



Catecharium



A CATECHARIUM READING EDITION

The Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

Translated from the Greek of Lightfoot and Harmer, 1891

Translated by Catecharium

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Chapter 1

PRESCRIPT Ignatius, who is also Theophorus, to the church that has received mercy in the majesty of the Father most high and of Jesus Christ His only Son, the church beloved and enlightened in the will of Him who willed all the things that are, according to the faith and love of Jesus Christ our God, the church that also presides in the place of the district of the Romans, worthy of God, worthy of honor, worthy of blessing, worthy of praise, worthy of attainment, worthy in purity, and presiding over the love, bearing the law of Christ, bearing the Father's name; which church I also greet in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of the Father: to those united in flesh and spirit to His every commandment, filled with the grace of God without wavering and filtered clean of every alien color, abundant and blameless greeting in Jesus Christ our God.

- 1 Since by prayer to God I have attained to see your faces so worthy of God, so that I have received even more than I was asking; for bound in Christ Jesus I hope to greet you, if indeed it is the will that I should be counted worthy to [hold out] to the end.
- 2 For the beginning is well ordered, if only I attain the end, so as to receive my lot without hindrance. For I fear your love: it may do me wrong; for to you it is easy to do what you wish, but for me it is hard to attain God, if you do not spare me.

Chapter 2

1 For I do not want you to please men, but to please God, as indeed you do. For neither will I ever have such an opportunity to attain God, nor can you, if you keep silent, have your name set to any better work. For if you keep silence about me, I am a word of God; but if you fall in love with my flesh, I will again be a voice.

2 Grant me nothing more than to be poured out as a libation to God while an altar is still ready, so that, becoming a choir in love, you may sing to the Father in Jesus Christ, because God has counted the bishop of Syria worthy to be found at the setting of the sun, having sent for Him from its rising. It is good to set from the world toward God, that I may rise to Him.

Chapter 3

1 You have never envied anyone; you have taught others. And I will that what you command when you make disciples should also stand firm.

2 Only ask power for me, inward and outward alike, that I may not only speak but also will; that I may not only be called a Christian but also be found one. For if I am found one, I can also be called one, and then be faithful, when I no longer appear to the world.

3 Nothing that appears is good. For our God Jesus Christ, being in the Father, appears the more. Christianity is not a work of persuasion but of greatness, whenever it is hated by the world.

Chapter 4

1 I write to all the churches, and I charge them all that I die willingly for God, if only you do not prevent it. I beg you, do not become an untimely kindness to me. Let me belong to the wild beasts, through whom it is possible to attain God. I am God's wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts, that I may be found pure bread [of Christ].

2 Rather, coax the wild beasts, that they may become my tomb and leave nothing of my body behind, so that when I have fallen asleep I may not be a burden upon anyone. Then I will truly be a disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world will not so much as see my body. Plead with the Lord on my behalf, that through these instruments I may be found a sacrifice of God.

3 I do not give you orders as Peter and Paul did: they were apostles, I am a condemned man; they were free, and I to this hour a slave. But if I suffer, I am a freedman of Jesus Christ, and in Him I will rise free. Now, in my bonds, I am learning to desire nothing.

Chapter 5

1 From Syria to Rome I am fighting wild beasts, by land and by sea, by night and by day, chained to ten leopards, that is, a detachment of soldiers, who become worse even when they are treated well. By their mistreatment I become all the more a disciple; but I am not thereby justified.

2 May I have joy of the beasts made ready for me; and I pray that they may be found prompt with me. I will even coax them to devour me promptly, not as with some, whom the beasts, turning timid, did not touch; and if they will not do it of their own accord, I will force them to it.

3 Bear with me: I know what profits me. Now I am beginning to be a disciple. May nothing visible or invisible envy me, so that I may attain Jesus Christ. Fire and cross and encounters with wild beasts, [cuttings apart, sunderings], scatterings of bones, choppings of limbs, grindings of the whole body, the devil's evil torments: let them come upon me, only so that I may attain Jesus Christ.

Chapter 6

1 The ends of the world will profit me nothing, nor the kingdoms of this age. It is good for me to die for the sake of Jesus Christ rather than to be king over the ends of the earth. Him I seek, who died on our behalf; Him I want, who rose [for our sake]. The pangs of birth are upon me.

2 Bear with me, brothers: do not hinder me from living, do not will me to die. Do not make the world a present of one who wants to be God's, nor coax him with matter. Let me receive pure light; when I arrive there, I will be a man.

3 Allow me to be an imitator of the passion of my God. If anyone has Him within himself, let him understand what I want, and let him have compassion on me, knowing the things that press upon me.

Chapter 7

1 The ruler of this age wants to carry me off and to corrupt my purpose toward God. Let none of you, then, who are present help him; rather, become mine, that is, God's. Do not talk Jesus Christ while you desire the world.

2 Let no envy dwell among you. Even if I myself beg you in person, do not be persuaded by me; believe rather what I write to you. For living I write to you, in love with dying. My love has been crucified, and there is in me no fire that loves matter, but water living [†]and speaking[†] in me, saying to me from within: Come to the Father.

3 I take no pleasure in the food of corruption nor in the pleasures of this life. I want the bread of God, which is the flesh of Christ, who was of the seed of David; and for drink I want His blood, which is love incorruptible.

Chapter 8

1 I no longer will to live as men live. And this shall be, if you will it. Will it, that you also may be willed.

2 In a few lines I ask you: believe me. And Jesus Christ will make these things plain to you, that I speak truly; He is the mouth that cannot lie, by which the Father has spoken [truly].

3 Ask on my behalf, that I may attain [in the Holy Spirit]. I have not written to you according to the flesh, but according to the purpose of God. If I suffer, you willed it; if I am rejected, you hated me.

Chapter 9

1 Remember in your prayer the church in Syria, which in my place has God for its shepherd. Jesus Christ alone will oversee it as its bishop, and your love.

2 But I myself am ashamed to be called one of them; for I am not worthy, being the last of them and an untimely birth. Yet I have received mercy to be someone, if I attain God.

3 My spirit greets you, and the love of the churches that received me in the name of Jesus Christ, not as a passer-by; for even the churches that did not lie along my road in the flesh went before me from city to city.

Chapter 10

1 I write you these things from Smyrna, by the hand of the Ephesians, who are worthy of blessing. And with me, together with many others, is Crocus, a name longed for [by me].

2 As for those who went before me from Syria to Rome to the glory of God, I trust that you have learned of them; let them know, too, that I am near. For they are all worthy of God and of you, and it is fitting for you to refresh them in every way.

3 I write you these things on the ninth day before the Kalends of September (24 August). Farewell to the end, in the endurance of Jesus Christ.