LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

JUSTIN MARTYR, IRENAEUS OF LYONS, AND CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE ON SUFFERING: A COMPARATIVE AND CRITICAL STUDY OF THEIR WORKS THAT CONCERN THE APOLOGETIC USES OF SUFFERING IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

THEOLOGY AND APOLOGETICS

BY

AARON GLENN KILBOURN

LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

AUGUST 2017

APPROVAL SHEET

JUSTIN MARTYR, IRENAEUS OF LYONS, AND CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE ON SUFFERING: A COMPARATIVE AND CRITICAL STUDY OF THEIR WORKS THA CONCERN THE APOLOGETIC USES OF SUFFERING IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Aaron Glenn Kilbourn

Read and approved by:

Chairperson: _____

Reader: _____

Reader: _____

Date: _____

To my wife, Michelle, my children, Aubrey and Zack, as well as the congregation of First Baptist Church of Parker, SD.

I thank our God that by His grace, your love, faithfulness, and prayers have all helped sustain each of my efforts for His glory.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I continue to have a great and growing depth of gratitude and love for my wife, Michelle, and my two children, Aubrey and Zack, for their sacrifice and endurance these past several years. Michelle, there are too many sacrifices, helps, and blessings for me to name. I appreciate each and every one of them but I appreciate you the most. Aubrey, thank you again for helping me organize the bibliography and doing it with a smile. Zack, thank you for putting up with all my books in your space and encouraging your dad with hugs and admiration. Thank you also to my second set of parents, Rod and Dorinda Martin, whose prayers I have depended on all this time.

I would like to thank my doctoral supervisor Dr. Ken Cleaver for his piquant yet poignant commentary and invaluable help during the entire dissertation process. Thank you also to Dr. Kevin King, Dr. Carl Diemer, and Dr. Leo Percer for their earnest and hearty support of this project since day one. I am deeply grateful for each and every one of the faculty at Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University. You have each left an indelible impression of the quality and camaraderie that is available for anyone that enters the classroom. Thank you to Drs. Corrado Primavera and Leonardo De Chirico, and Revs. Tim Faulkner and David Hodgdon for sharpening conversations and hospitality while researching the catacombs of Naples and Rome.

I would like to thank the entire congregation of First Baptist Church of Parker, SD for your willingness to support me in this journey and for the privilege of letting me walk with you through your joys and sufferings as your pastor and friend. I would like to thank Dick and Judy Kremer for their heartfelt, welcoming, and providential hospitality which made for the softest landings in the mountains of Virginia. Finally, I would like to thank my loving parents, Robert and Cheryl, who have endured much and are hopefully encouraged by what they may find in these pages.

ABSTRACT

Suffering in Early Christianity has often been highlighted in martyrdom and the stories surrounding the persecution of the Early Church. The biblical idea of redemptive suffering was not an afterthought to the Christian community or part of what Joyce Salisbury calls, "the unintended consequences of ancient violence,"[1] but it appears to be part and parcel of the Early Christian community as they sought to live faithfully to Christ's teachings. As the Early Church lived out redemptive suffering, it became apparent to the surrounding culture and critics of Christianity that their suffering was different and it pointed to something else. Through an inquiry into the understanding of suffering in the biblical tradition and patristic tradition, this dissertation seeks to bring forth the apologetic uses of suffering which Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Cyprian of Carthage have written about in their various works.

With biblical presentation of suffering in the Old Testament (מַכְאוֹב) describes the natural and consequential emotional as well as physical pain and sorrow felt by those such as Job, King David, and the Suffering Servant from the book of Isaiah. This מַכְאוֹב also describes the suffering the people of God endure as in the case of their wandering in the desert. In the NT, suffering (παθήματα, πάσχων, κακοπαθίας) also denotes physical and emotional pain while the idea of suffering physical and emotional pain together (συνκακοπάθησον) is also used in the biblical tradition.

In the patristic tradition the notion of suffering was at times used to describe the persecution and martyrdom the Early Church was experiencing but also was still firmly rooted in OT and NT expressions of suffering, particularly the type of suffering which Christ endured and which believers participated in together. In various works of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons,

[1] Joyce E. Salisbury. *The Blood of Martyrs* (London: Routledge, 2004).

and Cyprian of Carthage, the Church Fathers present the idea of suffering not only to describe their particular state of distress and its possible redemptive qualities but they also present suffering as a type of apologetic expression and bridge which would help not only transform their contemporary cultural ideas of suffering but infuse those cultural ideas of suffering with a biblically informed redefinition of the purpose and results of suffering. With this redefinition of suffering the Early Church Fathers may help current believers re-evaluate the current church's teachings on suffering, both corporate and individual.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

With Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Cyprian of Carthage there are three different categories of the Early Church Fathers represented: the Apostolic Fathers, the Greek Fathers, and the Latin Fathers, respectively. Each of these Early Church Fathers has written letters and treatises concerning suffering and how the Christian believer is able to endure suffering. They are encouraged that their suffering is especially something in which they share with the sufferings of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:17; 2 Cor 1:5; 1 Pet 4:13). While the issue of suffering is not given its own treatise or letter designation by these representative Early Church Fathers, the issue of suffering is thoroughly disseminated throughout their respective writings.

Besides the witness of the OT and NT which teaches on the meaning of suffering, the Early Church taught and dealt with suffering in its members. Polycarp (AD 69-155) deals with suffering in his expression of grief due to a straying church member named Valens.[2] Interestingly enough, this expression of grief is not because of death, persecution, or physical suffering but rather Polycarp's grief is over Valens being a "suffering and straying" member who is suffering due to sinful behavior that has made Valens restoration to the church a primary concern of Polycarp.[3]

This is not to say that the persecutory and physical suffering endured by the Early Church was without notice by Polycarp. In the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* there is mention of Christian believers that have "suffered [physical] torments" because of their "love towards their Lord."[4]

---

[2] Polycarp, *To the Philippians* 11.1-4.

[3] Paul Hartog and Polycarp, *Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians and the Martyrdom of Polycarp* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 49.

[4] Polycarp, *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* 2.3.

This is to say that there were several types of suffering which the early Christians had to find ways to endure and this occurred very early in the history of the church. This is no surprise since suffering has been a part of the human condition since time immemorial. What is notable is how the Early Church dealt with suffering and how the surrounding culture took notice. Tertullian (160-220) remarked about how those who persecuted Christians would say, "See, how they love one another…and how they are ready even to die for one another…"[5] How the adversaries of Christians regarded their suffering will be approached in upcoming sections.

A contemporary of Polycarp, Justin Martyr (103-165) also spoke of suffering in the church and among believers. In his *First Apology*, Justin contrasts the two types of suffering that the believer and the non-believer may go through. Justin contrasts how the non-believer who is separate from the doctrines of Christ will only have suffering and want compared to the suffering Christians will be freed from by those who persecute and kill them. In their murder of believers they show the great disparity between those who suffer as believers and those who suffer as non-believers.[6] The non-believer is seen as only knowing pleasure on this earth whereas the believer may die from persecution on this earth but be freed from suffering into eternal pleasures in with God.[7] Justin's *Second Apology* along with *Dialogue with Trypho* also mention the same kind of suffering that Polycarp mentions in describing how believers must endure living in a world that is hostile to the truth of Jesus Christ. Like Polycarp, Justin contrasts those who are bent on evil and hate Christ's believers by telling of their just suffering under God's punishment. For the

[5] Tertullian, *Apology* 39.7.

[6] Justin Martyr, *The First Apology* 57.

[7] Ibid.

believer however, it is because of their "knowledge and consideration of the whole Word, which is Christ" that they will suffer only temporarily.[8]

Irenaeus (AD 125-202) also relates the suffering the Early Church would endure when quoting 2 Cor 4:10 and the suffering and death that the believer may have to endure for Jesus' sake. Irenaeus affirms the hope of the resurrection despite the believer being delivered to death for the sake of Jesus.[9] Irenaeus also relates the suffering that comes from disbelief in the coming of Christ and their subsequent desire of the flesh.[10] What is quite interesting is how Irenaeus compares the redemptive suffering of Christ with what he believes to be the empty suffering of the Gnostic Twelfth Aeon. Here, Irenaeus take the effort to relate how the suffering of the Twelfth Aeon only established ignorance and the futility of death whereas the suffering and passion of Christ destroyed death and ignorance.[11] This is to show that in Irenaeus's refuting error about Christ to the Gnostics he also put forth what true redemptive suffering was about compared to the empty suffering of the Gnostics' god. In Irenaeus's showing of what true redemptive suffering was all about he was acknowledging the position of the church and its ideas of what Christian suffering was, despite the competing Gnostic view of suffering.

As Cyprian of Carthage (AD 200-258) dealt with the confessor and *lapsi* controversy suffering in the Early Church of Carthage presented itself in various forms as well. Cyprian was deeply involved as a pastor and bishop during the empire-wide persecution under the emperor

[8] Justin Martyr, *The Second Apology* 8.

[9] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.13.4.

[10] Ibid., 4.27.2.

[11] Ibid., 2.20.2-3 "Our Lord also by His passion destroyed death, and dispersed error, and put an end to corruption, and destroyed ignorance, while He manifested life and revealed truth, and bestowed the gift of incorruption. But their Æon, when she had suffered, established ignorance, and brought forth a substance without shape, out of which all material works have been produced—death, corruption, error, and such like."

Decius. He and his congregation were well-acquainted with the physical and emotional suffering brought on by threats and torture of the persecution.[12] The redemptive side of suffering for Cyprian lay not only in the believer's ability to share in the suffering of Jesus Christ but also in the redemptive reward of suffering which help serve the church as being more glorious and illustrious because of the suffering for Christ's sake.[13] Cyprian also makes mention of the witness of the suffering of those who are being persecuted both economically and physically to those who are watching.[14]

The comparisons between the works of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Cyprian are few and far between. A study that takes into account the socio-political, cultural, and ethical contexts and content of each of these early Fathers can shed light on the meaning of suffering. Some scholars such as Judith Perkins have often ascribed the Early Church's suffering and death as something akin to being a happy ending for the poor and marginalized, which includes those in the Early Church.[15] This work will study the representative works not only in light of socio-political, cultural, and ethical contexts but also in light of the biblical tradition and narrative out of which Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian as well as the Early Church grew. The result of this study will be the view that the Early Church had an understanding, grounded in the Old and New Testament, that suffering was to be thought of and expressed as redemptive and apologetic.

---

[12] Cyprian, *Letters* 10.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., "To the Clergy Bidding They Show Every Kindness to the Confessors in Prison." "-to such, I mean, as stand fast in the faith and bravely fight with us, and have not left the camp of Christ; to whom, indeed, we should now show a greater love and care, in that they are neither constrained by poverty nor prostrated by the tempest of persecution, but faithfully serve with the Lord, and have given an example of faith to the other poor."

[15] Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (London: Routledge, 2002), 41.

Each of the Early Church Fathers is an apologist in their own writings and work. Each dealt with suffering as the church was being persecuted and believers faced torture, economic hardship, emotional distress, and martyrdom. In working through these issues the church drew from not only their cultural ethic on suffering but also was informed by the biblical witness about the nature of suffering and its redemptive possibilities. What were some of the cultural issues which brought on the different and yet similar responses to suffering in the Early Church? Did each of the representative Fathers approach suffering with different goals, whether they were apologetic or not? If Judith Perkins has correctly identified cultural reasons for the plausibility of death being a happy ending, at what point do the Early Church Fathers' biblical references to Christ-like suffering and suffering with Christ intersect with the desire for the happy ending of death? Are there notable differences in each of the Early Church Fathers as to how they viewed suffering and to what degree were their views conditioned by their culture? Though being apologists in their own right, are there any striking similarities between all three? Do the represented Early Church Fathers still speak towards suffering in today's world?

These and other questions will be addressed throughout this work and will be focused primarily from three different approaches. Firstly, an examination of suffering in the philosophical and cultural contexts of Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian will help show the starting point of much of the attitudes and beliefs towards suffering. Secondly, an examination of biblical traditions and attitudes towards suffering, both Old and New Testament, will be taken and juxtaposed against the philosophical and cultural contexts of the three Fathers. Thirdly, by an examination of how Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian marshalled the suffering of Jesus Christ and the Early Church into a suffering which served as an apologetic discourse and bridge.

When Cyprian was dealing with the *lapsi*, Novatian, and schisms within the church; suffering was inextricably linked to each of these issues due to the persecution and emotional trauma that accompanied these issues. In order to address these issues Cyprian persuasively argues the merits of true suffering. This is in contrast to a suffering based on what Perkins and others have deemed to lead to a death as a type of welcome happy ending. This can be seen especially as Cyprian was dealing with those who had been tortured or who had experienced grief and loss due to loved ones being martyred. This approach to suffering informed by the biblical witness and testimony formed a type of apologetic which helped make suffering something reasonable not only in light of a glorious reward for the faithful but as a mark of a faithful believer who endured suffering on earth just as Jesus Christ did.

Other recent scholarship, besides Perkins, by the likes of Candida Moss[16] and Joyce E. Salisbury[17] have tended to promote the idea that those who suffered martyrdom were the poor and disenfranchised who primarily responded with a desire for martyrdom out of a purely socio-politically-conditioned response. While examining the works by Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian it will become apparent that there were socio-political concerns as well as religious concerns that informed their view of suffering. What becomes apparent in viewing the church Fathers is a comprehensive and broad understanding of what suffering is to the early Christian beyond just a possible martyrdom and earthly death.

Elizabeth Castelli speaks to the suffering and martyrdom of Christians to be one solely of the early Christians, "appropriate[ing] the logic of spectacle for their own ends."[18] While Castelli

[16] Candida Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012) and Joyce E. Salisbury. *The Blood of Martyrs* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[17] Salisbury, *The Blood of Martyrs*, 6.

[18] Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 132.

quotes the Stoic emperor Marcus Aurelius argument towards a type of manipulation of martyrdom for the Christian ends and a type of spectacularization found in martyrdom,[19] the labeling of all Christian suffering and martyrdom to be one of spectacularization seems too much of a broad stroke. By Castelli's own admission she cites that scholars believe Aurelius' characterization of Christians is a scribal interpolation into Aurelius' actual text.[20] This is to point out some of the inferred assumptions about Christians and suffering that some modern scholars have made at times.

When surveying these Early Church Fathers and their idea and attitudes about suffering, especially in an apologetic light, one can see that there can be overlap into several other areas that are related to suffering—namely martyrology and ecclesiology. An examination of these three church Fathers and suffering is by no means meant to explore every possible field of study that is connected to suffering in the ancient world. This examination of the issue of suffering among early Christians as an apologetic bridge will therefore seek to stay closely hinged on the philosophical, ethical, cultural, and socio-political concerns and environment of the times of Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian's times.

Apologetically, the Early Church Fathers were often concerned with refuting errors and heresies which opponents and schismatic leaders, such as Novatian and Valentinus, were propagating. While there have been many refinements to the world of Apologetics since the church of the second century AD, it is important to note exactly what kind of methods the Early Church Fathers used in order to provide a defense of the faith. It is also essential to this work to define exactly what apologetics are in order that one is able not only to see how the Early Church

---

[19]Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, from Marcus Aurelius' *Mediation* 32.1.

[20]Ibid., 258.

Fathers conducted their defense of the faith but also to see where the idea of suffering entered in as part of their *apologia.* While formal titled works such as Tertullian's *Apology* and the two *Apologies* by Justin Martyr are often examined for their apologetic contributions other works by Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian are just as apologetic as in the case of Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, Irenaeus's five volumes of *Against Heresies*, and Cyprian's *Epistles* and *Exhortation to Martyrdom*. All in all, these Early Church Fathers display four major elements of apologetics as outlined by Philip Palmer in his dissertation, "Cyprian the Apologist."[21] This work will strive to show how the suffering of the early Christians has, at times, informed the four major elements of apologetics in their expression by Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian.

Personal Interest

As I applied for admission into the PhD program at Liberty University, one of the requirements was to give a sample of my research writing. Justin Martyr had always made me curious about the times he was living in and how he eclectically responded to critics and seekers of the Christian faith. This led to deeper research about Justin Martyr and early Christians of the second century. After acceptance into the program and seminar course research progressing over the next several years, I could not help but notice the impact persecution and heresy had on the theology and expression of Scripture in the Early Church among its leaders and apologists.

Early Church Fathers such as Tertullian, Cyprian, Clement of Alexandria, and Justin Martyr all helped shed light on the Early Church's survival and also the environment in which they communicated the Gospel. Cullen Murphy's *Are We Rome?* helped me ask penetrating questions about the United States and if there were any similarities/differences with the Roman

[21] Philip Palmer, "Cyprian the Apologist." PhD diss., Liberty University, 2014. The four major elements being, "element (1), combined with a defense of the faith against the charges brought by enemies, which is element (3). But also in view is element (2), that the Christian faith is coherent and reasonable and fits with the reality of the world as it is, and element (4), that the faith needs to be defended against those who would weaken it from within."

culture of the second century. A Patristic Exegesis seminar and subsequent research papers concerning Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Cyprian also helped add to my knowledge. As I further study I cannot help but see how our current Christian believers may be helped in their witness of their faith as well as their suffering by examining the apologetic use of suffering in the Early Church.

The Need for the Study

C. S. Lewis's often quoted term *chronological snobbery* was coined by Lewis at a time when he was reflecting on his own self-admitted misguided disdain he had for the theological leanings of time periods before his own. Before becoming a believer in Jesus Christ, Lewis was admittedly enthralled with the "New Look" of his time which sought to exclude the afterlife and any deities that would hold any type of sway over his own soul.[22] The chronological snobbery of Lewis changed when Lewis found himself embracing what at one time he termed medieval and made up what would be considered traditional, orthodox Christianity. The intellectual and theological fruit of his conversion to Christianity is still being harvested across the world today in churches and secular institutions as well.

Particularly since the time of the Enlightenment, the theological and apologetical fruit of the Early Church Fathers has often been dismissed and swept under the rug by many across the evangelical denominational line. This is partially due to a chronological snobbery that has in this past decade reared itself up and has often generalized the contributions of the Early Church Fathers as something which has been supposedly hijacked by overeager patriarchs seeking to further establish the power and control of the Church. A postmodern malaise and contempt for

[22] C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1955), 206.

anything that could possibly assert an objective truth or authority has at times relegated the writings of the Early Church Fathers as nothing more than heavily biased hearsay.

In the past decade several works have also appeared addressing the issue of suffering and the development of a theology of suffering. Many of these attempts are well-construed and researched such as Eleanore Stump's *Wandering in Darkness*, the collection of essays from Providence College titled *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering*, as well as Peterman and Schmutzer's *Between Pain and Grace.* It appears that throughout many of the works of the last several hundred years there has been a noticeable absence (except some attention towards Ireneaen theodicy) of recognition of the Early Church Fathers' views on suffering and its meaning for the believer and his or her community.

Because suffering for the Church community was and still is a component of life, apologists and church leaders through the ages have continually addressed how the believer is to endure and even possibly redeem suffering. It is the argument of this dissertation that the Early Church Fathers represented by Justin Martyr, Cyprian of Carthage, and Irenaeus of Lyons each addressed suffering not only theologically but also apologetically to their listeners and readers as well as the non-believing world. Although there has been work that has addressed each of these Father's role as an apologist, this dissertation argues that there is continuity between each of these Early Church Father's apologetic use of suffering. It is possible that the Church today may be able to remember, draw deeply, and maintain the continuity of the apologetic use of suffering from Justin, Cyprian, and Irenaeus.

Methodological Design

This dissertation seeks to address the issue of suffering in the Early Church and how their suffering had apologetic impact on the surrounding culture. Because this dissertation has a fairly

comprehensive scope there needs to be a variety of works to help develop its argument. There needs to be an inclusion of both the OT and NT Scriptures because they were authoritative sources for the Early Church in its orthodoxy and orthopraxy as well as understanding what the definition and purpose of suffering is for a community of biblical believers.

It is indispensable to the discussion of these church Fathers to define what apologetics is and, as stated before, this work takes time to show how the suffering of the early Christians has, at times, informed four major elements of apologetics in their expression by Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian. This study also examines select works of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Cyprian which each deal with suffering to the extent of its apologetic value. That is, to the extent that suffering in the Early Church was seen as an apologetic bridge to the identity of not only the Early Church but primarily the nature and character of Jesus Christ. These three authors' works will be studied in the context of the cultural, political, and ecclesiological environment in which they were immersed.

This dissertation also recognizes that each of the Early Church Fathers was not identical in education, philosophy, or leadership role within the church. This study seeks to show the different and connecting threads between each of the three, helping to identify their particular perspective on suffering as well as showing common ground found among each of the Father's theology of suffering.

It will also be helpful to discuss the attitudes towards suffering in the cultural context of the early churches of Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian. To what degree did the surrounding culture's attitudes towards suffering inform and impact the Early Church? Did the Early Church redefine suffering or simply appropriate surrounding philosophy towards suffering?

The historical theology section of this dissertation will examine the attitudes of the church following the Patristic Period until the present time with a focus on the post-patristic church's attitude towards suffering and how the Early Church expressed their faith in light of that suffering. Commentary is often scant in these areas, especially between the European Reformation and the early twentieth century. Questions about why that gap exists will need to be answered in order to help shed light on the fairly recent resurgence of interest and developments in the theology of suffering and martyrology in the Early Church and its surrounding culture.

Lastly, due to the Early Church's best attempts to address suffering for their people and explanation to their critic and enemies the Early Church may help the current Church be informed and reassess its comprehension of suffering despite the ways the surrounding culture attempt to define it.

Limitations

The very concept of suffering is one of the most broad and vast theological subjects that scholars and laypeople have studied and expressed. This dissertation does not assume to be able to cover every dimension of what suffering is but rather it seeks to understand what suffering for the early church was. The testimonies, epistles, and letter of the Early Church have limitations as well both in frequency of occurrence and proximity from their age to the age of today. Therefore the temptation to over-contextualize or underestimate the context of the Early Church is a possibility. This dissertation will try to remain faithful to the true context of the particular works by relying on other scholars who have helped create a wholistic contextualization of the Early Church culture.

While this dissertation will be referring to scriptural concepts of suffering there is a limitation of the amount of exegetical comprehensiveness that it can treat each scriptural

reference due to the dissertation's intent to give a historical survey of how suffering was regarded by not only the Early Church but also by the Church that followed the patristic period. Secondly, the implications which come from the Early Church's understanding and expression of suffering cannot be fleshed out into every dimension of theology but rather this study will seek to address a few ecclesiological implications for the modern Church yet without providing an exhaustive ecclesiology. Space within this work does not allow expansion on these limitations. Thirdly, as a pastor in the Christian Church and my own enthusiasm and passion for an all-embracing expression of faith in Jesus Christ I will have to walk the tightrope between scholar and believer. One does not necessarily have to come at the expense of the other but can be well-informed by those who have gone before me and opened roads of inquiry.

This dissertation intends to further the development of what suffering meant in the Early Church and how that was expressed. The proposal seeks to show its strengths compared with much of the current views that have been recently offered. With the current proposed method of research, this dissertation will provide sufficient defense for its thesis and be able to illustrate how suffering was used as an apologetic bridge in the Early Church to the surrounding culture by assessing its role in light of biblical, cultural, and ecclesiological context.

CHAPTER 2

THE CONCEPT OF SUFFERING IN THE BIBLE AND EARLY APOLOGISTS

How is the concept of suffering expressed in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible? When suffering is mentioned in biblical literature how does the reader or hearer understand the concept? Who is involved in the suffering, and how is the role of suffering portrayed in the biblical literature and the literature of some of the earliest Christian apologists of church history? In this chapter, these questions will help better articulate the concept and content of suffering and its relation to the biblical literature and apologists of the Early Church.

Primary Expressions of Suffering in the Old Testament

Perhaps the first instance of a word that describes human suffering is encountered in Genesis when God curses Eve after she and Adam ate from the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God told Eve that he, "will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception" (Gen 3:16).[23] Often this view of suffering, which is the result of the Fall, primarily has to do with the suffering a woman would have during childbirth. However, Genesis does not exhaust the meaning of suffering and sorrow through one particular Hebrew expression (עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ), but rather the biblical literature is replete with various forms or ways to communicate the meaning of suffering by a variety of witnesses and participants in both the Old and New Testament. For example, the first verse in Genesis to mention pain or sorrow already communicates it in two different forms, בְּעֶצֶב[24] and עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ.

[23] "Your sorrow" or עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ, *`itstsabown* (Gen 3:16) is also translated as "your suffering, pain, or grief" particularly in childbirth.

[24] "In pain" or בְּעֶצֶב, *be-eseb* (Gen 3:16) is also translated as "in suffering" or "in pain" in a more general sense of the concept.

While Genesis has been referred to as having the first recorded expressions of suffering, the precise date for the Book of Job has been a long contested conundrum for theologians and biblical scholars.[25] This has not prevented scholars from attempting to give date estimations,[26] but virtually all scholarship on the Book of Job concurs that there are, "few characters in Scripture [that] embody such suffering and relational anguish."[27] Yet suffering is not limited just to the proverbial Job of biblical literature. Now attention will be devoted to the various expressions of how suffering is portrayed in the biblical literature.

עָצַב *(atsab)*

The word עָצַב occurs seventeen times in the Hebrew Old Testament. Its root meaning is "hurt, pain, or grieve." From this root verb several different forms of pain are described, whether being suffered by human or by God. When עָצַב is attributed to physical pain suffered by a human, it occurs only once (Eccl 10:9).[28] Whereas when עָצַב is attributed to emotional pain such as grief or broken heartedness, there are a far greater number of occurrences.[29] There is also mental pain that עָצֵב describes in Prov 15:1 when speaking of words that are "grievous" (KJV). עָצַב that affects not only a human agent but a divine one is also used in Isa 63:10 when speaking

[25] Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job, a Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 41. While Habel acknowledge the various attempts (linguistic evidences such as literary dependence and theological context of the time of writing) he concludes that, "clear lines of dependency for establishing a particular date for the book are not demonstrable."

[26] C. L. Seow, *Job 1-21: Interpretation and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013), 45. Seow acknowledges the difficulty of dating Job yet still dates the book, "most at home between the very late sixth and first half of the fifth century…" This is due primarily to word usage that is "reminiscent of postexilic religious personnel in Israel."

[27] Andrew J. Schmutzer and Gerald W. Peterman, *Between Pain and Grace: A Biblical Theology of Suffering* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2016), 267.

[28] Gen 3:17 speaks of the בְּעִצָּבוֹן, *be'itstsabown*, which comes from toil or working the ground agriculturally. This could be viewed as type of physical pain as well and is closely related to the Genesis 3:16 "toil" that is associated with childbirth.

[29] See Gen 6:8, 45:6; 1 Kgs 1:6; 1 Chr 4:10; 2 Sam 19:3; Ps 78:40, 139:24, 147:3; Prov 10:10, 22; Isa 14:3.

of the effects God's rebellious people have on Him, "But they rebelled and grieved (עִצְּבוּ) His Holy Spirit."[30]

The idea of grieving the Holy Spirit of God has been open to several interpretations, especially in the idea if one could actually break the heart the God.[31] One of these interpretations is held by John Oswalt who believes that God can suffer grief as Isa 63:10 expresses with עִצְּבוּ (and grieved).[32] Not only is the holiness of God "offended when we rebel," his "love is offended as well."[33] Oswalt's interpretation of עִצְּבוּ seems to be more cogent with the meaning of the word in the earlier section of Isaiah where it speaks of God giving His people "rest from their sorrow" (Isa 14:3). This interpretation of sorrow or grieving is also in line with Ps 78:40 when speaking of how Israel, "*grieved Him* [יַעֲצִיבוּהוּ] in the desert" due to their rebellious attitude towards God.

What remains consistent throughout the various Old Testament instances of עָצַב is that it is consistent in its expression of pain, hurt, and sorrow regardless of the nature of the one suffering. Holladay seems to show a wider range of meaning with עָצַב but overall the concept points towards the different types of suffering already listed.[34] What is important in determining

---

[30] Interestingly enough in the previous verse (Isa 63:9) the Hebrew used for pain or sorrow is completely different than any form of עָצַב.

[31] Thomas G. Weinandy, "Does God Suffer?," *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* (2001): 35*ff*, accessed September 21, 2016, http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/ps/i.do?p=AONE&u=vic_liberty&id=GALE|A80344686&v=2.1&it=r&sid=summon&userGroup=vic_liberty#. Weinandy perceives that if God would suffer any emotional loss then God's "transcendent otherness" would be at stake and that, "he predication of various emotional changes of state within God are not literal statements of His passibility, but illustrate and verify the literal truth that God, being transcendent, far from being fickle as men are, is unalterably, within all variable circumstances, all-loving, all-good, and all-holy."

[32] John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (Grand Rapids, MI: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 607.

[33] Ibid.

[34] William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1991), 279-280. Holladay includes 2 Scriptures which point towards "offenses" (Prov 15:1) and "hard –won acquisitions" (Prov 5:10).

the type of pain or distress that is being communicated through the use of עָצַב in each passage is done by, "noting the terms with which it is used."[35] Because of the number of occurrences of עָצַב in the Old Testament as well as the varied but consistent use of its meaning, עָצַב is one of the primary means of communicating the concept of suffering to the reader in the biblical literature.

כָּאַב (*ka'ab*)

Forms of the verb כָּאַב appear eight times in the Hebrew Old Testament. Whether the verb forms reflect the active Qal or active Hiphil, the existence of pain is still apparent in each of the contexts of the passages. The meaning that Brown, Driver, and Briggs gives it is, "be in pain."[36] The noun forms of כָּאַב, which are כְּאֵב and מַכְאוֹב occur an additional twenty-two times in the Old Testament. While there is a singular usage of כָּאַב to metaphorically mean a "ruining of a field" (2 Kgs 3:19), each of these forms are used in reference to human suffering. There is the physical suffering which Job speaks of (Job 14:22) and the physical suffering after circumcision (Gen 34:25).[37] The emotional suffering expressed with כָּאַב often has to do with grief or sorrow as in Jer 30:15 when speaking about Israel in exile or the suffering in servant who is familiar with sorrows in Isa 53:3. Forms of כָּאַב also refer to mental pain as when Job was suffering from how overwhelming his tragedies were (Job 2:13) or the mental pain the righteous suffer due to the falsehoods being spoken against them contrary to God's plans in Ezek 13:22.

---

[35] G. Johannes. Botterweck, Heinz-Josef Fabry, and Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, Volume 11* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 279.

[36] BDB 456a.

[37] Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew*, 149. Holladay interprets the Gen 34:25 usage of כָּאַב as "wound-fever" which still points towards a physical type of suffering.

One of the types of suffering which כָּאַב can refer to is what Gesenius terms as a figurative expression, "applied to a sorrowing soul" as in Prov 14:13.[38] When speaking of a spiritual type of suffering which affect the soul, the usage of כָּאַב in Job 14:22 points towards a type of spiritual suffering that incorporates both the physical and the spiritual. Job speaks about the separation of death from one's loved ones and how the events that happen on earth after one's passing are unknown to the soul which passes on and subsequently, the soul "mourns over it."[39]

This spiritual type of suffering is more prominently displayed in the remarkable Suffering Servant passage of Isa 53:3-4.[40] While many Christian scholars and theologians have interpreted the suffering which the Servant in this passage endured to be one of carrying sins for the people of Israel, it is important to note that Jewish rabbinic sources have also viewed this passage as one which communicates the propitiatory nature of the Servant's suffering.[41] Rashi also comments on the propitiatory suffering which the Servant Israel bore for the nations,

> But now we see that this came to him not because of his low state, but that he was chastised with pains so that all the nations be atoned for with Israel's suffering. The illness that should rightfully have come upon us, he bore.[42]

---

[38] Wilhelm Gesenius et al., *Gesenius' Grammar* (Andover: W.F. Draper, 1880), 440.

