

THE ACTS
OF THE CHRISTIAN
MARTYRS

INTRODUCTION
TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS
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Μαρτύριον τοῦ Ἁγίου Πολυκάρπου*

Ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ, ἡ παροικοῦσα Σμύρναν, τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, τῇ παροικούσῃ ἐν Φιλομηλίῳ καὶ πάσαις ταῖς κατὰ πάντα τόπον τῆς ἁγίας καὶ καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας παροικίας. Ἐλεος καὶ
5 εἰρήνη καὶ ἀγάπη θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πληθυνθείη.

1. Ἐγράψαμεν ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὰ κατὰ τοὺς μαρτυρήσαντας καὶ τὸν μακάριον Πολύκαρπον, ὅστις ὡσπερ ἐπισφραγίσας διὰ τῆς μαρτυρίας αὐτοῦ κατέπαυσε τὸν διωγμὸν. σχεδὸν γὰρ πάντα τὰ προ-
10 ἀγοντα ἐγένετο, ἵνα ἡμῖν ὁ κύριος ἀνωθεν ἐπιδείξῃ τὸ κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον μαρτύριον. 2. περιέμενεν γὰρ ἵνα παραδοθῆ, ὡς καὶ ὁ κύριος, ἵνα μιμηταὶ καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοῦ γενώμεθα, μὴ μόνον σκοποῦντες τὸ καθ' ἑαυτούς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ κατὰ τοὺς πέλας. ἀγάπης γὰρ ἀληθοῦς καὶ βεβαίας ἐστίν, μὴ μόνον ἑαυτὸν θέλειν
15 σῶζεσθαι ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀδελφούς.

2. Μακάρια μὲν οὖν καὶ γενναῖα τὰ μαρτύρια πάντα τὰ κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ γεγονότα. δεῖ γὰρ εὐλαβεστερέους ἡμᾶς ὑπάρχοντας τῷ θεῷ τὴν κατὰ πάντων ἐξουσίαν ἀνατιθέναι. 2. τὸ γὰρ γενναῖον αὐτῶν καὶ ὑπομονητικὸν καὶ φιλοδέσποτον τίς οὐκ ἂν θαυμάσειεν; οἱ
20 μάλιστα μὲν καταξανθέντες, ὥστε μέχρι τῶν ἔσω φλεβῶν καὶ ἀρτηριῶν τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς οἰκονομίαν θεωρεῖσθαι, ὑπέμειναν, ὡς καὶ τοὺς περιεστώτας ἐλεεῖν καὶ ὀδύρεσθαι. τοὺς δὲ καὶ εἰς τοσοῦτον γενναιότητος ἐλθεῖν, ὥστε μήτε γρύξαι μήτε στενάξαι τινὰ αὐτῶν, ἐπιδεικνυμένους ἅπασιν ἡμῖν, ὅτι ἐκείνη τῇ ὥρᾳ βασανιζόμενοι τῆς
25 σαρκὸς ἀπεδήμουν οἱ μάρτυρες τοῦ Χριστοῦ, μᾶλλον δὲ ὅτι παρεστῶς ὁ κύριος ὠμίλει αὐτοῖς. 3. καὶ προσέχοντες τῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ χάριτι

1-9 = Eusebius, *HE* iv. 15. 3 (Schwartz, 336) 5 ἀπὸ θεοῦ PHBCV
7 ἀδελφοί ἀγαπητοί M 16 sq. cf. Eus., *HE* iv. 15. 4-14 (Schwartz, 336 sq.)

* On the text see Introduction, pp. xiv-xv.

The Martyrdom of St. Polycarp

The church of God dwelling in Smyrna to the church of God of Philomelium and to all the communities of the holy Catholic Church everywhere: *may the mercy, peace, and love of God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord be multiplied.*¹

1. We are writing to you, dear brothers, the story of the martyrs and of blessed Polycarp who put a stop to the persecution by his own martyrdom as though he were putting a seal upon it. For practically everything that had gone before took place that the Lord might show us from heaven a witness in accordance with the Gospel. Just as the Lord did, he too waited that he might be delivered up, that we might become his imitators, *not thinking of ourselves alone, but of our neighbours as well.*² For it is a mark of true and solid love to desire not only one's own salvation but also that of all the brothers.

2. Blessed indeed and noble are all the martyrdoms that took place in accordance with God's will. For we must devoutly assign to God a providence over them all. Who indeed would not admire the martyrs' nobility, their courage, their love of the Master? For even when they were torn by whips until the very structure of their bodies was laid bare down to the inner veins and arteries, they endured it, making even the bystanders weep for pity. Some indeed attained to such courage that they would utter not a sound or a cry, showing to all of us that in the hour of their torment these noblest of Christ's witnesses were not present in the flesh, or rather that the Lord was there present holding converse with them. Fixing their eyes on the favour of Christ, they despised

¹ Jude 2.

² Phil. 2: 4.

τῶν κοσμικῶν κατεφρόνουν βασάνων, διὰ μιᾶς ὥρας τὴν αἰώνιον κόλασιν ἐξαγοραζόμενοι. καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἦν αὐτοῖς ψυχρὸν τὸ τῶν ἀπανθρώπων βασανιστῶν. πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν γὰρ εἶχον φυγεῖν τὸ αἰώνιον καὶ μηδέποτε σβεννύμενον καὶ τοῖς τῆς καρδίας ὀφθαλμοῖς
 5 ἀνέβλεπον τὰ τηρούμενα τοῖς ὑπομείνανσιν ἀγαθὰ, ἃ οὔτε οὐδὲ ἤκουσεν, οὔτε ὀφθαλμὸς εἶδεν, οὔτε ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου ἀνέβη, ἐκείνοις δὲ ὑπεδείκνυτο ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, ὅτι οὐκ ἔτι ἀνθρώποι ἀλλ' ἤδη ἄγγελοι ἦσαν. 4. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ οἱ εἰς τὰ θηρία κατακριθέντες ὑπέμειναν δεινὰς κολάσεις, κήρυκας μὲν ὑποστρω-
 10 νύμενοι καὶ ἄλλαις ποικίλων βασάνων ἰδέαις κολαζόμενοι ἵνα, εἰ δυναθῆι ὁ τύραννος, διὰ τῆς ἐπιμόνου κολάσεως εἰς ἄρνησιν αὐτοὺς τρέβη.

3. Πολλὰ γὰρ ἐμηχανᾶτο κατ' αὐτῶν ὁ διάβολος, ἀλλὰ χάρις τῷ θεῷ, κατὰ πάντων γὰρ οὐκ ἴσχυσεν. ὁ γὰρ γενναϊότατος Γερμανικὸς
 15 ἐπερρώνησεν αὐτῶν τὴν δειλίαν διὰ τῆς ἐν αὐτῷ ὑπομονῆς, ὅς καὶ ἐπισήμως ἐθηριομάχησεν. βουλομένου γὰρ τοῦ ἀνθυπάτου πείθειν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγοντος τὴν ἡλικίαν αὐτοῦ κατοικτεῖραι, ἑαυτῷ ἐπεσπάσατο τὸ θηρίον προσβιασάμενος, τάχιον τοῦ ἀδίκου καὶ ἀνόμου βίου αὐτῶν ἀπαλλαγῆναι βουλόμενος. 2. ἐκ τούτου οὖν πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος,
 20 θαυμάσαν τὴν γενναϊότητα τοῦ θεοφιλοῦς καὶ θεοσεβοῦς γένους τῶν Χριστιανῶν, ἐβόησεν· Αἴρε τοὺς ἀθέους· ζητείσθω Πολύκαρπος.

