband who sought by every means ways of finding pleasure, against the law of nature and against what is right. So she wanted to be separated from the marriage. Her family, however, urged her to stay a while longer, in the hope that her husband might one day change. Their pleading overcame her, and she forced herself to remain. But then her husband went to Alexandria and was reported to be behaving even worse. So that she might not become a partner in his wrongdoing and ungodliness by staying in the marriage and sharing his table and his bed, she gave him what you call a *repudium* (a notice of divorce) and left him.

2 Apol. 2b But this fine gentleman of a husband should have been glad. His wife had given up the things she used to do so readily with the servants and hired men, when she delighted in drunkenness and every kind of vice. She wanted him to give them up too. Instead, since she had left him against his wishes, he brought a charge against her, saying that she was a Christian. She submitted a petition to you, the emperor, asking first to be allowed to settle her affairs, and then to answer the charge once her affairs were in order. You granted this. Her former husband could no longer speak against her, so he turned against a man named Ptolemaeus, whom Urbicus had summoned, and who had been her teacher in the Christian lessons. He did it this way. He persuaded a centurion, a friend of his who had thrown Ptolemaeus in chains, to take hold of Ptolemaeus and ask him just one thing: whether he was a Christian.

Translator's note. The older translation reads "whom Urbicus punished," following the variant ekolasato; the Greek printed here reads ekalesato, "summoned."

2 Apol. 2c Ptolemaeus loved the truth and was not a deceitful or lying man. He confessed that he was a Christian, and the centurion had him put in chains. For a long time the centurion punished him in the prison. Finally the man was brought before Urbicus, and again he was asked only this: whether he was a Christian. Once more he knew in himself that his life was good because of Christ's

teaching, and he confessed the school of divine virtue. For anyone who denies a thing either denies it because he condemns it, or he avoids confessing it because he knows he is unworthy of it and a stranger to it. Neither is true of a real Christian. Urbicus ordered Ptolemaeus to be led away. Then a man named Lucius, who was also a Christian, saw how senseless this judgment was. He said to Urbicus, "What is the reason for this? You have punished this man, though he has not been convicted of adultery, fornication, murder, theft, robbery, or any wrongdoing at all. He has only confessed that he bears the name of Christian.

2 Apol. 2d "This judgment of yours, Urbicus, is not fitting for the Emperor Pius, nor for the philosopher, the son of Caesar, nor for the sacred senate." Urbicus gave him no other answer, but said to Lucius, "You seem to me to be one of them too." When Lucius said, "Certainly I am," Urbicus ordered him to be led away as well. Lucius declared that he was grateful. He knew he was being freed from such wicked masters and was going to the Father and King of the heavens. Then a third man came forward and was sentenced to be punished.

Translator's note. "Pius" is the emperor Antoninus Pius. Scholars are not sure who "the philosopher, the son of Caesar" is. It may be Marcus Aurelius or Lucius Verus, Pius's adopted sons, both of whom Justin addresses in the First Apology.

Chapter 3

2 Apol. 3 Someone may say, "Then kill yourselves, all of you, and go to God right now, and stop causing us trouble." I will explain why we do not do this, and why we confess without fear when we are questioned. We have been taught that God did not make the world without purpose, but only for the sake of the human race. We declared earlier that he is pleased with those who imitate what belongs to him, and displeased with those who embrace what is worthless, in word or deed. So if we all killed ourselves, we would be responsible, as far as it depends on us, for no one being born and taught the divine teachings, or even for the human race ceasing to exist. If we did this, we ourselves would be acting against the will of God. When we are questioned, we do not deny it, because we know of nothing evil in ourselves. We consider it ungodly not to tell the truth in everything, which we know is also dear to God. And we also want, by confessing, to free you now from your unjust prejudice.

Translator's note. The older translation printed with this section is a different passage, Justin's attack on the Cynic philosopher Crescens. The 1885 translation of this section is the one printed with the next section. This version follows the Greek.

Chapter 4

2 Apol. 4a Someone may also think, “If you confessed God as your helper, then, as you claim, you would not be overpowered and punished by unjust men.” I will answer this too. God made the whole world and put earthly things under human control. He arranged the heavenly bodies to make crops grow and seasons change, and he set a divine law over them. All these things he evidently made for the sake of people. But he handed over the care of human beings, and of everything under heaven, to angels whom he appointed for this. These angels broke that appointment. They were overcome by intercourse with women and had children, who are the so-called demons. After that they enslaved the human race to themselves. They did it partly through magical writings, partly through fear and the punishments they brought, and partly by teaching people to offer sacrifices, incense and drink offerings. They came to need these after they themselves were enslaved by their passions and desires. Among people they sowed murders, wars, adultery, licentiousness and every kind of evil.

