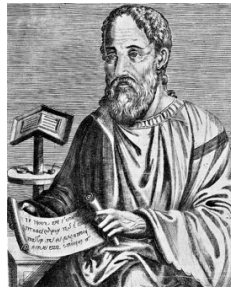


TESTING CHRISTIANITY (PT. 8)

UNDERSTANDING THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

In discussing the birth of Christianity, we had to discuss the men who started the faith of Christianity. These are some of the early church fathers who started the religion of Christianity. After you know some of them, I will provide you with some quotes from their writings that are about different subjects. If you want to do your own research, this information is found in the book – A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs by David Bercott. This information can help you understand more about what was in the hearts of the men who formulated this religion of Christianity. I hope this blesses you. Come out of her my people!!



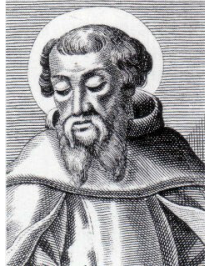
Eusebius

A church father of the 3rd & 4th century. He is the one who formulated the church history of the times and made it represent Christianity. He was a bishop of the church in Caesarea during the time of Constantine's reign. His Ecclesiastical History is a principal source for the history of the church from the 1st century down to the time of Constantine when he made Christianity the religion of Rome. He is the main source of history that brings the story of the Christian church to the masses.



Clement of Alexandria

Clement of Alexandria was an early church father of the 2nd century. He was the head of the catechetical school in the church of Alexandria. That is a school that was all about preparing religious instruction given to a person in preparation for Christian baptism or confirmation. He was a founder of that doctrine. He is most important not just for who he is, but who he taught. His most famous pupil was Origen.



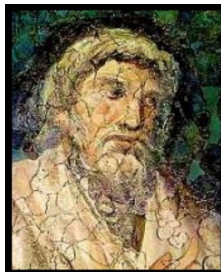
Irenaeus

A Greek bishop from the 2nd Century (130 to 200AD) He was a Greek bishop noted for his role in guiding and expanding Christian communities in the southern regions of present-day France and, more widely, for the development of Christian theology by combating Gnostic interpretations of Scripture. He is known as the Doctrine of Unity.



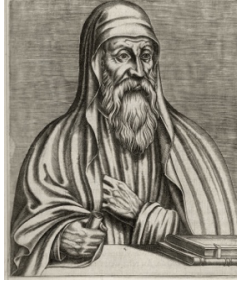
Justin the Martyr

Also known as Justin the Philosopher. He was an apologist from the early 2nd century (110 to 165). He was a Greek philosopher who converted to Christianity and was known as a tireless evangelist. He died as a martyr at the hand of the reign of Marcus Aurelius. They say much of his work is lost. According to the Britannica, His writings represent one of the first positive encounters of Christian revelation with Greek philosophy and laid the basis for a theology of history.



Lactantius

He helped make Rome a Christian empire. He was an early Christian author from the mid 3rd to century to early 4th. He became an advisor to Roman emperor Constantine I, guiding Constantine's Christian religious policy in its initial stages of emergence, and a tutor to Constantine's son Crispus.



Origen

A third century Christian Scholar (185 to 251 AD). A student of the Clement of Alexandria. He was a major contributor to Christian theology. He is widely regarded as one of the most influential Christian theologians also known as the Father of Christian Theology. He is known for his contributions to the development of the Trinity and the ransom theory of atonement. He was also a pioneer of philosophical theology in the church.



Tertullian

An early church father of the 2nd and 3rd century. He was the first theologian to write in Latin, and has been called "the father of Latin Christianity", as well as "the founder of Western theology".

QUOTES FROM THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

Topic: Israel of God

“Christians from among the Gentiles are both more numerous and more true than those from among the Jews and Samaritans. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.180.”

“For the true spiritual Israel, and descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham (who in uncircumcision was approved of and blessed by God on account of his faith, and called the father of many nations), are we who have been led to God through this crucified Christ. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.200.”

“God blesses this people [i.e., Christians], and calls them Israel, and declares them to be His inheritance. So why is it that you [Jews] do not repent of the deception you practice on yourselves, as if you alone were the Israel? Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.261.”