[39]Habel, *The Book of Job,* 244. Habel comments on Job's lament about the spiritual suffering of those souls in the afterlife in 14:22,"Alas, they are not extinguished at death, but reduced to shades with a capacity for pain and self-pity. How different is this image from the idealized portrait of Sheol as a glorious land…"

[40] "He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted." (NKJV)

[41]Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra, *The Commentary on Ibn Ezra on Isaiah: Translation of the Commentary* (London: N. Trubner & Co.,1873), 242. Rabbi Ibn Ezra comments on Is. 53:4, "…he has endured our sorrow, that is, the sorrow [וּמַכְאֹבֵינוּ] which we have inflicted upon him…While we deserve to be afflicted with all this grief, because our religion is false, it came instead upon Israel, who follow the true religion"

[42] "Yeshayahu- Isaiah - Chapter 53," The Complete Jewish Bible with Rashi Commentary, accessed September 22, 2016, http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/15984/jewish/Chapter-53.htm#showrashi=true.

This is to therefore point to the spiritual nature of suffering that can be associated with כָּאַב in the Old Testament. As David L. Allen writes, "the punishment for sin in view in Isaiah 53 is not temporal punishment but spiritual (eternal) punishment."[43] The vicarious suffering of Isa 53:4 is expressed through using כָּאַב and is not completely singular in its application to the Suffering Servant.[44] While כָּאַב is not limited to only expressing the spiritual nature of suffering, spiritual suffering is a definite component of the Hebraic expression. The meaning of this expression of course is often dependent on the context of the passage in which the various forms of כָּאַב are used.

חָלָה *(challah)*

Often חָלָה[45] is used to express a type of physical sickness that is being endured by the sufferer as in the case of Jacob being ill before he blesses his son Joseph (Gen 48:1)[46] or in the case of being physically struck as in Prov 23:35.[47] There is also the implication of חָלָה meaning to make one weak or to make oneself weakened as in Jer 12:13.[48] חָלָה also covers types of diseases which are incurable or leading to death (2 Kgs 20:1; 2 Chr 21:18).

---

[43] David L. Allen, "Substitutionary Atonement and Cultic Terminology in Isaiah 53," in *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*, eds. Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2012), 175.

[44] For further explanation on the possibility of the range of using כָּאַב to define vicarious suffering see, Walther Zimmerli, "Zur Vorgeschichte von Jes. liii," in *Congress Volume: Rome 1968,* VT Sup 17 (1969), 236-44. Reprinted in Zimmerli, *Studien zur alttestamentlichen Theologie und Prophetie* (1974), 213-21.

[45] One of the more numerous occurrences (76) of a Hebraic expression of suffering, חָלָה, is surprisingly one of the more focused in meaning. BDB notes the strong similarity between the Aramaic חֶלָא (suffer) and Syriac *alû* (sickness, grief). Although the Aramaic for "suffer" usage is rare, it is pertinent to the current discussion on suffering in the OT.

[46] "Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, 'Indeed your father *is* sick;'" (NKJV)

[47] "They have struck me, *but* I was not hurt;" (NKJV)

[48] "They have put themselves to pain *but* do not profit." (NKJV)

There are instances where forms of חָלָה allude to emotional or even spiritual sickness. The case where Amnon, "was so distressed over his sister Tamar that he became sick" (2 Sam 13:2) is a case, as BDB puts it, of "morbid passion."[49] With חָלָה there is also the reference to the emotional state of being lovesick (Song 2:5).[50] These particular references to a type of emotional distress are uncommon compared to the majority of usages which denote more of a physical wounding or disease.[51]

However, in the case of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 the idea of חָלָה alludes to more than physical illness but rather a sickness which appears to be more spiritual in nature. Ibn Ezra translates the noun חֳלִי (derived from חָלָה) as "the troubles which Israel had to suffer during the exile."[52] Robert B. Chisolm views this type of חֳלִי by the Suffering Servant of Isa 53:3 "like a terminally ill person who is shunned by others because of some horrible disease."[53] Chisolm is not advocating the Servant to be actually suffering from a disease but rather the Servant is taking on the appearance of suffering because of how despised he is among the people because of how insignificant he seems to them.[54] This helps illustrate the types of pain or suffering that, like the previous two terms explored (עָצַב and כָּאַב), may incorporate an emotional and/or spiritual type of suffering.

---

[49] BDB 318a.

[50] "Sustain me with cakes of raisins, refresh me with apples, for I *am* lovesick." (NKJV)

[51] Other singular instances (which do not specifically address human suffering and are taken from forms of חָלָה) revolve around animal suffering (Ezek 34:4) and suffering being seen as a "great evil" (Eccl 5:13).

[52] Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra, *The Commentary on Ibn*, 242.

[53] Robert B. Chisolm Jr., "Forgiveness and Salvation in Isaiah 53," in *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*, eds. Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2012), 192.

[54] Ibid.

What is noteworthy about the more divergent uses of חָלָה, as in the case of Eccl 5:13[55] and the Piel form of לְהַחֲ (חַל־ - "to appease" or "entreat"), are the possible implications on the other meanings of חָלָה which are found elsewhere in biblical literature. This is particularly of interest when examining Isa 53:3 and its use of the Hiphil causative חֳלִי (grief) and seeing the contrast of the piel חַל (entreat)[56] of I Kgs 13:6. In the case of the Hiphil causative חֳלִי found in Isa 53:3, there is a greater adherence of meaning to the idea of grief or sufferings.[57] While this is a different departure from the typical meaning of physical illness or weakness ascribed to חָלָה , Brevard Childs sees the grief or sickness ascribed to חֳלִי as an idiom which points towards the reaction people would have towards one who is "despised by the people."[58] Overall, חָלָה can be viewed as a concept that is designed to describe a sickness, grief, or weakness which can be the result of either a human or divine agent and while it often describes a physical condition it can be utilized to express an emotional or spiritual state of suffering as in Isa 53:3.

עָנָה (*anah*)

The term עָנָה is one of the most varied Hebrew forms used to express affliction or suffering. Occurring in seven of the Hebrew verb forms and sharing identical Hebrew spelling with three other words, עָנָה is a primitive root which is multifaceted in depth and meaning. Gesenius appears to make the primary meaning of עָנָה to mean "afflicted."[59] Brown, Driver, and

---

[55] "There is a severe evil which I have seen under the sun: riches kept for their owner to his hurt." (NKJV)

[56] Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew*, 104. Piel form of חַל in I Kgs 13:6 is seen as putting "(God) in a gentle mood."

[57] Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra, *The Commentary on Ibn*, 242.

[58] Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 414. Childs writes, "Increasingly the language takes on a flavor that transcends a simple historical description, and begins to resonate with the typical idiom of the innocent suffering one of the Psalter: 'I am a worm, less than a human, scorned and despised by the people. All who see me curl their lips and wag their heads' (22:6-7)."

[59] Wilhelm Gesenius et al., *Gesenius' Grammar*, 642.

Briggs balances the interpretation of the meaning of עָנָה primarily between "afflicted" and "humbled."[60] Whereas Holladay almost consistently gives עָנָה the primary meaning of "bowed down" or "humbling oneself."[61]

According to עָנָה, it has some nuanced difference from the previous three Hebrew words explored. This is seen primarily in how it is used to convey the idea of humbling or humbling oneself. While Gesenius only mentions two occurrences of עָנָה as an instance of humbling or submitting oneself in the Hithpael form וַיִּתְעַנִּי (*way'hitanni* – "and submit"),[62] Brown, Driver, and Briggs clarifies the humbling aspect of עָנָה by connecting it to fasting as in, "you shall afflict your souls" (Lev 16:29, 31).[63] This "affliction" of the soul points towards fasting in these passages due to context but affliction as humbling or bringing oneself low due to bondage or imprisonment is cited in Brown, Driver, and Biggs (and not Gesenius) in passages such as Judg 16:5, 6, 19 as well as Ps 105:18.

Besides the humbling aspect of עָנָה, there are the physical, emotional, and even spiritual components of עָנָה. Physical עָנָה can occur when put into imprisonment or subjecting oneself to fasting as mentioned before as well as a type of physical affliction such as rape in the case of Gen 34:2.[64] The physical affliction of עָנָה is also exemplified in cases of physical poverty as in

---

[60] BDB, 775a-777a.

[61] Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew*, 277-78.

[62] Wilhelm Gesenius et al., *Gesenius' Grammar*, 642. Gesenius does also mention the niphal form in Ex 10:3 which shows a submitting to one in authority but all other references to עָנָה, as this paper is working with, are directed at affliction or oppression.

[63] BDB 776a. The idea of humbling in fasting is also mentioned in Lev 23:29; Ezra 8:21; and Dan 10:12.

[64] "…he seized her and lay with her and humiliated her." (ESV)

the case of Deut 24 where laws are given for taking care of those in financial poverty.[65] Being poor in an oppressive state due to lack of political power is also communicated through various forms of עָנָה. This is particularly seen in various Psalms where God is viewed as being the deliverer and provider for those who are poor and oppressed (Ps 35:10, 68:11, 140:13) just as an earthly king is able to do as well (Ps 72:2, 4, 12).

Suffering spiritually that is found with עָנָה can be associated with the discipline that God uses to test those who say they are God's followers (Deut 8:2, 3).[66] This kind of humbling עָנָה is done to eventually help those who follow God (Deut 8:16). This is much like what Christopher J. H. Wright illustrates when describing God's spiritual discipline being, "just as parents may say, as they punish a child, "You'll thank me for this someday!"[67] God's humbling of His people is not only for the good of the people but also, as Jack Lundbom writes, "He does so to make good on the covenant sworn to the fathers."[68]

The spiritual suffering which God permits His people to endure is tied to the integrity of who God is and what God has promised. This type of spiritual suffering through God's humbling of His people can also be seen in the Psalms when the Psalmist recognizes the benefit of God's עָנָה, "*It is* good for me that I have been *afflicted*, that I may learn Your statutes." (Ps 119:71,

[65] "You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether one of your brethren or one of the aliens who is in your land within your gates. Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the Lord, and it be sin to you." (NKJV) Both cases of עָנִי, an adjectival form of עָנָה, are used to express a state of financial poverty.

[66] "And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord… who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end—" (NKJV)

[67] Christopher J. H. Wright, *Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 140.

[68] Jack R. Lundbom, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013), 356.

NKJV). This beneficial suffering spiritually imposed by God also takes on a propitiatory tone in Isaiah's Suffering Servant, "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and *afflicted* (מֻכֶּה) (Isa 53:4, NKJV). This spiritual affliction is not only for the chosen followers of God but also for the foolish who rebel and sin against God, who may still receive the mercy of God.[69]

Primary Expressions of Suffering in the New Testament

According to the semantic domains of the Greek language used in the New Testament there are three primary subdomains of how suffering, trouble, or hardship is expressed.[70] These particular subdomains do not include other Greek phrases that allude to or even serve as antonymous words and phrases to express various types of suffering. While it is impossible to interview or directly observe all biblical witnesses who experienced suffering, this paper will seek to bring understanding by looking with a type of Hegelian view at the written biblical literature and the historical evidence left behind.[71] This can be done by also looking within the unity of the scriptural witness and how it bears witness to the same Jesus Christ of whom the New Testament has made its primary character witness.[72]

The identification of Jesus as the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 by Luke in the book of Acts (Acts 8:32-33) is important to this conversation about the language of suffering in the New

[69] "Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, were afflicted… Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses." (Ps 107:17, 19) (NKJV)

[70] L&N § 221-34.

[71] See Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, *The Philosophy of History* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956), 6-7. Particularly Hegel's *reflective* method towards historical events in a critical form is helpful as he states that this form is, "a criticism of historical narratives and an investigation of their truth and credibility."

[72] G. B. Caird and L. D. Hurst, *New Testament Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 26. Caird writes of the centrality of Jesus Christ in interpretation, "Research must begin with the documents and their theology and arrive only at the end of its course at the teaching of Jesus."

Testament. This is because of the continuum of meaning attached to exactly what suffering was for the Hebrew audience of the time of Isaiah to the Gentile and Hebrew audience of the time of the apostle Paul. The Suffering Servant, Jesus Christ, not only endures unjust suffering and death but the particular kind of suffering which the Servant endures is an, as Darrel Bock writes, "…unique unjust suffering is to invoke what caused it to take place. One cannot have the Servant suffer unjustly without also considering why he silently went through it."[73] To understand what suffering was in both the Old and New Testament references to Isaiah 53, one must be familiar with the identity of that Suffering Servant, namely Jesus Christ. Thus, a portion of the study of suffering in the New Testament will revolve around the suffering which Jesus Christ endured and of which portions of the New Testament draw upon for communicating its meaning.

This section will also primarily examine the concepts of suffering which are shared between Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul and are written by the apostle Paul as well. The amount of New Testament writing that mentions suffering that are attributed to Paul will hopefully show continuity not only between the Hebraic understanding of suffering and the Greco-Roman understanding of suffering but the suffering which Jesus Christ had endured and the church identified with as well. This continuum between Old Testament, the apostle Paul, Christ, and the Greco-Roman world is noted also by Troels Engberg-Pedersen when speaking of Paul and his address in Romans explaining how sin affects both Jew and Greek under its curse that can be cured by Christ's atoning sacrifice.[74]

---

[73] Darrel Bock, "Isaiah 53 in Acts 8," in *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*, 141-142.

[74] Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 207. Engberg-Pedersen writes, "It remains the case that both Jews and Greeks might 'all' be under sin, as he has paradigmatically described them in 2:17-24 and 1:18-32 respectively.

Paul was also personally familiar with varieties of suffering as well as the suffering which he witnessed of those that he came in contact with throughout his lifetime. Primarily, this has been excellently shown by Kar Yong Lim, the suffering which he had to endure that missiologically mirrored in many ways the sufferings which Christ endured. Lim writes, "As Christ had to suffer persecution and rejection in his mission, so Paul is not exempted from suffering in his ministry of the gospel."[75] Therefore, Paul as a historical and etymological witness to the understanding of what suffering meant is a primary choice in this paper when reviewing the meaning of suffering in the New Testament.

For the apostle Paul, the suffering of Christ crucified is central to several of the churches which Paul addresses in the New Testament.[76] The suffering which Paul describes to the churches in Rome, Corinth and Galatia are part and parcel of the Gospel of Christ's suffering, death, burial, and resurrection. As Kar Yong Lim describes, "For Paul, suffering not only accompanies his proclamation of the gospel but also *is* a proclamation of the gospel."[77] To the concepts of suffering shared by the records of the gospels of Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul, we now turn. As will be seen in the coming chapters, suffering was part and parcel of the proclamation of the Gospel for several important leaders of the Early Church, especially as the Early Church Fathers referenced the Suffering Servant of Isaiah.

---

[75] Kar Yong Lim, *'The Sufferings of Christ Are Abundant In Us': A Narrative Dynamics Investigation of Paul's Sufferings in 2 Corinthians* (London: A & C Black, 2009), 52. Lim also takes care to illustrate what he believes to be the missiological and not the ontological likeness of suffering which Paul wrote about and compared himself to in Christ's sufferings.

[76] Rom 6:6; 1 Cor 1:23, 2:2; 2 Cor 13:4; Gal 2:20, 5:24, 6:14.

[77] Lim, *'The Sufferings of Christ*, 111.

Jesus Christ and Paul – πάσχω

Various tenses and forms of πάσχω (*paschó*) make up the most common vocabulary link concerning suffering that Jesus Christ and Paul share. Forms of πάσχω have forty-two occurrences in the New Testament. Seven of those are spoken by Paul, and nine are spoken by Christ. These particular forms of πάσχω are often attributed to being in pain and may also mean, according to Louw & Nida, "the sufferings experienced at the time of Messiah, that is to say, 'the Messianic woes.'"[78] All nine of the references to πάσχω which Jesus Christ makes are attributed to meaning the "Messianic woes" which Louw & Nida previously mentioned. Both Paul and Jesus Christ use πάσχω in conjunction with the idea of suffering to the point of death (Luke 22:15; Phil 1:29) as well as suffering at the hands of someone else (Mark 5:26; 1 Thess 2:14). The suffering of πάσχω is also used in conjunction with a meaning that has suffering as a form of punishment attached to it, as if suffering was to be endured during the time of punishment as in Luke 24:46 and Gal 3:1-4.[79]

While πάσχω was used as an indicator of experiencing something pleasant outside of biblical literature, it is in the New Testament that πάσχω has taken on a meaning that indicates something that is experienced in an "unfavorable sense."[80] Both Paul and Jesus Christ describe suffering as something that is unfavorable yet at the same time necessary as well. When Paul addresses the church in Galatia and asks them if they remember the crucified Christ and if their suffering that was part of following the crucified Christ was now in question of its usefulness because of their apparent slipping away from their faith in the crucified Christ, Paul is trying to

[78] L&N, § 24.78.

[79] See BDAG, 785d.

[80] BDAG, 785c. This includes Septuagint usages as well.

show the Galatians the worth of suffering and appealing to them to not have suffered in vain.[81] Jesus Christ points towards the same usefulness of suffering in Mark 8:31 where Jesus is trying to explain how suffering and death precede the resurrection.[82] Jesus also tells of the redemptive aspect of suffering when he is talking to the unaware disciples on the road to Emmaus after his resurrection as to why the Messiah had to suffer for the sake of entering into the glory of God.[83]

The particular events surrounding πάσχω—when πάσχω is attributed to Jesus Christ as the speaker in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke—are often (seven out of nine times) attributed to a suffering that would come at the hands of someone else and/or as a result of persecution of Jesus. Eight of the nine times that Jesus uses πάσχω are specifically about his personal suffering that he will have to endure.[84] The πάσχω which Jesus mentions in the gospels is also used five times by Jesus to describe the suffering he will receive as a direct result of fulfilling his mission on earth. For example, when answering the Pharisees about when the kingdom of God will come Jesus tells them that besides the kingdom of God residing within each person (Luke 17:21), the kingdom of God will not come until the Son of Man, "…must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation (Luke 17:25)."

This πάσχω suffering of Jesus helps point toward the redemptive and necessary function of the Messiah. Joel Green, professor of New Testament Interpretation at Fuller Theological

---

[81] "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed *it was* in vain? Gal 3:1-4 (NKJV)

[82] "And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." Mark 8:31 (NKJV)

[83] "Then He said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?'" Luke 24:25-26 (NKJV)

[84] This is also consistent with the number of occurrences in the Septuagint.

Seminary, writes in his commentary on Luke, "Morerover, it [the passion of Christ] brings again into the foreground the ongoing status of suffering and rejection in the realization of God's purpose."[85] This redemptive kingdom-purpose of suffering by the Messiah is also noted by Baylor professor of Christian Scriptures David Garland when he writes,

> …it may correct any expectation of glory without suffering. The path of suffering leads to glory, and this saying reminds readers that the affliction and rejection Jesus suffered at the hands of his generation does not end with his death.[86]

The apostle Paul uses various tenses of πάσχω throughout his epistles. Particularly, in the seven uses of πάσχω by Paul, five of the uses of πάσχω refer specifically to persecution for their faith and witness of the gospel. In 2 Corinthians, the correspondence between the παθήματα (noun form of *sufferings*) of Jesus Christ and the πάσχω of Paul and other believers is illustrated with the παθήματα of Christ being likened to what the believers endure (2:5). Then the πάσχω of Paul and the other believers is sympathetically shared between each of them (2:6). Then the benediction concludes with Paul encouraging the believers as "partakers of the παθημάτων (the sufferings)" (2:7). The verbal use of πάσχω to describe the suffering of the believers is the same word used, as mentioned earlier, by Jesus Christ when describing the suffering he must endure for his divine mission. A definite relation between the sufferings of Christ and the sufferings of the believing community is being communicated by Paul.

Although the root forms of πάσχω and παθήματα are different, it is clear that these forms of suffering are being used to help not only console the believers of Corinth but to communicate that, as Murray J. Harris states, "…any suffering endured by the followers of Christ for the sake

[85] Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1997), 634.

[86] David E. Garland, *Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 699.

of Christ constituted a part of 'Christ's sufferings.'"[87] This is only to show how Jesus Christ's use of πάσχω in terms of suffering produced because of persecution is closely associated with the πάσχω which Paul uses when describing the type of suffering which himself and other believers were enduring for the sake of the gospel. It is important to note that this suffering in no way was meant to communicate the actual suffering which Christ experienced on the cross but rather more of the physical and emotional/spiritual suffering that resulted from the believers who were "living for Christ."[88] This same πάσχω is the root word behind the word Passion which the Early Church leaders used to describe the suffering and death of Jesus Christ before the resurrection took place.

Jesus Christ and Paul – θλῖψις

While θλῖψις (*thlipsis*) occurs forty-five times compared to the forty-two occurrences of πάσχω, there are fewer uses shared between Paul and Jesus. Paul uses various tenses of θλῖψις twenty-one times and Jesus uses θλῖψις a total of nine times. Unlike πάσχω, θλῖψις differs in meaning in how it does not primarily revolve around messianic sufferings which both Jesus Christ predicted and His followers vicariously shared. Rather, θλῖψις often carries with it a more general meaning of trouble or tribulation which is, as Louw & Nida put, "involving direct suffering, persecution."[89]

This suffering of θλῖψις shared between Paul and Jesus covers a variety of usages from the trouble that comes with childbirth pains (John 16:21) to distress from generally difficult circumstances (2 Cor 8:13) to a "great tribulation" that is attributed to what immediately

[87] Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary of the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2005), 146.

[88] Ibid., 146.

[89] L&N § 22.2.

precedes before the coming of the Son of Man as told by Jesus in Matt 24:15-31. The sayings attributed to Jesus Christ in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke primarily revolve around three types of trouble or affliction. The most common use of θλῖψις by Jesus Christ is in reference to any distress or tribulation that would arise from being persecuted because of one's association with Jesus.[90] In both Matthew and Mark, which record Jesus speaking about the tribulation which comes "because of the word" (Matt 13:21; Mark 4:17), θλῖψις points towards a persecution for the faith, whereas in Jesus Christ's discourse about the coming of the Son of Man and the θλῖψις which precedes his coming, θλῖψις is used to communicate a more general tribulation or trouble of the last days but also includes the trouble of the siege of Jerusalem.[91] In these uses of θλῖψις by Jesus, suffering or tribulation is something that can also be a result of a great war or global upheaval.[92]

The apostle Paul's use of θλῖψις has a wider scope of meaning than what is recorded in the gospels. The particular similarities which Paul and Jesus share in their expression of suffering or tribulation are seen in how Paul and Jesus use θλῖψις to communicate the persecutory type of suffering which both Paul and Jesus communicate to those who are believers. In Matt 13:21 and 24:9, Jesus talks about the persecutory suffering which will come to all who are followers of the word (Matt 13:21) and those, "who will be hated by all for My name's sake." (Matt 24:9, NKJV).

---

[90] R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007), 520-521. France writes about this association of suffering and persecution and its meaning because of the gospel., "Indeed, it [the gospel] brings trouble of its own, since the same "message" which brings enlightenment can also bring persecution from those who do not accept it."

[91] France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 921. France acknowledges the possibility of the meaning of the distress of Mt 24:21 and 29 comes from an "inter-advent" age which accounts for events like the siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD as well as future events yet to happen with the coming of the Son of Man.

[92] BDAG, 457d. BDAG acknowledges in Mt 24:21, 29 and Mk 13:19, 24 both the θλῖψις that is due to the last days as well as the θλῖψις which is the result of "distress caused by war."

What is interesting to note is how in Matt 13:21, when Jesus mentions the persecution and θλῖψις which "arises because of the word" (NKJV), the terms persecution and θλῖψις (trouble) are coupled. Paul also makes use of this word pairing in 2 Thess 1:4 where he is commending the church in Thessalonica for, "all your persecutions and θλῖψις that you endure." This is the only time where Paul couples persecution (διωγμοῦ) and θλῖψις together rather than when he lists these among other afflictions as in Rom 8:35 or 2 Cor. 6:4. When Jesus pairs διωγμοῦ and θλῖψις, he only does this once as well in Matt 13:21. While Paul is addressing the body of believers in 2 Thess 1:4, Jesus is using a parable to describe any believer that would fall away because of διωγμοῦ and θλῖψις. Both conjunctive uses by Paul and Jesus are used to either commend what true faith is (2 Thess 1:4) or expose what faith is not (Matt 13:21).

This is not to say that persecution and afflictions or suffering are non-separate happenings in the lives of believers but as Gordon D. Fee writes, "Paul has regularly instructed his churches…such persecutions will regularly be accompanied by 'afflictions' or 'hardships' of all kinds."[93] While the uses of θλῖψις are more numerous than the previously discussed πάσχω, θλῖψις (like πάσχω), is used to more often describe the type of suffering that accompanies persecution for one being a believer in the gospel.

[93] Gordon D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing, 2009), 251.

Jesus Christ and Paul – σταυρός

The third most frequent and graphic word Jesus Christ and Paul used for describing types of suffering is σταυρός (*stauros*). Paul and Jesus use various forms of σταυρός a total of fifteen times in the New Testament. Σταυρός is a word that has many significant meanings attached to it throughout the New Testament. The *tau-rho* device attached to σταυρός in the earliest manuscripts of John and Luke point towards what Larry Hurtado calls, "references to Jesus' cross/crucifixion (or to his call to disciples to take up their crosses in response to his crucifixion)."[94] This symbolic reference, which was shown by the *rho* overlapping the *tau,* was done so that it represents Jesus' crucifixion.

In the New Testament σταυρός is primarily associated with the cross which Jesus would be crucified to with nails and suffer on before his death. Jesus predicted his death by crucifixion and then, after predicting his capture by the elders, chief priests, and scribes and his death and resurrection, Jesus then challenges the believer to, "…deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." (Matt 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23) (NKJV) The radical call that Jesus gives in the gospels for self-denial is described by John Nolland as, "The call is so to behave that the anticipated outcome may naturally be the loss of one's life. There is a radical denial of self-interest and normal concern for one's own well-being here."[95] R. T. France also comments on the suffering associated with the cross when he writes, "While it may no doubt be legitimately applied to other and lesser aspects of the suffering involved in following Jesus, the primary reference in context must be to the possibility of literal death."[96]

---

[94] Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2006), 142.

[95] John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing: Grand Rapids, MI, 2008), 691.

[96] France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 340.

The idiom of "taking up one's cross" is associated with the believer suffering for the sake of the gospel and identifying with the suffering of Jesus Christ throughout the New Testament. There has been debate as to the timing of Jesus Christ's idiom and whether it was part of a prediction by Jesus or whether it was an editorial addition by Mark when writing in retrospect much later than the crucifixion event itself. R. T. France sums up the appearance of σταυρός to be attributed to Jesus when he writes,

> The preservation of so specific an image at more than one point in the gospel tradition… may suggest that it originates from Jesus' own awareness of how he would die rather than from Mark's reading back the later event.[97]

Jesus Christ's use of "taking up one's cross" has several different layers of suffering implied in its usage. In each of Jesus' uses of σταυρός in the gospels, there is always a reference to the sacrifice and suffering required in order to truly follow Jesus. In each of Jesus' mentioning of σταυρός, he is admonishing or preparing his disciples to understand what taking up one's cross means. What is often cited is how one taking up one's cross involves not just a denial of the things and temptations of this world but of a suffering that involves a complete denial of self to the possible point of death.[98]

In Luke 9:23 there is also an expansion of how to live this life of suffering for the gospel that goes beyond any type of final death by crucifixion. Luke writes that Jesus Christ is challenging believer to take up his cross "every day" or "day by day" (καθ ἡμέραν)[99] whether or not that witness for the gospel will lead to an immediate death.[100] Ben Witherington of Asbury

---

[97] France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 339.

[98] Ibid, 340.

[99] Luke 9:23 (NKJV)

[100] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 374. Green attests how the aorist tenses of the verbs for self-denial and cross-bearing are meant to not only communicate the immediacy of when these events are to take place but also they communicate the greater length of time it will take the disciple.

Theological Seminary affirms the seriousness of Jesus' call to suffer, "He [the disciple] would be affirming a willingness to give all, even his very life, in order to follow Jesus."[101] This is to therefore show how Jesus was aware of the call to suffering he was giving to those who would follow him and what that suffering entailed.

Often the apostle Paul would use σταυρός to directly indicate the message of the gospel when speaking about the "offense of the cross" (Gal 5:11) or the "λόγος (message or word) of the cross" (v. 18).[102] Paul also used σταυρός to indicate the suffering that accompanied the cross as well. In Gal 6:12, Paul refers to the persecution that will accompany those who proclaim the cross rather than hide from it. Two verses later Paul writes of how he can only boast in the cross of Christ, "by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."[103] Paul also writes of the suffering and death that accompanies the cross when describing the humility that Jesus Christ endured, "And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." (Phil 2:8) Although the authorship of Hebrews has not been adequately determined as of yet, Heb 12:2 also speaks of the suffering of the cross which Jesus endured.[104]

Paul's use of the verbal idiomatic form of the *stauros*, σταυρόω (*stauroó*) occurs eleven times in his writings as well as thirty-five times in the gospel and is used each time in Paul's writings as a reference to the cross of Christ. The conjunctive verb form συσταυρόω (*sustauroó*)

---

[101] Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 245.

[102]Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013), 156. Thiselton believes that Paul's use of parallel thought in 1 Cor 1:21 concerning proclamation or preaching is apparent then proclamation can be "justifiably assumed in 1 Cor 1:18.

[103] Gal 6:14 (NKJV)

[104] "… looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (NKJV)

meaning "crucified together with"[105] in the first and third person singular occur twice in Paul's writing[106] and three other times in the gospels.[107] Paul's use of σταυρός and σταυρόω are often meant to convey a variety of meanings including: the cross as a symbol of reconciliation (Eph 2:16; Col 1:20, 2:14), a symbol of power (1 Cor 1:17-18; Gal 6:14), and a symbol of suffering and persecution (Gal 5:11, 6:12; Phil 2:8).

Paul also uses the closely associated verb σταυρόω much more often than the root noun σταυρό when addressing often as Douglas Moo writes, "the 'redemptive-historical' participation of the believer in the crucifixion of Christ…"[108] This "redemptive-historical" participation described by σταυρόω is also used by Paul to describe, "…his own proclamation of the Christian gospel."[109] Paul's proclamation of the gospel included the glory of the cross which all believers would share with Jesus and the glory of the cross, according to Paul in Rom 8:17-18.[110] This is to say that the suffering associated with the cross and crucifying would be readily understood by Paul's audience to include their own suffering as well as their identification with the cross and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. This suffering does not only include the possibility of physical torture and death because of persecution but also a suffering mentioned in Gal 5:14 associated with crucifying, "the flesh with its passions and desires." This close association between σταυρόω and

---

[105] L&N § 20.78.

[106] Rom 6:6 and Gal 2:20.

[107] Matt 27:44,;Mark 15:32; John 19:32.

[108] Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), 373.

[109] Richard N. Longenecker, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing), 635.