Translator’s note. The story of angels who fathered children by women echoes [Genesis 6:1–4](#) as later Jewish tradition developed it, for example in 1 Enoch. Justin goes beyond the biblical text, which does not call these children demons.

Scripture: [Genesis 6:2](#)

2 Apol. 4b So it was that the poets and myth-writers did not know that it was the angels, and the demons born from them, who did these things to men and women, to cities and nations. They wrote about these things, but they attributed them to god himself and to those thought to be his sons by his seed. They also attributed them to the sons of his so-called brothers, Poseidon and Pluto, and likewise to their descendants. For they called each one by the name that each of the angels had given to himself and to his children.

Translator’s note. “God himself” is Justin’s phrase. From the sons and brothers he lists, he evidently means Zeus, the chief god of the myths. The older translation uses “Neptune,” the Roman name for Poseidon.

Chapter 5

2 Apol. 5a But there is no name set upon the Father of all, since he is unbegotten. For anyone addressed by a name has someone older who gave him that name. “Father,” “God,” “Creator,” “Lord” and “Master” are not names. They are titles drawn from his good deeds and his works. His Son is the only one properly called Son. He is the Word, who was with the Father before the created things and was begotten when, in the beginning, God made and ordered all things through him. He is called Christ because God anointed him and ordered all things through him. This name too has a meaning we do not know, just as the title “God” is not a name. It is an opinion, planted in human nature, about something hard to explain.

Translator’s note. “Christ” means “Anointed One.” Justin ties it to God’s

| anointing the Son and ordering all things through him.

| Scripture: [John 1:1-3](#)

2 Apol. 5b “Jesus,” however, is the name of a man and of a Savior, and it has a meaning in both ways. For he did become man, as we said before. He was born according to the will of God the Father, for the sake of believing people and for the destruction of the demons. You can learn this even now from what happens before your eyes. Throughout the whole world, and in your own city, many of our people, the Christians, have healed many demon-possessed people, and they still heal them. These people could not be healed by all the other exorcists, enchanter and sorcerers. The Christians call on the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and so they overpower the demons that hold people and drive them out.

| *Translator’s note.* Unlike “Christ,” the name “Jesus” has a clear meaning. It comes from the Hebrew Yeshua, “the LORD saves,” which fits [Matthew 1:21](#): “he will save his people from their sins.” “Your own city” is Rome.

Chapter 6

2 Apol. 6a This is why God holds back from bringing confusion and destruction on the whole world, the destruction that would put an end to the wicked angels, demons and people. He holds back because of the seed of the Christians, which he knows is the cause of the world’s preservation. Otherwise it would not even be possible for you to go on doing these things, driven by the wicked demons. Instead the fire of judgment would have come down unchecked and judged everything. In the same way the flood long ago left no one except the one man called Noah among us and Deucalion among you, together with his own household. From him so many people have come again, some wicked and some good. This is how we say the burning of the world will happen. It will not be as the Stoics say, by the principle that all things change into one another, which is plainly shameful. Nor do we say that people do what they do, or suffer what happens to them, by fate. Rather, each person acts rightly or sins by his own choice. And it is by the working of the wicked demons that good men like Socrates and others like him are persecuted and put in chains, while Sardanapalus, Epicurus and their like seem to be happy in plenty and glory.

| *Translator’s note.* Deucalion is the survivor of the great flood in Greek myth. The Stoics taught that the universe is periodically consumed by fire and then renewed. Sardanapalus was a legendary Assyrian king famous for luxury.

2 Apol. 6b The Stoics did not understand this, and so they declared that everything happens by the necessity of fate. But from the beginning God made the race of angels and of people free to choose. So they will justly receive in eternal fire the punishment for whatever wrongs they commit. This is the nature of everything that

has been made: it is capable of both vice and virtue. For none of them would be praiseworthy if it did not have the power to turn either way. People everywhere who have made laws or practiced philosophy according to right reason show this too. They instruct us to do some things and to avoid others. Even the Stoic philosophers firmly honor these same things in their teaching on morals. This makes it plain that they are on the wrong track in their teaching on first principles and on incorporeal things.