4. Εἰς δὲ ὀνόματι Κόιντος, Φρύξ, προσφάτως ἐληλυθὼς ἀπὸ τῆς Φρυγίας, ἰδὼν τὰ θηρία ἐδειλίασεν. οὗτος δὲ ἦν ὁ παραβιασάμενος ἑαυτὸν τε καὶ τινὰς προσελθεῖν ἐκόντας. τοῦτον ὁ ἀνθύπατος πολλὰ
 25 ἐκλιπαρήσας ἐπεισεν ὁμόσαι καὶ ἐπιθῆσαι. διὰ τοῦτο οὖν, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἐπαινοῦμεν τοὺς προσιόντας ἑαυτοῖς, ἐπειδὴ οὐχ οὕτως διδάσκει τὸ εὐαγγέλιον.

5. Ὁ δὲ θαυμασιώτατος Πολύκαρπος τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἀκούσας οὐκ ἐταράχθη, ἀλλ' ἐβούλετο κατὰ πόλιν μένειν· οἱ δὲ πλείους ἔπειθον
 30 αὐτὸν ὑπεξελθεῖν. καὶ ὑπεξῆλθεν εἰς ἀγρίδιον οὐ μακρὰν ἀπέχον

2 κόλασιν: ζωὴν M 4 σβεννύμενον πῦρ CVM 5 ἀνέβλεπον M
 7 οἷπερ μηκέτι: εἷπερ λοιπὸν οὐκέτι M 11 ὁ τύραννος codd.: del. Funk-Bihlmeyer 26 προσιόντας: (προ)διδόντας (HV)Cfortasse ut glossam ἑαυτοῖς: ἐκουσίους con. Zahn: <ἐφ'> ἑαυτοῖς malle

the tortures of this world, in one hour buying themselves an exemption from the eternal fire. The fire applied by their inhuman torturers was cooled: for they kept before their eyes the knowledge that they were escaping that eternal fire never to be extinguished; and with the eyes of the soul they looked up to those good things that are saved up for those who have persevered, which *neither the ear has heard nor the eye seen, nor has it entered into the heart of man*:³ but to them the Lord revealed it seeing they were no longer men but angels.

Similarly did those who were condemned to the beasts endure terrifying torments, being laid out upon trumpet-shells, and bruised by other different kinds of tortures. The purpose was that, if possible, the tyrant might persuade them to deny the faith by constant torment. 3. For many were the stratagems the Devil used against them. But thanks be to God, he did not prevail over all of them. The most noble Germanicus gave them encouragement by the perseverance he showed; he even fought manfully with the beasts. The governor tried to persuade him, telling him to spare his young manhood; but he with a show of force dragged the beast on top of him, intending to be freed all the more quickly from this unjust and lawless life. At this then all the mob was astonished at the courage of this pious and devoted race of Christians, and they shouted out: 'Away with these atheists! Go and get Polycarp!'

4. There was a Phrygian named Quintus who had only recently come from Phrygia, and when he saw the wild animals he turned cowardly. Now he was the one who had given himself up and had forced some others to give themselves up voluntarily. With him the governor used many arguments and persuaded him to swear by the gods and offer sacrifice. This is the reason, brothers, that we do not approve of those who come forward of themselves:⁴ this is not the teaching of the Gospel.

5. Now at first when the most admirable Polycarp heard of this, he was not disturbed and even decided to stay in Smyrna; but most people advised him to slip out quietly. And so he left

³ 1 Cor. 2: 9; cf. Isa. 64: 4, 65: 6.

⁴ Cf. the *Acts of Cyprian* 1. 5 (*no quis se ultro offerat*).

ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως καὶ διέτριβεν μετ' ὀλίγων, νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν οὐδὲν ἕτερον ποιῶν ἢ προσευχόμενος περὶ πάντων καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐκκλησιῶν, ὅπερ ἦν σύνηθες αὐτῷ. 2. καὶ προσευχόμενος ἐν ὄπτασίᾳ γέγονεν πρὸ τριῶν ἡμερῶν τοῦ συλληφθῆναι αὐτὸν
5 καὶ εἶδεν τὸ προσκεφάλαιον αὐτοῦ ὑπὸ πυρὸς κατακαϊόμενον. καὶ στραφεὶς εἶπεν πρὸς τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ· Δεῖ με ζῶντα καῆναι.

6. Καὶ ἐπιμενόντων τῶν ζητούντων αὐτὸν μετέβη εἰς ἕτερον ἀγρίδιον. καὶ εὐθέως ἐπέστησαν οἱ ζητοῦντες αὐτόν, καὶ μὴ εὐρόντες
10 2. ἦν γὰρ καὶ ἀδύνατον λαθεῖν αὐτόν, ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ προδιόντες αὐτὸν οἰκεῖοι ὑπήρχον. καὶ ὁ εἰρήναρχος, ὁ κεκληρωμένος τὸ αὐτὸ ὄνομα, Ἡρώδης ἐπιλεγόμενος, ἔσπευδεν εἰς τὸ στάδιον αὐτὸν εἰσαγαγεῖν ἵνα ἐκεῖνος μὲν τὸν ἴδιον κλῆρον ἀπαρτίσῃ, Χριστοῦ κοινωνὸς γενόμενος, οἱ δὲ προδόντες αὐτὸν τὴν αὐτοῦ τοῦ Ἰούδα ὑπόσχοιεν τιμωρίαν.
- 15 7. Ἐχόντες οὖν τὸ παιδάριον τῇ παρασκευῇ περὶ δείπνου ὥραν ἐξήλθον διωγμίται καὶ ἵππεις μετὰ τῶν συνήθων αὐτοῖς ὄπλων ὡς ἐπὶ ληστῆν τρέχοντες. καὶ ὁψέ τῆς ὥρας συνεπελθόντες ἐκεῖνον μὲν εὐρον ἐν τινι δωματίῳ κατακείμενον ἐν ὑπερώῳ κάκειθεν δὲ ἠδύνατο εἰς ἕτερον χωρίον ἀπελθεῖν ἀλλ' οὐκ ἠβουλήθη εἰπῶν, Τὸ
20 θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ γενέσθω. 2. ἀκούσας οὖν αὐτοὺς παρόντας, καταβάς διελέχθη αὐτοῖς θαυμάζόντων τῶν παρόντων τὴν ἡλικίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ εὐσταθές, καὶ εἰ τοσαύτη σπουδὴ ἦν τοῦ συλληφθῆναι τοιοῦτον πρεσβύτην ἄνδρα. εὐθέως οὖν αὐτοῖς ἐκέλευσεν παρατεθῆναι φαγεῖν καὶ πιεῖν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ ὅσον ἂν βούλωνται,
25 ἐξητήσατο δὲ αὐτοὺς ἵνα δῶσιν αὐτῷ ὥραν πρὸς τὸ προσεύξασθαι ἀδεῶς. 3. τῶν δὲ ἐπιτρεψάντων, σταθεὶς πρὸς ἀνατολὴν προσηύξατο πλήρης ὢν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ οὕτως ὡς ἐπὶ δύο ὥρας μὴ δύνασθαι σιωπήσαι, καὶ ἐκπλήττεσθαι τοὺς ἀκούοντας πολλοὺς τε μετανοεῖν ἐπὶ τῷ ἐληλυθέναι ἐπὶ τοιοῦτον θεοπρεπῆ πρεσβύτην.
- 30 8. Ἐπεὶ δὲ ποτε κατέπαυσεν τὴν προσευχὴν, μνημονεύσας ἀπάντων τῶν καὶ πώποτε συμβεβληκότων αὐτῷ μικρῶν τε καὶ μεγάλων,