[110] "…and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (NKJV)

the proclamation of the Gospel carries on beyond the church of Paul's time and is used frequently by the church Fathers Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Cyprian of Carthage. This usage will be approached in the chapters to come.

Similarities and Differences between Expressions of Suffering Found in the OT and NT

So far this paper has worked through seven different concepts that are associated with suffering in both the Old (עָצַב, כָּאַב, חָלָה, and עָנָה) and New Testament (πάσχω, θλῖψις, and σταυρός). Suffering is a universal experience and concept throughout humanity. Eleonore Stump writes, "Only the most naïve or tendentious among us would deny the extent and intensity of suffering in the world."[111] As shown, various expressions of suffering are found throughout the Old and New Testament in a wide array of connotations. Other expressions of suffering have not been mentioned primarily because of their going outside of the original scope of this work concerning the apologetic use of suffering in early Christianity.[112]

A primary concern that can arise when trying to understand concepts of suffering in the Old and New Testaments is having an adequate intertextual approach. Part of the danger surrounding intertextual approaches to Scripture involves the possibility of interpreting various allusions and meanings that were never intended by the author. As we have seen, the apostle Paul frequently refers to similar uses of concepts of suffering which Jesus uses. Jesus and Paul also use concepts of suffering which resemble words found in the Old Testament such as עָנָה (*anah*) and כָּאַב (*ka'ab*). When trying to understand or assess any type of intertextual coherence between

[111] Stump, *Wandering in Darkness*, 3.

[112] For example, in the Old Testament נָזַק denotes suffering or loss that comes from either physical or mental injury as is found in Ezra 4:13, 15, 22; Dan 6:2. In the New Testament κόπους is found, as used in Matt 26:10; Luke 11:7; 1 Cor 15:58; 2 Cor 11:23, among others, which signifies a suffering which comes from laboring in ministry or can signify bothering or troubling someone. In both נָזַק and κόπους the usages of the words have a connotation which are very context specific and have fewer linguistic and connotative bridges with other words in Scripture.

Old and New Testament concepts of suffering, Richard Hays and other scholars regularly suggest applying several criteria which primarily include: availability of the text to the author, volume of words in common, recurrence of similar text elsewhere, thematic coherence within the author's text, historical plausibility, history of interpretation found in other sources, and if there is a satisfactory insightful reading of the text.[113]

With the particular seven words highlighted in this work so far there can be some similarities drawn. With the Hebrew עָצַב (*atsab*), the idea of grieving the Holy Spirit is not limited only to the Isa 63:10 reading but can also be found with Paul's use of λυπέω (*lupeó*) in Eph 4:30. In both the Old Testament and New Testament understanding of "to grieve" or "to distress" these words can indicate emotional distress or grief for human agents as in Gen 34:7[114] or Isa 54:6[115] and Matt 18:31[116] or John 16:20.[117] There is dissimilarity between the two words intertextually in that the Hebrew עָצַב (*atsab*) can be used to describe physical pain or distress as in Eccl 10:9.[118]

In particular, the Old Testament use of כָּאַב (*ka'ab*) and the New Testament use of πάσχω, θλῖψις, and σταυρός may be worth noting. As mentioned earlier כָּאַב (*ka'ab*) refers to, among

---

[113] Steve Moyise, *Paul and Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 114.

[114] "And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, a thing which ought not to be done." (NKJV)

[115] "'For the Lord has called you, like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a youthful wife when you were refused,' says your God." (NKJV)

[116] "So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done." (NKJV)

[117] "Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy." (NKJV)

[118] "He who quarries stones may be hurt by them, and he who splits wood may be endangered by it." (NKJV)

other things, a type of spiritual and/or emotional suffering that accompanies a persecutory and/or punitive type of suffering found in the Suffering Servant passages of Isaiah 53. Using the criteria listed above one can determine that the persecutory suffering which is part of the suffering found in the New Testament uses of πάσχω, θλῖψις, and σταυρός have very similar references to כְּאֵב of the Old Testament. They also share a very similar thematic coherence between the Suffering Servant and Jesus Christ. With πάσχω, כְּאֵב shares the similarity with both referring to pain and suffering which, according to Louw & Nida, "may mean 'the sufferings experienced at the time of the Messiah,' that is to say, 'the Messianic woes.'[119] If one holds to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 being the Messiah,[120] then the כְּאֵב (pain) of Isa 53:3 would closely resemble the πάσχω (pain, suffering) of Luke 24:26 which speaks of the suffering that "the Christ" or "Son of Man" was to suffer in order for prophecy to be true.

Luke had to be familiar with the Suffering Servant passages of Isaiah since he writes in Luke 22:37 of how Jesus quotes directly from Isaiah when he speaks to his disciples, "For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end." (Isa 53:12, NKJV) This not only fulfills the intertextual requirement from Hays and other scholars of how available the text containing the same word is for Luke but also shows the requirement of a recurrence of the Old Testament text in the gospel of Luke.

---

[119] L&N § 24.78.

[120] Michael L. Brown, "Jewish Interpretations of Isaiah 53," in *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*, eds. Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser, 82. Michael Brown gives a cogent summary of many objections to reading Isaiah 53 with a singular Messiah in mind and he concludes, "…according to many traditional Jewish interpreters, the Gentile nations misinterpreted the (apparently) vicarious sufferings of the (relatively speaking) righteous Jews in exile. This is a step in the right direction, but it is not quite on target. What has really happened is that the *people of Israel* misinterpreted the *truly vicarious* sufferings of the *totally righteous* Jew." For further detail on the Suffering Servant being a single righteous vicarious sufferer who atones as a messianic figure as well, see Michael L. Brown, *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus*, vol.2: *Theological Objections* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), sec. 3.15.

Luke's description of how Jesus was treated and Luke's report of how Jesus described how he would be treated, particularly the πάσχω that he would have to endure as Israel's Messiah occurs five times in the gospel of Luke and four times in the book of Acts. When the כָּאַב of the Old Testament refers to a type of suffering brought on by another agent, whether divine or human, and associated with persecution and/or associated with the messiah there are ten out of sixteen occurrences of כָּאַב. This is to show the volume of words which the Old Testament and the New Testament share in common around the words כָּאַב and πάσχω.

The historical plausibility which helps add to the strength of a strong intertextual meaning between כָּאַב and πάσχω can be found in linking the record of historical actions as Jesus being a congruent component and historical figure with the prophetic utterance of Isaiah who is also rooted as a historical figure. If one cannot see the plausibility of historicity which may occur between the actions of the divine interacting with humanity (for example, the prophetic role of God's Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 being fulfilled in Jesus Christ of the gospels) then viewing the biblical accounts as a type of myth or just purely a divine revelation devoid of historical merit may eventually result in what C. Stephen Evans writes about when he calls it, "…a loss…for there is a great difference between a story which reveals truth about someone, and an actual series of events which makes possible a relation with that someone."[121]

Because of the historical *plausibility* of Jesus Christ being the fulfillment of the role of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 and its culmination in the Gospels[122] the intertextual connection between the suffering (כָּאַב) of Isaiah 53 and the suffering (πάσχω) of Luke 24:26 and

[121] C. Stephen Evans, *The Historical Christ and the Jesus of Faith: The Incarnational Narrative as History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 80.

[122] For further detail on the historical plausibility of Jesus Christ's identity as the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, see Darrel L. Bock & Mitch Glaser, eds. *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2012).

other Gospels is conceivable. This is to say that if the Suffering Servant or Messiah of Isaiah 53 describes a suffering which is attached to a prophetic figure that is tenably connected to Jesus Christ and the suffering he endured as the plausible messiah in the Gospels then the intertextuality is certainly tenable as well and is conceivable under the test for intertextual meaning that has been described above.

There is also historical precedence of the use of suffering (כָּאַב) of Isaiah 53 being interpreted as intertextually connected to the suffering (πάσχω) of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. University of Göttingen Chair of Old Testament, Herman Spieckermann, acknowledges that, "The concept of 'vicariousness' or 'vicarious suffering' (*Stellvertretung, stellvertretendes Leiden*) in the Old Testament is inextricably linked with Isaiah 53."[123] This vicarious suffering of the Servant in Isaiah 53 is unique in its expression as it describes a mediator which takes on suffering. This is a role which, "God always remains the one who does the decisive thing himself."[124] The intertextual link of this vicarious suffering of the Suffering in Isaiah 53 can be attested to by scholars such as Peter Stuhlmacher when he writes,

> By making one of the first applications of the whole Servant text, including its suffering motif, to an individual figure Jesus and his disciples after Easter extended the early Jewish interpretation independently.[125]

While some scholars have questioned the Messiah's suffering to be linked to the references of the suffering messiah in the Gospels[126] others have affirmed the unique completion

[123]Herman Spieckermann, "The Conception and Prehistory of the Idea of Vicarious Suffering in the Old Testament," in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, eds. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing, 2004), 1.

[124] Ibid, 15.

[125] Peter Stuhlmacher, "Isaiah 53 in the Gospel and Acts," in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources,* eds. Bernard Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, 147.

of the concept suffering found in Isaiah Servant Songs. This uniqueness of the suffering found in Isaiah 53 can be intertextually linked to how Jesus Christ made the concept complete in the passages previously mentioned. As Joseph Blenkinsopp writes,

> The sacrificial analogy, exemplified by the suffering and dying Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 53, was, however, only fully and unambiguously articulated in the language in which early Christian writings expressed the meaning of the life and death of Jesus.[127]

In terms of satisfactory insightful readings of the Old and New Testament texts which allude to an intertextual link between כָּאַב and πάσχω, one can read the post-resurrection text of Luke where Jesus says, "Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day." (Luke 24:46 NKJV) Joel B. Green writes of the suffering which Luke mentions,

> 'To suffer' is regularly used by Luke to denote the totality of Jesus' passion…Luke does provide direct hints for the scriptural basis of the reversal Jesus has experienced in his life, death, and resurrection, by drawing above all on the Psalms and Isaiah in his presentation of Jesus' passion.[128]

Clinton Arnold also attests to the Early Church understanding of the suffering found in the Lukan passage, "The early church recognized the suffering of the Messiah in passages like Ps 2;16;22;118; Isa 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12."[129]

In Mark 9:12 and Luke 9:22 where πάσχω is used to describe the suffering the Messiah must endure, R. T. France writes of the Messiah and Jesus' rejection, "…the thought of rejection

---

[126] For further explanation of viewing the suffering of Isaiah 53 as an, "isolated terminological" analogy see, Martin Hengel with Daniel P. Bailey, "The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period," in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, eds. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, 132.

[127] Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Sacrificial Life and Death of the Servant (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)," *Vetus Testamentum* 66, no.1 (January 2016): 13.

[128] Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 856-7.

[129] Clinton E. Arnold, ed., *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 183.

is clearly present in both Ps 118:22 and Isa 53:3, and few more probable sources can be suggested for the conviction that Scripture predicts the rejection of the Son of Man."[130] Jesus Christ as the Isa 53:3 "man of sorrows" (מַכְאֹבוֹת from the previously discussed כָּאַב) is attested throughout the gospels during the passion of Jesus Christ in Matt 26:37-38, Mark 14:34, and Luke 22:45. While there is some scholarly debate as to the direct link that Jesus Christ and the Suffering Servant share in Isa 53:3-4, the allusion to Jesus Christ as the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 is often believed and, "The presupposed Old Testament prophecy is not hard to find."[131] This is all to say that the intertextual link between two words for suffering, כָּאַב and πάσχω, has been able to follow the criteria of intertextual coherence that Richard Hays and other scholars often follow. This same intertextual coherence of the expressions of suffering seen in the Scriptures will also be evident in the Early Church Fathers' writings which appropriated many of the same prophetic Scriptures.

The Suffering of God

This following section is not meant to be a full theological treatment of the possibility of a divine agent like God to endure suffering or the full implications of divine immutability or impassibility, but it is to be more focused on Old and New Testament biblical accounts where God is mentioned as One Who possibly suffers. This is done in order to help illustrate how suffering is something which not only has a continuity with human agents in biblical literature but it also has continuity with the divine agent, that being God.

[130] France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 361.

[131] Craig A. Evans, "Isaiah 53 in the Letters of Peter, Paul, Hebrews, and John," in *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*, eds. Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser, 151.

When speaking of God suffering, as biblical literature expresses, there are several representative Scriptures which are often addressed.[132] Gen 6:6 speaks of a type of regret that God suffers, "And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart." In Job 4:2 and Ex 32:14 it shows how God relents of His anger because of repentance on behalf of the people He sought to bring judgment on. There is also record of God, as Jesus Christ, enduring suffering on earth, especially the suffering of the cross (Matt 27:33-35; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:33; John 19:17-18). There is also record in both the Old and New Testament of grieving the Holy Spirit of God (Isa 63:10; Eph 4:30).

Looking at the particular verses which concern grieving of the Holy Spirit, one can ask if God truly does grieve or if this grief is something that occurs because God Himself is *said* to be grieved rather than any inherent grieving that would affect the divine essence of the Holy Spirit. The Septuagint use of παρωξύναν in Isa 63:10 that is translated as "provoked" is וְעִצְּבֻ֖ו ("and mistreated") in the Hebrew from the root עָצַב ("displeased" or "grieved"). The Vulgate translates as *adflixerunt*.[133] These are all different than the present imperative active word translated as "grieved" in Eph 4:30 which is λυπεῖτε or "to make sad."[134] The idea of "making God's Spirit sad"[135] is unique to the Scriptures in Eph 4:30 when talking about a divine agent being affected or suffering in this case.

---

[132] Daniel Castelo, *The Apathetic God: Exploring the Contemporary Relevance of Divine Impassibility* (Colorado Springs, CO: Paternoster, 2009); James F. Keating and Thomas Joseph White, *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009); J. Y. Lee, *God Suffers for Us: A Systematic Inquiry into a Concept of Divine Passibility* (Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media, 2012); for an extensive list of scholars on either sides of the argument see, Thomas G. Weinandy, "Does God Suffer?," *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* (2001).

[133] *Adflixerunt* refers to the third-person plural perfect active indicative of *adfligo,* (wretched, distressed, shattered).

[134] L&N § 25.275.

[135] Ibid.

Several prominent theologians and scholars are reticent in admitting that God would truly be grieved or that God would be anything less than impassible. Thomas Weinandy sees the history of Christian theology primarily one that has held the suffering of God, "as axiomatic that God is impassible—that is, He does not undergo emotional changes of state, and so cannot suffer."[136] John Calvin views the grieving of God's Spirit as something which is a, "human form of expression" but not necessarily any part of the divine nature.[137] J. Y. Lee elaborates on this component of divine suffering which to him seems to be best concentrated in the form of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah and seems to not be a graspable and understandable part of the divine essence when he writes,

> Even though the nature of divine suffering is a mystery to us, we are led to believe that there is a possibility of discerning an analogous knowledge about it. The analogous knowledge is given to us in the biblical symbol which depicts the nature of divine suffering. Just as the wrath of God is the symbol of the manifestation of divine inner tension, the "Servant of the Lord" is a characteristic symbol of divine suffering.[138]

What is possible in comprehending the divine suffering of God is the idea that there is a connection between the biblical accounts of the suffering of God and the suffering of human beings. This is due to the biblical witness of the incarnation and suffering of Jesus, the Son of God. If one holds to the identity of the Suffering Servant to be Jesus Christ then one can read Isa 63:9 with the Suffering Christ in mind, "In all their affliction [צָרָה] He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them." This intertextually coordinates with the affliction or suffering that Jesus bore on humanity's behalf when one reads New Testament Scriptures which attest to the purpose of Jesus' Christ's

---

[136] Weinandy, "Does God Suffer?"

[137] John Calvin, *Isaiah* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000), 375.

[138] Lee, *God Suffers for Us*, 20.

suffering, death, and resurrection in Rom 3:21-26, 4:23-25, and 1 Pet 2:21-25, among others.

While there does seem to be a component of divine sorrow or sadness on the part of God because of the choices His created human beings have made, this can be attributed to what Augustine and more elaborately by Gary Culpepper when they write about the "permissive will" of God which allows suffering "through the Father's providential knowledge of the suffering of the Son."[139] This kind of suffering is not dependent on the created being but rather is a part of God's providential plan which would allow God to send His Son Jesus Christ into a world of evil and all kinds of suffering.[140] In God's allowance of this participation of suffering it may cause a type of sorrow which can be defined as being, "moved by another" but only to the extent of what God permissively wills to happen within His greater plan which is culminated in the redemptive suffering of Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament we read in Heb 2:18 and 1 Pet 2:21 we read of Christ's suffering for us and with us. Paul speaks of the fellowship of Christ's suffering when he writes, "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death." (Phil 3:10, NKJV) Paul repeatedly affirms dying and rising *with* Christ— an action of solidarity and identity with Jesus Christ.[141] As James Keating writes, "God's solidarity with us in passibility is an essential element of both his own true identity as God, and of his soteriological triumph over evil."[142] This is only to help illustrate how the

[139] Gary Culpepper, "One Suffering in Two Natures': An Analogical Inquiry into Divine and Human Suffering," in *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering*, eds. James F. Keating and Thomas Joseph White (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009), 88.

[140] See Augustine, *Confessions and Enchiridion* 5.7, trans. Albert C. Outler (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955).

[141] Peter T. OBrien, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1991), 400.

[142] Keating and White, *Divine Impassibility*, 21.

concept of suffering, whether being endured by a human or divine agent, is a concept which retains intertextual continuity throughout both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. Thomas Weinandy comments on this divine witness throughout biblical literature,

> The very language used, such as compassion, sorrow, suffering, anger, forgiveness, and relenting, seeks to express God's unswerving and unalterable transcendent nature as the One All Holy God who is Savior and Creator.[143]

The Suffering of Humanity

When approaching the concept of human suffering, whether one ascribes to the witness of biblical literature or not, one cannot help but encounter it. Australian Heideggerian philosopher and Distinguished Professor at the University of Tasmania Jeff Malpas writes,

> To attend to suffering, to recognize the fact of suffering, to respond to the suffering around us, is simply to attend to the fact of our own humanity; and so to ignore it, to fail to respond to its call, is also a failure to face up to the character of our own being.[144]

The suffering of humanity has been shown to have spanned both the Old and the New Testament with varieties of suffering possessing intertextual links between the testaments. As Keith Warrington of Regents Theological College states,

> Suffering is a constant theme throughout the Bible. It is associated with various features, sometimes negatively, being a consequence of sin, but also positively, being associated with persecution or development in one's faith.[145]

Eleonore Stump's cogent assessment of the intricacies of biblical narratives when describing suffering seem to communicate clearly when she writes of, "…the density characteristic of some

---

[143] Weinandy, "Does God Suffer?"

[144] Jeff Malpas and Norelle Lickiss, eds., *Perspectives on Human Suffering* (Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media, 2012), 1.

[145] Keith Warrington, "Healing and Suffering in the Bible." *International Review of Mission* 95, no. 376-377 (January-April 2006): 154+, accessed October 17, 2016, http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/ps/i.do?p=AONE&u=vic_liberty&id=GALE|A149515562&v=2.1&it=r&sid=summon&userGroup=vic_liberty&authCount=1. Warrington also affirms the role of God as healer of the sufferer in both the Old and New Testament.

biblical texts and the ability of those texts to convey an enormous amount with very few words."[146] This is to convey not only the complexity of how human suffering is communicated in the biblical texts but also the very existence of the biblical texts trying to wrestle with and illustrate human suffering.

There will not be a dedication of large portions of this paper to discuss all of the approaches to suffering from the Bible. Rather, the desire is to help show in this section how Scripture has a continuity of its witness about suffering. Suffering is an inseparable and consequential dynamic of human existence and all of biblical literature bears witness to the varieties of suffering and the human response to it. Brian Han Gregg notes,

> From the Garden of Eden in Genesis to the new creation in Revelation, we find attempts to understand the cause of suffering, find deliverance from suffering, remain faithful in the midst of suffering and understand the mystery of suffering. We may not like the answers we find in Scripture, but we may never accuse it of turning a blind eye to the problem.[147]

While other scholars such as Bart Ehrman see a failure of the biblical literature to *answer* humanity's questions about suffering, Ehrman still acknowledges the Bible's involvement with the fact of human suffering when he writes of how his book, *God's Problem: How the Bible Fails to Answer Our Most Important Question*, "…tries to explore some aspects of the problem, especially as they are reflected in the Bible, whose authors too grappled with the pain and misery in the world."[148]

The biblical narratives do present such a wide variety of the dimensions of human suffering. From the iconic suffering Job to the lifelong heartbreaks of King David to the

---

[146] Stump, *Wandering in the Darkness*, 178-9.

[147] Han Gregg, *What Does the Bible*, 14.

[148] Bart D. Ehrman, *God's Problem: How the Bible Fails to Answer Our Most Important Question* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009), 1.

longsuffering of Hannah to the spiritual and physical trials of Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul, suffering is presented in, "its manifold variety, from moral evil to psychic brokenness and shame"[149] and it involves human agents who may or may not respond perfectly to the suffering which they encounter but nonetheless bear witness to not only its existence but how the God of the Bible may speak to the very issues of human suffering.

While Bart Ehrman may lament how the Bible may "fail to answer" the problem of suffering and evil which is so apparent in the world humanity dwells and that the Bible seems to give simplistic answers at best,[150] the most stringent of the biblical critics often do admit that the biblical literature does attempt to give understandings from the perspective of the Scripture's author(s)–be they divine or human. Shortly before his death in 2011, Christopher Hitchens (one of the most outspoken atheists and critics of the Bible in the last fifty year) comments on the timeless character of the Tyndale and King James version of Scripture. Hitchens, despite his apparent antagonism towards Scripture,[151] commented about the Bible's ability to address suffering in the context of Dan 3:17 and the fiery furnace that Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego were about to face.

> From the stricken beach of Dunkirk in 1940, faced with a devil's choice between annihilation and surrender, a British officer sent a cable back home. It contained the three words "but if not … " All of those who received it were at once aware of what it signified. In the Book of Daniel… They made him an answer: "If it be so, our god whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of

[149] Stump, *Wandering in the Darkness,* xix.

[150] Ehrman, *God's Problem*, 263-4.

[151] Christopher Hitchens, *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2008), 102. Hitchens is clear about how he views particular components of the Bible when he writes, "The Bible may, indeed does, contain a warrant for trafficking in humans, for ethnic cleansing, for slavery, for bride-price, and for indiscriminate massacre, but we are not bound by any of it because it was put together by crude, uncultured, human mammals."

> thy hand, o King. / *But if not,* be it known unto thee, o king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."[152]

Hitchens was commenting on how the Bible attempted to answer suffering in the richness of the King James language used. Whether one ascribes to the efficacy of how the Bible helps one cope with the condition of human suffering, there is little doubt as to whether or not the biblical literature addresses it.

One could say that the Bible gives a *witness* to the issues of suffering in humanity. Gerald Peterman writes about the efficacy of this witness,

> The affective appeal is a way the writer gets our attention, draws us into what is happening in the story, and makes us ready to be hit by the message. Furthermore, the way admirable characters feel in suffering, respond in suffering, and give voice to suffering teaches us how to do the same.[153]

One of the major aspects of this work is to show exactly how that scriptural witness of suffering could be used as an apologetic device which bears witness not only to the suffering and the sufferer but to the credibility of Scripture as well as to the God of whom it describes as being able, "to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed…" (Isa 61:1; Luke 4:18). To this *witness* of suffering, we now turn.

The Witness of Suffering

When the idea of *witness* is mentioned in the Old Testament it is predominantly rooted in the Hebrew עֵד (*ayd*). In congruence with the idea of suffering being a type of witness, one can read Job 16:19 as Job is speaking of his exasperating suffering as being something which will be arbitrated with God by an arbitrator or witness on his behalf when he says, "Surely even now my

[152] *Fair* (March 30, 2011): 98.

[153] Schmutzer and Peterman. *Between Pain and Grace*, 250.

witness is in heaven, and my evidence is on high." Although there are arguments that the עֵד which Job speaks of is a pointing towards a messianic figure[154] I believe the witness (עֵד) which Job speaks of is his own cry of suffering since the third option of God acting as arbitrator to himself seems to be a strained reading and, "extremely awkward."[155]

Not only would God act as Job's witness against himself but any other divine agent as well, according to Job's own words in Job 9:32-33 where he understands that there is no, "mediator between us [God and Job]." I would concur with the assessment of who the witness is by David J.A. Clines in this often disputed verse when he writes, "…there is *no* personal witness in heaven." It is rather the personal *lament* of his suffering and his "affirmation of innocence that stands as his witness in God's presence."[156]

The witness of Job's suffering can also be seen earlier in chapter 16 when he refers to his shriveling up and leanness which he suffers from due to how God has "worn him out."[157] Although the MT perceives the witness of Job 16:9 to be of divine origin the MT also renders the shriveling and leanness of Job 16:8 to be a "witness against him." While there are different renderings of the type of suffering described as "shriveled up" or "bound up" it is clear that the suffering which Job is enduring is a suffering that bears witness to his plight.[158]

This witness of suffering and God's involvement in the suffering in biblical literature is also found in the New Testament in the Gospel account of John 20:24-29 as Jesus is showing

---

[154] Walter C. Kaiser, *The Messiah in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 61-64.

[155] Tremper Longman III, *Job* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 239.

[156] David J. A. Clines, *Job 1-20, Volume 17* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 390.

[157] "But now He has worn me out; You have made desolate all my company. You have shriveled me up, and it is a witness against me; my leanness rises up against me and bears witness to my face." (Job 16:7-8) The MT also supports this reading of how Job's suffering is a witness to his condition and God's involvement in it.

[158] Tremper Longman III, *Job*, 237.

Thomas the scars of the nail prints from his hands and the wound of the spear in his side from his crucifixion. The very suffering which Jesus endured on the cross has become a witness to who God is and how God may speak through that suffering. Leon Morris writes of the import of this suffering witness to the early believers, "This incident…is of the utmost importance for an understanding of the way the first Christians came to know that the resurrection had indeed taken place."[159] Loyola University professor of New Testament, Urban C. von Wahlde, also sees the continuity shown in this account when he writes, "Thomas not only verifies the physicality of the body of Jesus but also the continuity of the risen Jesus with the person who suffered on the cross."[160]

The very appearance of the wounds inflicted on Jesus Christ and his subsequent resurrection helped testify to the truth of the divine identity of Jesus Christ. This is agreed on by scholars such as von Wahlde who state, "This is generally considered the clearest and most unequivocal identification of Jesus with God by a human in the New Testament."[161] D. A. Carson comments on how the confession of Thomas, "My Lord and My God!" is not so much "shocked profanity addressed to God" as it is a personal address to Jesus as God and that, "an overwhelming majority of grammarians rightly take the utterance as vocative address to Jesus."[162] (John 20:28) This is only to show that scholars generally believe that event of Thomas declaring Jesus' divinity with the vocative address which includes the pairing of the title of God

[159] Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995), 751.

[160] Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John,* vol.2 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2010), 870.

[161] Ibid., 868.

[162] D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2016), 658-9.

(LORD) used in the LXX for Yahweh with the LXX term for God (*Elohim*) and addressed specifically to Jesus and not in any forced reading of the text which would remove the divinity ascribed to Jesus and make Thomas' exclamation as one directed to God in general praise, as in the case of Theodore of Mopsuestia's interpretation, which was later discarded in 553 by the Second Council of Constantinople.[163]

Thomas' declaration of the divinity of God, "My Lord and my God!" would only have been declared if Thomas had seen the wounds that indicated the suffering and crucified Jesus was indeed alive and what Jesus had promised concerning his resurrection was indeed true. The wounds of Christ which Thomas examined point towards, among other things, a redemptive suffering rather than a suffering that ended in death. Jesus Christ's wounds at his resurrection appearance to Thomas and the others can be said to have apologetic weight or witness to the veracity of who God is in terms of power over the very death and suffering which Jesus Christ endured. Michael Licona notes about the apologetic tendency found in the epiphany of John 20:24-29, "This [physical state of Jesus Christ] suggest an apologetic tendency in the tradition that objectified Jesus' presence by emphasizing bodily features or functions."[164] The physical life of Jesus, which included his physical suffering, served as a living apologetic. In Norman Geisler and Patrick Zukeran's book, *The Apologetics of Jesus*, Norman Geisler comments on how little has been written about the apologetic methods of Jesus Christ and he states, "Jesus not only had an apologetic, he was an apologetic. He not only persuaded people with his arguments, he also persuaded them with his life."[165]

---

[163] "Second Council of Constantinople – 533 A.D.," Papal Encyclicals Online, accessed October 20, 2016, http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Councils/ecum05.htm#Sentence%20against%20the%20Three%20Chapters.

[164] Michael R. Licona, *The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 541 n. 277.

[165] Geisler and Zukeran, *The Apologetics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books), 165.

Part of this persuasion can also be viewed in the biblical accounts where there is a similar proclamation of the identity of Jesus Christ in what is often termed the "confession of the soldiers" in Matt 27:54 and Mark 15:39. While there have been an increasing number of scholars that have attempted to make the soldier's utterance, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!" (after witnessing the crucifixion of Jesus Christ), as something that is more sarcastic than declarative,[166] or something that is either, "an ambiguous pronouncement or an ironic form of mockery,"[167] the proclamation of the soldier at the cross in Matt 27:54 and Mark 15:39 does have the appearance of a sincere affirmation and confession.

These two particular examples of confessional proclamations by both the centurion and the Apostle Thomas were made in view of the condition of Jesus Christ's body and the suffering which had been endured (John 20:24-29) or was enduring (Matt 27:54; Mark 15:39). This is to say that the suffering or marks of suffering which Jesus bore (crucifixion, nail prints in hand, spear mark in his side) were integral to the confession of Thomas and the soldier. Without the marks of suffering both confessions of Thomas and the soldier would be without cause or merit. Thus, the suffering and marks of suffering of Jesus Christ in these accounts lends evidential weight to the proclamations given about the identity of Jesus Christ and may help in what Geisler call, "Jesus's life as an apologetic."[168]

---

[166] See Donald H. Juel, *A Master of Surprise: Mark Interpreted* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994), 74.

[167] Kelly R. Iverson, "A Centurion's 'Confession': A Performance-Critical Analysis of Mark 15:39," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 350. Iverson enlists the help of ancient delivery techniques, illocutionary force, characterization, and the performance scenario envisioned by the Gospel writers in order to help bring further clarity and meaning to a passage she believes, along with a wide assortment of scholars, contributes to an understanding of the passage as one that is meant to be more declarative along the line of a confessional more than anything else.

[168] Geisler and Zukeran, *The Apologetics of Jesus*, 147.

Apologetics Defined

What necessarily constitutes an apologetic? With the wide variety of apologetic methods and the subsequent argumentative strategies, clarification on the nature and purpose of apologetics for this particular paper is needed. When one reads the word "apologetics" one can infer that it comes from the Greek ἀπολογία and refers to a "defense" particularly when speaking in order to defend a particular position.[169] This definition of apologetics is given to help bring parameters to the discussion at hand. If apologetics is something which Christian apologists have practiced for nearly two thousand years, what has been the nature of what Alister E. McGrath has called, "defending, commending, and translating"[170] the Christian faith?