Translator's note. Justin's point is that Stoic ethics, which praises and blames people's choices, does not fit with Stoic physics, which holds that everything happens by fate.

2 Apol. 6c For suppose they say that what people do happens by fate, or that God is nothing apart from things that turn, change and dissolve again and again into the same things. Then they will be shown to have grasped only perishable things. They will also be making God himself, both in his parts and as a whole, present in every kind of wickedness. Or else they must say that there is no such thing as vice or virtue. That goes against all sound thought, reason and sense.

Translator's note. The Stoics identified God with the universe itself, which is why Justin says their view puts God, "in his parts and as a whole," into every wickedness.

Chapter 7

2 Apol. 7 We know that followers of the Stoic teachings have also been hated and murdered. They were well-ordered, at least in their moral teaching, as the poets also were in some matters, because of the seed of the Word that is planted in every race of people. Heraclitus is one example, as we said before. Among people of our own time we know of Musonius and others. As we pointed out, the demons have always worked to make people hate everyone who strives in any way to live by reason and to flee evil. It is no surprise, then, that the demons, when they are exposed, work all the more to make people hate those who live not by a part of the seed-sown Word but by the knowledge and contemplation of the whole Word, who is Christ. The demons will receive the punishment and penalty they deserve, shut up in eternal fire. For if they are already being defeated by men through the name of Jesus Christ, that is a sign of the punishment in eternal fire that will come on them and on those who serve them. All the prophets proclaimed that it would be so, and Jesus our teacher taught it.

Translator's note. Heraclitus was not himself a Stoic, though the Stoics drew on him. Justin had already named him in First Apology 46. Musonius Rufus, a Stoic teacher, was exiled under Nero. Ancient sources do not clearly say that either man was put to death, so Justin's statement may be loose.

Scripture: [Matthew 25:41](#)

Chapter 8

2 Apol. 8a So I too expect to be plotted against by one of those I have named and to be fixed to a stake. Perhaps it will be Crescens, that lover of noise and boasting. He does not deserve to be called a philosopher, since he publicly testifies against us about things he does not understand. He says that Christians are godless and impious, and he does this to please and gratify the many who are led astray. If he attacks us without ever having read the teachings of Christ, he is thoroughly wicked. He is much worse than ordinary uneducated people, who often take care not to discuss or give false testimony about things they do not understand. Suppose instead he has read them but did not grasp their greatness. Or suppose he grasped it but acts like this so that no one will suspect him of being a Christian. Then he is far more base and thoroughly wicked, giving way to the ignorant, unreasoning opinion and fear of the crowd. I want you to know that I put some questions of this kind to him and cross-examined him. I learned, and proved, that he truly knows nothing.

Translator's note. Crescens was a Cynic philosopher in Rome. Justin's pupil Tatian later wrote that Crescens schemed to bring about Justin's death.

2 Apol. 8b To show that I am telling the truth: if the reports of our discussions have not reached you, I am ready to hold the same questioning again in your presence. That too would be a task worthy of an emperor. But if my questions and his answers have been made known to you, it is plain to you that he knows nothing of our teachings. Or, if he does know them but does not dare to speak out as Socrates did because of those who are listening, then, as I said before, he shows himself to be not a philosopher but a lover of glory. He does not even honor that saying of Socrates which is so well worth loving: "But a man must not be honored above the truth." But it is impossible for a Cynic, who has set indifference as his goal, to know any good except indifference.

Translator's note. The saying is spoken by Socrates in Plato's Republic, book 10 (595c).

Chapter 9

2 Apol. 9a Some who are thought to be philosophers may say that our claim that the unjust are punished in eternal fire is mere boasting and scare tactics. They may say that we urge people to live virtuously out of fear, and not because living virtuously is good and pleasing. I will answer this briefly. If this is not so, then either there is no God, or, if there is, he does not care about people. Then virtue and vice are nothing, and, as we said before, lawgivers are unjust when they punish those who break the good commands laid down. But those lawgivers are not unjust, and neither is their Father, who through the Word teaches people to do the same things he does.

Since that is so, those who agree with them are not unjust either. Someone may bring up the differing laws of men. He may say that among some peoples certain things are considered good and others shameful, while among others what the first consider shameful is considered good, and what they consider good is considered shameful. Let him hear what we say to this as well.

Translator's note. The Greek says only "those." We have taken it to mean the lawgivers, the nearest group named, and "their Father" as God. The sentence is obscure, and some scholars suspect the text is damaged. The older translation also leaves it vague ("these").

