

## JUSTIN MARTYR AND THE EVIDENCE THAT GOSPELS UNKNOWN

There is evidence that the four New Testament gospels were hidden in the writings of St Justin Martyr. He knew nothing of Acts a book that was never quoted until 177 AD (page 150, 225, The Jesus Mysteries). And our four gospels were certainly unavailable to him for what he has got differs a lot (ibid, page 224). He never mentioned Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (page 224, The Jesus Mysteries). He quotes what may come from the heretical Gospel of Peter on one occasion (page 200, The Canon of Scripture). But Justin did know the four gospels before he died in 165 AD for it was his disciple, the Encratite Tatian who merged the gospels into one heretical and condemned book called the Diatessaron. Tatian might have put in quotes in Justin's books. If so, it is no wonder they differ so from the four gospels and contradict Justin's statements for they were inserted in a hurry. When Justin had a heretic who taught that it was a sin to eat meat or drink wine and discouraged and frequently forbade marriage as a disciple, the gospels must have been censored for they do not sanction such asceticism at all but quite the opposite.

Justin wrote his first apology in around 150 AD. It was addressed to the Roman Emperor. It contains the following evidence.

Astonishingly, Justin argues that reason forbids humanity to follow the traditions of men who did wrong or erred. This contradicts what he said about relying on the apostles to find the true revelation that Jesus gave. The apostles denied that they were sinless or always infallible. Justin evidently could not get his hands on the New Testament gospels. The bits which approve of the apostles must have been later insertions. The real Justin held that reason was supreme not the apostles and believed in direct revelation from Jesus.

Justin or his ghost writer gave lots of quotations from Jesus' words as they are in the gospels but Christians had nothing to fear from publicising them but plenty to fear from much of the historical material.

Justin told the emperor to read the Acts of Pontius Pilate which recorded the miracles of Jesus. But this book was rejected as rubbish by the Church. When Justin was prejudiced against evil men like Pilate why did he tell the Emperor to read Pilate's alleged book and not the books of the more holy apostles? Justin must really have been desperate. The gospels were censored.

Justin quoted Psalm 22 saying it was about the nailing of Jesus to the cross and the other things that happened to him at the time and that the Emperor can check this out in the Acts of Pilate. Why not the gospels? Justin gives no hint that this book was considered authoritative by anyone but himself. Nobody would have worried about obscure wacky books in those days to destroy them. The four gospels if they were considered as scripture or close to it would have had to have been hidden for they were official books. They were hidden when Justin had to direct the Emperor to rubbish that nobody else would touch.

It is important that Justin turns to vague Old Testament alleged prophecies that are not prophecies to back up some of the things which he thought were facts about the life of Jesus. Why not turn to the gospels? They were still censored in his day. You don't use weak arguments instead of strong unless the weak ones are all you have got.

Justin taught that baptism remits sin by magical power and causes a person to be reborn or born into the divine family.

Justin made the mistake of assuming that when Jesus said that "you have to be reborn to get into the kingdom of Heaven", that anybody who is not born of water and the spirit cannot enter the kingdom of God that water refers to baptism. Jesus is more likely to have meant a birth from water and wind both of which are figures of the Holy Spirit. He could not read the verse in its context for the gospels were hidden. The way Jesus said that the action of the spirit was like the blowing of the wind which is unpredictable shows that he was not thinking of a magical baptism ceremony. Paul wrote in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 12:13) that we all drank from the same Holy Spirit indicating that water was an emblem of the Holy Spirit and was not literal water.

Justin seems to be quoting John 3:5 here but it is different from John so Ellegard is right to say that Justin never cited the Gospel of John (page 183, Jesus – One Hundred Years before Christ). The quote could have come from Justin's commonsense. Tradition was saying that baptism was rebirth and necessary for Heaven so it was only natural for some to say that Jesus said you must be reborn to enter the Kingdom of Heaven and for Justin to quote this without any of them having John's Gospel. John has kingdom of God and reborn of water and spirit instead of what Justin has so there are significant differences. If Justin was quoting John then somebody told him some of the things that were in it but he could not get a copy to get the quotation exactly right. If there were loads of heretical gospels about which we would expect Justin had to be very careful and so had the rest of the Church fathers. They had to be very careful to say where their data came from and to use a decent and reliable source.