Often apologetics has been viewed as a primarily philosophical endeavor. Some of the most well-known examples of a purely philosophical idea of apologetics can be found in the *Dialogues of Plato* by Socrates who recounts Plato's *apologia* before the Athenian court.[171] There are also scholars such as Sharon D. Downey who may perceive *apologia* as something which has changed in function because of "subgenres" of apologia which have developed in the modern era.[172] The various subgenres of *apologia* which Downey mentions would be welcomed by the distinctive definition of Christian apologetics. This is due to how Christian apologetics which have emanated from the classic understanding of "giving a defense" not only becomes a philosophical task but it emanates from a biblical warrant as well which often strives for what

[169] Steven B. Cowan, "Introduction," in *Five Views on Apologetics*, edited by Stanley N. Gundry and Steven B. Cowan (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 8. See also, Alister E. McGrath, *Mere Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2012), 15. McGrath furthers the legal definition of *apologia* when he writes, "*apologia* is a 'defense,' a reasoned case proving the innocence of an accused person in court, or a demonstration of the correctness of an argument or belief."

[170] McGrath, *Mere Apologetics*, 17

[171] Plato, *Essential Dialogues of Plato*.

[172] Sharon D. Downey, "The Evolution of the Rhetorical Genre of Apologia," *Western Journal of Communication*, 57 (Winter 1993): 42.

Ronald B. Mayers terms a Christian "wholism" which can apply to "all facets of reality."[173] These facets of reality would also include Downey's sub-genres of *apologia* which include: self-exoneration, self-absolution, self-sacrifice, self-service, and self-deception.[174]

The Christian apologetics which have endured since the inception of Christianity have primarily revolved around specifically defending the faith. These apologetics particularly arose from questions, doubts, and accusations which the early Christians often had to encounter and answer. Critical in the Christians' response was the ability for the Christian to point towards, "signs and evidences they had found convincing."[175] These signs and evidences, as well as revelation, dogma, and human memories of the events, made up a majority of the early Christian apologetic and helped differentiate it from what could be termed "general religious apologetics."

Early on in the Christian church, not only were the particular components of apologetics meant to help define Christian faith and belief, but it also helped to inform what Alan Richardson calls, "the wider sphere of man's 'secular' knowledge (philosophy, science, etc.…with a view to showing that faith is not at variance with the truth that these enquiries have uncovered."[176] The particular aspect of Christian apologetics (to help defend the Christian faith as well as inform and transform one's understanding of the world by Christian revelation) is not only meant to be a tool to justify one's faith but to also help the believer to understand and reason. Therefore, due to the

---

[173] Ronald B. Mayers, *Balanced Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1984), 9. Mayers sees this overarching *Weltanschauung*to be comprised of the theologian interpreting, "the doctrines of Scripture that they provide overarching parameters to contemporary Christian thought and penetrating insights to detailed specifics."

[174] Downey, "The Evolution," 42. While Downey maintains that recognizing shifts in genre function over time can only help further understand and preserve the rhetorical landscape of culture, it is important to note how the particular sub-genres of *apologia* still may operate under the Christian apologetic "wholism" which Mayers and McGrath both describe.

[175] Avery Cardinal Dulles, *A History of Apologetics* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1999), 2.

[176] Alan Richardson, *Christian Apologetics* (London: Harper & Brothers, 1970), 19.

wide scope of literary genres available and as Anders-Christian Jacobsen sees, "This common content [which] can be expressed in many different literary forms and genres and it can[also] be addressed to many different persons and communities"[177] within the early Christian church and the surrounding culture it would be near difficult to say that there is an exact apologetic genre. Again, this understanding of what apologetics is coincides with the more wholistic Christian apologetics of Mayers and McGrath which seeks to defend and communicate how

> …the Christian's doctrine of man's dignity and depravity throws more light on the totality of man than any humanistic philosophy or biologized psychology…[in an] attempt to correlate these contributions and show Christianity's power of interpretation to both her followers and her gainsayers.[178]

Evidential Apologetics in the New Testament

As Avery Cardinal Dulles notes, it is on a *surface reading* of the New Testament that one could come to the conclusion that it is, "addressed to convinced Christians"[179] and not so much a collection of writings meant to convince anyone inside or outside of the faith. On further examination though, one is able to witness a wide variety of apologetic overtones throughout almost every book of the New Testament. In each of the five prominent methods (classical, evidential, presuppositional, reformed epistemology, and cumulative case) major proponents of each of these methods are sure to draw their method back to supporting scripture in the New Testament.[180]

---

[177] Anders-Christian Jacobsen, "Apologetics and Apologies – Some Definiitons," in *Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity: Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics*, eds. David Brakke, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and Jörg Ulrich (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009), 21.

[178] Mayers, *Balanced Apologetics*, 9-10.

[179] Dulles, *A History of Apologetics*, 1.

[180] See Steven B. Cowan et al., *Five Views on Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 2000).

What is salient to the work at hand is exactly how suffering may be used in an apologetic method in early Christianity. Due to the experiential and universal involvement of humanity with suffering, as discussed before, there will be more focus and exploration of the evidential method of apologetics found in Scripture. This method is primarily chosen because of the idea that those who had testified and communicated the Gospel of Jesus Christ were doing so because they had witnessed something, evidence per se, which was grounded in history and subsequently began to be argued to God from history. Alister McGrath comments on the importance of historical evidence used in Scripture,

> An appeal to the evidence of history unquestionably has an important role to play here…It poses a powerful challenge to those who argue, usually on rather flimsy grounds, that Christianity is just some kind of wish-fulfillment, by stressing the historical events that brought Christianity into being. Christian faith arose in part as a response to the history of Jesus of Nazareth.[181]

Part of the internal historical evidence of the New Testament often centered on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ which is used by many of the authors of the New Testament books as proof for his deity. Gary Habermas speaks to this evidential apologetic found in the internal witness of the New Testament when he writes,

> The God of the universe raised Jesus, approving both Jesus' personal claims to deity and the central thrust of his mission-to offer the opportunity for eternal life. This appears to be Jesus' view and also best represents the repeated emphasis of the earliest apostolic witness that we find in the New Testament.[182]

The suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the major propositions of the New Testament and is highly supported by the evidential method, both by current scholars such as Gary R. Habermas, Michael R. Licona, as well as Wolfhart Pannenberg. These and other

---

[181] McGrath, *Mere Apologetics*, 61.

[182]Gary R. Habermas, "Evidential Apologetics," in *Five Views on Apologetics*, edited by Stanley N. Gundry and Steven B. Cowan, 119-20.

evidential and non-evidential scholars recognize the evidential type of apologetic occurring in the New Testament. [183]

There are some scholars who believe the evidentialist approach to apologetics may, "not draw sufficiently on the biblical data relevant to the questions"[184] that the evidentialist investigates. Some may view the evidentialist's approach to the biblical literature as being something which flies in the face of postmodern thought. This postmodern thought or philosophy ultimately denies any ability to grasp a fully objective truth. This would result in what could be called a death of truth where, "an inevitable part of the general condition of postmodernity: [is] an acknowledgment of the impossibility (and indeed the undesirability) of reaching any absolute and final Truth."[185] This postmodern position of viewing truth as something primarily subjective may seem to thwart any headway the evidentialist may try to gain, particularly in the area of being able to establish evidence which would hold any veracity or apologetic proof.

The problem with the postmodern approach to evidence not holding any objective value can be found in the very lack of tenability to personally live out a postmodern view in relation to objective truth or solid, valid evidence. When the law of non-contradiction rears its head as one discovers the findings of objective truth and evidence's findings, the one who holds to postmodern truth is not bothered by these inconveniences to one's worldview. Thus, according to

[183] See Gary R. Habermas, *The Risen Jesus and Future Hope* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), Michael R. Licona, *The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), and Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus: God and Man*, trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1974).

[184] John M. Frame in "A Presuppositionalist's Response," in *Five Views on Apologetics*, edited by Stanley N. Gundry and Steven B. Cowan, 134.

[185] Joseph Natoli and Linda Hutcheson, eds., "Introduction," *A Postmodern Reader* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993), x-xi.

F. Leroy Forlines, for the postmodern thinker, "Reason is dead when the law of non-contradiction is ignored."[186]

Therefore, when looking at the evidential data of New Testament Scripture[187] one can reasonably conclude that the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ not only had apologetic value for the early Christians and Early Church but also had a reasonable grounding in the historical witness of the New Testament. The witness of the New Testament, particularly Paul and the writers of the Gospel, have proven to be corroborators who have given us reports which are valid.

There are other scholars such as Wayne Kannady, Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Newberry College, who leans towards viewing the copyists of the Gospels as ones who, while transmitting and reproducing the Gospels, "…revised, buttressed, corrected, harmonized, refined, polished, stylized, abbreviated, enhanced, or otherwise altered"[188] the manuscripts of which they copied. While Kannady may attach much value to the copyists' possibility of replete editorial license, Kannady acknowledges the centrality of the message of

---

[186] F. Leroy Forlines, *The Quest for Truth* (Nashville: Randall House Publications, 2001), 27.

[187] See Gary R. Habermas, *The Risen Jesus and Future Hope*, 221. The ability for one to apply Scripture's authority is due in part to what Habermas calls a "minimal amount of well-attested data, and is therefore generally accepted by critical scholars." This minimal data refers to what Habermas has termed "minimal facts" of Jesus' death and resurrection. These "minimal facts" that are generally accepted by at least 98% of scholars who represent secular, Christian, and other religious viewpoints. The minimal facts which, as Habermas believes, grounds the witness and validity of the NT's witness are: (1) Jesus died by Roman crucifixion, (2) the disciples had experiences that they thought were actual appearances of the risen Jesus, (3) the disciples were thoroughly transformed, even being willing to die for this belief, (4) the apostolic proclamation of the resurrection began very early, when the church was in its infancy, (5) James, the brother of Jesus and former skeptic, became a Christian due to an experience that he believed was an appearance of the risen Jesus, (6) Saul (Paul), the church persecutor, became a Christian due to an experience that he believed was an appearance of the risen Jesus. (pp. 26-27). This is important to note in terms of the veracity of the evidences found in the New Testament, which each of these minimal facts are, and therefore, the veracity of the witness to these evidences of the New Testament.

[188] Wayne C. Kannady, *Apologetic Discourse and the Scribal Tradition* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 250.

Jesus Christ as the *Logos* which held validity past any editorial license.[189] Associate Professor in Theology at Houston Baptist University, Michael R. Licona, writes of the validity and soundness of the witness of the New Testament biblical literature,

> However, what we do have is good. We have reports that Jesus had been raised from the dead from at least one eyewitness (Paul) and probably more (the Jerusalem apostles preserved in the kerygma). These reports are very early and provide multiple independent testimonies, as well as testimony from one who had been hostile to the Christian message previous to his conversion experience.[190]

To overlook the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ within the New Testament as a viable and coherent apologetic would be to extract the very evidence and heart of the New Testament. Bart Ehrman, a noted skeptic and textual critic of Christianity, even notes that, "Without the belief in the resurrection, Jesus would have been a mere footnote in the annals of Jewish history."[191] If Jesus were relegated to being a mere footnote in Jewish history then the New Testament would be virtually empty of the *sine qua non* resurrection of Jesus event which determined so much of the Early Church orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Jewish critic Pinchas Lapide also writes of the veracity of the New Testament accounts of the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

> Often it seems as if renowned New Testament scholars in our days want to insert a kind of ideological or dogmatic curtain between the pre-Easter and the risen Jesus to protest the latter against any kind of contamination by earthly three-dimensionality. However, for the first Christians who thought, believed, and hoped in a Jewish manner, the immediate historicity was not only a part of that happening but the indispensable precondition for the recognition of its significance for salvation. For all these Christians who believe in the incarnation (something I am unable to do) but have difficulty with the historically understood resurrection, the word of Jesus of the "blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel" (Matt. 23:24) probably applies.[192]

---

[189] Kannady, *Apologetic Discourse*, 250.

[190] See Michael R. Licona, *The Resurrection of Jesus,* 275-6.

[191] Bart D. Ehrman, *How Jesus Became God: The Exaltation of a Jewish Preacher from Galilee* (San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2015), 131-2.

[192] Pinchas Lapide, *The Resurrection of Jesus: A Jewish Perspective*, trans. Wilhelm C. Linss (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1982; reprint, Eugene, OR, Wipf and Stock, 2002), pp. 130-1.

For the first Christians, the evidential weight and what Pinchas Lapide terms as the "immediate historicity" of the resurrection events tied to Jesus Christ were foundational in one having an identity with the Christian movement. An evidential apologetic founded on the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ which is found in the New Testament writings was critical. The evidential weight of Jesus Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection was critical not only to the identity of the early Christian church but was also, as we will explore next, critical in how some of the first apologists communicated and defended the Christian faith to a world witnessing its formation. While textual critics like Bart Ehrman may state that the Bible may fail to answer the problem of evil and suffering it may also seem as if Ehrman is ignoring the evidential weight of the historicity of Jesus' resurrection which could help bring understanding to some of humanity's questions concerning suffering.

Apologetics of Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian

While the apologetics of the New Testament gospels would help bring weight and a coherent backdrop for Pauline apologetics, there would be new intellectual and apologetic demands which would face the church as they sought to address a culture which did not readily accept the Jewish Scriptures. Avery Cardinal Dulles writes about this transition for the church, "New forms of apologetic would become necessary when the church, primarily based on Hellenistic soil, was forced to deal continuously with persons born and bred in a very different intellectual world."[193]

From these new forms of apologetics there still remained conversion-narratives which the earliest apologists, such as Justin Martyr, were willing to communicate. These conversion

[193] Dulles, *A History of Apologetics*, 25.

narratives "influenced thousands of converts between the 2nd and early 4th centuries" and "…perhaps all – of the converted apologists of this period considered it beneficial to their apologetic argumentation to give their readers accounts for their own conversion."[194] Personal conversion stories were used by each of this work's selected apologists but Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Cyprian of Carthage also used other various forms of apologetics.

For Justin Martyr, who represents more of Eastern Christianity in its inception, his primary methods of apologetic were based on arguing from Scripture and the prophecies which Jesus Christ fulfilled as well as attempting to show the weaknesses of the Stoic and platonic philosophies of his time and culture.[195] With his type of apologetic, Justin wanted to show how Christianity was the "true philosophy" and superior to Greek philosophy.[196] This involved not only determining the apologetic and ontological bridge which existed between the Jewish and Christian Scriptures but also distinguishing between reason and revelation in the process.[197] As Justin argued for Jesus Christ being the true Logos he also argued for Jesus Christ being fully human. For Justin, part of the divine and human identity of Jesus involved Jesus being able to fully suffer as humans did and therefore, Jesus—for Justin—was not an aloof unfeeling god but one who sympathized with the suffering of humanity.[198] This understanding of suffering and its use in Justin Marty's apologetics will be addressed later in this work.

---

[194] Jakob Engberg in "'From Among You are We. Made, not Born are Christians': Apologists' Accounts of Conversion before 310 AD," in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics*, eds. David Brakke, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and Jorg Ulrich, 57.

[195] See Craig D. Allert, *Revelation, Truth, Canon, and Interpretation: Studies in Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho* (Netherlands: Brill, 2002).

[196] See Erwin R. Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr* (Jena: Verlag Frommannsche Buchhandlung, 1923), 106.

[197] Ibid, 108.

[198] Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Volume 1*: The Apostolic Fathers - Justin Martyr - Irenaeus*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1956), 251.

For Irenaeus of Lyons, who represents more of Western Christianity in its inception, his primary methods of apologetics revolved around refuting heresies such as the Ebionites, Nicolaitians, Valentinians, and other Gnostics which sought to, among other things, demean and limit the need for the atoning and divine messiah, Jesus Christ.[199] His apologetic methods centered on the use of aesthetics and logic to help illustrate the pre-eminence of Christ and the Scriptures. While logic, rhetoric, and aesthetics were major vehicles of argumentation for Irenaeus his view of Scripture was not diminished in his effort to persuade his audiences. John C. Peckham notes Irenaeus's view of Scripture, "…Irenaeus is adamant about the importance of both the apostolic writings of the New Testament (NT) and the prophetic writings of the Old Testament (OT).[200] Irenaeus can be viewed as more intellectual in his approach than Justin Martyr.

Even though both were facing different threats and objections against Christianity, Eric Osborn views Irenaeus as a church father where, "No one has presented a more unified account of God, the world and history than has Irenaeus."[201] As with Justin Martyr, Irenaeus also drew on the suffering of Christ to further his polemic against what he viewed to be the Gnostic's inferior understanding of suffering.[202] Like Justin Martyr, Irenaeus's view and apologetic use of suffering will be further explored in this work.

With Cyprian of Carthage, who represents early North African Christianity, his apologetic methods were focused on addressing confrontation with a persecutory Roman

---

[199] Robert M. Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 16-17.

[200]John C. Peckham, "Epistemological Authority in the Polemic of Irenaeus," *Didasklia* 19, (January 1, 2008): 51.

[201] Eric Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9.

[202] Roberts and Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 388.

government under Decian as well as issues with the confessors, the *lapsi*, and the martyrs who brought challenges to the authority of the bishop and the unity of the Christian church in Carthage.[203] His apologetic methods were two-pronged. One method of apologetic was an appeal to scriptural authority and purity of the church and was reserved for those who were creating schisms in the church at Carthage. The other apologetic method of Cyprian was directed towards the Jewish population where Cyprian not only argued from the authority of fulfilled Scripture but also the authority and identity which could come from Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah.

Like Cyprian's contemporaries Justin and Irenaeus, Cyprian drew on the apologetic use of suffering. For Cyprian this was seen in how he requested those who were being persecuted for their faith to emulate Jesus Christ in his suffering and how that bears a great witness not only for the church but for those outside of the church.[204] Throughout Cyprian's epistles, treatises, and books, Cyprian displays a generous supply of treatment on the issue of suffering and how it, among other facets of Christian life, could be viewed as encouragement to one's faith and its usefulness as an apologetic response.[205] History professor Gervase Phillips writes about the Christians of Cyprian's time and how they appropriated their own suffering to communicate the gospel,

---

[203] See J. Patout Burns Jr., *Cyprian the Bishop* (Hove, UK: Psychology Press, 2002), 3-4.

[204] Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325.,* volume 5 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1950), 505-7.

[205] See Eusebius and Paul L. Maier, *Eusebius—the Church History: A New Translation with Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1999), 293. Eusebius writes of the testimonial/apologetic value of how Christians encountered and coped with suffering that was a result of great famine and pestilence. He writes about the Christians of Cyprian's time, "…the zeal and piety of all the Christians were obvious to all the heathen. In this awful adversity they alone gave practical proof of their sympathy and humanity. All day long some of them attended to the dying and to their burial, countless numbers with no one to care for them. Others gathered together from all parts of the city a multitude of those withered from famine and distributed bread to them all, so that their deeds were on everyone's lips, and they glorified the God of the Christians. Such actions convinced them that they alone were pious and truly reverent to God."

> For Christians martyrdom transformed the most savage stigma of their alleged deviance, their public humiliation, degradation and execution as criminals and enemies of mankind, into an opportunity to share Christ's passion and partake directly in the struggle with Satan.[206]

These apologetic responses of Cyprian which involve suffering will be addressed further in this work.

Summary

There is a virtual common understanding that suffering among people who have claimed the God of Scripture has been recorded in the biblical tradition since at least its written record began. The different Hebrew and Greek word usages for suffering have been shown to have definite differences in meaning and yet, two particular words כָּאַב and πάσχω have been shown to have an intertextual link which adhere to the scholarly standards of Richard Hays, Steve Moyise, and many other scholars when it comes to the plausibility of the existence of intertextual links between the words כָּאַב and πάσχω which describe suffering in the Old and New Testament.

The suffering of God and the suffering of humanity have also been shown to have continuity found in the human agents in biblical literature and also continuity with the God of the divine agent of Scripture, that being God, in the form of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah. Where suffering exists as a type of witness in both the Old and New Testament, the previously discussed texts found in Job 46 and John 20 have helped show the possibility of suffering being a type of biblical witness to the existence and intervention of God into human affairs. Also, the confessional declarations of the identity of Jesus found in the biblical accounts of Matt 27:54 and Mark 15:39 as well as John 20:24-29 lend towards the idea of suffering being used when verifying the identity of Jesus Christ. Due to the evidential elements of suffering which helped

[206] Gervase Phillips, "Deviance, Persecution and the Roman Creation of Christianity," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 29, (August 5, 2014): 266.

shape the identity and purpose of the Early Church, which was found in the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, there is plausibility to suffering being a primary component of the evidential apologetic method used by the Early Church.

With the definition and nature of early Christian apologetics being centered on a more holistic approach of Christian apologetics that attempts to address Christianity's power (via the gospel of Jesus Christ) of interpretation on the totality of humanity, the evidential and historical aspect of the apologetic witness found in Scripture is clear. The evidential and historical event of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ was constitutional and idiopathic to the identity and apologetic of the early Christians. Representative of three different geographic and cultural components of the first few hundred years of Christianity, apologists Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Cyprian of Carthage each had different reasons for developing their respective apologetics. Each apologist also incorporated suffering into their apologetics and how the Christian faith had answers and defenses concerning suffering and death. These particular defenses made by these three apologists which incorporated suffering and death will be explored with greater depth in the upcoming chapters, three, four, and five. However, as this work has reviewed the biblical precedent, history, and witness of suffering, it now turns to the concepts of suffering in the ancient Greco-Roman world in which the early Christians lived.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONCEPT OF SUFFERING IN THE ANCIENT GRECO-ROMAN WORLD

The Concept of Suffering

"…neither he who unjustly acquires a tyranny, nor he who suffers in the attempt, for of two miserables one cannot be the happier."[207] This statement follows a conversation in Plato's *Gorgias* where Plato had constructed which hypothetically took place between Polus and Socrates where they were trying to determine if doing an injustice was worse or better than suffering without doing the injustice. In this statement Socrates is trying to show Polus that suffering in either way is unavoidable. Plato's Socrates goes on to ask Polus the proof for doing an injustice is better than suffering for not doing the injustice. Whether Plato's Socrates or Polus believes that suffering has merit or not or whether suffering is a form of punishment or *medicine*[208] is not of primary relevance to this conversation but rather the common understanding is that suffering, whether unjustly received or justly deserved, is something miserable that one cannot avoid.

While Plato's Polus and Socrates are both willing to explore the personally difficult and painful dimensions of suffering,[209] they do not limit suffering to a purely physical sensation.[210]

---

[207] Plato, *Gorgias*, 473E. Translated by Benjamin Jowett, (New York: Barnes and Nobles Classics, 2005), 1.473.19.

[208] Anthony Meredith, *Christian Philosophy in the Early Church* (London: T & T Clark International, 2012), 76.

[209] "What do you mean? Take a man who's caught doing something unjust, say, plotting to set himself up as tyrant. Suppose that he's caught, put on the rack, castrated, and has his eyes burned out. Suppose that he's subjected to a host of other abuses of all sorts, and then made to witness his wife and children undergo the same. In the end he's impaled or tarred. Will he be happier than if he hadn't got caught, had set himself up as tyrant, and lived out his life ruling in his city and doing whatever he liked, a person envied and counted happy by fellow citizens and aliens alike? Is this what you say is impossible to refute?" Benjamin Jowett, trans. *Gorgias* (Chicago: Oxford University Press, 1952), 1.28.473.

Rather than attempting to define suffering by interjecting modern notions of what suffering is and is not, attention can begin in this paper with what ancient philosophers believed suffering to consist of and how it manifested as well as how it was treated in their time. Throughout Plato's *Gorgias* and the works of Socrates the issue of suffering often comes up in various forms and situations.[211] In the previous example, the hypothetical conversation between Socrates and Polus does not arrive at which type of suffering is the more severe. What is clear is that suffering was an important subject in antiquity. This chapter will address a working definition of suffering and how it relates to the present after the initial exploration of how key figures of ancient Greece and Rome regarded the concept of suffering.

The Concept of Suffering in the Ancient Greco-Roman World

Among some current scholars there has been a renewed interest in the study of suffering in ancient Greco-Roman thought and history. These studies have attempted to portray the historical contexts of suffering and how different religious groups and the state have formed ways to define suffering as well as ways to cope with it or explain what suffering is. This has provided additional reference material for historians and theologians researching their various fields of interest. What is important at the outset of this definition of the concept of suffering is that suffering in the ancient Greco-Roman context is not limited to just persecutory suffering but

[210]Plato *Gorgias* 1,28.473. Socrates poses to Polus how suffering is evil in itself besides the physical stress that accompanies suffering.

[211] Ibid.,1.36.480. In Plato's *Gorgias* Plato addresses the suffering that comes about not only by disease and sickness but also by injustice and subsequent punishment. In this, Plato is calling attention to both the deleterious as well as the positive effects of suffering.

rather suffering, according to the ancients, involved individual as well as group experiences of enduring physical, psychological, economic, social, and spiritual pain, distress, or loss.[212]

Not only did the concept of suffering involve the foremost Greco-Roman philosophical leaders but it was embedded in the mythology that was familiar to most Romans and Greeks of antiquity. In one of the most vivid myths concerning suffering, the titan Prometheus steals fire from Zeus and gives it to humanity. Zeus punishes Prometheus by chaining him to a rock and having a giant eagle daily eating his regenerative liver. Not only does Zeus, king of the gods, inflict this terrible punishment on Prometheus for his theft of fire but Zeus also punishes mankind by creating Pandora. Pandora, whose name ironically means "all" or "universally gifted," was given a jar by Zeus which she was forbidden to open. Pandora's curiosity cannot be quenched and she opens the jar thus releasing on all of humanity "ten thousand or so other horrors"–plagues, sorrows, diseases, calamites, etc.[213]

This myth is important to the concept of what suffering is in the mind of Greco-Roman antiquity because for one, there are several characters that could be accused of bringing suffering into the world: Zeus for creating Pandora, Prometheus for stirring Zeus' wrath to create Pandora, Pandora herself for opening up all the evils on humanity, or humanity itself for taking the stolen gift of Prometheus thereby stoking Zeus' punitive wrath. Secondly, Zeus and other gods are not viewed as perfect or completely good as the God of the Judeo-Christian tradition is typically

[212] These particular components of suffering are found throughout ancient sources. See Plato's *Gorgias*, Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*, Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption*, as well as Seneca's *On the Happy Life*. Fuller detail will be given to a sampling of these writers throughout this chapter.

[213] See Stephen Trzaskoma et al., *Anthology of Classical Myth: Primary Sources in Translation* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 2004). While Trzaskoma acknowledges two different fragments which portray Pandora in two different lights of spiritual headship and leadership, the resultant suffering with all parties involved as described above is essentially the same. Suffering is something that is viewed as part and parcel of the human condition.

seen.[214] This is integral to the understanding of the concept of suffering in Greco-Roman antiquity because of how suffering was seen not only as a norm of the human experience but also a norm of the gods who either created suffering by punishing humans or endured suffering themselves due to their choices towards one another.

Ovid expresses a cynical view towards the existence of the Greco-Roman gods when he penned,

> Fertile poetic license extends to infinity
> And binds none of its words with history's truth.[215]

Yet Ovid, despite his cynicism towards the traditional Greco-Roman faith in gods and goddesses acknowledges the suffering that is real despite a belief in the gods or not when he writes,

> Though Jove is greater than swelling ocean's king,
> He's harassed by Neptune's wrath, I by Jove's.
> And that the greatest part of his toils are fiction,
> But my sufferings contain no myth.[216]

For Ovid, one of Rome's greatest poets, suffering was still a very real hardship, despite one's religious adherence.

Towards a Holistic Definition of Suffering in Antiquity

Suffering is a universal experience. As psychiatrist Gerald G. May states, "Certainly life brings suffering; no one escapes it…suffering arise from the simple circumstances of life

---

[214] See Bernard Evslin, Dorothy Evslin, and Ned Hoopes, *The Greek Gods* (New York: Scholastic, 1995), 88. A conversation between Echo and Aphrodite ensues where Aphrodite asks Echo if she would like the love of a god and Echo answers, "Alas sweet Aphrodite, I have seen no man who pleases me. And gods are too fickle." See also Ovid et al., *Ovid's Erotic Poems: "Amores" and "Ars Amatoria"* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 1.9.25. Ovid writes, "And of Mars is fickle, Venus, too. The conquered rise, and mighty plans fall through…Achilles raged, seeing Briseis hauled away,…And Mars, ensnared by Vulcan, started in to moan. There was no joke in heaven better known."

[215] Roger D. Woodard, *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 373.

[216] Ibid., 378.

itself."[217] Professor of philosophy at Saint Louis University, Eleonore Stump, begins her book *Wandering in the Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering* with, "Only the most naïve or tendentious among us would deny the extent and intensity of suffering in the world."[218] In looking at suffering in antiquity it is important to present several qualifications towards a more holistic definition of suffering. First, the term *holistic* will be used to encapsulate the individual as well as group experiences of enduring physical, psychological, economic, social, and spiritual pain, distress, or loss and not the components of suffering that animals or divine beings may endure. Secondly, the study at this point is concerned primarily with how those in antiquity perceived suffering. Samples of these perceptions will be taken from the literary sources of Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, Plato, Plotinus, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, Cyprian of Carthage, and rabbinic sources from the first and second centuries AD. Thirdly, the treatment of suffering in this work is not so much a theodicy as it is an examination of how those in antiquity coped with and viewed suffering from their particular contexts and worldviews.

With physical suffering Socrates sees how physical suffering itself is not evil or harmful in itself but that the only harm that can occur is harm to one's character. In speaking on what is most painful Socrates replies, "when they take medicine, for example, at the bidding of a physician, do they will the drinking of the medicine which is painful, or the health for the sake of which they drink?."[219] This is not to begin a commentary of Socrates' view of physical pain but rather to show that Socrates acknowledged its existence. With psychological pain, Plato writes about how a lover may suffer because of how love may be misinterpreted as friendship and not

---

[217] Gerald G. May, *The Dark Night of the Soul: A Psychiatrist Explores the Connection Between Darkness and Spiritual Growth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 9.

[218] Stump, *Wandering in the Darkness*, 1.

[219] Plato *Gorgias*, 1.54.8.

romantic love.[220] Economic suffering is found to be attested by Marcus Aurelius when he speaks of what he believes to be the futility of those in poverty, "But how worthless are all these poor people who are engaged in matters political, and, as they suppose are playing the philosopher."[221] In terms of social distress and loss Justin Martyr relays how Jesus Christ was prophesied in coming, "one, which has already happened, as that of a dishonored and suffering man; and the second, when, as has been proclaimed."[222] With spiritual suffering Plotinus writes about the body and soul having some unity in suffering,

> …then the essential duality becomes also a unity, but a unity standing midway between what the lower was and what it cannot absorb, and therefore a troubled unity; the association is artificial and uncertain, inclining now to this side and now to that in ceaseless vacillation; and the total hovers between high and low, telling, downward bent, of misery but, directed to the above, of longing for unison.[223]

Irenaeus also writes of spiritual suffering when he writes about the woman in Mark 5:21-43 suffering from the issue of blood. Here Irenaeus talks about how this woman would not be a type of Aeon that suffered as well as having, "participated in suffering."[224] These examples are not meant to give a precise definition of what suffering was to these authors of antiquity but rather to illustrate how each acknowledged the various dimensions of suffering which in turn helps define the whole of what suffering meant to the writers and their audiences. While the concept of

---

[220] Plato, *Selected Dialogues of Plato*, Translated by Benjamin Jowett, (New York: Random House Publishing, 2009), *Phaedrus* 1.255e. "…but when he is away, then he longs for his lover and is longer for, suffering love's image, requited love, which he calls and believes to be not love but friendship only.."