2 Apol. 9b We know that the wicked angels laid down laws that match their own wickedness, and people who have become like them take pleasure in those laws. But right reason, when it came, showed that not all opinions or all teachings are good. Some are bad and some are good. So I will say the same and similar things to people like these, and I will say more if there is need. For now I return to the matter before us.

Translator's note. The Greek has no capital letters, so "right reason" (orthos logos) could mean reason in general or Christ the Word; "when it came" may point to Christ's coming, since Justin elsewhere calls Christ the Logos.

Chapter 10

2 Apol. 10a Our teachings, then, show themselves to be greater than any human teaching, because Christ, who appeared for our sake, became the whole rational being: body, reason, and soul. Whatever the philosophers or lawgivers ever said or discovered well, they worked out by searching and reflecting, through a portion of the Word. But they did not know all that belongs to the Word, who is Christ, and so they often contradicted themselves. Those who lived before Christ tried, as far as human ability allowed, to examine and test things by reason, and they were brought into the courts as godless and meddlesome men. Socrates, the most determined of them all in this, was charged with the same things as we are. They said he was bringing in new divinities and did not acknowledge the gods the city recognized.

Translator's note. The phrase rendered "as far as human ability allowed" can also be taken with "lived before Christ," meaning "born before Christ's human birth." The older translation reads it that way.

2 Apol. 10b Socrates drove Homer and the other poets out of the state. He taught people to turn away from the wicked demons and from those who did the things the poets told of. And he urged them to seek, by reasoned inquiry, to know the God who was unknown to them. He said: "It is not easy to find the Father and Maker of all, and once you have found him, it is not safe to declare him to everyone." Our Christ did these things through his own power. No one believed Socrates enough to die for this teaching. But Christ

was known in part even by Socrates. For he was and is the Word who is in everything. He foretold what was to come through the prophets, and then he himself became a man like us, subject to the same sufferings, and taught these things. And Christ was believed not only by philosophers and scholars but also by craftsmen and completely uneducated people, who despised glory, fear and death. For he is a power of the ineffable Father, and not a vessel of human reason.

Translator's note. "In everything" may also be read "in everyone." The older translation has "in every man."

Chapter 11

2 Apol. 11a We would not be killed, and unjust men and demons would not be stronger than we are, if death were not a debt that every person born must pay. So we give thanks as we pay the debt. We also think it right and timely to tell Crescens, and those who rave as he does, the well-known story from Xenophon. Xenophon says that Heracles, walking to a place where three roads met, came upon Virtue and Vice, who appeared in the form of women. Vice wore a luxurious dress, and her face was made seductive and blooming by such arts. She was alluring at first sight, and she told Heracles that if he followed her, she would make him always live in pleasure, adorned with the most splendid ornaments, like those she wore herself.

Translator's note. The story is in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (2.1), where Socrates tells it as the work of the teacher Prodicus.

2 Apol. 11b And Virtue, he says, came with an unkempt face and rough clothing, and said: "But if you obey me, you will adorn yourself not with ornament or beauty that flows away and perishes, but with ornaments that are eternal and beautiful." We are convinced that everyone who flees what only seems good, and pursues what is thought harsh and senseless, will receive happiness. For Vice has nothing imperishable and cannot make anything imperishable. So she imitates the imperishable and throws around her own deeds, as a screen, the qualities that belong to Virtue and are truly good. In this way she enslaves the earthbound among men, and she pins her own bad qualities on Virtue. But those who have understood what is truly good are also incorruptible in virtue. Every sensible person must think this about Christians, about "those from the contest," and about those who did the kinds of things the poets told of their so-called gods. He should draw his conclusion from the fact that we despise even death, the thing everyone flees.

Translator's note. The last sentence is obscure in the Greek, and the text may be damaged. The phrase "those from the contest" is uncertain. The Greek word can mean either an athletic contest or a labour. So it may mean athletes, or it may refer to followers of Heracles' labours.