11 ὁ κεκληρωμένος τὸ αὐτὸ ὄνομα fortasse melius post εἰσαγαγεῖν (12) collocanda
18 21 παρόντων codd.: ὁρώντων Bihlmeyer post Schwartz (cf. Eus. ὡς καὶ θαῦμα δοκεῖν ὄραν)
26 πρὸς ἀνατολὴν M: om. PHBCV Bihlmeyer 30 sqq. (8-19. 1) = Eus., HE iv. 15. 15-45 (Schwartz, 340-52)

secretly for a small estate on the outskirts, staying there with a few friends. Day and night he did little else but pray for everyone and for all the churches scattered throughout the world, as he was indeed accustomed to do.

Three days before he was captured he fell into a trance while at prayer: he saw his pillow being consumed by fire. He turned and said to his companions: 'I am to be burnt alive.'

6. The pursuivants persisted on his trail, and so he moved to a different estate. Shortly thereafter they arrived. Not finding Polycarp they seized two slaves, and one of them told everything under torture. Indeed, it was impossible for Polycarp to remain in hiding when he had betrayers in his own household. The police captain, who was called Herod, was eager to bring him to the amphitheatre: destiny had given him the same name, that Polycarp might fulfil the lot that was appointed to him, becoming a sharer with Christ, and those who betrayed him might receive the punishment of Judas.⁵

7. With the slave then, the police and cavalry set out on Friday at the dinner hour with the usual arms *as though against a brigand*.⁶ It was late in the evening when they closed in: they found him reclining in a small room upstairs. He could have left and gone elsewhere but he refused, saying: '*May the will of God be done.*'⁷ And so, hearing that they had arrived he went downstairs to talk with them, while all those present⁸ were surprised at his composure and his old age, and why there should have been such concern to capture so elderly a man.

At any rate Polycarp immediately ordered food and drink to be set before them, as much as they wished, even at this hour, and only requested that they might grant him an hour to pray undisturbed. When they consented, he stood up and began to pray facing the east,⁹ and so full was he of God's grace that he was unable to stop for two hours, to the amazement of those who heard him; and many were sorry that they had come out to arrest such a godlike old man.

8. Finally he finished his prayer, after calling to mind all those who had ever come into contact with him, both important and

⁵ With the reference to Judas and Herod we see the beginning of the Gospel parallelism which the author (or, according to von Campenhausen, a redactor) has striven for. ⁶ Matt. 26: 55. ⁷ Acts 21: 14.

⁸ Some editors would emend the text: 'while they were surprised seeing his composure.'

⁹ Most editors omit the phrase 'facing the east'.

ἐνδόξων τε καὶ ἀδόξων, καὶ πάσης τῆς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας, τῆς ὥρας ἐλθούσης τοῦ ἐξίεναι, ὄνῳ καθίσαντες αὐτὸν ἤγαγον εἰς τὴν πόλιν ὄντος σαββάτου μεγάλου. 2. καὶ ὑπήντα αὐτῷ ὁ εἰρήναρχος Ἡρώδης καὶ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ Νικήτης, οἱ καὶ
 5 μεταθέντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὴν καροῦχαν ἔπειθον παρακαθεζόμενοι καὶ λέγοντες· Τί γὰρ κακὸν ἐστὶν εἰπεῖν· Κύριος Καίσαρ, καὶ ἐπιθῦσαι καὶ τὰ τούτοις ἀκόλουθα καὶ διασώζεσθαι; ὁ δὲ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα οὐκ ἀπεκρίνατο αὐτοῖς, ἐπιμενόντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἔφη· Οὐ μέλλω ποιεῖν ὁ συμβουλευέτέ μοι. 3. οἱ δὲ ἀποτυχόντες τοῦ πείσαι αὐτὸν δεινὰ
 10 ῥήματα ἔλεγον καὶ μετὰ σπουδῆς καθήρουν αὐτὸν ὡς κατιόντα ἀπὸ τῆς καροῦχας ἀποσῦραι τὸ ἀντικνήμιον. καὶ μὴ ἐπιστραφεῖς ὡς οὐδὲν πεποιθὼς προθύμως ἐπορεύετο ἀγόμενος εἰς τὸ στάδιον, θορύβου τηλικούτου ὄντος ἐν τῷ σταδίῳ ὡς μηδὲ ἀκουσθῆναί τινα δύνασθαι.

15 9. Τῷ δὲ Πολυκάρπῳ εἰσιόντι εἰς τὸ στάδιον φωνὴ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐγένετο· Ἰσχυε, Πολύκαρπε, καὶ ἀνδρίζου. καὶ τὸν μὲν εἰπόντα οὐδεὶς εἶδεν, τὴν δὲ φωνὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων οἱ παρόντες ἤκουσαν. καὶ λοιπὸν προσαχθέντος αὐτοῦ, θόρυβος ἦν μέγας ἀκουσάντων ὅτι Πολύκαρπος συνειληπται. 2. προσαχθέντα οὖν αὐτὸν ἀνηρώτα ὁ
 20 ἀνθύπατος εἰ αὐτὸς εἶη Πολύκαρπος. τοῦ δὲ ὁμολογοῦντος ἔπειθεν ἀρνεῖσθαι λέγων· Αἰδέσθητί σου τὴν ἡλικίαν (καὶ ἕτερα τούτοις ἀκόλουθα, ὧν ἔθος αὐτοῖς λέγειν)· Ὁμοσον τὴν Καίσαρος τύχην, μετανόησον, εἶπον· Αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος ἐμβριθεῖ τῷ προσώπῳ εἰς πάντα τὸν ὄχλον τὸν ἐν τῷ σταδίῳ ἀνόμων ἐθνῶν
 25 ἐμβλέψας καὶ ἐπισείσας αὐτοῖς τὴν χεῖρα, στενάξας τε καὶ ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶπεν· Αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους. 3. ἐγκειμένου δὲ τοῦ ἀνθυπάτου καὶ λέγοντος· Ὁμοσον, καὶ ἀπολύω σε, λοιδύρησον τὸν Χριστόν, ἔφη ὁ Πολύκαρπος· Ὁγδοήκοντα καὶ ἐξ ἔτη δουλεύω αὐτῷ καὶ οὐδὲν με ἠδίκησεν. καὶ πῶς δύναμαι βλασφημῆσαι τὸν βασιλέα
 30 μου τὸν σώσαντά με;

16 post ἀνδρίζου add. μετὰ σοῦ γάρ εἰμι (cf. Acta Ap. 18: 10) CV fortasse recte

insignificant, famous and obscure, and the entire Catholic Church scattered throughout the world. It was now time to go, and so they put him on a donkey and thus conducted him into the city. It was now a great Sabbath day.¹⁰

The police captain Herod with his father Nicetes came up to meet Polycarp; they shifted him into their own carriage, and after sitting down beside him they tried to persuade him, saying: 'Now what harm is there for you to say "Caesar is lord", to perform the sacrifices and so forth, and thus save your life?'