“All who through Him have fled for refuge to the Father constitute the blessed Israel. But you [Jews] have understood none of this. And you are not prepared to understand. Rather, since you are the children of Jacob after the fleshly seed, you expect that you will be assuredly saved. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.262.”

“We, who have been quarried out from the bowels of Christ, are the true Israelite race. . . . So it is necessary for us here to observe that there are two seeds of Judah, and two races, just as there are two houses of Jacob. The one is begotten by blood and flesh. The other is begotten by faith and the Spirit. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.267.”

“The elder nation rejected Him, saying, “We have no king but Caesar.” But in Christ every blessing [is summed up], and therefore the latter people have snatched away the blessings of the former from the Father—just as Jacob took away the blessing of Esau. For this reason, Jacob suffered the plots and persecutions of a brother, just as the church suffers this self-same thing from the Jews. Irenaeus (c. 180, E/ W), 1.493.”

“Should not the worshippers of the true God be of greater antiquity than all the Chaldeans, Egyptians, and Greeks? For we must bear in mind that the father of those Gentiles was born from this Japheth. He received the name of Javan, and he became the forefather of the Greeks and Ionians. Hippolytus (c. 225, W), 5.150.”

“According to what had been foretold in advance, the Jews had departed from God. They had lost God’s favor, which had been given them in times past and had been promised them for the future. Instead, the Christians have succeeded to their place, deserving well of the Lord by faith. They come out of all nations and from the whole world. Cyprian (c. 250, W), 5.507.”

“Two peoples were foretold: the elder and the younger. The elder people are the Jews. The younger one consists of us. In Genesis it says, “And the Lord said unto Rebekah, ‘Two nations are in your womb.’” . . . The church, which had been barren before, is to have more children from among the Gentiles than what the synagogue had had before. . . . The Jews were to lose, while we were to receive the bread and the cup of Christ and all His grace. The new name of Christians is to be blessed in the earth. . . . So the Gentiles, rather than the Jews, attain to the kingdom of heaven. In the Gospel, the Lord “says, “Many will come from the east and from the west, and will lie down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” Cyprian (c. 250, W), 5.512, 513.”

“Our ancestors were the patriarchs of the Hebrews. Lactantius (c. 304–313, W), 7.108.”

“The Jews had formerly been in covenant with God. But being afterwards cast off on account of their sins, they began to be without God. Tertullian (c. 197, W), 3.247.”

Topic: Restoration of Israel

“You [Jews] deceive yourselves. For you think that because you are the seed of Abraham after the flesh, you will fully inherit the good things announced to be bestowed by God through Christ. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.216.”

“As there is a bodily race of Jews, so also is there a race of those who are Jews inwardly—the soul having acquired this nobility for certain mysterious reasons. Now, there are many prophecies that predict things regarding Israel and Judah, concerning what is about to befall them. Do not these promises that are written concerning them need a mystical interpretation? For they are rather lowly in expression, manifesting no elevation [of thought] or anything worthy of the promise of God? Origen (c. 225, E), 4.370.”

“There is one fact that proves that Jesus was something divine and sacred. It is this: the Jews have suffered severe calamities now for a lengthened time on His account. And we say with confidence that they will never be restored to their former condition. For they committed a crime of the most unholy kind. Origen (c. 248, E), 4.506.”

Topic: The Law

“If anyone preaches the Jewish Law to you, do not listen to him. For it is better to listen to Christian doctrine from a man who has been circumcised than to listen to Judaism from one who is uncircumcised. Ignatius (c. 105, E), 1.82.”

“We do not follow the Jews in their peculiarities in regard to food, nor in their sacred days, nor even in their well-known bodily sign. Tertullian (c. 197, W), 3.34.”

“The same God, therefore, who prohibited meats also restored the use of them. For He had indeed originally allowed them. Tertullian (c. 207, W), 3.445.”

“Jesus wished to lead all men by His teachings about the pure worship and service of God. He was anxious not to place any hindrance in the way of many who might be benefited by Christianity. So he did not impose a burdensome code of rules in regard to food. Origen (c. 248, E), 4.650.”

“From these things, it is plain that all those things [i.e., clean and unclean animals] are returned to their original blessedness now that the Law is finished. Novatian (c. 235, W), 5.648.”