[221] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, AD 167. Translated by George Long, (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2012), 9.29.

[222] Justin Martyr, *The First and Second Apologies*, AD150. Translated by Leslie William Barnard, (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press), 59.

[223] Plotinus, *The Six Enneads*, AD 250. Translated by Stephen MacKenna, (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 4.18.

[224] Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies: 2:23*, AD 180. Translated by A. Cleveland Coxe, (Buffalo, NY: The Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1885), 23.

suffering was known throughout the ancient world, how particular segments of the Greco-Roman world regarded suffering had its differences and similarities.

Plato and Suffering

Throughout virtually all of Plato's surviving works his usage of *αξιός* (to suffer) is found when referring to physical, psychological, social, economic, or spiritual suffering. It is used most often in reference to suffering because of one being punished.[225] While it is often the case that Ἀξιός is used to describe the consequence of a deserved or mandated punishment,[226] the term has also been used to describe heartbreak as well as unwarranted sickness and physical pain.[227] It is important to note that Plato often was addressing suffering as being something that did result from punishment or as a consequence of one's own actions.

In Plato's primary works (*Republic*, *Apology*, *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, *Protagoras*) the mentioning of suffering is often brought out in Socratic dialogue that focuses on the idea of a warranted punishment.[228] Suffering was not meant to be redemptive to Plato but often suffering was the consequence of one's choices for good or evil. Plato does address suffering as something that is to be avoided and yet he asks which type of suffering is to be avoided the most in his conversation between Socrates and Polus:

> Soc. But have not you and the world already agreed that to do injustice is more disgraceful than to suffer?
> Pol. Yes.

---

[225] Plato *Apology*, 1.33. There are several other translations that point towards suffering by inference and context but *αξιός* is the particular Greek word which immediately denotes "to suffer" or "suffering." See Plato, *Gorgias*, translated by Benjamin Jowett145-47

[226] Plato *Gorgias*, 1.28-1.36.

[227] Ibid.,1.28.

[228] See Plato *Republic*, *Apology*, *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, *Protagoras* in *Essential Dialogues of Plato*. Translated by Benjamin Jowett, (New York: Barnes and Nobles Classics, 2005).

> Soc. And that is now discovered to be more evil?
> Pol. True.
> Soc. And would you prefer a greater evil or a greater dishonor to a less one? Answer, Polus, and fear not; for you will come to no harm if you nobly resign yourself into the healing hand of the argument as to a physician without shrinking, and either say 'Yes' or 'No' to me.
> Pol. I would say 'No.'
> Soc. Would any other man prefer a greater to a lesser evil?
> Pol. No, not according to this way of putting the case, Socrates.
> Soc. Then I said truly, Polus, that neither you, nor I, nor any man, would rather do than suffer injustice; for to do injustice is the greater evil of the two.
> Pol. That is the conclusion.[229]

For Plato, via Socrates and Polus, suffering does happen, and the choice between suffering and causing suffering through injustice is answered with the desire to avoid doing the injustice more than enduring the suffering.

This is to say that with a Platonic view towards suffering there is an acknowledgment of suffering being something that must be endured in cases where doing an injustice that would only exacerbate suffering is preferable and even desirable. While Plato does dialogue with the possibility that everyone does seek to avoid suffering[230] he also marks out how people are willing to suffer much for themselves and for their children and, "suffer through all sorts of ordeals, and even die for the sake of glory."[231] This is to show that Plato was not like the Epicureans of his time who desired to avoid pain at all costs and he did not lean towards the Stoic school of philosophy who believed that through sheer austerity one's soul can overlook suffering. Plato believed that human beings sought to avoid suffering if need be but would be willing to endure suffering for something which Plato believed to be noble, such as glory. He also advocated people to avoid practicing an injustice in order to avoid exacerbating any

[229]Plato *Gorgias*, 1.475.35.

[230] Ibid., 35.14-36.1. Here Plato describes how suffering and death are used by the court system in order for people to be truthful in order to avoid suffering and death.

[231] Plato *Symposium*, 1.208d.

suffering on others or themselves. Throughout the works of Plato there seems to be no clear definition of what suffering exactly is, but the frequency and contexts of suffering in the works of Plato do point towards the acknowledgement of physical, psychological, social, economic, and spiritual suffering in antiquity.

Plato did pay greater attention to suffering brought about by one's own corrupt or evil actions. This type of suffering for one's own wickedness and subsequent consequences is outlined several different ways in Plato's *Timaeus.*[232] Yet Plato in his *Republic* also involves God in the concept of suffering. Charles Talbert comments on how God may, "send evil to humankind only by way of discipline to improve and benefit the sufferer."[233] While Plato does acknowledge the role of God in shaping humanity by allowing suffering or sending evil, Plato's dominant dialogue with suffering revolves around how it is brought about by consequence of one's evil actions or injustice exercised which produces suffering.[234] Interestingly, in his *Apology*, Plato has Socrates comment on how unrighteous acts are worse than death even as he is facing his own mortality.[235]

Plato did not so much advocate the suicide of his mentor, Socrates, as he did acknowledge the reality of Plato's choice in the light of his own present time. In his *Apology*,

---

[232] Plato, *Timaeus*. Translated by Peter Kalkavage, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001), 1.42b. "If they were to master these [pleasure, pain, terror, anger, etc.], they would live in justice, but if they were mastered by them, then in injustice…If in that form he still did not refrain from evil, then in whatever mode he might make himself bad, he would always take on some such bestial nature in the similitude of that mode of life that was born in him."

[233] Charles H. Talbert, *Learning Through Suffering: The Educational Value of Suffering in the New Testament and Its Milieu* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 17.

[234] See Plato *Gorgias, Timaeus, Symposium,* and *Apology*.

[235] Plato *Apology* 39.1. "…and in other dangers there are other ways of escaping death, if a man is willing to say and do anything. The difficulty, my friends, is not in avoiding death, but in avoiding unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death."

Plato outlines the responses of Socrates to his accuser Meletus. At one point Socrates responds to his accuser and judges,

> But when the oligarchy of the Thirty was in power, they sent for me and four others into the Rotunda, and bade us bring Leon the Salaminian from Salamis, as they wanted to put him to death. This was an example of the sort of commands which they were always giving with the view of implicating as many as possible in their crimes; and then I showed, not in word only but in deed, that, if I may be allowed to use such an expression, I did not give a damn about death, and that my great and only care was not to do an unrighteous or unholy thing.[236]

Suffering and death were not the worse things that could happen to Socrates or Plato, rather, it was to have dishonor in doing what was unrighteous or evil which was what was to be avoided. While Plato acknowledged the role and concept of suffering in showing the character of a person, Plato did not view suffering as the ultimate reality.

The Stoic Emperor Marcus Aurelius and Suffering

While Platonism may have been a predominant philosophy in antiquity before the advent of Christianity, it was Stoicism that also existed during and after the inception of the New Testament church. The Stoicism of Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* is congruent to this study due to what R. B. Rutherford states when comparing Marcus Aurelius' fascination with death to Epictetus' treatment on the subject of life, "…[Marcus Aurelius'] fascination with the topic…we can discern in Marcus. Epictetus' eyes are more on life."[237] It has been commented that the philosopher Seneca could be viewed as one of the greatest and most lucid Stoic philosophers.[238]

---

[236]Plato, *Apology* 32.2.

[237] R. B. Rutherford, *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius: A Study* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 245. Rutherford partially attributes Marcus Aurelius' fascination with death to be bound up in his fascination with, "…a strange kind of poetry."

[238] Brad Inwood, *Reading Seneca: Stoic Philosophy at Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 43. "Without any commitment to theses borrowed from other schools, Seneca modifies in a sensitive and open way the established Stoic doctrine; the result is a theory more closely corresponding to Seneca's own experience and insight but which still entails orthodox conclusions, especially in ethics."

Seneca has been also seen as particularly insightful in Stoic philosophy as well.[239] Robert Mott Gummere in his work, *Seneca the Philosopher, and His Modern Message,* writes,

> …the antecedents of Seneca,; they assist us in our attempt to account for his blend of the millionaire and ascetic, for his literary catholicism, and for his attainment of the highest place in Rome short of the throne by means of his eloquence and his Stoicism.[240]

While it is true that Seneca has contributed greatly to the Stoic philosophy it is also true that the Stoic Emperor Marcus Aurelius was not short of the throne when attaining the highest place in Rome. It is from this privileged place of power and influence this paper will examine his Stoic commentary on suffering.

Stoics like Seneca and Marcus Aurelius were known for acknowledging emotions while at the same time they were sure to express the idea that, "A sage would never have grief, anger, or fear.[241] Marcus Aurelius was sure to direct others towards a Stoic detachment when it came to suffering. William Kaufman notes,

> And in the face of the inevitable pain, loss, and death – the suffering at the core of life- Aurelius counsels stoic detachment from the things that are beyond one's control and a focus on one's own will and perception.[242]

While Marcus Aurelius had some tendencies towards adopting some Platonic tendencies, especially in regards to the body, he did not, "betray his fundamental allegiance to Stoicism.[243]

---

[239] William B. Irvine, *A Guide to the Good Life: The Ancient Art of Stoic Joy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 45. "…his Stoic writings are quite wonderful. His essays and letters are full of insight into the human condition."

[240] Robert Mott Gummere, *Seneca the Philosopher, and His Modern Message* (Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1922), 12.

[241] Ismo Dunderberg, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Thomas Rasimus, eds. *Stoicism in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 71.

[242] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* [outside back cover].

[243] Dunderberg, Engberg-Pedersen, and Rasimus, *Stoicism*, 11.

This can be seen in Aurelius'*Meditations* as he acknowledges the body but still maintains an austere perspective on the determination of the soul and mind. He writes:

> Let the body itself take care, if it can, that it suffer nothing, and let it speak, if it suffers…But the soul itself will suffer nothing…for it will never deviate into such a judgment. The leading principle in itself wants nothing, unless it creates its own needs; and therefore it is both free from perturbation and unimpeded if it does not disturb and impede itself.[244]

Yet Marcus was not so austere as to have his Stoic philosophy kept away from his public policies and proclamations which paved the way for legislation and governance to come in antiquity and the Western world.[245]

According to the working definition that has been given to suffering in Greco-Roman antiquity, Marcus Aurelius directly and indirectly addressed his Stoic views concerning suffering. With the physical side of suffering he believed that one must approach physical suffering with the understanding that it is natural but one should not, "…let the ruling part of itself add to the sensation the opinion that it is either good or bad."[246] In terms of psychological or mental suffering Aurelius believes in the Stoic freedom of the mind and the choices one has despite the circumstances or people that causes one suffering.[247] Aurelius relied on Epicurus as well in his advice on how to cope with physical pain,

> For times when you feel pain: See that it doesn't disgrace you, or degrade your intelligence—doesn't keep it from acting rationally or unselfishly. And in most cases what Epicurus said should help: that pain is neither unbearable nor unending, as long as

---

[244] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, 1.7.16.

[245] E. Vernon Arnold. *Roman Stoicism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 403. "In the legislation of Antoninus and Aurelius the human and cosmopolitan principles of Stoic politics at last triumph over Roman conservatism. The poor, the sick, the infant, and the famine-stricken are protected…This legislation is not entirely the work of professed Stoics; it is nevertheless the offspring of Stoicism."

[246] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, 1.7.1-9.

[247]Ibid., 1.10.32. "But if men do not permit you, then get away out of life, as if you were suffering no harm…But so long as nothing of the kind drives me out, I remain, am free, and no man shall hinder me from doing what I choose; and I choose to do what is according to the nature of the rational and social animal."

> you keep in mind its limits and don't magnify them in your imagination. And keep in mind too that pain often comes in disguise—as drowsiness, fever, loss of appetite.… When you're bothered by things like that, remind yourself: "I'm giving in to pain."[248]

Economic suffering was addressed by Marcus Aurelius as he sought to alleviate the suffering of the poor and famine-stricken. Marcus Aurelius acknowledged the suffering that accompanies poverty and saw the neglect of the poor to be unnatural. He writes,

> For we are made for cooperation, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth. To act against one another then is contrary to nature; and it is acting against one another to be vexed and to turn away.[249]

Aurelius' seeming logic of compassion may strike a stark contrast to how he views loss and suffering and how the soul is to cope with that suffering,

> Let the body itself take care, if it can, then it can suffer nothing, and let it speak, that it suffer nothing, and let it speak, if it suffers. But the soul itself, that which is subject to fear, to pain, which has completely the power of forming a judgment about these things, will suffer nothing, for it will never deviate into such a judgment.[250]

To the Stoic, spiritual suffering was something which did not enter the true Stoic's vocabulary or comprehension. The idea of the immortal soul not enduring any suffering was not novel with Marcus Aurelius but has its roots in Zeno of Citium. While no works of Zeno remain, it is scholarly consensus that Diogenes Laertius was one of the closest contemporaries of Zeno (BC 300) who recorded some of Zeno's thoughts, particularly concerning the soul and suffering. Diogenes writes of Zeno speaking on pain and suffering with Zeno the Stoic saying that pain and suffering are perturbations of the mind which have arisen out of an irrationality or error.[251]

---

[248] Marcus Aurelius *Meditations* 1.7.64.

[249] Ibid., 1.2.1.

[250] Ibid., 1.7.16.

[251] Diogenes Laertius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*. Translated by C. D. Yonge, (London: George Bell & Sons, 1901), 1.7.62.

Physical, psychological, economic, and spiritual suffering were acknowledged by Marcus Aurelius as well as most of Stoicism's most prominent philosophers of antiquity.[252]

Platonic and Stoic Suffering Divergences and Convergences

Stoics and Platonists existed side-by-side in antiquity and during the inception of the Christian Church. While Platonists often attempted to distance themselves from Stoics, the Stoics were not busy creating any *apologia* against Stoicism but rather were willing to borrow and adapt some Platonic concepts into their Stoic philosophy.[253] In terms of the concept of suffering where did these two schools of philosophy converge and diverge? More often than not Platonism and Stoicism both agreed that suffering did have the possibility of producing good character on the part of the sufferer. Socrates viewed suffering as something that can be beneficial if it is to bring about something good[254] The Stoic Seneca also viewed suffering as something that could be beneficial as well. In his *Anger, Mercy, and Revenge*, Seneca compares suffering and pain as having the possibility of being, "like surgery and fasting and other things that cause pain in order to do us good."[255]

---

[252] Primary representatives of Early, Middle, and Late Stoicism are Seneca, Musonius Rufus, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. See Runar M. Thorsteinsson, *Roman Christianity & Roman Stoicism: A Comparative Study of Ancient Morality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 20. For Seneca see Seneca, *Anger, Mercy, Revenge*. Translated by Robert A. Kaster and Martha C. Nussbaum, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). For Musonius Rufus see J. T. Dillon, *Musonius Rufus and Education in the Good Life* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004). For Epictetus see Epictetus, *Of Human Freedom*. Translated by Robert Dobbin, (London: Penguin Books, 2008). For Marcus Aurelius see Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*. Translated by George Long, (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1997).

[253] Ismo Dunderberg, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Thomas Rasimus, eds., 5. The Platonists had some definite borrowing of concepts from the Stoics as well. Troels Engberg-Pedersen writes, "At least, while there is a certain openness toward input from Plato, as we will see, in certain Stoics…the Platonists, on their side, wrote explicitly against Stoicism while also adopting Stoic ideas in a number of places.

[254] Plato, *Gorgias* 1.525.2.

[255] Seneca, *Anger, Mercy, Revenge*. Translated by Robert A. Kaster and Martha C. Nussbaum, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 4.27.3.

Platonic and Stoic thinkers also agreed on how hardships should be willingly endured, especially when those sufferings would benefit or produce something that is inherently good to the Greco-Roman mind such as glory or preserving the life of one's children and their future.[256] Seneca views the person's ability to willing concede towards suffering as something that is not difficult to endure and that many that have endured worse have already succeeded in making their suffering something to be willingly chosen if need be.[257] Both Stoic and Platonic thinkers believed that suffering will attend to both the evil and the good person. No one escapes physical or economic suffering in this life. Socrates believed that suffering was something that, whether one was the perpetrator of the suffering or the victim of the suffering, would be endured either way.[258] Marcus Aurelius acknowledged well how one's life may be full of pleasure and satisfaction and how life may also be filled with nothing but "what the deity has planted in you."[259]

In these particular Stoic and Platonic convergences of suffering, both adherents of these philosophies found some common ground of what it means to endure hardship and suffering even though they may have differed sharply, especially in terms of how Stoicism may often appear to be a "total reversal" of Platonic ontology.[260] This reversal of Platonic ontology

---

[256] Socrates in *Apology* 1.39.1. Socrates views righteousness as what is inherently good and worthy of suffering for when he writes, "The difficulty, my friends, is not to avoid death, but to avoid unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death."

[257] Seneca, *The Stoic Philosophy of Seneca: Essays and Letters of Seneca*. Translated by Moses Hadas (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1958), 1.65.4.

[258] Plato *Gorgias* 1.475.

[259] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, 1.3.6. In this particular refrain from Meditations, Marcus Aurelius actually quotes Socrates when speaking of how to "detach…from the persuasions of sense."

[260] Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, translated by Mark Lester (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 19. Deleuze believes that the Stoic discovery of sense being an "irreducible entity" thusly "presupposed a reversal of Platonism."

manifested in Stoicism deals particularly with how a proposition may contain the irreducible entity of sense.[261] Within both ontologies of Stoicism and Platonism there is still acknowledgement, as it has been shown with Socrates and Marcus Aurelius, of suffering in the physical, psychological, economic, and spiritual realms of the human being.

Neoplatonist Views on Suffering

While Neoplatonism has been accused of beginning with Plato's death and the subsequent myriad of different interpretations[262] that sought to properly interpret Plato's thought, Plotinus (AD 205-70) is often regarded as the primary founder of Neoplatonism.[263] Neoplatonism differs from Platonism in two primary ideas: the cause is superior to the effect and "what is simple is prior and superior to what is complex."[264] While at surface it may appear that Neoplatonism appeared well after the inception of the church, it is congruent to the current work due to the Neoplatonic ideas that were already in existence and which Plotinus only distilled and helped codify these ideas.[265] Early Christian leaders were well aware of Greco-Roman philosophy's influence and Eusebius (AD 263-339), bishop of Caesarea Maritima, is noted as having borrowed extensively from Plotinus' *Enneads*.[266]

In terms of suffering, Plotinus acknowledged the four areas of the current definition of suffering which is being used in this paper. Plotinus describes physical pain as something which

---

[261] Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 19.

[262] Gerald A. Press, *Plato: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Continuum Books, 2007).

[263] Pauliina Remmes and Svetla Slaveva-Griffin, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Neoplatonism* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

[264] Meredith, *Christian Philosophy*, 97-8.

[265] Ibid., 37. Meredith credits Plotinus with "this process of assimilation and amalgamation" of what Meredith terms later Platonism or Neoplatonism.

[266] Ibid., 97.

hinders the happy life when he writes, "Now if happiness did indeed require freedom from pain, sickness, misfortune, disaster, it would be utterly denied to anyone confronted by such trials."[267] Plotinus acknowledges physical suffering as something that accompanies physical pain (sickness) but does not necessarily endanger one's happiness.[268]

Psychological pain and suffering for Plotinus includes the death of a child, or one's children being taken away into captivity, or personal capture by an enemy.[269] Plotinus views these mental and physical sufferings as something that will not sway the thinking man, the Sage, from "the radiance of the inner soul."[270] For Plotinus, as for the Platonist and the Stoic, psychological suffering is something that eventually comes down to how one thinks and then acts in response to the suffering, no matter how agonizing it is. Plotinus writes of how one would respond, "What if pain grows so intense and so torture him that the agony kills? Well, when he is put to torture he will plan what is to be done: he retains his freedom of action."[271] For Plotinus, psychological suffering is something which one can always have a choice in how one responds, no matter how intense or alarming the suffering is.

In Plotinus' *Enneads*, the author distinguishes between the rich and the poor by making the man who receives a "stroke of good fortune" as the more preferable economic state.[272]

---

[267] Plotinus *Enneads* 1.5.

[268] Ibid., Plotinus continues to link the physical and spiritual suffering to the possibility of redemptive suffering if it "lies in the fruition of the Authentic Good." Plotinus also describes the physical suffering and "annoying opposites" as a necessity but not necessarily as Good.

[269] Ibid., 1.8.

[270] Ibid., "As for violent personal suffering , he will carry them off as well as he can; if they overpass his endurance they will carry him off. And so in all his pain he asks no pity: there is always the radiance in the inner soul of the man, untroubled like the light in a lantern when fierce gusts beat about it in a wild turmoil of wind and tempest."

[271] Ibid., 1.8.3.

[272] Plotinus *Enneads* 3.2.

Plotinus also alludes to the "Adrasteia" (the Inevadable Retribution) which visits those who abuse their power and are wasteful with their riches, "Those that have money will be made poor."[273] Plotinus also describes the very lack of matter and possession as being in poverty and for one to make an effort out of poverty is something that is, "an Ideal-principle."[274] In Paulina Remes' *Handbook of Neoplatonism* she comments on Plotinus' understanding of poverty and its association with matter which makes it, to the Neoplatonist, intrinsically evil when she writes, "As such, matter possesses the ontologically unredeemable qualities of poverty, passivity, plasticity, indefinability, unmeasuredness, lack of order and thus intrinsic evil."[275] Yet to Plotinus the true Neoplatonic well-being is not threatened by poverty. Laura Westra comments on how Plotinus understands that poverty does not necessarily doom one to a lack of well-being but how the "prize of well-being lies essentially within our grasp, if we make the effort to be virtuous."[276]

Plotinus also explored spiritual suffering in what he termed the "Couplement" of the soul and the body.[277] This "Couplement" of the soul and the body does have the ability to sense pain and suffering but this Couplement according to Plotinus "subsists by virtue of the Soul's presence."[278] This is to say that Neoplatomism views the suffering of the soul as something that

---

[273] Plotinus, *Enneads* 2.6.

[274] Ibid., 2.12.

[275] Pauliina Remmes and Svetla Slaveva-Griffin, eds., *The Routledge Handbook,* 5.

[276] Laura Westra, "Freedom and Providence in Plotinus," in *Neoplatonism and Nature: Studies in Plotinus' Enneads*, ed. Michael F. Wagner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 132. Westra also highlights Plotinus' belief in the free agency of human choice.

[277] Plotinus, *Enneads* 1.6. Here Plotinus comes to a conclusion that not all of the sensations and affections of the human experience share in the body and soul at the same time.

[278] Ibid.

can be shared by the soul and the body but that the very sensation of spiritual suffering due to grief or physical pain through the soul cannot exist because of the soul's primacy above the Couplement.[279] Even above the soul's primacy Plotinus found The Plotinian One as the ultimate transcendent being beyond intellect and being.[280] However, Plotinus does not deny all suffering cannot touch the soul but rather the guilt and consequences of sin can be taken on by the soul. Here Plotinus takes his understanding of the soul to mean, when vexed or plagued by personal guilt, as part of the whole; that is, the lesser soul and the physical body as well.[281] As Anthony Meredith states regarding Plotinus' view in *Enneads*, "[to Plotinus] there is always part of every human being that rises above the emotions of the lower soul and the body."[282]

This particular aspect of Neoplatonic spiritual suffering is vital to the discussion at hand due to how the Neoplatonists did understand the effects of spiritual suffering with the soul, particularly in the case of the effects of one's own willful sin on their soul.[283] Plotinus also viewed these sins against the soul as something that was determined by the "law of the Universe" rather than just a personal judgment concerning what is truly good or evil.[284] Spiritual suffering

[279] Plotinus, *Enneads*, 1.9.

[280] Dunderberg, Engberg-Pedersen, and Rasimus, *Stoicism*, 258.

[281] Plotinus, *Enneads*, 1.12. "By the soul subject to sin we indicate a groupment, we include that other, that phase of the Soul which knows all the states and passions: the Soul in this sense is compound, all-inclusive: it falls under the conditions of the entire living experience: this compound it is that sins; it is this, and not the other, that pays penalty."

[282] Anthony Meredith, *Christian Philosophy,* 111.

[283] Plotinus, *Enneads*, 1.12.

[284] Ibid.,3.4. "…still, when they do wrong, they pay the penalty – that of having their Souls hurt by their evil conduct and of degradation to a lower place – for nothing can ever escape what stands decreed in the law of the Universe."

that was brought about by personal sins existed for Plotinus and Neoplatonists before him and was often the result of one's own doing.[285]

The Cultural Context of Suffering in the Ancient Greco-Roman World

Rome's greatest poet Virgil wrote in BC 37 about the suffering of the Roman people a few decades before the birth of Jesus Christ in his pastoral poetic work, *Eclogues*, which was a semi-autobiographical response to his own personal loss of family property due to the government's confiscation of his family's land.[286] Virgil writes about this loss and suffering that comes when one loses their homeland,

> Must all this tillage be a soldier's spoil?
> These crops the strangers?...
> Still you could take your rest with me tonight,
> Couched on green leaves: there will be apples ripe,
> Soft roasted chestnuts, plenty of pressed cheese.
> Already rooftops in the distance smoke,
> And lofty hills let fall their lengthening shade.[287]

Here Virgil is painting the picture of grief and of comfort despite the loss of the homestead of his family. Scholars have viewed this particular poem by Virgil to be one that portrays,

> Virgil's ideal Arcady human suffering and superhumanly perfect surroundings creat[ing] a dissonance...that vespertinal mixture of sadness and tranquility which is perhaps Virgil's most personal contribution to poetry.[288]

---

[285]Laura Westra, "Freedom and Providence in Plotinus," in *Neoplatonism and Nature: Studies in Plotinus' Enneads*, ed. Michael F. Wagner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 136. Westra believes that Plotinus attributes humanity's culpability in suffering because of what she believes to be Plotinus' understanding of how limitless freedom really is.

[286] Leendert Weeda. *Vergil's Political Commentary: In the Eclogues, Georgics, and Aeneid* (Berlin: De Gruyter Open, Ltd, 2015), 54. Weeda does not attribute the Eclogues as a full autobiography of Vergil but the author does believe that Vergil, "…does, however, use his personal experience of the expropriations" in the writing of the Eclogues.

[287] Vergil, *Eclogues*, translated by Barbara Hughes Fowler (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 1.80.

[288] Erwin Panofsky, "*Et in Arcadia Ego*: Poussin and the Elegiac Tradition," in *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1955), 300.

Horace, a contemporary of Virgil, also commented on suffering that happened within the cultural context of ancient Rome.[289] While Virgil brought out the pastoral side of suffering and acknowledged the harsh reality in the Roman world of antiquity of the loss of one's homestead and subsequent relocation, other contemporaries of Virgil such as Livy write about the eventuality of Rome's demise due to greed and the subsequent suffering brought in by unbridled greed.[290] The Roman historian and politician Sallust also spoke to how suffering was worse than death[291]

The Rome of antiquity was indeed replete with suffering as shown by poets, philosophers, and historians of the time. At the height of the Roman Empire the population of Rome was nearly one million inhabitants with nearly one-half of the population receiving food and necessities from public charity.[292] It is not that the vast majority of Romans suffered from hunger necessarily but rather the majority of Roman plebs who were either unemployed, supported by the government or employed part-time by the Roman government were often occupied by the state-sponsored spectacles at the arena, write Jerome Carcopino, "The spectacles were the great anodyne for their subject's unemployment, and the sure instrument of their own."[293] This is to only highlight that although there was starvation suffered by the lower class

[289] Horace, *Horace's Satires and Epistles.* Translated by Jacob Fuchs (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1977), 1.70-85.

[290] Livy, *The Early History of Rome*. Translated by Aubrey De Selincourt (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 1.5. Livy writes, "Indeed, poverty, with us, went hand in hand with contentment. Of late years wealth has made us greedy, and self-indulgence has brought us, through every form of sensual excess, to be, if I may so put it, in love with death both individual and collective."

[291] Sallust, *Sallust's Conspiracy of Catiline and the Jugurthine War*. Translated by Rev. John Selby Watson (Philadelphia: David McKay, 1896), 51.8.

[292] Jerome Carcopino, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 64. Carcopino calculates that aling with slaves, the military, and other dependent groups the actual amount of financially independent households numbered around 150,000.

[293] Carcopino, *Daily* Life, 210.

of slaves, it was not a widespread starvation that marked the suffering of the Romans. Much of the physical suffering that was part of Rome had its roots in poor sanitation and the subsequent disease that accompanied.[294] Also, the quantity of the food available to the Romans was not the issue in suffering as it was the cleanliness of the food which was often contaminated due to lack of hygiene and sanitary storing methods. Medical methods were also lacking due to physicians maintaining that treating the symptom was as thorough as one could be as a physician.[295] This would gradually change with Galen (AD 164) but often the diseased Roman citizen would have no other recourse in the face of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and typhoid.

Disease brought on by poor nutrition or deplorable sanitary conditions were part of the cultural context of Rome. The landscape of the Greco-Roman world also had psychological suffering as part of its terrain, writes Jerome Carcopino of the intellectual decay that had set in by the first century AD, "A morbid passion for the unusual and the extraordinary made common sense seem a defect, experience of real life seem weakness…"[296] Outside of the devastating plagues such as the Antonine Plague (AD 165-180) that swept across the Greco-Roman world, the threats of war, invasion, and untimely death must have weighed heavily on the mind of the citizens of Rome.

Judith Perkins remarks that Stoics and romantics were particularly enthralled with the idea of cultivating the self which, "is exempt from the experience of pain and suffering."[297]

---

[294] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 30. Even in the most luxurious *insula* Carcopino notes that the outward beauty of the homes belied the squalor inside that resulted from insufficient lighting and heat as well as often non-existent sanitation.

[295] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 145.

[296] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 120.

[297] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 77.

While this desire for a Stoic response to suffering which gives the appearance of one being above suffering and unaffected by it may have existed in the Greco-Roman world, it would be a gross generalization to believe that even a large minority of these ancient people would have adhered to it. It is true that no one alive today can completely understand the mind of the average person of Greco-Roman antiquity and thus one can only begin to understand what suffering was to these ancient people through what they left behind, namely their literary writings concerning suffering with which this study will occupy itself.

The acknowledgement of suffering by the various poets, historians, writers, and philosophers that have been explored so far do show an acknowledgment of suffering across the Greco-Roman landscape. If suffering was something that one strived to be exempt from or above, several leaders of the Roman population seemed to express otherwise. Jerome Carcopino writes about the suffering that was portrayed in the satires and Roman theatre, "Epigrams and satires are full of the cries of angry matrons and the groans of serving women in distress."[298] In Juvenal's (d. AD 127) third book of *Satires* the author's primary theme revolves around the tensions and suffering of the rich and poor and the general degradation of Roman culture.[299] The general population was also familiar with suffering on several levels. Carcopino describes the overall malaise as such,

> The numerical inferiority of the Haves to the horde of the Have-Nots, sufficiently distressing in itself, becomes positively terrifying when we realize the inequality of fortune within the ranks of the minority; the majority of what we should nowadays call the middle classes vegetated in semistarvation within sight of the almost incredible opulence of a few thousand mulitmillionaires.[300]

---

[298] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 167.