At first Polycarp would not answer them; but when they persisted, he said: 'I do not intend to do what you advise.'

They then gave up their attempt to move him and spoke threateningly to him, and took him down from the carriage so hastily that he scraped his shin. But taking no notice, as though nothing had happened, he walked on eagerly and quickly; and as he was brought into the amphitheatre there was such an uproar there that no one could even be heard.

9. As Polycarp entered the amphitheatre, a voice from heaven said: '*Be strong, Polycarp, and have courage.*'¹¹ No one saw who was speaking, but those of our people who were present heard the voice.

Then, as he was brought in, a great shout arose when the people heard that it was Polycarp who had been arrested. As he was brought before him, the governor asked him: 'Are you Polycarp?' And when he admitted he was, the governor tried to persuade him to recant, saying: 'Have respect for your age' (and other similar things that they are accustomed to say);¹² 'swear by the Genius of the emperor.'¹³ Recant. Say, "Away with the atheists!"

Polycarp, with a sober countenance, looked at all the mob of lawless pagans who were in the arena, and shaking his fist at them, groaned, looked up to heaven, and said: 'Away with the atheists!'

The governor persisted and said: 'Swear and I will let you go. Curse Christ!'

But Polycarp answered: 'For eighty-six years I have been his servant and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme against my king and saviour?'

¹⁰ Cf. John 19: 31 of the Sabbath occurring during Passover. See Arndt-Gingrich, s.v. *σάββατον*.

¹¹ Josh. 1: 6, 7; cf. Deut. 31: 6, 7, 23. Some manuscripts add 'for I am with you' (as in Acts 18: 10).

¹² The words in parenthesis would seem to be an editorial comment.

¹³ On the oath see also the *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs* 3, 5, and the *Acts of Apollonius* 3.

10. Ἐπιμένοντος δὲ πάλιν αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγοντος· "Ὁμοσον τὴν Καίσαρος τύχην, ἀπεκρίνατο· Εἰ κενοδοξεῖς ἵνα ὁμόσω τὴν Καίσαρος τύχην, ὡς σὺ λέγεις, προσποιεῖ δὲ ἀγνοεῖν με τίς εἰμι, μετὰ παρρησίας ἄκουε· Χριστιανός εἰμι. εἰ δὲ θέλεις τὸν τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ μαθεῖν

5 λόγον, δὸς ἡμέραν καὶ ἄκουσον. 2. ἔφη ὁ ἀνθύπατος· Πείσον τὸν δῆμον. ὁ δὲ Πολύκαρπος εἶπεν· Σὲ μὲν καὶ λόγου ἠξίωκα· δεδιδάγμεθα γὰρ ἀρχαῖς καὶ ἐξουσίαις ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ τεταγμέναις τιμὴν κατὰ τὸ προσήκον τὴν μὴ βλάπτουσαν ἡμᾶς ἀπονέμειν. ἐκείνους δὲ οὐχ ἡγοῦμαι ἀξίους τοῦ ἀπολογεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς.

10 11. Ὁ δὲ ἀνθύπατος εἶπεν· Θηρία ἔχω· τούτοις σε παραβαλῶ ἂν μὴ μετανοήσης. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· Κάλει. ἀμετάθετος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν κρειττόνων ἐπὶ τὰ χεῖρω μετάνοια, καλὸν δὲ μετατίθεσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν χαλεπῶν ἐπὶ τὰ δίκαια. 2. ὁ δὲ πάλιν πρὸς αὐτόν· Πυρί σε ποιήσω δαπανηθῆναι εἰ τῶν θηρίων καταφρονεῖς, ἂν μὴ μετανοήσης. ὁ δὲ

15 Πολύκαρπος εἶπεν· Πῦρ ἀπειλεῖς τὸ πρὸς ὄραν καιόμενον καὶ μετ' ὀλίγον σβεννύμενον. ἀγνοεῖς γὰρ τὸ τῆς μελλούσης κρίσεως καὶ αἰωνίου κολάσεως τοῖς ἀσεβέσι τηρούμενον πῦρ. ἀλλὰ τί βραδύνεις; φέρε ὁ βούλει.

12. Ταῦτα δὲ καὶ ἕτερα πλείονα λέγων θάρσους καὶ χαρᾶς ἐν-
 20 ἐπίπλατο, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ χάριτος ἐπληροῦτο ὥστε οὐ μόνον μὴ συμπεσεῖν ταραχθέντα ὑπὸ τῶν λεγομένων πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀλλὰ τοῖναντίον τὸν ἀνθύπατον ἐκστῆναι, πέμψαι τε τὸν ἑαυτοῦ κήρυκα ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ σταδίου κηρῶσαι τρίς· Πολύκαρπος ὡμολόγησεν ἑαυτὸν Χριστιανὸν εἶναι. 2. τούτου λεχθέντος ὑπὸ τοῦ κήρυκος, ἅπαν τὸ

25 πλήθος ἔθνῶν τε καὶ Ἰουδαίων τῶν τὴν Σμύρναν κατοικούντων ἀκατασχέτω θυμῷ καὶ μεγάλῃ φωνῇ ἐπεβόα· Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τῆς Ἀσίας διδάσκαλος—ὁ πατὴρ τῶν Χριστιανῶν—ὁ τῶν ἡμετέρων θεῶν καθαιρέτης—ὁ πολλοὺς διδάσκων μὴ θύειν μηδὲ προσκυνεῖν. ταῦτα λέγοντες ἐπεβόων καὶ ἠρώτων τὸν Ἀσιάρχην Φίλιππον ἵνα ἐπαφῇ

30 τῷ Πολυκάρπῳ λέοντα. ὁ δὲ ἔφη μὴ εἶναι ἐξὸν αὐτῷ ἐπειδὴ

10. But the other insisted once again, saying: 'Swear by the emperor's Genius!'

He answered: 'If you delude yourself into thinking that I will swear by the emperor's Genius, as you say, and if you pretend not to know who I am, listen and I will tell you plainly: I am a Christian. And if you would like to learn the doctrine of Christianity, set aside a day and listen.'

The governor said: 'Try to move the people.'

And Polycarp said: 'I should have thought you worthy of such a discussion. For we have been taught to pay respect to the authorities and powers that God has assigned us (for this does not harm our cause). But as for the mob, I do not think they deserve to listen to a speech of defence from me.'

11. The governor said: 'I have wild animals, and I shall expose you to them if you do not change your mind.'

And he answered: 'Go and call for them! Repentance from a better state to one that is worse is impossible for us.¹⁴ But it is good to change from what is wicked to righteousness.'

And he said again to him: 'Since you are not afraid of the animals, then I shall have you consumed by fire—unless you change your mind.'

But Polycarp answered: 'The fire you threaten me with burns merely for a time and is soon extinguished.¹⁵ It is clear you are ignorant of the fire of everlasting punishment and of the judgement that is to come, which awaits the impious. Why then do you hesitate? Come, do what you will.'

12. As he said these and many other words he was filled with a joyful courage; his countenance was filled with grace, and not only did he not collapse in terror at what was said to him, but rather it was the governor that was amazed. He sent his herald into the centre of the arena to announce three times: 'Polycarp has confessed that he is a Christian.'