Chapter 12

2 Apol. 12a I myself used to delight in the teachings of Plato. When I heard Christians slandered, and saw that they were fearless in the face of death and everything else thought terrifying, I concluded that it was impossible for them to be living in vice and love of pleasure. What pleasure-loving or self-indulgent person, who thought feasting on human flesh a good thing, could welcome death and so be deprived of his own enjoyments? Would he not rather try by every means to go on living this present life forever, and to escape the notice of the rulers? Would he ever turn himself in to be put to death? The wicked demons have already caused this kind of thing to be done through certain evil men. These men put some people to death on the false charges against us. They also dragged our household slaves, or children, or poor women to the torture. By terrible torments they forced them to accuse us of those fabled deeds which these men themselves openly practice. We do not worry about these charges, because none of them is true of us, and we have the unbegotten and ineffable God as witness of our thoughts and our actions.

2 Apol. 12b If we did these things, why would we not openly admit that they are good and present them as divine philosophy? We could say that we perform the mysteries of Kronos when we murder men. We could say that when we gorge ourselves with blood, as people claim we do, we are only doing what the idol you honor does. You sprinkle that idol not only with the blood of irrational animals but also with human blood, and the blood of the slain is poured out by the most distinguished and noble man among you. We could say that we imitate Zeus and the other gods by having intercourse with males and by sleeping with women without restraint. We could bring the writings of Epicurus and the poets as our defense. But we persuade people to flee these teachings, and to flee those who practice and imitate them, as we have also striven to do in this present discourse. For this we are attacked in every kind of way. But we do not care, since we know that God is the just overseer of all things. If only someone would even now climb up on some high platform and cry out in a tragic voice: "Be ashamed, be ashamed! You openly do these things yourselves, yet you charge them to the innocent. You take what belongs to yourselves and your gods and pin it on people who have no share in it, not even a little. Change your ways. Come to your senses."

Translator's note. Justin does not name the idol. Other early Christian writers, such as Tatian and Tertullian, say that human blood was offered at Rome to Jupiter Latiaris, and Justin may have this rite in mind.

Chapter 13

2 Apol. 13 For I too, when I learned that the evil demons had thrown a wicked disguise over the divine teachings of the

Christians to turn other people away, laughed at those who spread these lies, at the disguise itself, and at the opinion of the crowd. I confess that I pray and strive with all my strength to be found a Christian. This is not because Plato's teachings are foreign to Christ's, but because they are not in every respect the same, any more than the teachings of the others are: the Stoics, the poets and the prose writers. Each of them spoke well, through his share of the seminal divine Word, when he saw what was akin to it. But those who contradicted themselves on the more important points appear not to have had knowledge that cannot fail or understanding that cannot be refuted. So whatever has been said well by anyone belongs to us Christians. For after God we worship and love the Word who comes from the unbegotten and unspeakable God, since he also became man for our sake, so that by sharing in our sufferings he might also bring us healing. All the writers were able to see reality only dimly, through the seed of the Word implanted in them. A seed or likeness given according to a person's capacity is one thing. The thing itself is another, and sharing in it and imitating it come through the grace that is from him.

Translator's note. "Seminal" (spermatikos) means "of the seed." Justin pictures the Word sowing seeds of truth in all people.

Chapter 14

2 Apol. 14 We ask you, then, to add whatever you think right and to publish this little book, so that others too may come to know our teachings. Then they may be able to be freed from false opinion and from ignorance of what is good. By their own fault they become liable to punishment. This is so for three reasons. First, the ability to tell good from shameful is part of human nature. Second, they condemn us, though they do not know that we do the shameful things they speak of. Third, they take delight in gods who did such things and who even now demand similar things from people. And so, by sentencing us to death or chains or some other such penalty, as if we were doing these things, they condemn themselves, so that there is no need of other judges.

Translator's note. The older translation loosens the logic here. In the Greek, the "because" clauses give the reasons why these people are answerable for their own punishment. It also adds the words "that so these things may be published to men," which are not in this Greek text.

Chapter 15

2 Apol. 15 If you post this publicly, we will make it known to everyone, so that, if they are able, they may change their minds. For this reason alone we have composed these words. Our teachings, judged soberly, are not shameful. They are higher than all human philosophy. If you will not grant that, they are at least not like the writings of Sotades, Philaenis, Arcestratus and Epicurus, and other such poetic teachings. Everyone is permitted to read

these, whether spoken or written. We will stop now, having done what we could, and having added a prayer that all people everywhere may be counted worthy of the truth. May you also judge justly on your own behalf, in a way worthy of piety and philosophy.

Translator's note. The older translation begins with a sentence about despising the teaching of Simon, which is not in this Greek text. It also reads "Dancers" for Arcestratus. Sotades and Philaenis were known for obscene verse and a sex manual. Arcestratus wrote a poem on fine eating.

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