[299] Susan A. Braund, *Beyond Anger: A Study of Juvenal's Third Book of Satires* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 32. Braund repeatedly mentions how the major character of the third book in Juvenal's third book of *Satires*, Umbricius, makes known the central theme of the poem to be the inequalities between the rich and the poor.

[300]Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 64-5.

Roman Pagan Spirituality in Decline

There has been previous mention of the spiritual suffering which the Platonist, Stoic, and Neo-Platonist thinkers mentioned. Judith Perkins contends that the Greco-Roman understanding of suffering was limited purely to a more Stoic sense of primarily physical suffering which was also adopted by much of the population in pagan Roman.[301] In the time period of which this study is concerned, the Roman Empire had its own primary pagan religion with temples and altars dedicated to the particular gods and goddesses of Greek and Roman mythology. However, decay was setting in the spiritual life of the pagan Roman. It is true that even the most Stoic of philosophers, as well as Plato and Aristotle, espoused and formulated many philosophical texts and treatises while at the same time maintaining at least the appearance of religious affiliation and worship of the enculturated Twelve Olympian gods and goddesses.[302] The Stoic Marcus Aurelius who has been quoted to have said,

> If the gods exist, then to abandon human beings is not frightening; the gods would never subject you to harm. And if they don't exist, or don't care what happens to us, what would be person needs to avoid real harm they have placed within him. If there were anything harmful on the other side of death, they would have made sure that the ability to avoid it was within you. If it doesn't harm your character, how can it harm your life?[303]

This quote could possibly show an atheistic if not agnostic tendency in the Stoic emperor/philosopher if it were not for other cases in which Marcus Aurelius acknowledged the

---

[301] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*,, 197-98.

[302] Meredith, *Christian Philosophy*, 28. Meredith concludes about the Stoic philosophers, "We are a long way from academic Stoicism, which serves to underline the point that even philosophy may be inconsistent, just as Plato and Aristotle continued their religious practices despite their philosophical opinions." The primary Twelve Greek Olympian gods and goddesses of the Greek Pantheon, with their Roman counterparts, included: Zeus (Jupiter), Hera (Juno), Poseidon (Neptune), Demeter (Ceres), Athena (Minerva), Apollo (Apollo), Artemis (Diana), Ares (Mars), Aphrodite (Venus), Hephaestus (Vulcan), Hermes (Mercury), and either Hestia (Vesta) or Dionysus (Bacchus).

[303] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, 2.11.

existence of gods and goddesses.[304] This is only to illustrate how even philosophers who notably had a greater tendency towards disbelief in the prevalent Roman paganism did acknowledge devotion towards or at least the existence of the pagan gods and goddesses of the Roman Empire.[305]

As mentioned before, by the start of the second century there was a decay and general spiritual malaise that began to set in the Roman pagan cult worship of gods and goddesses. esoteric philosophy, along with other cult religions began to take a more dominant hold in the spiritual life of the Roman Empire.[306] What Anthony Meredith termed as a "deficit" in the official state religion, was beginning to be shored up by the emergent mystery cults which sought to fill the apparent void. Meredith writes,

> Yet despite its social usefulness it cannot be said that the official religion of Rome satisfied the deeper spiritual aspirations of many ordinary people. The deficit was supplied by the emergence not only of philosophy, above all Stoic philosophy in the early empire, but sacred and usually hidden rite to establish contact with the objects of their worship the cults of Mithra (for soldiers), Isis (for women) and Dionysus at Eleusis promised secret knowledge and above all experience that the official cults were quite unable to supply.[307]

This seems to contend against Judith Perkins assertion that suffering for the pagan Roman was one of a primarily physical ordeal and the production of a more "subjective suffering" within the individual was a construct which was foreign to the pagan or Stoic

---

[304] Marcus Aurelius, Meditations, 2.5, 4.31. "You see how few things you have to do to live a satisfying and reverent life? If you can manage this, that's all even the gods can ask of you." Aurelius also advises, "Love the discipline you know, and let it support you. Entrust everything willingly to the gods, and then make your way through life—no one's master and no one's slave."

[305] Anthony R. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius: A Biography* (London: Routledge, 2012), 194. Interestingly enough, Marcus Aurelius was initiated into the ancient cult and, "in the mysteries of Demeter and Persephone [which] took place at Eleusis every September."

[306] Gaston H. Halsberghe, *The Cult of Sol Invictus* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 36.

[307] Meredith, *Christian Philosophy*, 32.

suffering experience.[308] Thus the decline of the spiritual component of the Roman Empire's cultural context was one that not only was marked by a rise in esoteric philosophy and increased interest in new religious cults but also a decrease in pagan piety.[309] This decrease in pagan piety was reinforced by Juvenal's *Satires*,

> That ghosts exist, or subterranean kingdoms and rivers, or black frogs croaking in Styx's waters, or one punt ferrying thousand, not even children – except those young enough to get a free bath – still credit.[310]

This decline in Roman pagan piety was not only limited to the time of Juvenal and his view that the state pagan religion was something for only children but a definite cynicism towards the virtue of the gods, like Zeus, was being voiced by Plato hundreds of years before the satiric works by the likes of Juvenal or Aeschylus were written.[311]

Much of what has been mentioned in this section is to help illustrate not only the decline of pagan spirituality but also to recognize the fact that spirituality did indeed exist within the hearts of Roman people and not as just some type of created subjective construct. This spirituality was indeed a component of how the people of antiquity sought to cope with the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual suffering they endured. One only needs to view the satires, tragedies, and comedies of the first and second century writers to view what many of

---

[308] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 214.

[309] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 121. "The Roman pantheon still persisted, apparently immutable; and the ceremonies which had for centuries been performed on the dates prescribed by the pontiffs…But the spirits of men had fled from the old religion; it still commanded their service but no longer their hearts or their belief. With its indeterminate gods and its colourless myths, mere fables concocted from details suggested by Latin topography or pale reflections of adventures…with its prayers formulated in the style of legal contracts and as dry as the procedure of a lawsuit…Roman religion froze the impulses of faith by its coldness and its prosaic utilitarianism…but in the motley Rome of the second century it had wholly lost its power over the human heart."

[310] Juvenal, *Satires*, 2.150-152.

[311] Plato *Republic* 4. Anthony Meredith sums up Plato's characterization of the immorality of the gods and goddesses as them having, "only one purpose in life, to make love to as many girls and pretty boys as they could seduce." Anthony Meredith, *Christian Philosophy in the Early Church*, 18.

them saw as the suffering of humanity and how gods and goddesses would intercede or not intercede on the sufferer's behalf. As Anthony Meredith states, "The effort to reconcile human freedom and divine providence was not therefore a peculiarly Christian problem."[312] The suffering which was endured by many Roman people who adhered to pagan practice and belief understood that the spiritual component of suffering was one which was "completely surveyed, regulated, and informed by the divine."[313]

Summary

This overview of the concept of suffering in the ancient Greco-Roman world has shown the acknowledgement and treatment of suffering by the predominant four philosophies which existed not only in antiquity but certainly at the time of the inception of the Early Church.[314] One of the major questions that each of the philosophies asked was, "Who brought suffering into the world?" Even though philosophers such as Plato, Marcus Aurelius, and others had cynical views towards the pagan religion which the state and many under Roman rule observed, they would often ascribe that suffering was brought to the people by the pagan gods they worshipped.

Epicureans, Stoics, Neo-Platonists, Platonists, and Aristotelian adherents all acknowledged the holistic scope of suffering. Holistic suffering meaning a suffering which encompassed the individual as well as group experiences that included enduring physical, psychological, economic, social, and spiritual pain, distress, or loss. How each philosophy determined the meaning of suffering of course had their differences. Plato did not view suffering as the ultimate reality while Stoics Marcus Aurelius and Seneca held the freedom of the human

[312] Meredith, *Christian Philosophy*, 19.

[313] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 181.

[314] Meredith, *Christian Philosophy,* 20-36.

mind as paramount for a person to deal with suffering. Stoic and Platonic thought did converge in the acknowledgment of suffering but due to ontological differences both philosophies prescribed different methods for coping with suffering. Neoplatonism shared some affinity with Stoicism and Platonism in how psychological/mental suffering was something which the mind could have the power to determine how to respond to suffering despite the apparent anguish and suffering it was experiencing. One other common denominator that each of the schools of philosophy regarded about suffering was how one's own willful sin to one's own soul was responsible for suffering.

These schools of philosophy did not operate in a cultural vacuum but were part and parcel of what historians, poets, playwrights, philosophers, statesmen, and common people of antiquity acknowledged to be culture of greed and war. Despite the living conditions that brought about physical, mental, emotional, economic, and spiritual suffering for a mass majority of the Roman Empire, it was indeed difficult to find a truly thorough Stoic approach to suffering as this was shown not only in the writings of Stoic Marcus Aurelius but also in the satire and dramatic/literary forms of antiquity.

Roman pagan spirituality was in definite decline at the time of the Early Church and some of the leading philosophers of Greco-Roman antiquity were cynical about not only how the pagan gods were involved in human suffering but also their very existence as shown by, among others, Juvenal and Marcus Aurelius. Both of whom were contemporaries of apologists and church fathers, Justin Martyr and Irenaeus of Lyons. Despite some of the cynicism displayed by lead philosophers and statesmen towards the ability of the pagan gods and goddesses being instructive or intervening in human suffering, pagan spirituality was not, as Judith Perkins

suggests, "a creatively subjective construct"[315] brought about to help people cope with suffering but a real and vital component for so many to use when trying to cope with suffering.

While the predominant philosophers formally addressed within their writings issues surrounding suffering in the cultural context of Greco-Roman antiquity, they also experienced cognitive dissonance with their own philosophies as they encountered the reality of the suffering which the common people struggled with as well. This is shown in how Marcus Aurelius enacted state economic policy which did not completely align with a Stoic sense of removal from suffering. While Greco-Roman philosophies attempted to answer issues concerning suffering, a new or possibly even greater philosophy[316] of Christianity was emerging in the Roman culture. The tension of how suffering can be alleviated as well as it having the possibility of having any redemptive quality for humanity was being addressed again by apologists of the Early Church, to which this paper turns.

[315] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 214

[316] Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1: The Apostolic Fathers - Justin Martyr - Irenaeus*, vol. 1, 183. Justin Martyr attempt to show the superiority of Christian thought throughout his writings. He writes in what he sees as "Plato's Doctrine of the Cross", "It is not, then, that we hold the same opinions as others, but that all speak in imitation of ours. Among us these things can be heard and learned from persons who do not even know the forms of the letters, who are uneducated and barbarous in speech, though wise and believing in mind; some, indeed, even maimed and deprived of eyesight; so that you may understand that these things are not the effect of human wisdom, but are uttered by the power of God."

CHAPTER 4

JUSTIN MARTYR

Introduction

The following chapter will center on the apologetics and understanding of suffering of Justin Martyr of whom L. W. Barnard comments, "was the most important of the second-century Greek Apologists" and of whom nearly all of the early Greek Fathers imitated Justin.[317] This chapter will give a brief introduction to the biographical and sociological context of Justin Martyr's life and writings and will then move into his apologetic works with special attention given to the philosophical, biblical, and ethical components of Justin's understanding of suffering. After reviewing Justin's understanding of suffering in his three primary works, this chapter will summarize how Justin overall used suffering within his apologetics.

Social and Cultural Contexts of Justin's Works

Justin was born in the Roman province of Syria Palestina which was also known as Judea before it fell to Hadrian after the defeat of Bar Kokhba in AD 132-135. According to the "Martyrdom" account of Justin, it is said that he had lived in Rome twice and he was eventually martyred under Marcus Aurelius in AD 165.[318] The vast and prevalent Roman Empire with its propensity towards universalism and plurality of cultures tolerated the Greek thought behind much of Justin Martyr's works to a certain point. It is true that Justin Martyr's works were

[317] L. W. Barnard, *Justin Martyr: His Life and Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), vii.

[318] Roberts, Alexander, and James Donaldson. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* volume 1*: the Apostolic Fathers - Justin Martyr - Irenaeus*. "The Martyrdom of Justin Martyr, 1," Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1956.

exposed and even influenced by the deep Hellenism which marked the vast Roman Empire.[319] This deep Hellenism of Justin's time was definitely affected by Greek thought, as well as other cultures which vied for their own place within the Roman culture and empire.[320] The Hellenism of the Roman Empire was not the only contender for the mind of the human of antiquity but occultist oracles, myths, and secret societies were also very influential in the Justin's world, even to the point of carrying convincing arguments to a Roman audience who had, "a morbid love for the unusual and marvellous."[321]

Judaism also had particular influence on Justin's social and cultural environment. While Justin's notable *Dialogue with Trypho* carried indicators of Hellenistic Judaism, it is safe to say that neither the dialogue itself or the Judaism portrayed is a completely accurate representation of the normal Jewish person's attitudes or life.[322] American religion educator Graydon Snyder believes that while there was a definite distance that the majority of the Jewish population of Rome kept from the cultural influences of the Roman state there is room for the view that the Jewish population of Rome interacted with their non-Jewish neighbors to some degree. There are architectural indications of the Jewish population borrowing some of the Roman decorations for their homes and synagogues but not to the point of having any significant impact on worship or cultural norms for the Jewish population. Even though there is little proof for acculturation of Roman values, there are cultural indicators of the Jewish population being willing to have

[319]Rebecca Lyman, "Justin and Hellenism: Some Postcolonial Perspectives," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, Sarah Parvis and Paul Foster, eds. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 162.

[320] Lyman, "Justin and Hellenism," 162.

[321] Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr,* 73.

[322] Ibid., 91-2.

"active participation in Greco-Roman culture."[323] As will be explored further in this chapter, Justin had interaction with the Jewish population which was interacting with Rome and Christians and often in combative ways.[324]

Rome itself was undergoing serious shifts internally at the time of Justin's most prolific impact on the culture. While peace was associated with the rule of Antoninus Pius, conflict was a large part of his successor Marcus Aurelius.[325] Marcus Aurelius' reign after the death of his adoptive father in AD 161 was marked often with war with the Parthian Empire and disease that was often brought back by soldiers from the frontlines of battle. Education for Justin Martyr was obtainable but usually not as thorough as what it could be. While Christians did have an unusual access to books and philosophical sources, the access was still quite short of what the Roman citizen could obtain.[326] Still, Justin was able to acquire education in the major schools of philosophy which were part and parcel of the fabric of Roman society and culture.[327] While E. R. Goodenough believes that Justin was more dabbler than serious student of philosophy,[328]

---

[323] Karl P. Donfried and Peter Richardson, *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2003), 81.

[324] See Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr*, 91. Goodenough recounts Rabbi Tarphon who was known to be one of the most "bitter and violent of the anti-Christian rabbis" and who may possibly be the identity behind the Jew, Trypho in his *Dialogue.*

[325] Christopher J. Fuhrmann, *Policing the Roman Empire: Soldiers, Administration, and Public Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 90.

[326] Gillian Clark, *Christianity and Roman Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 85-6.

[327] Sara Parvis, "Justin Martyr and the Apologetic Tradition," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, Sarah Parvis and Paul Foster, eds., (Fortress Press: Minneapolis, MN, 2007), 127. Parvis comments on how Justin was adept at trying to use philosophy of all schools in order to convince all types of people, including the emperor himself, of how "Christianity was neither impious nor philosophically bankrupt."

[328] Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr,* 60.

University of Edinburg's Sarah Parvis believes Justin was a much more complex, educated, and well-versed student of philosophy than previous scholars have led readers to believe.[329]

This rule of Rome was inextricably linked to philosophical ideas of morality and justice by which Justin often appealed to in his works.[330] Christians faced persecutions officially and unofficially sanctioned by the state and in doing so Justin Martyr as well as other apologists of the Early Church felt need to respond as they watched their fellow Christians brought before the magistrate. During Justin's lifetime (100-165) there were four official persecutions sanctioned by the Roman state as well as the persecutions enacted by mobs in Rome looking for a scapegoat for the plagues and ills of Rome that surfaced during Justin's time.[331]

While this section is not meant to exegete the origins of *apologia* it is applicable to this section to comment on how *apologia*, which was often the generic legal description of "a speech in defense," was often mentioned in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* but not in a way that would completely describe defensive arguments for the claims of Christianity.[332] This author would concur with Sara Parvis in how Justin Martyr's use of *apologia* to construct a different textual genre than the previously mentioned generic legal language was the result of, "Justin himself who forged the genre of Christian apologetic, in response once again to particular pressures at a particular time, and those who came after him were self-consciously his

---

[329] Sara Parvis, "Introduction: Justin Martyr and His Worlds," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, Sarah Parvis and Paul Foster, eds., 2.

[330] Stuart G. Hall, *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church* (London, UK: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2005), 50.

[331] Everett Ferguson et al., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 895-6.

[332] Michael Frede, "Eusebius's Apologetic Writings," in *Apologetics,* Mark J. Edwards, Martin Goodman, Simon Price, and Chris Rowland, eds., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 225.

imitators."[333] This is only to show how even though the use of *apologia* in Justin's time was once only used for a strictly legal use, Justin Martyr created a new usage of *apologia* to mean more of a Christian defense of the faith–whether he or other apologists were before the magistrate or not.

To the issue of martyrdom and suffering in the first few Christian centuries of Rome, there are some scholarly voices that have taken the suffering of Christians in the first few centuries of the Christian church to be suffering which was the result of the poor and disenfranchised who primarily responded with a desire for martyrdom out of a purely socio-politically conditioned response.[334] Elizabeth Castelli speaks to the suffering and martyrdom of Christians to be one solely of the early Christians, "appropriate[ing] the logic of spectacle for their own ends" and that early Christians were enacting, "performances that were staged by martyrs were persuasive precisely because they did not seem to be true but rather enacted a far – reaching truth."[335]

While Castelli singularly quotes the Stoic emperor Marcus Aurelius's argument towards a type of manipulation of martyrdom for the Christian ends and a type of spectacularization found in martyrdom,[336] the labeling of all Christian suffering and martyrdom to be one of spectacularization seems too much of a broad stroke. The extent and severity of the suffering of Christians during the first few centuries of the early Christian church has come under scrutiny by the previously mentioned Moss, Salisbury, and Castelli, as well as others such as Judith Perkins

---

[333] Sara Parvis, "Justin Martyr and the Apologetic Tradition," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, Sarah Parvis and Paul Foster, eds., 117. See also, Paul Parvis, "Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: The Posthumous Creation of the *Second Apology*," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, Sarah Parvis and Paul Foster, eds. (Fortress Press: Minneapolis, MN, 2007), 36.

[334] See Candida Moss. *Ancient Christian* Martyrdom, Joyce E. Salisbury. *The Blood of Martyrs*, as well as Elizabeth A. Castelli. *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making*.

[335] Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, 132.

[336] Marcus Aurelius, *Mediation* 32.1.

who has seemingly diminished the suffering of the early Christians as a type of amalgamation of Asclepian ideal of profitable pain with Ignatius's understanding of profitable pain that extends to a permanent relationship with the divine.[337] While Ignatius and Aristedes (via Asclepius) share some mutual understanding of profitable suffering the marked difference between the two is can be determined. Ignatius understands that suffering has eternal weight and reward compared to Perkins' understanding of Aristedes and Asclepius concept of suffering which makes suffering profitable mostly for a person while on earth, is an understanding which is rooted throughout Ignatius's works, primarily those from his *Epistles to the Romans*.[338]

This is to say that while some scholars have tried to portray the view of suffering of the Early Church, the same Early Church which Justin defended and belonged, as suffering which is a type of theatrical construct or syncretized amalgamation of pagan and monotheistic thought, there is a definite tenor found in Ignatius of the early Christian understanding suffering being something which not only is profitable here on earth but also eternally rewarding and intimately connected to God. This idea of redemptive suffering that carries eternal and intimate connection to God is not only limited to Ignatius but some of his other contemporaries. Perkins mistakenly gives Ignatius credit for being the first to mention how the believer can "suffer with Christ."[339]

---

[337] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 192.

[338] See Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1: The Apostolic Fathers - Justin Martyr - Irenaeus*, vol. 1, 75-76. Ignatius writes of his possible torture and martyrdom at the hands of the Roman state, "But when I suffer, I shall be the freedman of Jesus Christ, and shall rise again emancipated in Him. And now, being in bonds for Him, I learn not to desire anything worldly or vain." In chapter six of the *Epistle to the Romans* Ignatius writes about his eternal result of his suffering and death, "It is better for me to die for the sake of Jesus Christ, than to reign over all the ends of the earth." Ignatius gives his reasons for wanting to die which reflects a more eternal perspective on suffering in chapter seven, "For though I am alive while I write to you, yet I am eager to die for the sake of Christ. My love has been crucified, and there is no fire in me that loves anything; but there is a living water springing up in me, and which says to me inwardly, Come to the Father…I desire the drink, namely His blood, which is incorruptible love and eternal life."

[339] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 192.

Contemporaries of Ignatius also mention the believer suffering with Christ before the date of the writing of Ignatius's *Epistle to the Romans*.

In Clement of Rome's *First Epistle to the Corinthians* which has been dated as early as 70,[340] Clement admonishes the Corinthian believers to imitate Jesus Christ as he is an example of humility. In the entire chapter sixteen by Clement of Rome urges believers to humble themselves as Christ humbled himself. Clement quotes the majority of Isaiah 53 and likens Christ to the Suffering Servant of which believers are to emulate and imitate. Clement concludes chapter sixteen by writing, "Ye see, beloved, what is the example which has been given us; for if the Lord thus humbled Himself, what shall we do who have through Him come under the yoke of grace?"[341] Here Clement, like Ignatius, is instructing believers as to how one should interpret the suffering they may endure as believers. Thus, the understanding of suffering by the Early Church represented first in Clement of Rome and Ignatius of Antioch and then eventually Justin Martyr was not only a reality they experienced but also a suffering that was to be understood in light of the suffering of Jesus Christ. This Christian approach to suffering was markedly different than what the surrounding Roman culture embraced.

Apologetic Works of Justin Martyr and Development

Scholars have been trying to determine whether Justin's First and Second *Apology* consisted of one, two, or one and a half group of texts, it could be safe to assume that the

[340] Thomas J. Herron, *Clement and the Early Church of Rome: One the Dating of Clement's First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Steubensville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 1988), 11-13.

[341] Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1: The Apostolic Fathers - Justin Martyr - Irenaeus*, vol. 1, 9. This quote of Isaiah 53 by Clement of Rome also points towards continuity of what suffering meant to the Early Church compared to the surrounding Roman culture because of how one was to humble themselves much like Jesus Christ did.

Apologies themselves are mostly attributed to Justin Martyr himself.[342] There are three definite scholarly camps which view the First and Second *Apology* in three different compositional arrangements. There are those who think the First and Second *Apology* are truly one address, there are those who believe it is two separate addresses, and there are those who believe the *First Apology* has what has been termed the *Second Apology* as only a postscript or appendix of sorts.[343] This is only to highlight how the *First* and *Second Apology* of Justin that is in existence today had possibly endured what Paul Parvis terms, "cutting-room floor" redaction and editing before arriving in the state in which modern readers can peruse.[344]

The *First* and *Second Apology* as well as the *Dialogue with Trypho* have also been accepted as reliable manuscripts due in part to how Justin's reference to the canonical gospels are not always in line with the exact wording found in the canonical gospels themselves.[345] This variance points to how the accepted writings of Justin Martyr which contained gospel references were not changed by an overly astute church editor to exactly fit canonical gospels word for word. There is also recent discussion that the time between Justin writing the *First Apology* and the *Second* may have been very short and Justin's writing of the *Second Apology* may have come as a way for Justin to refer to the *First Apology*.[346] This is all to say that Justin's currently

---

[342] Paul Parvis, "Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: The Posthumous Creation of the Second Apology," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, eds. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 35. Paul Parvis does ascribe to redaction taking place early on in the manuscripts' existence after a possible "deletion of sections thought to be dated, the omission (or replacement) of things that could be construed as grist to a Valentinian mill, and the cutting of some of Justin's more infelicitous sallies." Even though this is a possibility, Parvis still believes the original authorship of the First and Second *Apology* still remains with Justin Martyr.

[343] Parvis, "Justin, Philosopher," 23-4.

[344] Ibid, 35.

[345] A. J. Bellinzoni, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967), 6.

[346] Dennis Minns, "The *Rescript* of Hadrian," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, eds. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 48. While several hypotheses like this are offered up by Minns, there is not an overwhelming consensus of scholars on the veracity of such a claim.

accepted works (*First* and *Second Apology* and *Dialogue*) may have some editorial adjustments before the *Parisinus graecus* 450 manuscript of 1364 and yet still maintained a very close resemblance to the original manuscripts of these works initially penned by Justin.

Genre, Style, and Structure Markers of *First Apology*, *Second Apology*, and *Dialogue with Trypho*

The genre, style, and structure markers of the three accepted works by Justin Martyr are important to this work due largely to how Justin Martyr helped redefine the concept of the *apologia* for the Early Church and subsequent centuries of Christianity. While the *apologia* was technically used for the court room of Justin's time in order to make a defense against allegations, Justin's apologies were not only defenses against allegations against Christians and what they believed but Justin's *apologia* helps define particularly Christian defenses against secular and pagan attacks while at the same time giving rise to the term "apologist."[347] The title "apologist" which is ascribed to Justin and others in the Church is itself formed by in the titles he gives Justin and those who defend the Christian faith in his *Ecclesiastical History*.

Scholars such as Paul Parvis and Sebastian Moll view Justin's *First Apology* as being in the line of the typical *libellus* which was meant to be read to the imperial court.[348] This is important that while it is probable that Justin's works were not read to the imperial court, nonetheless, as Sebastian Moll puts it, Justin is attempting to, "address[ed] his *Apology* to an educated pagan audience" in order to influence the political atmosphere and how the public

[347] Parvis, "Justin, Philosopher," 31. When Eusebius' publishes *Ecclesiastical History* in the 4th century, the link between *apologia* and Justin Martyr occurs eight out of thirty-one uses of *apologia* in Eusebius' work.

[348] Sara Parvis and Paul Foster, eds. *Justin Martyr and His Worlds* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 27-8, 146.

viewed Christians.[349] Although it is improbable that Justin's *First* and *Second Apology* were formal defenses for the imperial court is secondary to the goal that Justin more than likely had in mind. Justin was more than likely seeking to capture the attention of the educated pagans which Sebastian Moll highlighted.

As mentioned earlier, there has been some attention given to the difference between the *First* and *Second Apology* in terms of structure. Most notably, the *Second Apology* may show some indication of a posthumous creation and/or editing of the original work. The type of editing or creation which is referred to is more of a putting together of authentic pieces of Justin's writing more than any overt extra-authorial additions.[350] The particular three works attributed to Justin each bear the author's stamp of authorship and are thus a key to understanding the expression of primary Christian concepts. Whether in the *Dialogue with Trypho* or in the *First* and *Second Apology*, Justin Martyr did show continuity in his style and exegesis of Scripture. Writes Oskar Skarsaune,

> With regard to the Jewish Scriptures , the exact wording of the prophecies is important to Justin…Justin has an incipient canon in the way he refers to the Gospels, exactly as *Memoirs*, and he has a kind of implicit canon in the decisive role he accords to the apostles.[351]

This is cogent to the current issue at hand in that the theology of Justin Martyr which would be formed from his exegesis of Scripture and would also inform his understanding of suffering which will be addressed further in this work.

---

[349] Sebastian Moll, "Justin and the Pontic Wolf," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, eds. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 147.

[350] Parvis, "Justin, Philosopher," 35.

[351] Oskar Skarsaune, "Justin and His Bible," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, eds. Sara PArvis and Paul Foster, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 75-6.

While the contents of the *First* and *Second Apology* did lean toward a more defense-minded *libellus*, Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* definitely has different stylistic expression but at the same time Justin is using *Dialogue* for much the same reason that he wrote his *First* and *Second Apology*. While the length of *Dialogue* is longer than the four Gospels combined, the mark of Hellenistic Judaism and Platonism can be found throughout all three works.[352] This is relevant to the discussion at hand that while there were influences of Platonism (specifically in how Justin sets up the actual dialogue with Trypho) and Hellenistic Judaism to be found in Justin's works there were also definite marks of a different understanding of suffering apart from these influences found in his work.

Dialogue with Trypho is by far a more extensive apologetic address to those who would read this particular writing. Not only in sheer length does Justin give greater apologetic attention to the particular attacks against Christianity of his day, but Justin also uses several different types of apologetics to persuade Trypho.[353] Justin's style of scriptural exegesis and referencing to Old Testament prophecy are quite consistent between *Dialogue* and the *First* and *Second Apologies*.[354] The consistencies according to Goodenough and Skarsaune are also found in Justin's use of the New Testament when explaining concepts such as the passion of Jesus Christ and fulfillment of the prophecy of Zech 12:10-12 and Matt 21:1-7.[355] The *Dialogue with Trypho* is replete with stylistic and exegetical markers that are shared with the *First* and *Second*

---

[352] Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr*, 88.

[353] In the first section of *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin uses more of classical apologetic approach by showing the necessity of the Mosaic Law and the existence of God. In the second section of *Dialogue*, Justin uses a combination of evidential and presuppositional apologetics by showing the historicity of Jesus Christ as well as the presuppositions of what constitutes fulfilled prophecy, namely fulfilled prophecy completed in Jesus Christ. In the third section, Justin appeals with more presuppositional apologetics as well as experiential apologetics when he appeals to Trypho's Jewish background and his need to be part of the children of the True Israel.

[354] Skarsaune, "Justin and His Bible," 55.

[355] Ibid., 66-8.

Apologies and therefore can help point towards as consistent understanding of basic theological concepts which include the concept of suffering to the Early Church and early apologists such as Justin Martyr.

Philosophical Influences on Justin's Understanding of Suffering

Justin was familiar with several schools of philosophy such as Platonism, Neoplatonism, Hellenism, Stoicism, and Socratic philosophy. Justin's use of concepts such as *chiasma*, *daimon, logos*, and *philosophia* (which space does not permit elaboration) show the apologist's familiarity with some of the terms used in philosophical dialogue. However, this was nothing extraordinary in Justin's day. Scholars through the ages have almost unanimously agreed that Justin was probably not an expert in any of the particular philosophies of his day.[356] It has been noted that Justin believed he came to a final understanding of what the one true philosophy was and that it had, "been fully revealed in and through Jesus Christ."[357] What is important to understanding Justin's use of philosophy in his writings are the particular philosophical concepts and apologetic bridges he employed when describing certain aspects surrounding the idea of suffering.

In Justin's *First Apology* he addresses how they have been taught that God,

> …in the beginning did of His goodness, for man's sake, create all things out of unformed matter; and if men by their works show themselves worthy of this His design, they are

[356] Erwin Goodenough describes the philosophical environment which Justin was brought up in when he writes, "Everyone could readily talk the philosophical jargon of his day, so that no normal child would have grown up in a Greek city…without acquiring the vocabulary of, and accustoming himself to taking part in, popular philosophical discussions…Such was the popular philosophical environment of Justin, the welter of crude superstitions expressed in myth and in snatches of philosophical terminology. At the same time a few higher spirits were trying to keep pure the better traditions of philosophy, while at least the leaders of the Platonic and Pythagorean schools were driven by a profound desire to find peace in a mystical communion with God." Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr*, 32.

[357] Leslie William Barnard, trans., *The First and Second Apologies* (New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 12.