After the herald had spoken, the entire mob of pagans and Jews from Smyrna shouted out aloud in uncontrollable rage: 'Here is the schoolmaster of Asia—the father of the Christians—the destroyer of our gods—the one that teaches the multitude not to sacrifice or do reverence!'¹⁶

And while they were saying all this they shouted and asked Philip the Asiarch to have a lion loosed on Polycarp. But he said that he was not allowed to do this since the days of the animal

¹⁴ Cf. the *Acts of Justin* B 5. 4.

¹⁵ Cf. the *Acts of Carpus* B 4. 5.

¹⁶ Representing the different accusations of those in the throng.

πεπληρώκει τὰ κυνηγέσια. 3. τότε ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐπιβοῆσαι ὥστε τὸν Πολύκαρπον ζῶντα κατακαῦσαι. ἔδει γὰρ τὸ τῆς φανερωθείσης αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τοῦ προσκεφαλαίου ὄπτασίας πληρωθῆναι, ὅτε ἰδὼν αὐτὸ καιόμενον προσευχόμενος εἶπεν ἐπιστραφεὶς τοῖς
5 σὺν αὐτῷ πιστοῖς προφητικῶς· Δεῖ με ζῶντα καῆναι.

13. Ταῦτα οὖν μετὰ τοσούτου τάχους ἐγένετο θάπτον ἢ ἐλέγετο, τῶν ὄχλων παραχρήμα συναγόντων ἕκ τε τῶν ἐργαστηρίων καὶ βαλανείων ξύλα καὶ φρύγανα, μάλιστα Ἰουδαίων προθύμως ὡς ἔθος αὐτοῖς εἰς ταῦτα ὑπουργούντων. 2. ὅτε δὲ ἡ πυρὰ ἤτοιμασθη, ἀπο-
10 θέμενος ἑαυτοῦ πάντα τὰ ἱμάτια καὶ λύσας τὴν ζώνην ἐπειράτο καὶ ὑπολύειν ἑαυτόν, μὴ πρότερον τοῦτο ποιῶν διὰ τὸ ἀεὶ ἕκαστον τῶν πιστῶν σπουδάζειν, ὅστις τάχιον τοῦ χρωτὸς αὐτοῦ ἀψήγῃ. ἐν παντὶ γὰρ ἀγαθῆς ἕνεκεν πολιτείας καὶ πρὸ τῆς μαρτυρίας ἐκεκόσμητο. 3. εὐθέως οὖν αὐτῷ περιτίθετο τὰ πρὸς τὴν πυρὰν ἡρμοσμένα
15 ὄργανα. μελλόντων δὲ αὐτῶν καὶ προσηλοῦν, εἶπεν· Ἄφετέ με οὕτως. ὁ γὰρ δοὺς ὑπομείναι τὸ πῦρ δώσει καὶ χωρὶς τῆς ὑμετέρας ἕκ τῶν ἡλῶν ἀσφαλείας ἀσκυλτον ἐπιμείναι τῇ πυρᾷ.

14. Οἱ δὲ οὐ καθήλωσαν μὲν, προσέδησαν δὲ αὐτόν. ὁ δὲ ὀπίσω τὰς χεῖρας ποιήσας καὶ προσδεθείς ὡσπερ κριὸς ἐπίσημος ἕκ μεγάλου
20 ποιμνίου εἰς προσφορὰν, ὀλοκαύτωμα δεκτὸν τῷ θεῷ ἡτοιμασμένον, ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶπεν· Κύριε ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ, ὁ τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ καὶ εὐλογητοῦ παιδός σου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πατῆρ, δι' οὗ τὴν περὶ σοῦ ἐπίγνωσιν εἰλήφαμεν, ὁ θεὸς ἀγγέλων καὶ
25 δυνάμεων καὶ πάσης τῆς κτίσεως παντός τε τοῦ γένους τῶν δικαίων, οἱ ζῶσιν ἐνώπιόν σου, 2. εὐλογῶ σε ὅτι ἠξίωσάς με τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ ὥρας ταύτης τοῦ λαβεῖν μέρος ἐν ἀριθμῷ τῶν μαρτύρων, ἐν τῷ ποτηρίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ σου εἰς ἀνάστασιν ζωῆς αἰωνίου ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ πνεύματος ἁγίου, ἐν οἷς προσδεχθεῖν
30 ἐνώπιόν σου σήμερον ἐν θυσίᾳ πίονι καὶ προσδεκτῇ, καθὼς προητοίμασας καὶ προεφανέρωσας καὶ ἐπλήρωσας ὁ ἀψευδῆς καὶ ἀληθινὸς θεός. 3. διὰ τοῦτο καὶ περὶ πάντων σὲ αἰνῶ, σὲ εὐλογῶ, σὲ δοξάζω διὰ τοῦ αἰωνίου καὶ ἐπουρανίου ἀρχιερέως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ

10 ἑαυτοῦ PCV: αὐτοῦ M: ἑαυτῷ HB Eus. Bihlmeyer 12-13 ἐν παντὶ γὰρ Eus.: παντὶ γὰρ καλῶ B: πάσης γὰρ M: πράξεις γὰρ καλὰς PHCV 13 μαρτυρίας: πολιᾶς Eus.

games were past. Next they decided to shout out all together that Polycarp should be burnt alive. For the vision he had seen regarding his pillow had to be fulfilled, when he saw it burning while he was at prayer and turned and said to his faithful companions: 'I am to be burnt alive.'

13. All of this happened with great speed, more quickly than it takes to tell the story: the mob swiftly collected logs and brushwood from workshops and baths, and the Jews (as is their custom) zealously helped them with this. When the fire was prepared, Polycarp took off all his clothing, loosed his belt and even tried to take off his own sandals, although he had never had to do this before: for all the Christians were always eager to be the first to touch his flesh. Even before his martyrdom he had been adorned in every way¹⁷ by reason of the goodness of his life. Straightway then he was attached to the equipment that had been prepared for the fire. When they were on the point of nailing him to it, he said: 'Leave me thus. For he who has given me the strength to endure the flames will grant me to remain without flinching in the fire even without the firmness you will give me by using nails.'

14. They did not nail him down then, but simply bound him; and as he put his hands behind his back, he was bound like a noble ram chosen for an oblation from a great flock,¹⁸ a holocaust prepared and made acceptable to God. Looking up to heaven, he said: 'O Lord, omnipotent God¹⁹ and Father of your beloved and blessed child²⁰ Christ Jesus, through whom we have received our knowledge of you, the God of the angels, the powers, and of all creation,²¹ and of all the family of the good who live in your sight: I bless you because you have thought me worthy of this day and this hour, to have a share among the number of the martyrs in the cup of your Christ, for the resurrection unto eternal life²² of both the soul and the body in the immortality of the Holy Spirit. May I be received this day among them before your face as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, as you, the God of truth who cannot deceive, have prepared, revealed, and fulfilled beforehand. Hence I praise you, I bless you, and I glorify you above all things, through that eternal and celestial high priest, Jesus Christ,

¹⁷ Some manuscripts have: 'with every good deed' or the like.

¹⁸ Cf. Lev. 5: 15.

¹⁹ Rev. 4: 8; 11: 17; 15: 3; 16: 7; 21: 22.

²⁰ That is, παῖς, here 'son', not 'servant': see PGL s.v.

²¹ Cf. Judith 9: 12.