“Certainly, the introduction of Christianity is through the Mosaic worship and the prophetic writings. But after that introduction, progress takes place through the interpretation and explanation of these things. . . . Those who advance in the knowledge of Christianity do not, as you allege, treat the things written in the Law with disrespect. On the contrary, they bestow upon them greater honor, showing what depth of wise and mysterious reasons is contained in these writings—which are not fully comprehended by the Jews. . . . Just because [John the Baptist] was a Jew, it does not follow that every believer, whether a convert from paganism or from Judaism, must literally obey the Law of Moses. Origen (c. 248, E), 4.431.”

Topic: Sabbath

“. . . no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord’s Day. Ignatius (c. 105, E), 1.62.”

“Is there any other matter, my [Jewish] friends, in which we Christians are blamed, than this: that we do not live after the Law . . . and do not observe Sabbaths, as you do? Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.199.”

“There was no need of circumcision before Abraham. Nor was there need of the observance of Sabbaths, or of feasts and sacrifices, before Moses. Accordingly, there is no more need of them now. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.206.”

“If some, through weak-mindedness, wish to observe the laws given by Moses, . . . yet choose to live with the Christians and the faithful, as I said before, not inducing the Gentiles either to be circumcised like themselves, or to keep the Sabbath, or to observe any other such ceremonies, then I hold that we should join ourselves with such persons. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.218.”

“We do not follow the Jews in their peculiarities in regard to food nor in their sacred days. Tertullian (c. 197, W), 3.34.”

Topic: God, Name of

“God has no name, for everything that has a name is related to created things. Aristides (c. 125, E), 9.264.”

“He has as many virtues as are distinctive to a God who is called by no proper name. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.165.”

“To the Father of all, who is unbegotten, there is no name given. . . . These words—Father, God, Creator, Lord, and Master—are not names. Rather, they are appellations derived from His good deeds and functions. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.190.”

“As to the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe, . . . if anyone dares to say that there is a name, he raves with a hopeless madness. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.183.”

“God cannot be called by any proper name. For names are given to mark out and distinguish various subject matters, because these matters are many and diverse. However, no one existed before God who could give Him a name, nor did He Himself think it right to name Himself. For He is one and unique. . . . On this account, He said to Moses, “I am the Being.” By the participle being, He taught the difference between the God who is and the gods who are not. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.281.”

Topic: Sun Worship

“It is written that God has given the sun and moon to the nations to worship as gods. Justin Martyr (c. 160, E), 1.222.”

“Not only the believer, but even the pagan, is judged most righteously. For God knew by virtue of His foreknowledge that the Gentile would not believe. Nevertheless, in order that the Gentile might receive his own perfection, God gave him philosophy. However, He gave it him previous to faith. And He gave the sun, the moon, and the stars to be worshipped. For the Law says God made them for the nations, so that they might not become altogether atheistic and so utterly perish. Nevertheless, the Gentiles, even in the instance of this commandment, became devoid of sense and addicted themselves to graven images. Therefore, they are judged unless they repent. . . . This was the way given to the nations to rise up to God, by means of the worship of the heavenly bodies. But there were those who would not abide by those heavenly bodies that had been assigned to them. Rather, they fell away from them to wooden blocks and stones. So they were considered . . . beyond salvation. Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, E), 2.505.”

Topic: Philosophy

“Before the advent of the Lord, philosophy was necessary to the Greeks for righteousness. And now it becomes conducive to piety. It is a kind of preparatory training to those who attain to faith through demonstration. . . . Perhaps, too, philosophy was given to the Greeks directly and primarily, until the Lord would call the Greeks. For this was a pedagogue to bring “the Hellenic mind” to Christ, as the Law did the Hebrews. Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, E), 2.305.”

“Hellenic philosophy does not comprehend the whole extent of the truth. Besides, it is destitute of strength to perform the commandments of the Lord. Yet, it prepares the way for the truly royal teaching. Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, E), 2.318.”

“Philosophy is not, then, the product of vice, since it makes men virtuous. It follows, then, that it is the work of God. Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, E), 2.517.”

These are just some of the many quotes that have come from these early church fathers. These men did not serve our Father. Please come out of this religion of tares, and serve our Father in truth. Be blessed! HalleluYAH! Praise YAH!