Justin seemingly quoted Luke 22:19 in the First Apology claiming that it was a quote from an apostle. Either Justin did quote a verbal apostolic tradition or he denied the tradition that Luke, who was not an apostle, wrote the gospel and was saying an apostle wrote it. It is absurd to say that he means that Luke was an apostle in the sense we all are! It is most likely that he meant one of the twelve when there is no evidence for the loose usage in his works. But the quote is skeletal and comes from the last supper and could be from any gospel. More probably it was cited by memory from the liturgy.

Justin held that a man goes to everlasting torture or salvation according to his actions contradicting the New Testament, mainly the Pauline Epistles, which say salvation is without good works from beginning to end. This does not prove he did not know the New Testament for the epistles would hardly have been censored but that he did not believe that it was infallible or reliable. Perhaps he didn't consider the men he would have believed to have been their authors to have been as solid as rocks.

In his First Apology Justin said that the Jews were wrong to think that the person speaking to Moses in the burning bush was God the Father for it was God the Son who did that. But Jesus supported the Jewish belief in Mark 12, Matthew 22 and Luke 20.

In *The Truth of Christianity*, Turton claims that Justin used the gospels calling them the *Memoirs of the Apostles*, "Justin gives about sixty quotations from these *Memoirs*, and they describe precisely those events in the life of Christ recorded in our first three, commonly called the Synoptic Gospels, and with scarcely any addition. Indeed out of all Justin's references to the events of Christ's life, whether quotations or not, of which there are over two hundred, only four refer to events not now found in our Gospels. This is remarkable and seems to show that even at this early time our Gospels were the only recognised sources of information" (page 282-3).

But "scarcely any of the quotations are verbally accurate, and it has been urged in consequence that Justin must have been quoting from some Lost Gospel. But this theory is hardly tenable. For Justin sometimes quotes the same passage differently, clearly showing that he was relying on his memory; and that he had not looked up the reference, which in those days of manuscripts, without concordances, must have been a tedious process. Also when quoting the Old Testament, he is almost equally inaccurate" (page 284).

In reply, a professional Christian apologist like Justin who knew the importance of accurate quotations from being a philosopher in which every word or letter counts would have jotted down useful quotations when he found them as he studied the manuscript if he studied one at all. It looks like Justin did find out a lot about what was in the gospels somehow but was not able to read this material for himself and probably got his information from an indiscreet person who read imitation gospels and blew the lid on their contents rather than the four we have now. Whatever his informant read told him that the wise men came from Arabia and that Jesus was born in a cave things which are not in the gospels. Justin was careless with the Old Testament for it needed to be forced to testify to Christ. He declared that Moses made a cross with a snake on it which was why Plato said God placed a god crosswise in the universe. This logic is nonsensical and he went as far as to say Moses inspired the philosophy of the Greeks! Justin was very manipulative. Justin added prophecies of raising the dead and cleansing lepers and making the blind see to Isaiah 35:6 in order that it would appear to be an exact prophecy about Jesus. This suggests that the Christian leaders were using fraud to get converts. Isaiah 57:1 which is not a prophecy of Christ at all but about what is happening in the prophet's day is made into a prophecy about Christ. A verse from Deuteronomy (30:15,19) was wrested from its context and said to have been spoken to Adam. This was wilful distortion for the Old Testament wasn't hard to get to. After all it was the Jewish Scripture not just the scripture of the Christians.

About 135AD, a knowledgeable Jew named Trypho escaped from turbulent Palestine and met up with Justin. Justin recorded the debate he had with him in his *Dialogue with Trypho* who he tried to convert to Christianity. Justin told him that Jesus spoke to Moses from the burning bush even though Jesus himself said it was the Father so that was a deliberate lie or Justin didn't know what Jesus said. Justin did not have the complete gospels for he quoted what may be Luke 20:35 which was two verses before the one which Jesus said it was God. Justin claimed that Jesus Christ spoke to Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 18 and appeared as a captain to Joshua (Joshua 5). Trypho rightly rejected all these ideas as being useless as evidence. An intelligent man like Justin would use better texts than that – so shall we assume somebody was interfering with his writings? Or perhaps Justin couldn't do any better. Trypho knew a lot about religion and his country so Justin would have pulled out the four gospels and hit Trypho with their historical evidences for the messianic and prophetic identity of Jesus. But he couldn't. He couldn't even quote from Roman records but the dubious Acts of Pilate. Trypho even questioned the existence of Jesus for he said that nobody knew of him. This tells us that the Gospels were hidden if they existed.

Justin seriously contradicted the gospels when he called Jesus a Second God (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 58-61). Both he and Trypho never heard of the gospels being strictly monotheistic.