²² John 5: 29.

σου παιδός, δι' οὗ σοὶ σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ πνεύματι ἁγίῳ δόξα καὶ νῦν καὶ εἰς τοὺς μέλλοντας αἰῶνας. ἀμήν. †

15. Αναπέμφαντος δὲ αὐτοῦ τὸ ἀμήν καὶ πληρώσαντος τὴν εὐχήν, οἱ τοῦ πυρὸς ἄνθρωποι ἐξήψαν τὸ πῦρ. μεγάλης δὲ ἐκλαμψήσης
5 φλογός, θαῦμα εἶδομεν οἷς ἰδεῖν ἐδόθη· οἱ καὶ ἐτηρήθημεν εἰς τὸ ἀναγγεῖλαι τοῖς λοιποῖς τὰ γενόμενα. 2. τὸ γὰρ πῦρ καμάρας εἶδος ποιήσαν ὡσπερ ὀθόνη πλοίου ὑπὸ πνεύματος πληρουμένη, κύκλῳ περιετείχισεν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ μάρτυρος. καὶ ἦν μέσον οὐχ ὡς σὰρξ καιομένη ἀλλ' ὡς ἄρτος ὀπτύμενος ἢ ὡς χρυσὸς καὶ ἄργυρος ἐν
10 καμίνῳ πυρούμενος. καὶ γὰρ εὐωδίας τοσαύτης ἀντελαβόμεθα ὡς λιβανωτοῦ πνέοντος ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς τῶν τιμίων ἁρωμάτων.

16. Πέρασ γοῦν ἰδόντες οἱ ἄνομοι μὴ δυνάμενον αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα ὑπὸ τοῦ πυρὸς δαπανηθῆναι, ἐκέλευσαν προσελθόντα αὐτῷ κομφέκτορα παραβῦσαι ξιφίδιον. καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσαντος, ἐξῆλθεν πλῆθος αἵματος
15 ὥστε κατασβέσαι τὸ πῦρ καὶ θανατῶσαι πάντα τὸν ὄχλον, εἰ τοσαύτη τις διαφορὰ μεταξὺ τῶν τε ἀπίστων καὶ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν, 2. ὧν εἰς καὶ οὗτος γέγονει ὁ θαυμασιώτατος Πολύκαρπος, ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς χρόνοις διδάσκαλος ἀποστολικὸς καὶ προφητικὸς γενόμενος ἐπίσκοπος τε τῆς ἐν Σμύρνῃ καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας. πᾶν γὰρ ῥῆμα ὁ ἀφήκεν
20 ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐτελειώθη καὶ τελειωθήσεται.

17. Ὁ δὲ ἀντίζηλος καὶ βάσκανος καὶ πονηρός, ὁ ἀντικείμενος τῷ γένει τῶν δικαίων, ἰδὼν τό τε μέγεθος αὐτοῦ τῆς μαρτυρίας καὶ τὴν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἀνεπίληπτον πολιτείαν, ἐστεφανωμένον τε τὸν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας στέφανον καὶ βραβεῖον ἀναντίρρητον ἀπενηγμένον, ἐπετή-
25 δευσεν ὡς μηδὲ τὸ σωματίον αὐτοῦ ὑφ' ἡμῶν ληφθῆναι, καίπερ πολλῶν ἐπιθυμούντων τοῦτο ποιῆσαι καὶ κοινωνῆσαι τῷ ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ σαρκίῳ. 2. ὑπέβαλεν γοῦν Νικήτην τὸν τοῦ Ἡρώδου πατέρα, ἀδελφὸν δὲ Ἀλκης, ἐντυχεῖν τῷ ἄρχοντι ὥστε μὴ δοῦναι αὐτοῦ τὸ σῶμα· μή, φησὶν, ἀφέντες τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον τοῦτον ἄρξωνται
30 σέβεσθαι. καὶ ταῦτα ὑποβαλλόντων καὶ ἐνισχυόντων τῶν Ἰουδαίων, οἱ καὶ ἐτήρησαν μελλόντων ἡμῶν ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς αὐτὸν λαμβάνειν,

5-6 οἱ . . . γενόμενα del. Schwartz
13 fortasse κομφέκτορα (= confectorem)
στερὰ καὶ sed om. Eus. et del. edd.

9-10 ἢ . . . πυρούμενος del. Schwartz
14 post ἐξῆλθεν praebent codd. περι-

your beloved child, through whom is glory to you with him and the Holy Spirit now and for all ages to come. Amen.'

15. He had uttered his Amen and finished his prayer, and the men in charge of the fire started to light it. A great flame blazed up and those of us to whom it was given to see beheld a miracle. And we have been preserved to recount the story to others. For the flames, bellying out like a ship's sail in the wind, formed into the shape of a vault and thus surrounded the martyr's body as with a wall. And he was within it not as burning flesh but rather as bread being baked, or like gold and silver being purified in a smelting-furnace.²³ And from it we perceived such a delightful fragrance as though it were smoking incense or some other costly perfume.

16. At last when these vicious men realized that his body could not be consumed by the fire they ordered a *confector* to go up and plunge a dagger into the body. When he did this there came out²⁴ such a quantity of blood that the flames were extinguished, and even the crowd marvelled that there should be such a difference between the unbelievers and the elect. And one of the elect indeed was the most venerable martyr Polycarp, who was in our day a teacher in the apostolic and prophetic tradition and a bishop of the Catholic Church in Smyrna. Every word that he uttered from his mouth was indeed fulfilled and shall be fulfilled.

17. The jealous and envious Evil One, who is the adversary of the race of the just, realizing the greatness of his testimony, his unblemished career from the beginning, and seeing him now crowned with the garland of immortality and the winner of an incontestable prize, prevented us even from taking up the poor body, though so many were eager to do so and to have a share in his holy flesh. Hence he got Nicetes, Herod's father and Alce's brother, to petition the governor not to give up his body. 'Otherwise', he said, 'they may abandon the Crucified and begin to worship this man.'

And all of this was at the suggestion and insistence of the Jewish people, who even kept watch as we were on the point of removing his body from the fire. Little did they know that we

²³ Cf. Wisd. 3: 6.

²⁴ The manuscripts have: 'there came out a dove and . . .', but this is omitted by Eusebius and modern editors have deleted it.

ἀγνοοῦντες ὅτι οὔτε τὸν Χριστὸν ποτε καταλιπεῖν δυνησόμεθα τὸν ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου τῶν σωζομένων σωτηρίας παθόντα ἄμωμον ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτωλῶν οὔτε ἕτερόν τινα σέβεσθαι. 3. τοῦτον μὲν γὰρ υἱὸν ὄντα τοῦ θεοῦ προσκυνοῦμεν, τοὺς δὲ μάρτυρας ὡς μαθητὰς
5 καὶ μιμητὰς τοῦ κυρίου ἀγαπῶμεν ἀξίως ἕνεκα εὐνοίας ἀνυπερβλήτου τῆς εἰς τὸν ἴδιον βασιλέα καὶ διδάσκαλον, ὧν γένοιτο καὶ ἡμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τε καὶ συμμαθητὰς γενέσθαι.