> deemed worthy, and so we have received – of reigning in company with Him, being delivered from corruption and suffering.[358]

When Justin refers to how "they" have been taught, it may be plausible that he is referring to a common background that he and his Roman audience may have in common, namely the teaching of Platonic creation. In Platonic creation, according to Plato's *Timaeus*, there is a the supreme Demiurge which creates the ordered universe out of a pre-existent, unformed matter which will "for man's sake" serve to help rational beings understand one another.[359] Justin turns the Platonic view of suffering as being something that for the most part only affects the earthly life and not at all affecting the divine nature of the human and Justin instead shows suffering as something which the *worthy* human may be delivered from. This deliverance from suffering is not due to the human solely escaping the mortal world, as in Platonic thought, but rather the deliverance from suffering and corruption is contingent on the human, "by their works show themselves worthy of this His design."[360] Here we see a departure from Platonic thought into a more Judeo-Christin idea of escaping suffering due to the relationship one has with God. This idea of being able to live with God free from suffering because of one's relationship to God and because of how one (even more pointedly) "lived as Christ" is also touched on by Justin in his Second Apology.[361]

Justin also speaks to his pagan hearers about the absence or presence of the afterlife and its relation to suffering when speaking of how Christian believers will be freed from suffering by

---

[358] Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 10.3.

[359] Plato, *Timaeus* 41B-42A.

[360] Justin Martyr ,*The First Apology* 10.3.

[361] Ibid., *The Second Apology of Justin* 1.2.

their persecutors. Justin addresses those persecutors who may have had an Epicurean or Stoic view of the afterlife when he writes,

> But if they believe that there nothing after death, but declare that those who die pass into unconsciousness, then they become our benefactors when they set us free from the sufferings and necessities of this life, and prove themselves to be wicked and inhuman and prejudiced. For they kill us with no intention of delivering us, but cut us off that we may be deprived of life and pleasure.[362]

While Justin seems to acknowledge the philosophies which ascribe to an unconscious or non-existent afterlife, Justin does maintain a view of the afterlife which would fall in line with Christian theology and the witness of Scripture, namely that death is a welcome deliverance from suffering in the present world. Justin does not write this to illustrate how Christians are bent on dying in some type of absurd death wish but rather to show that this deliverance to death holds no fear for the true believer, "since it is certain we must surely die."[363]

In the *First* and *Second Apology* Justin Martyr attempts to convince his audience of the innocence of Christians in the face of persecution and marginalization. Justin attempts to alleviate the suffering of persecuted Christians by comparing them with all the other "philosophers" that are given respect regardless of their background. Justin desires that punishment should be given not to Christians but to evil-doers instead.[364] Here Justin appeals to the idea that Christians should not be punished for merely being a set of people who espouse a particular set of beliefs like the Greeks or even the Barbarians do without threat from the Roman

---

[362] Justin Martyr, *The First Apology* 57.3.

[363] Justin Martyr, *The First Apology* , 57.2.

[364] Ibid., 7.3-4. "And this we acknowledge, that as among the Greeks those who teach such theories as please themselves are all called by the one name "Philosopher," though their doctrines be diverse, so also among the Barbarians this name on which accusations are accumulated is the common property of those who are and those who seem wise. For all are called Christians. Wherefore we demand that the deeds of all those who are accused to you be judged, in order that each one who is convicted may be punished as an evil-doer, and not as a Christian; and if it is clear that any one is blameless, that he may be acquitted, since by the mere fact of his being a Christian he does no wrong."

government. Here the influence of the current philosophical environment on Justin's concept of suffering takes a very practical position. If Christians are to be respected and not persecuted by the Roman government then the Christian's particular brand of philosophy should be tolerated and not persecuted. Sara Parvis writes of Justin's plea to Rome's attitude towards philosophy and how the Christian should be able to take shelter under that Roman umbrella of toleration,

> It was he who had the brilliant idea of attempting to bring before the emperor himself the legal anomaly, under which Christians were suffering, for noting more than the name of Christian. It was he who believed it must be worth attempting to persuade people who call themselves Pius and philosophers that Christianity was neither impious not philosophically bankrupt.[365]

Not only was Justin's understanding of suffering given a foil through the surrounding philosophies of his time but the suffering of Christians under an increasingly persecutory Roman rule was cause enough for Justin to show how philosophy and suffering intersected in a very real and visceral way.

Biblical Foundations in Justin's Understanding of Suffering

Justin's existing works are replete with uses of Old and New Testament Scripture.[366] In his proposed *libellus* to an educated class, the *First Apology*, Justin does not shy away from using the Scriptures to help persuade his pagan audience of the veracity of Christianity's truth claims.[367] In A. J. Bellinzoni's thorough work, "The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin

[365] Parvis, "Justin Martyr," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, 127.

[366] According to Oskar Skarsaune there is ample proof that Justin was working with separate scrolls and not a codified compilation of Old and New Testament writings. Oskar writes that even though there was an element of condensed and unified Scripture that Justin's, "use of these documents is consonant with his concept of what it means to be an apostle…" Oskar Skarsaune, "Justin and," 75.

[367] When testifying of the Christian's character despite persecution and insults Justin quotes Luke 6:29 in the First Apology when he writes, "And concerning our being long-suffering and servants to all and free from anger, this is what He said: "To him who smites you on the one cheek, offer also the other; and to him that takes away your shirt do not forbid your cloak also." Justin Martyr, *The First Apology* 16.1.

Martyr" Bellinzoni concludes that through Justin's uses of the sayings of Jesus found in the Gospels that, "it is reasonable to assume that Justin, as a prominent teacher in the school of Rome, took an active part in the creation and formation of that school's tradition."[368] Some scholarship in the past century has sought to view Justin's *Second* Apology as devoid of Scripture and more dependent on philosophy.[369] Stephen Presley helps to dispel this notion by forcefully arguing for Justin's repeated allusions and references to Scripture throughout the *Second Apology* and Justin's "use of the 'teachings of Christ.'"[370] This is to say that if Justin Martyr's use of the Bible was fairly explicit in his writings which, according to Skarsaune, influenced the catechetical schools of Rome then it is possible that Justin's understanding and use of Scripture and how suffering was treated by Scripture very well could have influenced believers for years to come.

Justin intended to reach both the unbelieving and believing audience with his writing. With a familiarity with most school of philosophy of his time, Justin was eventually led to a study of the Scriptures by way of a conversation with an older man who asked what Justin's understanding of philosophy was. Justin replied that philosophy is, "the knowledge of that which really exists, and a clear perception of the truth."[371] Justin's desire to know, "the prophets, and of those men who are friends of Christ"[372] through his reading of Scripture was fueled in a desire to

[368] Bellinzoni, *The Sayings of Jesus*, 141.

[369] R. M. Grant, "Forms and Occasions of the Greek Apologists," *Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni* 52, no.2 (June 1986): 216.

[370] Stephen O. Presley, "A Loftier Doctrine: The Use of Scripture in Justin Martyr's *Second Apology*," *Perichoresis* 12, no. 2 (June 2014): 198.

[371] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 3.21.

[372] Ibid., 8.2.

know the Savior. Justin writes, "Moreover, I would wish that all, making a resolution similar to my own, do not keep themselves away from the words of the Savior."[373]

This is pertinent to the work at hand in that by Justin's admission in *Dialogue with Trypho* his seeking after the truth through philosophy helped him arrive to the Scriptures, which he called, "words filled with the Spirit of God, and big with power, and flourishing with grace."[374] Justin's biblical foundations were moored with anchors of deep respect and admiration for what he perceived to be Holy Spirit inspired Scripture. Yet, deep respect and admiration for Scripture was not the basis of why he held *the* true philosophy of Christianity as preeminent. Justin's understanding of the Logos concept where, "the Logos himself who had become a man and he was called Jesus Christ"[375] was intricately amalgamated with the Scriptures which foretold of the Logos which was to come. For Justin, he was able to "turn from reason to revelation as the source of authority for his faith."[376] This authority found in Scripture was not grounded in what Justin said were, "empty fables,"[377] as he tried to convince Trypho of the Scripture's veracity, but in the revelation of Scripture and what Oskar Skarsaune termed, "the [evidentially] reliable"[378] fulfilled prophecy in the person of Jesus Christ which where witnessed by the apostles who subsequently transmitted their reports.

Therefore, when one surveys Justin's uses of Scripture and how Scripture informs the concept of suffering, Justin is relaying concepts of suffering which are grounded in his

---

[373] Ibid., 8.4.

[374] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 9.3.

[375] Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 5.5.

[376] Willis A. Shotwell, *The Biblical Exegesis of Justin Martyr* (London: S.P.C.K., 1965), 3.

[377] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 9.3.

[378] Skarsaune, "Justin and His Bible," 76.

understanding of how Scripture is true and reliable. For Justin, these Scriptures are reliable and true when they speak to and about suffering and how the believer can understand not only the suffering of Jesus Christ but also the suffering in which they experience themselves and with which they participate in and with Jesus Christ. As Christopher Hall noted about Justin's understanding of Scripture, "[Justin] identified both a literal and typological/allegorical meaning in a number of biblical texts."[379] Justin alludes to the suffering that believers and Jesus chare when he writes, "For all that we suffer, even when killed by friends, He foretold would take place; so that it is manifest no word or act of His can be found fault with."[380] Justin also accuses Trypho and the Jews of treating those who are associated with "the Righteous One [Jesus Christ]" in hateful ways just as they treated Jesus the same way.[381] Justin ties the suffering that believers endure with the suffering of Christ and more relevant to this discussion, the suffering found in Scripture when Justin quotes Isa 3:9 and the woe which will befall those who oppose the Messiah and his righteous followers.[382]

The suffering that is shared between Jesus Christ and His followers is a suffering which Justin acknowledges is a crucial part of the incarnation. In Justin's *Second Apology*, which is held to be written shortly before or posthumously after[383] Justin and several other believers' martyrdom, Justin writes of how Christ's shared suffering and healing helps prove the non-contradictory and wholistic nature of the revelation of Jesus Christ,

---

[379] Hall, *Reading Scripture*, 138.

[380] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 35.13.

[381] Ibid., 136.5.

[382] Ibid, 136.6.

[383] Parvis, "Justin, Philosopher," 36-7. Paul Parvis sees no inherent authorship issue with a posthumous creation of the *Second Apology*. Parvis writes, "Justin…"invented" it – as he perhaps invented "apology" – not by writing, but by dying."

> For each man spoke well in proportion to the share he had of the spermatic word, seeing what was related to it. But they who contradict themselves on the more important points appear not to have possessed the heavenly wisdom, and the knowledge which cannot be spoken against. Whatever things were rightly said among all men, are the property of us Christians. For next to God, we worship and love the Word who is from the unbegotten and ineffable God, since also He became man for our sakes, that becoming a partaker of our sufferings, He might also bring us healing.[384]

Here Justin states the identity of Christ as the Logos or Word who, among other qualities, is a "partaker of our sufferings" and one who can bring them healing as well. Justin's understanding of suffering is quite literally established in the Word or Logos found in Jesus Christ whom the Scriptures, which Justin holds to, testify.

Throughout Justin's three works he continually uses the Scripture reference of Jesus predicting his death and resurrection saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."[385] Justin also wrote about the prophecies from the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 and linked the suffering to Jesus Christ as not only a testament to what Jesus would endure on earth but also as a proof to fulfilled prophecy.[386] Therefore, the suffering of Jesus Christ as prophesied in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament is integral not only to Justin's understanding of suffering from a biblical background but the suffering of Jesus Christ is integral in explaining to believers and non-believers some of the core truths of the Christian Scriptures.[387]

The Ethical Dimension of Justin's Understanding of Suffering

---

[384] Justin Martyr, *Second Apology* 13.3-5.

[385] Matt 16:21; Mk 8:31; Lk 9:22 (NKJV) Justin uses this Scripture more than four times in *Dialogue with Trypho*.

[386] Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 50.1, 51.7, 52.3.

[387] Leslie W. Barnard and Iustinus, *St. Justin Martyr: the First and Second Apologies* (New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 10. Barnard comments on how the *Second Apology* illustrates the benefit of suffering for the faith and, "the crowning proof of the truth of their religion."

Justin did not believe that a human being was a sectioned out composite of mind, body, and soul but a human. Ioan-Gheorghe Rotaru comments on how Justin viewed the composition of the human being, "Justin says that God, summoned to life and resurrection this entire assembly, that is the man, and not just a part of him."[388] For Justin suffering was not just a theological idea based on the biblical witness of Scripture and something which was philosophically tenable, but suffering was also grounded in the reality and ethic of day-to-day living for the Christian. Rather than suffering for being something which only served, as Marcus Aurelius stated, to be one more thing in this life "we yield to" among other things like anger and strength,[389] suffering for Justin carried with it the implication that there is human choice involved in suffering. Justin writes, "But neither do we affirm that it is by fate that men do what they do, or suffer what they suffer, but that each man by free choice acts rightly or sins."[390] Part of what Justin considered "acting rightly" was how to act in the face of persecution and physical violence.

Of course, Justin acknowledged how suffering can come, not by any choice on the part of the sufferer, but also how violence may be inflicted on the sufferer. Justin refers to Jesus Christ in what could be seen as types of run-on sentences surrounding ethics, Justin in his *First Apology* semi-quotes Luke 6:29 when giving instruction to believers about how they are to endure suffering despite persecution,

> And concerning our being patient of injuries, and ready to serve all, and free from anger, this is what he said: "To him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak or coat, forbid not. And whosoever shall be angry, is in

[388] Ioan-Gheorghe Rotaru, "Man –Body and Soul, as well as the Relationship between Them in the Conception of St. Justin the Martyr and the Philosopher," *Dialogo* 1, no.1 (November 2014): 100.

[389] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 2.19.

[390] Justin Martyr, *Second Apology* 7.3.

> danger of the fire… For we ought not to strive; neither has He desired us to be imitators of wicked men, but He has exhorted us to lead all men, by patience and gentleness, from shame and the love of evil. And this indeed is proved in the case of many who once were of your way of thinking, but have changed their violent and tyrannical disposition, being overcome either by the constancy which they have witnessed in their neighbours' lives, or by the extraordinary forbearance they have observed in their fellow-travellers when defrauded, or by the honesty of those with whom they have transacted business.[391]

These types of ethical remonstrations from Jesus Christ, especially in the face of suffering, were not meant to be philosophical treatises but practical ways of ethically living out the Christian life which in time would, "overcome either by the constancy which they have witnessed in their neighbours' lives or by the extraordinary forbearance they have observed in their fellow-travellers."[392]

Leslie Barnard comments on Justin's Middle Platonist use of Stoic ethical concepts in his *Second Apology* as having within Justin's expression of this type of ethic a germinating seed of how Christians can redeem suffering by their very existence within the human race.[393] This is to say that Justin was aware of how deeply embedded the Christian's ethic towards suffering would be held. For Justin, this ethic towards suffering is different than what the Stoics believe because of the believer's desire to live by an ethic which the Logos, Jesus Christ, has made known the truth that is for the believer's contemplation and ethical practice. Justin writes,

> For, as we intimated, the devils have always effected, that all those who anyhow live a reasonable and earnest life, and shun vice, be hated. And it is nothing wonderful; if the devils are proved to cause those to be much worse hated who live not according to a part only of the word diffused [among men], but by the knowledge and contemplation of the whole Word, which is Christ.[394]

---

[391] Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 16.1-3, 5-6.

[392] Ibid.

[393] Barnard , *St. Justin Martyr*, 207-8.

[394] Justin Martyr, *Second Apology* 8.2-3.

It is important to note that Justin wrote the *Second Apology* shortly before his death. This is to highlight how, contrary to Rebecca Lyman's assertion that Justin's desire to show Christianity as the true philosophy was, "…simplistic as Jude the Obscure's attempt to learn Latin or Greek"[395] and that Justin's "philosophical persona therefore must be seen as…hybridity that is neither orthodox Christianity nor religious Hellenism."[396] While Lyman's estimation of Justin Martyr's philosophy and theology may appear conclusive in her writing, there are few believers in the Early Church that would face physical death over this kind of *hybridity* which Lyman describes. In short, the ethic of suffering which Justin Martyr not only proclaimed, but lived and died for, was not just a conceptualized hybrid philosophy ricocheting off of a sectarian codex of writings but was instead an indivisible element of Christian identity for Justin and the Early Church as they lived out their faith. Justin was clear about who the mere mouthpieces of philosophy were and who were the true professors and practitioners of what they taught. Justin writes about the hypocrisy of pagan philosophers,

> For of philosophy, too, some assume the name and the garb who do nothing worthy of their profession… are yet all called by the one name of philosophers. And of these some taught atheism; and the poets who have flourished among you raise a laugh out of the uncleanness of Jupiter with his own children. And those who now adopt such instruction are not restrained by you; but, on the contrary, you bestow prizes and honours upon those who euphoniously insult the gods.[397]

For the Christian believers such as Justin Martyr suffering was something which would delineate the false from the true believer. As Craig Hovey writes,

> The martyr-church is prepared to suffer even though it knows that suffering is no longer the shape of the universe. When it suffers, it does not do so because suffering "means

[395] Rebecca Lyman, "Justin and Hellenism: Some Postcolonial Perspectives," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, eds. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 164.

[396] Ibid., 168.

[397] Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 4.8-10.

> something" but precisely because it has lost its meaning as a determinative feature of a world made new by the suffering of Christ.[398]

The ethic of Justin Martyr's suffering was fully informed by the resurrection of Jesus Christ which he alluded to and which he outright quoted Scripture throughout his known writings.[399] His adherence to the resurrection of Jesus Christ was part and parcel with his Christian faith and practice.[400] Justin's orthopraxy, which was displayed through his Christian ethic towards suffering (among other things), eventually was tried as he faced death when his *Second Apology* reads,

> For having put some to death on account of the accusations falsely brought against us, they also dragged to the torture our domestics, either children or weak women, and by dreadful torments forced them to admit those fabulous actions which they themselves openly perpetrate; about which we are the less concerned, because none of these actions are really ours, and we have the unbegotten and ineffable God as witness both of our thoughts and deeds.[401]

Justin's ethic in the face of suffering was informed by the understanding that God would accompany them through their trials. What Justin declared and evoked about the redemptive aspect of suffering in relationship to his God and expressed in his writings accompanied Justin to the point of facing death at the hands of his enemies and the Roman state. A near-contemporary of Justin Martyr, apologist Minucius Felix (d. 250), who after a lengthy response to the pagan

---

[398] Craig Hovey, *To Share in The Body* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008), 132.

[399] See *First Apology* 19.1-5, 52.3, 63.12; *Second Apology* 13.6-8; *Dialogue with Trypho*77.7, 106.1-3, 139.5.

[400] Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr*, 248-9. Goodenough summarizes the progression of Justin's view of the resurrection and references both *First Apology* and *Dialogue with Trypho* as proofs of Justin's Christology.

[401] Justin Martyr, *Second Apology* 12.4.

culture around him and responding how the Christian was to live concluded, "We who bear wisdom not in our dress, but in our mind, we do not speak great things, but we live them."[402]

Suffering in *First Apology, Second Apology,* and *Dialogue with Trypho*

As it has been shown, suffering for Justin Martyr was addressed in different philosophical, biblical, and ethical degrees within his writings. There are some scholarly voices that seek to detract from the biblical and ethical core of what suffering and martyrdom meant to Justin, his contemporaries, and the Christian community of the second century. One way of distracting from the overarching meaning of suffering for Justin is found with Candida Moss who sees Justin's portrayal of suffering at the hands of the Jews as an attempt to create a Christian identity by demarcating the Jews as similar enemies of Christians. Moss's imaging of Justin using persecution to create identity by making Jews and Romans similar enemies is shown when she writes, "Moreover, according to the *Dialogue with Trypho*, the Jews are grandfathered into a history of persecution that links Jew and Roman." [403] Moss sees Justin's naming of Jews as persecutors as powerful rhetoric that, "is forcefully felt in the writings of modern scholars who have been seduced by the familiar, if perhaps unfounded, narrative of Jewish persecution of Christians."[404]

While Justin certainly does name Jewish persecutors among those who caused suffering to Christians and Jesus Christ, Moss fails to mention that the particular work *Dialogue with Trypho* is addressed to the Jew, Trypho. It is certainly plausible that within Justin's range of

[402] Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 38.11.

[403] Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*, 85.

[404] Ibid., 85.

apologetic tradition and practice that he would use examples from the person's (Trypho) background (Judaism) in order to create apologetic bridges in order to bring about a greater awareness of Jesus Christ and the truth of fulfilled Jewish Scriptures. For example, Justin speaks about Christ's crucifixion as being predicted by Jewish Scriptures and how even though Christians face persecution in light of their belief in Jesus Christ, that Christians,

> …in addition to all this we pray for you, that Christ may have mercy upon you. For He taught us to pray for our enemies also, saying, 'Love your enemies; be kind and merciful, as your heavenly Father is.[405]

For Moss to single out Justin's dialogue as one that is meant to help create identity for the Christians and antipathy for the Jews is to disregard the larger picture of *Dialogue with Trypho*.[406] The larger picture is one of trying to persuade Trypho the Jew by approaching Trypho in his own faith tradition. As Bruce Chilton writes, "Yet he does know that he is confronting a Jewish *paradosis* – tradition – unlike his own, and he warns Trypho away from it."[407]

This is all to say that the portrayal of suffering in Justin's three main writings is one that is not as encumbered by other agendae as some may suppose. Rather, the suffering which is related especially to the passion of Jesus Christ and Justin's attempt to persuade others of its

---

[405] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 96.1-4. Justin's encapsulation of why Jews are included in cursing Christ includes Jewish Scripture, "For the statement in the law, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,' confirms our hope which depends on the crucified Christ, not because He who has been crucified is cursed by God, but because God foretold that which would be done by you all, and by those like to you, who do not know that this is He who existed before all, who is the eternal Priest of God, and King, and Christ. And you clearly see that this has come to pass. For you curse in your synagogues all those who are called from Him Christians; and other nations effectively carry out the curse, putting to death those who simply confess themselves to be Christians; to all of whom we say, You are our brethren; rather recognise the truth of God. And while neither they nor you are persuaded by us, but strive earnestly to cause us to deny the name of Christ, we choose rather and submit to death, in the full assurance that all the good which God has promised through Christ He will reward us with."

[406] While there may be concern that Justin could have erected a straw man in the form of Trypho in Justin's *Dialogue*, it is important to note that Trypho appears to be a fair representation of Jews in his Hellenized position. Erwin Goodenough writes, "and indeed Trypho in all these respects illustrates remarkably what has been described as the point of view of the Hellenized Jew. See Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr*, 93.

[407] Bruce Chilton, "Justin and Israelite Prophecy," in *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, eds. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 80.

divine significance is a description of suffering. This description of suffering is in part meant to bring attention to the unique character of how the believer identifies with and understands the suffering which Justin describes (as shown in the previous sections) throughout his works.

Judith Perkins in her book, *The Suffering Self*, is adept at seeing how Justin and, "the early Christian narrative offered a particular self-understanding for Christians – the self as sufferer."[408] Perkins is able to identify the unique expression of suffering in the early Christian community of which Justin Martyr was a part of but she seems to take this identification only so far as to label the type of suffering the Christian community endured as being suffering which primarily helped further a type of self-identifying ritual that helped establish the Christian community as one that, "groups send collective messages to themselves, supporting their social fabric and legitimating their world-view."[409] However, a particular aspect of suffering and martyrdom which was not only a key element to the Christian community seems to be overlooked by Moss, Perkins, and others. This particular element is what could be termed as the *apologetic* use of suffering used by Justin and the Early Church of his time and it is to this we now turn.

Apologetic Uses of Suffering by Justin Martyr

For centuries, when the term "apologetics" was used, often the discussion of the origin of apologetics would invariably include Justin Martyr among other church fathers.[410] Henry Chadwick comments on Justin's *Apology* in that it was, "a document invaluable for the study of

[408] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 32.

[409] Ibid.

[410] Chad V. Meister and Khaldoun A. Sweis, eds., *Christian Apologetics: An Anthology of Primary Sources* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 358. Mesiter and Khaldoun list Justin Martyr first among a list of primary Early Church apologists and Fathers.

the second century and, indeed, for the whole story of Christian thought."[411] Christian apologetics, as discussed earlier in chapter one, has been used to help defend the Christian faith as well as inform and transform one's understanding of the world by Christian revelation. Justin Martyr helped to set the tone by what appears to be an actual *apologia*, which formally was to be read by the state but more than likely was intended for educated pagans.

Although Justin Martyr's *First* and *Second Apology* have often been viewed as essential in understanding exactly what apologetics are, there has been recent scholarship that has tried to show that the very category of apologetics, "has been foisted on us by Eusebius of Caesarea."[412] Sara Parvis also believes that because of so many different cultural influences on the concept of apologetics that it may be worth deconstructing the term in order to better define it.[413] While this paper will not seek to explore the few sources concerning a reassessment of the definition of apologetics, for the sake of space and congruency with the rest of this work attention will be paid to the particular uses of suffering that lend to serving Justin various apologetic uses.

Suffering at the time of Marcus Aurelius was expressed in several different ways in ancient Rome and Greece. Instead of a recapitulation from chapter 2 of a discussion on this subject, it is important to note that there was beginning to occur some cognitive dissonance about what suffering exactly entailed. To make writing about suffering as an activity that is only an expression of neurosis or hypochondria is to simplify the real changes of attitude and thought towards suffering that was beginning to occur. Judith Perkins writes, "…their emphasis on pain and suffering reflects a widespread cultural concern, which during the period was using

---

[411] Henry Chadwick, ed., *Justin: Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 31.

[412] Sara Parvis, "Justin Martyr," 115.

[413] Ibid.

representatives of bodily pain and suffering to construct a new subjectivity of the human person."[414]

While Perkins may believe she is beginning to construct an argument for Christianity introducing this "new subjectivity" towards suffering, it may be more precise to label this "new subjectivity" towards suffering as a more objective approach to suffering since the early Christians, including Justin Martyr, were basing their understanding of suffering and coping with suffering on the highly likely historical event of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.[415] Rather than another philosophical system that addressed suffering, early Christians were interpreting their suffering through the lenses of the historical event of the resurrection of Jesus due to Jesus having a true humanity with which the Christian community could identify. Justin sees this identifying with human suffering lodged in the fact that Jesus could actually experience human suffering. Justin writes of the Gethsemane prayer of Jesus who knew that suffering was imminent, "And again He prayed: 'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt; showing by this that He had become truly a suffering man."[416] Justin anticipated that some may say that Jesus did not suffer as a person and felt no pain when he wrote,

> His heart and also His bones trembling; His heart being like wax melting in His belly: in order that we may perceive that the Father wished His Son really to undergo such sufferings for our sakes, and may not say that He, being the Son of God, did not feel what was happening to Him and inflicted on Him.[417]

---

[414] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 173.

[415] Habermas, *The Risen Jesus*, 9-10. Using Habermas' list historical facts which are "accepted as historical by virtually all scholars who research this area [of Jesus' life and time period]" and in turn lends towards Jesus' resurrection as an historical event.

[416] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 99.5.

[417] Ibid., 103.8. While Justin did not regard a human being as one that has segmented parts between body, soul, and spirit but rather a being that is an entire assembly, his reference to Jesus Christ's suffering is meant to show how suffering was indeed viscerally felt on many levels by Jesus Christ. Just as humanity suffered, so too, was Jesus suffering to show his identification with humanity's suffering rather than using his divine ability to escape suffering. See Goodenough, *The Theology of Justin Martyr*, 237, 243. Also, Justin writes in his *First Apology* 63.10

The concept of suffering for the Christian was inextricably linked to the historical concept of the suffering of Jesus Christ. Erwin Goodenough writes of how the Christian view of suffering, shown through Justin's witness, captured both the humanity of Jesus's time on earth and the hope that would lie beyond the current attitudes towards suffering,

> A Stoic indifference may lift a few strongminded persons into a state of mind closely resembling otherworldly exaltation, but no such popular movement as Christianity could ever have been based upon such a coldly intellectual foundation. But when God was conceived of as personal and loving, and yet sublimely transcendent in location and nature above the world of change, Christians, with their hope through Christ, could face the vicissitudes of fortune with a passionate scorn which at once puzzled and amazed the pagan world. For the Christians were confident, that their souls were in the care of God, and so in a sense, like God were safe beyond the world of change and suffering.[418]

This is where the idea of using suffering as an apologetic bridge was one of Justin's compelling apologetic arguments for the veracity and validity of the Christian faith and the core belief of the humanity of Jesus Christ. Justin Martyr writes of the "strange endurance" which emanates from the Christian faith,

> For we ought not to strive; neither has He desired us to be imitators of wicked men, but He has exhorted us to lead all men, by patience and gentleness, from shame and the love of evil. And this indeed is proved in the case of many who once were of your way of thinking, but have changed their violent and tyrannical disposition, being overcome either by the constancy which they have witnessed in their neighbours' lives, or by the extraordinary forbearance they have observed in their fellow-travellers when defrauded, or by the honesty of those with whom they have transacted business.[419]

Justin spoke of how those who were wicked and at the same time near the Christians were "overcome…by the extraordinary forbearance"[420] not of when there were executions or torture of Christians but in this instance by just how Christians endured economic suffering due to

---

about the purpose of Jesus becoming man "for the sake of the human race." This is only to point towards how Justin viewed Jesus as intentionally having to endure the same suffering which others humans had to endure.

[418] Goodenough, *The Theology,* 133

[419] Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 16.3.

[420] Ibid.

dishonest business transactions. To be sure, Justin did mention physical abuse that Christian believers would endure at the hands of the their persecutors,

> But this only can they effect, that they who live irrationally, and were brought up licentiously in wicked customs, and are prejudiced in their own opinions, should kill and hate us; whom we not only do not hate, but, as is proved, pity and endeavour to lead to repentance. For we do not fear death, since it is acknowledged we must surely die; and there is nothing new, but all things continue the same in this administration of things; and if satiety overtakes those who enjoy even one year of these things, they ought to give heed to our doctrines, that they may live eternally free both from suffering and from want.[421]

Coupled with Justin's remarks about those who would persecute them and how Christians would hope to help lead to repentance is the idea that they do not fear death and that suffering can be escaped for all time if the unbelieving would repent. Although scholarly treatment of this particular passage is fairly sparse through the ages it does appear that the idea of persecution and suffering for the Christian faith is closely linked with the apologetic assertion that suffering will be no more in eternity if one is in the Christian faith by repentance.

What is interesting is Candida Moss's assertion that Justin Martyr's actual court case where he and six other believers were sentenced,[422] is an account which has been, "edited in order to explain their meaning and significance for their audiences."[423] Unfortunately, it appears that Moss has also edited the accounts of Justin Martyr and excluded sections of Justin's *First* and *Second Apology* which would significantly shed light on the recension of the court report. If the court report of Justin's trial were all that had survived from Justin's writings then there would be little to discuss in terms of the martyrdom, much less any apologetic value. But this is not the

---

[421] Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 57.2-3.

