

## APOSTOLIC FATHERS DISCREDITED

We have the New Testament, the only body of writings that come from the early Christians. The next oldest writings are those of the Apostolic Fathers. These works hail from the late first to early second century. They seem to add weight to the evidence for Christianity therefore it is important they we discredit them and do a good job of it.

To achieve that we have to show that they were gullible and careless and dishonest in matters of religious belief.

Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, the author of the Epistles to Diognetus, the author of the Epistle of Barnabas and the author of the Didache (and maybe the demented composer of the Shepherd of Hermas) are the Apostolic Fathers.

These were gullible silly men. They gave clear evidence that the gospels were not known when they were written. Christians will say I use them to prove this then I run them down and discredit them when they attest to the resurrection and to the existence of Jesus. But the more gullible they were the more likely they would have been to hug and kiss and distribute the gospels perhaps purged of any bits they did not like. They were not reliable in relation to evidence for the supernatural and to the existence of Jesus. Also, they make positive declarations in favour of Christianity while the sayings of Christ are dealt with in passing. They are being fanatical with faith and merely reporting the sayings so if they are being fanatical then it does not affect the sayings for they are not what they are being fanatical about. Emmanuel Swedenborg was a fanatic and delusional but still his books can show us that he had the Old and New Testaments.

### *Clement*

Clement of Rome thought that when Rahab was saved by hanging a scarlet cord from her house that it was a prophecy of salvation by the red blood of Jesus (12) which shows that he saw miracles where there need have been none and was too credulous to be relied on. When a man writes such nonsense on small things why trust him in greater? Jesus himself said much.

Clement was conscious that some is not all. He did not let that stop him from claiming that the seeming dying and rising of things in nature means that all people are going to rise (24).

He even accepted the far-fetched superstitions about the Phoenix, the bird of legend from whose ashes a new bird grows. Concerning this matter he wrote, "Look at that strange portent that occurs in the East" as if it were proven! He declared that the creator made use of this bird to show that there is a resurrection. This proves his slackness when the legend as he gives it doesn't even allude to a resurrection but the making of a new bird from what is left of the old. He was desperate for evidence for the resurrection and when that was the best he could do then plainly when there was no evidence for the resurrection of Christ and therefore none for his existence for the resurrection was his chief achievement.

Clement wrote that lying is the only thing that God cannot do (27). Yet he would have agreed with God deceiving us in other ways. God made the natural laws that make people be deceived by dreams – even forgotten ones that can serve no purpose. Clement was a hypocrite.

### *Ignatius and Polycarp*

St Ignatius of Antioch was undoubtedly crazy. In his letter to the Romans he expressed his intention to refuse to escape from the Romans to save himself from a horrid death in the arena. He vowed to incite the lions in it to tear him to bits if they were not interested in eating him. "I am truly in earnest about dying for God – if only you yourselves put no obstacles in the way. I must implore you to do me no such untimely kindness". St Polycarp was as bad. In the Martyrdom of Polycarp (7) we are told that when he was arrested to be murdered he could have escaped but didn't.

The Fathers knew that the apostles did not deliberately set out to get martyred for if they had they would have succeeded long before. They waited until they were nearly dead anyway if they did. The fathers claimed to be preserving their tradition and yet they set bad example and preached fanatical lies. It is an insult to the apostles to take them to be reliable sources of apostolic tradition. Also Ignatius did not know the teaching of Matthew's gospel that if you are in danger of death in one town flee to another.

Ignatius did not bother condemning Christians for having slaves in his Epistle to Polycarp. Slavery is absurd for it teaches that some people are inferior because of the circumstances under which they were born. Criminally, he told his slave-owners not to be overbearing. He accused slaves who bought their freedom with the money of the Church of being selfish –

a ridiculous accusation for some Churches must have been wealthy.

Ignatius knew that the foundational Christian virtue was humility. Yet in his open letter to the Church of Philadelphia, he was quite a braggart, "I am thankful to say that, where you are concerned, my conscience is clear. Nobody can be bold enough to claim that I have ever been oppressive to a single one of you in any matter, great or small".

### *Barnabas*

The Epistle of Barnabas was supposed to have been written by Barnabas who was the companion of Paul.

This ridiculous letter maintains that the Old Testament is an allegory.

This passage speaks volumes about the madness of its author: "The scripture tells us that out of his own household Abraham circumcised eighteen and three hundred ... Now, in writing eighteen, the ten is expressed by the letter I and the eight by E; and there, you see, you have IE (sus) [Jesus is Jesus]. And then, since grace was to come by a cross, of which T is the shape, it adds "and three hundred". Thus it indicates "Jesus" with two of the letters, and "the Cross" with the third." This is complete fantasy. Anybody can see that this is crap.

In chapter 10, it is declared that the Jewish food laws of the Old Testament were never meant to be taken literally! In other words, don't eat pigs means don't associate with people who are pigs! This is incredible. Barnabas knew fine well that using that method of interpretation one could make the Old Testament mean anything.

He wrote, "Do not speak sharply when you are giving orders to servants, whether men or women, if their trust is in the same God as yours; else they may lose their fear of him who is over you both" (19). This is hypocrisy because the apostles were cutting and abusive just like their Jesus. His logic is warped. Your unpleasantness does not mean that people will start fearing you more than God. Barnabas would deny that the gospels are inspired or even important for they record the abusive talk of Jesus.

### *Didache*

The Didache is the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. Its silences speak louder than its words for major Christian teachings are absent. It is less than seminal. Nobody would write a basic account of apostolic teaching and leave out such foundational Christian dogmas such as salvation by faith and by grace, the saving death and resurrection of Christ. Sharp chastising is forbidden in it which proves that it is not the teaching of the apostles at all who were cross men like Jesus.

Hypocritically, the Didache says that we must give food and money to prophets for they have earned it and then it says that any prophet who looks for money is to be called a charlatan. According to the stupid author, it is bad to ask for payment but not bad to accept it. Accepting it is asking for more!

The Didache (6) contradicts Paul, the first Christian author, when it says that Christians must not eat meat sacrificed to idols and calls it false worship. Paul said that there was no harm in it except when it might be an occasion of bad example for other people who see you doing it (1 Corinthians 10) and that it was not worshipping false gods. Commonsense agrees. Anybody can see that eating such communion sacrifices is not worship. Some may object that the Didache does not forbid eating meat bought at the market just because it has been sacrificed but only when eating it is part of a religious ritual of worship and symbolic union. They are wrong. The text says, "Be careful to refuse" this food. This is not the language of one who has Christians going to sacrifices in mind. If they couldn't eat the meat they wouldn't go. And what would they be doing there anyway? Most of the pagans didn't even bother with the temple.

### *To Diognetus with Love*

The Epistle to Diognetus accuses pagans of wilfully adoring stones or whatever in their idolatrous worship. The pagans were not that crazy. They adored the spirit they believed inhabited the idol or meant the honour given to the idol to pass on to the being represented like the kiss given to John's photo is meant in honour of John not the photo.

Diognetus criticises such worship for the idols cannot take care of themselves. This is sheer dishonesty and malice for when he believed that when his own God did not take care of his own affairs that it was for a mysterious purpose. The bigot knew that the gods that indwelt idols might let them be stolen and desecrated for a mysterious purpose.

### *Conclusion*

It is the vice of imprudence to heed the writings of the Fathers for they were all daft and addicted to nonsense.