18. Ἰδὼν οὖν ὁ κεντυρίων τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων γενομένην φιλονεικίαν, θεὸς αὐτὸν ἐν μέσῳ, ὡς ἔθος αὐτοῖς, ἔκαυσε. 2. οὕτως τε ἡμεῖς
10 ὕστερον ἀνελόμενοι τὰ τιμιώτερα λίθων πολυτελῶν καὶ δοκιμώτερα ὑπὲρ χρυσίον ὅσα αὐτοῦ ἀπεθέμεθα ὅπου καὶ ἀκόλουθον ἦν. 3. ἐνθα ὡς δυνατὸν ἡμῖν συναγομένοις ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει καὶ χαρᾷ παρέξει ὁ κύριος ἐπιτελεῖν τὴν τοῦ μαρτυρίου αὐτοῦ ἡμέραν γενέθλιον εἰς τε τὴν τῶν προηθληκότων μνήμην καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἀσκήσιν τε καὶ
15 ἐτοιμασίαν.

19. Τοιαῦτα τὰ κατὰ τὸν μακάριον Πολύκαρπον, ὃς σὺν τοῖς ἀπὸ Φιλαδελφίας δωδέκατος ἐν Σμύρῃ μαρτυρήσας, μόνος ὑπὸ πάντων μᾶλλον μνημονεύεται, ὥστε καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ λαλεῖσθαι, οὐ μόνον διδάσκαλος γενόμενος ἐπίσημος ἀλλὰ καὶ μάρτυς
20 ἕξοχος, οὗ τὸ μαρτύριον πάντες ἐπιθυμοῦσιν μιμεῖσθαι κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον Χριστοῦ γενόμενον. 2. διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καταγωνισάμενος τὸν ἄδικον ἄρχοντα καὶ οὕτως τὸν τῆς ἀφθαρσίας στέφανον ἀπολαβὼν, σὺν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ πᾶσιν δικαίοις ἀγαλλιώμενος δοξάζει τὸν θεὸν καὶ πατέρα παντοκράτορα καὶ εὐλογεῖ τὸν κύριον
25 ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, τὸν σωτήρα τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν καὶ κυβερνήτην τῶν σωματίων ἡμῶν καὶ ποιμένα τῆς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας.

20. Ὑμεῖς μὲν οὖν ἠξιώσατε διὰ πλείονων δηλωθῆναι ὑμῖν τὰ γενόμενα, ἡμεῖς δὲ κατὰ τὸ παρὸν ἐπὶ κεφαλαίῳ μεμνηνύκαμεν διὰ
30 τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἡμῶν Μαρκίωνος. μαθόντες οὖν ταῦτα καὶ τοῖς ἐπέκεια ἀδελφοῖς τὴν ἐπιστολὴν διαπέμψασθε ἵνα καὶ ἐκεῖνοι δοξάζωσιν τὸν κύριον τὸν ἐκλογὰς ποιοῦντα ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων δούλων.

2. Τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ πάντας ἡμᾶς εἰσαγαγεῖν ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι καὶ δωρεᾷ εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον αὐτοῦ βασιλείαν διὰ τοῦ παιδὸς αὐτοῦ τοῦ

could never abandon Christ, for it was he who suffered for the redemption of those who are saved in the entire world, the innocent one dying on behalf of sinners.²⁵ Nor could we worship anyone else. For him we reverence as the Son of God, whereas we love the martyrs as the disciples and imitators of the Lord, and rightly so because of their unsurpassed loyalty towards their king and master. May we too share with them as fellow disciples!

18. And so, when the centurion noticed the conflict caused by the Jews, he put the body out before everyone and had it cremated, as is their custom.²⁶ Thus at last, collecting the remains that were dearer to us than precious stones and finer than gold, we buried them in a fitting spot. Gathering here, so far as we can, in joy and gladness, we will be allowed by the Lord to celebrate the anniversary day of his martyrdom, both as a memorial for those who have already fought the contest and for the training and preparation of those who will do so one day.

19. This then was the story of the blessed Polycarp, who, counting those from Philadelphia, was the twelfth to be martyred in Smyrna; yet he alone is especially remembered by everyone and is everywhere mentioned even by the pagans. He was not only a great teacher but also a conspicuous martyr, whose testimony, following the Gospel of Christ, everyone desires to imitate. By his perseverance he overcame the unjust governor and so won the crown of immortality; and rejoicing with the apostles and all the blessed he gives glory to God the almighty Father and praise to our Lord Jesus Christ, the saviour of our souls, the pilot of our bodies, and the shepherd of the Catholic Church throughout the world.

20. You asked us then to give you a lengthy account of what took place, but we have sent you for the moment only a summary through the courtesy of our brother Marcion. After you have heard the story, send the letter to our more distant brothers, that they too may give glory to the Lord who chooses his elect from among his own servants. To him who can gather all of us by his grace and gift into his heavenly kingdom through his

²⁵ Cf. Heb. 7: 26.

²⁶ That is, pagan custom, as distinct from Christian.



μονογενοῦς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δόξα, τιμή, κράτος, μεγαλωσύνη εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. προσαγορεύετε πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους. ὑμᾶς οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν προσαγορεύουσιν καὶ Εὐάρεστος ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν πανοικεί.

21. Μαρτυρεῖ δὲ ὁ μακάριος Πολύκαρπος μὴνὸς Ξανθικοῦ δευτέρα
5 ἰσταμένου κατὰ δὲ Ῥωμαίους πρὸ ἑπτὰ καλανδῶν Μαρτίων σαβ-
βάτῳ μεγάλῳ ὥρα ὀγδόῃ. συνελήφθη δὲ ὑπὸ Ἡρώδου ἐπὶ ἀρχιερέως
Φιλίππου Τραλλιανοῦ, ἀνθυπατεύοντος Στατίου Κοδράτου, βασι-
λεύοντος δὲ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

22. Ἐρρῶσθαι ὑμᾶς εὐχόμεθα, ἀδελφοί, στοιχοῦντας τῷ κατὰ τὸ
10 εὐαγγέλιον λόγῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, μεθ' οὗ δόξα τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ
καὶ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῇ τῶν ἁγίων ἐκλεκτῶν, καθὼς
ἐμαρτύρησεν ὁ μακάριος Πολύκαρπος, οὗ γένοιτο ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ
Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὰ ἴχνη εὐρεθῆναι ἡμᾶς.

2. Ταῦτα μετεγράψατο μὲν Γάϊος ἐκ τῶν Εἰρηναίου, μαθητοῦ τοῦ
15 Πολυκάρπου, ὃς καὶ συνεπολιτεύσατο τῷ Εἰρηναίῳ. ἐγὼ δὲ Σωκρά-
της ἐν Κορίνθῳ ἐκ τῶν Γαῖου ἀντιγράφων ἔγραψα. ἡ χάρις μετὰ
πάντων.

3. Ἐγὼ δὲ πάλιν Πιόνιος ἐκ τοῦ προγεγραμμένου ἔγραψα ἀνα-
ζητήσας αὐτά, κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν φανερώσαντός μοι τοῦ μακαρίου
20 Πολυκάρπου, καθὼς δηλώσω ἐν τῷ καθεξῆς, συναγαγὼν αὐτὰ ἤδη
σχεδὸν ἐκ τοῦ χρόνου κεκμηκότα, ἵνα καμὲ συναγάγῃ ὁ κύριος
Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς μετὰ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν οὐράνιον βασι-
λείαν αὐτοῦ, ᾧ ἡ δόξα σὺν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι εἰς τοὺς
αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. ἀμήν.