The gospels were hidden in the time of Justin. Further confirmation of this is in the work of St Irenaeus who advanced

several doctrines that were in accord with the gospels which were supported which shows that they had just recently come out of the closet with the result that the Church had not derived a coherent theology from them yet for they hadn't been known long enough. In *Evil and the God of Love* you see how Irenaeus had taught the view that God allowed suffering for the sake of discipline and had made Adam and Eve imperfect so that they could sin and grow through it and rejected the traditional view taught in the gospels that they were made perfect and fell from it making us biased towards sin meaning that discipline would be of little use.

## MEMOIRS OF THE APOSTLES?

Justin said in his book for the Emperor that the *Memoirs of the Apostles*, which are frequently taken to refer to the four gospels, were read publicly in the Churches. "He tells how the compositions of the prophets were read in the weekly meetings of Christians along with the memoirs of the apostles; the memoirs of the apostles indicated the lines along which the prophets' words were to be understood" (*The Canon of Scripture*, page 70). The *Memoirs* must have been incomplete for who is going to write out full books or purchase them when all that is needed are some quotes that fit the Old Testament's so-called predictions? The early Church did everything in the light of the Old Testament. We are clearly told that only the bits that fitted the prophecies were read. But if it were right to assume that he is saying that the gospels whole and entire were read in public, then this would have been a lie or an altered and inauthentic insertion. All Justin would have had to do was to go to his preacher to get accurate quotations for his writings. The evidence says that even Justin could not get the full and accurate version of the gospels which is a sure sign that they were top secret for the Church. There is no need to believe that these *Memoirs* contained historical matter.

One must remember that Justin quoted these *Memoirs* to the Emperor and the Emperor had a body of men who could have checked them out so if Justin had our gospels he had to be more specific as to what gospel the quotation he used was in. Even if Justin's book was not for the Emperor and Justin saying it was for the Emperor was a lie, Justin had to act as if it was. So the *Memoirs of the Apostles* are just collections of sayings attributed to Jesus. They are not the Gospels. When the *Memoirs* were lost that means the Church did not think much of them. Justin uses the names of Old Testament authors in his book when he quotes them which proves the *Memoirs* were not the Gospels. When Justin used a collection like that it tells you that there were no gospels.

Would Justin really call the four gospels the *Memoirs of the Apostles* without giving a shred of evidence that they came from the apostles in case the Emperor would be sceptical? This indicates that he was lying about them or he could find no evidence for an apostolic origin. It is a serious problem if Justin was really able to write to the Emperor and testify that the Christians used the *Memoirs* as holy books if not scripture every week when the emperor wanted rid of Christianity. He knew that the Church could be destroyed best by destroying the books. Near the end of the book is a plea for the execution of Christians to be ended. My bet is the Emperor never heard of Justin's wacky book. Justin was a dishonest person. He said that the *Memoirs* were composed by the apostles but Luke and Mark were not apostles and Matthew never claimed that it was apostolical and neither did John. This would indicate that he did not have the four gospels at all.

To recap, Justin never refers to the gospels but to what he calls the *Memoirs of the Apostles* and he quotes these. The Christians say the *Memoirs* were the gospels. But there is no evidence that this title was used for them by anyone other than Justin so it is most probably a gospel on its own. The *Memoirs* are too different from the Gospels to be the Gospels. Christians say that Justin was quoting from memory and that was why there was inaccuracy. They say it was too hard to go through scrolls to get the exact wording. This is the excuse they apply to all the Apostolic Fathers none of whom quoted the gospels exactly or gave any clear indication that they were quoting our four gospels at all. But remember this, the likes of Justin must have gone through the scrolls often enough to be able to remember anything like the text so why not when they were writing? Commonsense tells you that these teachers would have went through the scrolls once if they had access to them and taken notes of portions they wanted to remember and use these notes in writing and so the wording would be an exact match for the gospels if they had them.

It is insanity in any case to depend on Justin as evidence for the existence of the gospels in those days for when an apologist was bad and woolly thinking as him was the only one to survive from the earliest period it reflects terribly on the other apologists and on the intellectual climate in the Church. He was the best then. The best apologist might get access to the gospels so even if he knew them that does not mean anybody else did or that he was allowed to tell everything that they contained.

It is certain that the later Church tampered with the Apostolic Fathers' writings but even now as they are they do not hold out much hope for those who want to find evidence for the existence and publication of the gospels by the time they were written.

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