25 [EPILOGUS ALTER EX CODICE MOSQUENSI]

Ταῦτα μετεγράψατο μὲν Γάϊος ἐκ τῶν Εἰρηναίου συγγραμ-
μάτων, ὃς καὶ συνεπολιτεύσατο τῷ Εἰρηναίῳ, μαθητῇ γεγονότι τοῦ

3 τὴν ἐπιστολὴν M: om. PHBCV Bihlmeyer 5 κατὰ δὲ Ῥωμαίους M:
om. PHBCV Bihlmeyer 8 post Χριστοῦ add. ᾧ ἡ δόξα, τιμή, μεγα-
λωσύνη, θρόνος αἰώνιος ἀπὸ γενεᾶς εἰς γενεάν. ἀμήν HB Bihlmeyer

only-begotten child, Jesus Christ, be glory, honour, power, and majesty for ever.

Send our greeting to all the faithful; all those who are with us (as well as Evaristus, who wrote this letter,²⁷ and all his household) send their greetings.

21. The blessed Polycarp died as a martyr on the second day of the first half of the month Xanthicus (according to the Roman calendar, on 23 February), about two o'clock in the afternoon, on a great Sabbath day. He was arrested under Herod, during the time when Philip of Tralles was high priest and Statius Quadratus was governor—while Jesus Christ was reigning eternally.²⁸

22. We pray that you are well, brothers, who live according to the word of Jesus Christ and the Gospel (with whom be glory to God the Father and the Holy Spirit), for the redemption of the faithful elect, for in such wise was the blessed Polycarp martyred; and may it be granted to us to come into the kingdom of Jesus Christ following his footsteps. Gaius²⁹ transcribed all of this from a document of Irenaeus, who was a disciple of Polycarp, since Polycarp lived with him. I, Socrates, transcribed it at Corinth from Gaius' copy: may God's favour be with us all! And I, Pionius, transcribed it once again from an earlier copy after I had searched for it, since the blessed Polycarp communicated with me in a vision (as I shall go on later to explain), and collected the material together all but worn with age—that the Lord Jesus Christ might also gather me together with his elect into his heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit for all ages. Amen.

[THE ALTERNATIVE ENDING]³⁰

Gaius transcribed this account from the documents of Irenaeus, seeing that he had been a companion of Irenaeus, who had also

²⁷ Some manuscripts omit the words 'this letter'.

²⁸ C. Julius Philippus of Tralles is attested as an Asiarch for September 149 (*Orientalis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae* 498); L. Statius Quadratus, as *consul ordinarius* for 142, could hardly have been proconsul much before 155: see the discussion by T. D. Barnes, *JTS* 18 (1967), 434-7.

The earliest recension of the text seems to have ended with this paragraph (some manuscripts add a doxology), the following ending being added later, ostensibly by Pionius.

²⁹ Given the frequency of the name, it seems unwise to link this Gaius with the churchman mentioned by Eusebius (*HE* vi. 20), who flourished under Pope Zephyrinus (199-217). See W. Jülicher, *RE* 7 (1910), 509-10.

³⁰ Preserved only in the Moscow manuscript (s. XIII). The final revision of the text is again claimed by Pionius from a transcript of Gaius.

ἀγίου Πολυκάρπου. 2. οὗτος γὰρ ὁ Εἰρηναῖος κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ μαρτυρίου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου Πολυκάρπου γενόμενος ἐν Ῥώμῃ πολλοὺς ἐδίδαξεν· οὐ καὶ πολλὰ αὐτοῦ συγγράμματα κάλλιστα καὶ ὀρθότατα φέρεται, ἐν οἷς μέμνηται Πολυκάρπου ὅτι παρ' αὐτοῦ ἔμαθεν.

5 ἱκανῶς τε πᾶσαν αἵρεσιν ἤλεγξεν καὶ τὸν ἐκκλησιαστικὸν κανόνα καὶ καθολικὸν ὡς παρέλαβεν παρὰ τοῦ ἀγίου καὶ παρέδωκεν. 3. λέγει δὲ καὶ τοῦτο· ὅτι συναντήσαντός ποτε τῷ ἀγίῳ Πολυκάρπῳ Μαρκίωνος, ἀφ' οὗ οἱ λεγόμενοι Μαρκιωνισταί, καὶ εἰπόντος· Ἐπιγίνωσκε ἡμᾶς, Πολύκαρπε, εἶπεν αὐτὸς τῷ Μαρκίῳ· Ἐπιγινώσκω, ἐπιγινώσκω

10 τὸν πρωτότοκον τοῦ σατανᾶ. 4. καὶ τοῦτο δὲ φέρεται ἐν τοῖς τοῦ Εἰρηναίου συγγράμμασιν, ὅτι ἡ ἡμέρα καὶ ὥρα ἐν Σμύρνῃ ἐμαρτύρησεν ὁ Πολύκαρπος, ἤκουσεν φωνὴν ἐν τῇ Ῥωμαίων πόλει ὑπάρχων ὁ Εἰρηναῖος ὡς σάλπιγγος λεγούσης· Πολύκαρπος ἐμαρτύρησεν.

5. Ἐκ τούτων οὖν, ὡς προλέλεκται, τῶν τοῦ Εἰρηναίου συγγραμ-

15 μάτων Γάιος μετεγράψατο, ἐκ δὲ τῶν Γαίου ἀντιγράφων Ἰσοκράτης ἐν Κορίνθῳ. ἐγὼ δὲ πάλιν Πιόνιος ἐκ τῶν Ἰσοκράτους ἀντιγράφων ἔγραψα κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ ἀγίου Πολυκάρπου ζητήσας αὐτά, συναγαγὼν αὐτὰ ἤδη σχεδὸν ἐκ τοῦ χρόνου κεκμηκότα ἵνα καμὲ συναγάγῃ ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς μετὰ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς

20 τὴν ἐπουράνιον αὐτοῦ βασιλείαν, ᾧ ἡ δόξα σὺν τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ υἱῷ καὶ τῷ ἀγίῳ πνεύματι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. ἀμήν.

been a disciple of the blessed Polycarp. Now Irenaeus, at the time of Bishop Polycarp's martyrdom, was in Rome where he had many disciples; and there are many of his beautiful and orthodox works extant in which he mentions Polycarp as having taught him; and Irenaeus ably refuted every heretical doctrine, and handed on the norm of the Catholic Church as he had received it from the holy Polycarp.

Irenaeus also has this story. Once Marcion, from whom the so-called Marcionites derive, encountered the holy Polycarp and said to him: 'Recognize me, Polycarp!'

And he said to Marcion: 'I do recognize you: I recognize the Devil's firstborn.'

And it is also recorded in the writings of Irenaeus that on the day and at the very hour that Polycarp was suffering in Smyrna Irenaeus who was in Rome heard a voice like a trumpet-call saying: 'Polycarp has suffered martyrdom.'

From Irenaeus' remains, then, as was stated above, Gaius made his copy and Isocrates made another copy at Corinth from Gaius' transcription. Finally, I, Pionius, made my transcription from Isocrates' copy, after I had made diligent search for it in accordance with the revelation of the saintly Polycarp, collecting the pages after they were all but worn out with age, that the Lord Jesus Christ might also gather me together with his elect into his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory together with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit for ever. Amen.