[422] Barnabas, Justin, Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, A. Cleveland Coxe, G. H. Box, Ignatius, Polycarp, Papias, and Clement. "The Martyrdom of the Holy Martyrs," in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: translations of the writings down to A.D. 325*. Vol. 1. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

[423] Moss, *The Myth,* 111-12.

case as Justin repeatedly uses suffering and the life of the believer to apologetically call attention to the validity and veracity of the Christian faith. More than three hundred years before Candida Moss wrote *The Myth of Perecution*, William Reeves writes of the powerful apologetic persuasion that came from the lives of Justin Martyr and Christians, as they endured suffering and hardship,

> And with what face could a Christian offer to persuade a heathen to embrace such a persecuted religion, without the clearest convictions imaginable? This argument from the primitive sufferings, and from the manner of them, for the truth of Christianity, I insist upon the longer, not only because it is strong in itself, and so often appealed to in the primitive writings, but because to me it is ore moving, and apter to take hold of the heart than all of the speculative proofs in nature.[424]

Justin's use of suffering as an apologetic bridge is also in his *Second Apology* where he talks about how Christians would face death. Justin links his own conversion from Platonism and "delighting in the teachings of Plato"[425] as he writes about how he witnessed Christians approaching death and suffering much differently than himself and those caught up in Epicurean or other philosophies of his time,

> For I myself, too, when I was delighting in the doctrines of Plato, and heard the Christians slandered, and saw them fearless of death, and of all other things which are counted fearful, perceived that it was impossible that they could be living in wickedness and pleasure. For what sensual or intemperate man, or who that counts it good to feast on human flesh, could welcome death that he might be deprived of his enjoyments, and would not rather continue always the present life, and attempt to escape the observation of the rulers; and much less would he denounce himself when the consequence would be death?[426]

---

[424] William Reeves, *The Apologies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Minutius Felix, in Defence of the Christian Religion* (London: W.B. Black Swan, 1709), 265.

[425] Justin Martyr, *Second Apology* 12.1.

[426] Ibid., 12.1-2. Justin addresses the Epicurean view towards sensuality and intemperance further on in the same chapter, "And imitating Jupiter and the other gods in sodomy and shameless intercourse with woman, might we not bring as our apology the writings of Epicurus and the poets? But because we persuade men to avoid such instruction, and all who practise them and imitate such examples, as now in this discourse we have striven to persuade you, we are assailed in every kind of way."

In fact Justin points out the irony of how Christians were falsely persecuted, tortured, or even executed for accusations which the pagans around them, "they themselves openly perpetuate."[427] It was by the Christians' attitude towards suffering and death that, at the time, forced an unbelieving philosopher like Justin to take notice of the faith and holiness of the Christians. Justin takes the holiness of the Christians and uses what Justin calls the "sensual and intemperate"[428] actions as a foil as to why Christians are being persecuted. Justin writes of how he wishes that someone would remonstrate the hypocritical pagans around them and shout, "Be converted, become wise."[429]

In probably the most scripturally supported writings of Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin refers often not just to the suffering of persecuted Christians but to the suffering of Jesus Christ of whom,

> it was prophesied by Jacob the patriarch that there would be two advents of Christ, and that in the first He would suffer, and that after He came there would be neither prophet nor king in your nation (I proceeded), and that the nations who believed in the suffering Christ would look for His future appearance.[430]

The suffering Christ was not only integral to the prophecies of the Old Testament but was also integral to Justin's own conversion in his *Dialogue with Trypho*.[431] Justin acknowledges Trypho's identification of the suffering Christ as the one who fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies[432] and that the suffering Christ is part and parcel of the identity of the Jewish

---

[427] Justin Martyr, *Second Apology*, 12.3.

[428] Ibid., 12.2.

[429] Ibid., 12.10.

[430] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 52.1.

[431] Chilton, "Justin and Israelite Prophecy," 77.

[432] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 36.1-2.

Messiah.[433] The idea that the Old Testament and the New Testament carried scriptural significance to Justin and Trypho is attested to by Bruce Chilton who writes, "Both Judaism and Christianity made the immediate reference of Scripture ancillary to its systemic significance."[434] While Chilton sees a systemic divide between Trypho's Judaism and Justin's Christianity, Justin obviously did not see a systemic divide from Old to New Testament when he wrote a conclusive plea to Trypho, "My friends, I now refer to the Scriptures as the Seventy have interpreted them; for when I quoted them formerly as you possess them, I made proof of you [to ascertain] how you were disposed."[435]

This is to all say that Justin's apologetic was informed by an understanding that the Messiah was a suffering Messiah who was foretold of in the Old Testament. This suffering which was part and parcel of the Messiah's identity was not a fabrication of Justin Martyr but rather an affirmation of the identity of who exactly the Messiah was and therefore fulfilled in the suffering of Jesus Christ, which lends apologetic weight to the divine identity of Jesus Christ. Bruce Chilton devotes a section of his article on Justin's use of Israelite prophecy and while there is mention of the Davidic and Mosaic elements of Jesus Christ's prophetic fulfilment there is only three words[436] that mentions Justin acknowledging the Suffering Servant element of the Messiah.

While Chilton may not dedicate much space to how Christ has fulfilled the Suffering Servant prophecy of Isaiah, it is clear that Justin often mentions the suffering Christ as the one who is the Christ which would fulfill prophecy and bring salvation which is clear to Willis

[433] Ibid., 51.3.

[434] Chilton, "Justin and Israelite Prophecy," 86.

[435] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 137.5.

[436] Chilton, "Justin and Israelite Prophecy," 79. "(Isaiah, above all)"

Shotwell who writes, "However, some of the haggadic material was used to show the fulfillment of prophecy. This is true of the statements that Jesus was deformed (to fit Isa 53:2)."[437] Elsewhere in Justin's writing one can identify his use of suffering to identify who the Messiah is in Jesus Christ.[438] For Justin, not only the suffering of the believers who were enduring trials on account of their identity as Christians served apologetic ends but the very identity of Jesus Christ as one who suffers, according to Old Testament prophecy, is integral to the apologetic argument of Christ's divinity and therefore the veracity and validity of the Christian faith. Craig Albert sees the value of Christ's suffering within the apologetic discourse with Trypho when he writes, "Justin employs an explanation of the events of the life of the incarnate *Logos* together with the prophecies made of him to convince Trypho that the one who did suffer is the one of whom the Prophets speak."[439]

[437] Shotwell, *The Biblical Exegesis*, 26.

[438] See *First Apology* 22.3-4, 50.1, 52.3; *Dialogue with Trypho* 39.14-16, 89.3-5, 95.5-7.

[439] Craig D. Allert, *Revelation, Truth, Canon, and Interpretation: Studies in Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 107.

CHAPTER 5

IRENAEUS OF LYONS

Introduction

The following chapter will direct attention on the apologetics and understanding of suffering of Irenaeus of Lyons (140-202), who has been called, "the first great theologian of the Christian tradition"[440] even though, according to the Dean and Professor of Patristics at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, John Behr, he has largely been marginalized and ignored by most mainstream evangelical theologians for the last half-century.[441] This chapter will give a brief introduction to the biographical and sociological context of Irenaeus's life and writings and will then move into his apologetic works with special attention given to the philosophical, biblical, and ethical components of Irenaeus's understanding of suffering. After reviewing Irenaeus's understanding of suffering in the five books of his *Adversus Haereses*, this chapter will summarize how Irenaeus used suffering within his apologetics.

Social and Cultural Context of Irenaeus's Work

By the time of Justin's death, the emperor Marcus Aurelius would soon be ruling without the co-emperor Lucius Verus. In his last eleven years of Aurelius' reign was notably marked by

[440] John Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), [outside back cover].

[441] Ibid., 15. Behr believes most of the marginalization of Irenaeus emanates from broadly characterizing Irenaeus as "a bishop concerned for his own authority and intolerant towards others [as well as] demonizing his opponents with the general label of 'Gnosticism.'"

constant wars on nearly every border and severe plague which resurged and became widespread in the late 170s. It would be simplistic to say that the Roman Empire was in danger of implosion but even under the balanced rule of philosopher/statesman Marcus Aurelius, "Christianity was still not an easy option."[442]

Justin Martyr had passed away fourteen years before Irenaeus had taken the mantle of bishop of Lyons in Gaul. What awaited Irenaeus in Lyons was a population that was more immigrant than established Roman descent and was mostly made up Celtic, Greek, and Latin cultures.[443] Irenaeus was known to be steeped in the work of evangelizing those he came in contact with in Lyons but at the same time he, "fiercely opposed divergence of doctrine."[444] Although Irenaeus may have attempted to evangelize the Celts it was the Latin language which was his *lingua franca* and which he would often preach.[445]

What is generally accepted as the date of Marcus Aurelius' state-ordered persecution of Christians in 177 is also the year of which Irenaeus makes his home in Lyons as the bishop of the Christian community[446] in order to help govern the church due to the imprisonment of their long-time leader, Pothinus. The Christian community in Lyons had suffered persecution resulting in martyrdom of Latin and Greek believers.[447] State sanctioned persecution was less of a worry to

---

[442] Martin Goodman, *The Roman World: 44 BC-AD 180* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 416.

[443] Robert M. Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (London, UK: Routledge, 1997), 5.

[444] Sara Parvis and Paul Foster, "Introduction: Irenaeus and His Traditions," in *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy*, eds. Paul Foster and Sara Parvis (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 1.

[445] Jared Secord, "The Cultural Geography of a Greek Christian," in *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy*, eds. Paul Foster and Sara Parvis (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 32. Secord postulates from Gregory of Tours' *History of the Franks* description of Irenaeus as one who "taught and preached" in Latin.

[446] Robert M. Grant, "Eusebius and the Martyrs of Gaul", in *Les Martyrs de Lyon*, Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Reserche Scientifique, no. 575 (Paris: CNRS, 1978), 129-36.

[447] Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 5.

Irenaeus since it was the rise of Montanism, the teaching of Valentinus, various sects of Gnosticism, and mystery religions which seemed to capture most of Irenaeus's attention.

Whether the particular Gnostic communities were rising up and causing a serious threat against the orthodox Christian church from within the Church as some Christians may have been adopting Gnostic views or if the Gnostic communities were entirely separate from the Christian community in Lyons is a point of contention among some scholars.[448] What is consistent among scholars is that Irenaeus was commissioned to come be a peacemaker, "engaged on an embassy of peace."[449] This did not mean that Irenaeus did not engage the particular sects and divergent groups which had split off from orthodox Christianity in Lyons but rather that Irenaeus was sent to Lyons in order to distinguish, even polemically at times, between the orthodox Christian faith and the branches of groups in what he perceived as those in error.[450]

Martyrdom had already occurred in Lyons and was definitely an influential element in determining who would be counted as a loyal Christian and who would not. Irenaeus had met Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, and was influenced by Polycarp who was martyred in Smyrna around 157. Although scholars such as Sara Parvis and Robert M. Grant believe the persecution of Christians was not as widespread throughout the Roman Empire, the fact remains that persecutions of Christians did occur during Irenaeus's lifetime under the rule of Marcus Aurelius (161-180), with an official state-ordered execution of Christians in 177.[451] The Christian community was well aware suffering at the hands of those in power. In Irenaeus's *Adversus*

---

[448] Phillip Rousseau, *The Early Christians* (London, UK: Pearson Education Limited, 2002), 14.

[449] Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 16.

[450] Rousseau, *The Early Christians*, 110. Rousseau lists the particular groups and briefly describes the distinctions each group had from each other and the Chrisitans.

[451] Gillian Clark, *Roman and Christian Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 43.

Haereses the author does not pontificate or overtly capitalize on the loss and witness of persecution but instead seems to regard some of the martyrdoms in a more balanced way by writing,

> For the Church alone sustains with purity the reproach of those who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, and endure all sorts of punishments, and are put to death because of the love which they bear to God, and their confession of His Son; often weakened indeed, yet immediately increasing her members, and becoming whole again, after the same manner as her type…[452]

Despite the chaotic disruption of martyrdom, internal divisions, and outward heresies Irenaeus displayed often in his writings, "a calm assurance and a quiet confidence in the working out of God's purposes in history"[453] and yet his polemical style was markedly different and more severe than his contemporary Justin Martyr or the Early Church Fathers before him.[454] An example of his polemic jabs can be found in *Adversus Haereses* when he writes,

> Learn then, ye foolish men, that Jesus who suffered for us, and who dwelt among us, is Himself the Word of God. For if any other of the Æons had become flesh for our salvation, it would have been probable that the apostle spoke of another.[455]

This particular bent of Irenaeus's polemic and apologetic serves to illustrate the type of audience and culture he found himself in as a Christian leader in Lyons as he tried to make known the superiority of Christianity in comparison to, among others, the Gnostic sects. While the polemic jabs are frequent throughout *Adversus Haereses*, it is notable that Irenaeus was not redundant in his polemic style but was capable in using various rhetorical devices to, "ground it in the

---

[452] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* IV 33.9.

[453] Paul Parvis, "Who Was Irenaeus? An Introduction to the Man and His Work," in *Irenaeus: Life Scripture Legacy,* eds. Paul Foster and Sara Parvis (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 16.

[454] Rousseau, *The Early Christian Centuries*, 109-10.

[455] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* I 9.3.

sacramental life of the Church, the crux for both of which is the Passion of Christ."[456] This grounding in the Passion of Jesus Christ is a key element of the Early Church's understanding of suffering.

Genre, Style, and Structure Markers in *Adversus Haereses*

In relation to the present work at hand, Irenaeus's lengthy magnum opus *Adversus Haereses* was foremost written to address the heresies that had plagued the orthodox Christian church in Lyons. In his preface to the work, Irenaeus writes,

> One far superior to me has well said, in reference to this point, "A clever imitation in glass casts contempt, as it were, on that precious jewel the emerald (which is most highly esteemed by some), unless it come under the eye of one able to test and expose the counterfeit.[457]

Irenaeus has clearly set himself as the one to "expose the counterfeit[s]" and yet as one approaches the five-volume work it is clear that in the last three volumes that Irenaeus is setting forth what he believes to be the orthodox positions of the true Christian church and,

> Since therefore we have such proofs, it is not necessary to seek the truth among others which it is easy to obtain from the Church; since the apostles, like a rich man [depositing his money] in a bank, lodged in her hands most copiously all things pertaining to the truth: so that every man, whosoever will, can draw from her the water of life. For she is the entrance to life; all others are thieves and robbers. On this account are we bound to avoid *them*, but to make choice of the thing pertaining to the Church with the utmost diligence, and to lay hold of the tradition of the truth.[458]

The five-volume work does appear to be, as John Behr describes, "dense and unwieldly"[459] and yet several scholars have sought to break down the composition of *Adversus Haereses* in such a

---

[456] Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 115-16.
[457] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* I.Pref.1.2.

[458] Ibid., III.4.1.

[459] Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 78.

way that helps the reader better determine where Irenaeus is heading in his writing.[460] The primary structure of *Adversus Haereses* lies in the shift from the first and second books, which are focused more towards exposing and refuting the Gnostic systems of various sects, to the third, fourth, and fifth books which comprise more of a defense of the Early Church's theology by use of Scripture. This is integral to the conversation at hand because of the possibility of an apologetic which maintains continuity throughout all five volumes. Irenaeus M. C. Steenberg believes the mass appeal of Irenaeus's work was due to his ability to meld a polemic, apologetic, and "positive expression of doctrine" in a continual work like *Adversus Haereses.*[461]

In the setting forth of his orthodox beliefs, Irenaeus at times fluctuates between full polemic, apologetic, and doctrinal engagement with his intended audiences. For the sake of space, this paper will primarily deal with the writings in *Adversus Haereses* which primarily revolve around various segments of the five-volume work that expose his more apologetic and polemic communication. While scholars often point towards the spectrum of polemics Irenaeus has expressed in *Adversus Haereses.*[462] Although the use of polemics is replete throughout *Adversus Haereses* it is clear that Irenaeus, in part, wants to bring bridges of apologetic thought to even his most contentious opponents such as the Valentinians. Irenaeus writes about how one should approach their opponents apologetically,

---

[460] Ibid. John Behr is especially adept at organizing the works of Irenaeus according to period of time, audience, purpose of address, and cultural /church context of Irenaeus *Adversus Haereses*. See also Dennis Minns, *Irenaeus: An Introduction* (London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), 9-11and William R. Schoedel, "Theological method in Irenaeus : (Adversus haereses 2,25-8)," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 35, no.1 (January 1984): 31-49.

[461] Irenaeus M. C. Steenberg, "Tracing the Irenaean Legacy," in *Irenaeus: Life Scripture Legacy,* eds. Paul Foster and Sara Parvis (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 199.

[462] Robert M. Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 48. Grant views Irenaeus's polemic as a device which Irenaeus uses to "demolish the exegesis of the Gnostics."

> The man, however, who would undertake their conversion, must possess an accurate knowledge of their systems or schemes of doctrine. For it is impossible for any one to heal the sick, if he has no knowledge of the disease of the patients. This was the reason that my predecessors—much superior men to myself, too —were unable, notwithstanding, to refute the Valentinians satisfactorily, because they were ignorant of these men's system.[463]

Irenaeus M. C. Steenberg comments on the Irenaeus's genius of polemic and apologetic bridge building when he writes, "He had composed a work unlike any other known at the time, bridging polemic and apologetic and positive doctrinal articulation…[as] the "first theologian" in the patristic heritage."[464]

It is interesting to note that while many church leaders in the Roman Empire after Irenaeus were schooled in rhetoric and debate, Irenaeus himself admits his lacking in these areas and that he seeks "a kindly spirit" as he, "writes to thee simply, truthfully, and in my own homely way."[465] Irenaeus does not shy away from his task as he sees himself as one who will, "prove an earnest and efficient minister to others, that men may no longer be drawn away by the plausible system of these heretics, which I now proceed to describe."[466] As this work continues to explore the nature of suffering and some of the Early Church Fathers' use of suffering in their apologetic, it is important to note how Irenaeus (despite the focus on dispelling heresy) regards the suffering of Christ which helps cut through much of the Gnostic etherealness. To this John Behr concurs, "It is the identity of Christ as the suffering one that is of primary importance for

[463] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* IV.Pref.2.

[464] Steenberg, "Tracing," 199.

[465] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* I.Pref. 3.2.

[466] Ibid.

Irenaeus, and to which he brings back his discussion, showing how it opens a way for others to enter into the life that Christ gives."[467]

An issue that is pertinent to the work at hand is and has risen from *Adversus Haereses* is some of the controversy surrounding Irenaeus trying to put forth his own personal vision of Christianity rather than what was held as historical and orthodox by the Early Church.[468] Bernard Sesboüé has labeled Irenaeus as a type of seducer, but in a positive sense of one who draws another to what Sesboüé has described Irenaeus as one who,

> …se présente encore à nous comme un auteur « séduisant » au sens noble de ce terme. Son texte est le témoignage de la jeunesse de la foi, thème qui lui est d'ailleurs cher. dit les choses avec une grande fraîcheur et un réalisme simple qui emportent la conviction. Il a l'art des formules parlantes, des images qui touchent... Cette jeunesse de sa foi le rend paradoxalement contemporain de nous.[469]

If Irenaeus was truly a type of "noble seducer" of those towards the gospel then this can only add to the idea that Irenaeus was one who not only was a primary theologian but was also one who had great concern to communicate the Christian faith in a way that was not only polemical but apologetic in nature as well. While polemics were part and parcel of the discourse of the day, it is important to note that when Irenaeus would respond to his critics polemically, he was often more subdued and les voluminous in his polemic than his critics. Sesboüé writes of this subdued polemic,

---

[467] Behr, *Irenaeus*, 90-1.

[468] See Friedrich Loofs, *Theophilus von Antiochen Adversus Marcionem und die anderen theologischen Quellen bei Irenaeus*, (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1930), 62-5.

[469] Bernard Sesboüé, *Tout Récapituler dans le Christ—Christologie et sotériologie d'Irénée de Lyon* (Paris: Desclee, 2000), 29-30. "Still presents itself to us as a 'seductive' author in the noble sense of this term. His text is the testimony of the youth of faith, a theme that is dear to him. He says things with great freshness and simple realism that carry conviction. He has the art of speaking formulas, images that touch…This youthfulness of his faith makes him paradoxically contemporary with us.

> La polémique en matière doctrinale ne plaît pas à nos contemporains, bien que la vie politique, sociale et artistique en donne de nombreux exemples. Dans le cas des anciens Pères de l'Église, il ne nous est pas demandé de l'approuver inconditionnellement. Mais nous devons la comprendre pour ce qu'elle était: un trait culturel universellement employé dans les écoles et dans les débats d'idées. On y maniait non seulement la caricature, mais aussi les injures et le portrait noirci de l'adversaire. Dans ce contexte, les Pères de l'Église sont plutôt plus réservés que leurs adversaires.[470]

This is mentioned only because the restraint which Irenaeus seemingly displayed in his polemic writings may be reflective of a greater purpose in how he communicated Christian faith and ideas, namely to be able to communicate in a way that also expresses a concern for believers and his opponents. Irenaeus alludes to this in his preface of the first book of *Adversus Haereses*, "…but my feeling of affection prompts me to make known to thee and all thy companions those doctrines which have been kept in concealment until now, but which are at last, through the goodness of God, brought to light."[471] As Paul Parvis states about the overall character of Irenaeus in light of his writing and especially *Adversus Haereses*,

> We are, I hope, left with a picture of a man of broad sympathies and deep pastoral concern, firmly rooted in the traditions of his native Asia but immersed as well in the life and the problems of the church and the churches around him.[472]

Irenaeus's Work *Adversus Haereses i*n Philosophical and Biblical Relation to Justin's *First Apology* and *Second Apology*

Lately there has been a variety of scholarship that has mentioned the influence of Justin Martyr on the work of Irenaeus. Justin was a near-contemporary of Irenaeus and some believe

---

[470] Bernard Sesboüé, *Tout Récapituler dans le Christ—Christologie et sotériologie d'Irénée de Lyon* (Paris: Desclee, 2000) , 34. "The polemic in doctrinal matters does not please our contemporaries, although political, social and artistic life gives many examples. In the case of the ancient Fathers of the Church, we are not asked to approve unconditionally. But we must understand it for what it was: a cultural trait universally used in schools and in the debates of ideas. It was not only caricature, but also it was the insults and the blackened portrait of the adversary. In this context, the Fathers of the Church are rather more reserved than their opponents."

[471] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* I.Pref. 1.2.

[472] Paul Parvis, "Who Was Irenaeus?" 23-4.

that Irenaeus and Justin may have met in their concurrent stay they had in Rome in 155. Scholars such as John Behr believes that there is little evidence of the two meeting and believes that Justin's, "Contacts with other Christians were minimal; he seems to have preferred the quiet life of a withdrawn philosopher."[473] Robert Grant seems to side with scholarship which supports Irenaeus knowing the works of Justin but not necessarily knowing Justin himself.[474] Other scholars such as Jared Secord believe that there is a link between the Irenaeus and Justin which is based on how Greek, which was used by both, and how it was, "the *sine qua non* for educated Christians at Rome, so many of whom [including Irenaeus and Justin] came to the city from the East."[475] Other compelling facts that could point towards Irenaeus and Justin meeting come from Paul Parvis who sides with Michael Slusser that it is plausible that Justin and Irenaeus did meet.[476] Steenberg believes the possibility of the two being in the same city of Rome at the same time for at least ten to twelve years.[477]

Justin was undoubtedly a student of several schools of philosophy and addressed many of his philosophical listeners in his *First* and *Second Apology* as well as his *Dialogue with Trypho*[478] to the point of making the apologetic claim of Christ being the, "philosophy alone to

---

[473] Behr, *Irenaeus*, 42.

[474] Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 39. Interestingly enough, Grant points towards Irenaeus's use of Justin as a type of proof that illustrates Irenaeus's apologetic value as he addressed the Valentinians.

[475] Jared Secord, "The Cultural Geography of a Greek Christian," in *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy*, 30.

[476] Cf. Paul Parvis, "Who Was Irenaeus?," in *Irenaeus: Life Scripture Legacy,* 15. See Michael Slusser, "How Much Did Irenaeus Learn from Justin?," *Studia Patristica* XL, (2006): 515-20.

[477] Steenberg, "Tracing," 202.

[478] See Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 21-2. Justin elaborates on his understanding of philosophy with Trypho, I will tell you," said I, "what seems to me; for philosophy is, in fact, the greatest possession, and most honourable before God, to whom it leads us and alone commends us; and these are truly holy men who have bestowed attention on philosophy. What philosophy is, however, and the reason why it has been sent down to men, have escaped the observation of most; for there would be neither Platonists, nor Stoics, nor Peripatetics, nor Theoretics, nor Pythagoreans, this knowledge being one."

be safe and profitable."[479] This is some contrast to how Irenaeus chooses to converse about philosophy. In Irenaeus's entire *Adversus Haereses* he only overtly mentions philosophy four times and in each case it is in a way that does not seek to redeem what the philosophy of his time was expounding but rather Irenaeus is more deprecatory towards philosophy and philosophers of his culture.[480] His polemic extended even beyond the philosophers that would make inroads into Irenaeus's primary targets: the teachings of Valentinus and Marcion and seek to confront what Irenaeus saw as ignorant and irreligious.[481] Irenaeus also was versed in Hellenistic philosophy that would be "building upon Aristotle and Epicurus."[482] As Irenaeus put forth arguments he would build on Hellenistic "first principles" (i.e. the canon of Scripture) in order to help hypothesize how valid Scripture was, particularly in prophecy fulfillment and the identity of Jesus Christ as the Messiah.[483] Irenaeus's use of a Hellenistic hypothesis is also validated by Robert M. Grant as he observes how Irenaeus uses quotes from the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* in order to ground his polemic against some of the Gnostic sects.[484]

---

[479] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 7.2.

[480] See Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* II 14.2. Irenaeus terms both Gnostics and philosophers like Homer and Thales of Miletus as "ignorant of God" as much as the Gnostics were. "And not only are they convicted of bringing forward, as if their own original ideas, those things which are to be found among the comic poets, but they also bring together the things which have been said by all those who were ignorant of God, and who are termed philosophers; and sewing together, as it were, a motley garment out of a heap of miserable rags, they have, by their subtle manner of expression, furnished themselves with a cloak which is really not their own. They do, it is true, introduce a new kind of doctrine, inasmuch as by a new sort of art it has been substituted for the old. Yet it is in reality both old and useless, since these very opinions have been sewed together out of ancient dogmas redolent of ignorance and irreligion. For instance, Thales of Miletus affirmed that water was the generative and initial principle of all things. Now it is just the same thing whether we say *water* or *Bythus*. The poet Homer, again, held the opinion that Oceanus, along with mother Tethys, was the origin of the gods: this idea these men have transferred to Bythus and Sige.

[481] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 7.2.

[482] Behr *Irenaeus of Lyons* 11.

[483] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* III.5.1.

[484] Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 48.

One of the main connective tissues of thought between Irenaeus and Justin is their mutual focus of debating and refuting Marcion and his followers. Irenaeus refers to Justin's writing on Marcion in his fourth book of *Adversus Haereses* when he writes,

> For as we do direct our faith towards the Son, so also should we possess a firm and immoveable love towards the Father. In his book against Marcion, Justin does well say: "I would not have believed the Lord Himself, if He had announced any other than He who is our framer, maker, and nourisher. But because the only-begotten Son came to us from the one God, who both made this world and formed us, and contains and administers all things, summing up His own handiwork in Himself, my faith towards Him is steadfast, and my love to the Father immoveable, God bestowing both upon us."[485]

While Irenaeus is approving of Justin's refutation of Marcion and affirmation of the eternal existence of Jesus Christ and God, it is important to note that both Irenaeus and Justin share this theology of the eternal Christ and not a Gnostic version which in the end attempts to make Jesus Christ less transcendent and less able to take on the suffering of humanity.[486]

While this present work does not have the space to examine every convergence and divergence which Irenaeus and Justin Martyr had with Scripture, it will help serve the purpose in examining the apologetic use of suffering to look at a few major streams of theology that each of these apologists shared and contributed to their expression of Christian truth. Both Justin and Irenaeus had a definite understanding that the Old Testament and the New Testament[487] had continuity and unity. This was expressed in each of their understanding of Jesus Christ fulfilling

---

[485] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, IV 6.2.

[486] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, V. 26.2 Irenaeus speaks against the Marcionites and other Gnostics as to how they have denied the eternality of Jesus Christ and therefore blasphemed his name. Irenaeus speaks to the how Jesus Christ fulfilled his Father's "dispensations with regard to the human race." This would include the dispensation in suffering for humanity, "For those things which have been predicted by the Creator alike through all the prophets has Christ fulfilled in the end." To these Irenaeus attests Justin's concurrence of thought, "Truly has Justin remarked."

[487] Justin referred to the Gospels of the New Testament as the "Memoirs of the Apostles" (see *First Apology* 66.3, 67.4) and Irenaeus saw the continuity between the Old Testament and what he called the Gospel (see *Adversus Haereses* IV.34.1, "…read with earnest care that Gospel which has been conveyed to us by the apostles, and read with earnest care the prophets, and you will find that the whole conduct, and all the doctrine, and all the sufferings of our Lord, were predicted through them."

the prophecies of the Old Testament. For Irenaeus, the unity between the Old and New Testaments was expressed in this way when he likens Jesus Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies as something which is part of the whole body of Scripture. He writes,

> For since they themselves were members of Christ, each one of them in his place as a member did, in accordance with this, set forth the prophecy [assigned him]; all of them, although many, prefiguring only one, and proclaiming the things which pertain to one. For just as the working of the whole body is exhibited through means of our members, while the figure of a complete man is not displayed by one member, but through means of all taken together, so also did all the prophets prefigure the one [Christ]; while every one of them, in his special place as a member, did, in accordance with this, fill up the [established] dispensation, and shadowed forth beforehand that particular working of Christ which was connected with that member.[488]

Here Irenaeus speaks of Jesus Christ as the one who summed up the whole body of Old Testament prophets who prefigured and proclaimed the prophecies that pertained to the one messiah found in Jesus Christ. Some of these prophecies explain the suffering which the Messiah will have to endure. The continuity and unity between the Old Testament and the New Testament is inextricably bound in the prophecy fulfilling person of Jesus Christ. Irenaeus highlights the importance of continuity and unity between the Old and New Testament throughout both primary sections of his *Adversus Haereses*. Irenaeus points to Jesus Christ and his working of miracles,[489] as foretold by Old Testament prophets, as another sign of not only the divinity of Jesus Christ as God's Son but also an indicator of the validity and unity of the Old and New Testament when he writes,

> …it is manifest that, when He was made man, He held fellowship with His own creation, and did all things truly through the power of God, according to the will of the Father of all, as the prophets had foretold. But what these things were, shall be described in dealing with the proofs to be found in the prophetical writings.[490]

---

[488] *Adversus Haereses* IV 33.10

[489] See Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 113. Justin provides several *types* of miracles that provide foreshadowing (Moses, Joshua, etc.) of Jesus Christ.

[490] Ibid., II.32.5. See also John Behr *Irenaeus of Lyons* 139. Behr writes of Irenaeus understanding of how Jesus Christ unites the Old Testament with the Gospels, "Irenaeus can point to the eschatological completeness of

Irenaeus writes this particular section in order to contrast the various Gnostic false healers who claim divinity to Jesus Christ who healed in accordance with the prophecy of the Old Testament. This is a slight difference of usage than the previous illustration where Irenaeus mentions Christ's fulfillment of prophecy in order to more flesh out the implications of Jesus fulfilling Old Testament prophecy. Of particular interest is Irenaeus's more lengthy exposition of prophecies fulfilled in Jesus Christ which includes messianic prophecies from Genesis, Psalms, and Isaiah.[491] Irenaeus concludes the exposition of prophecy by declaring that Jesus Christ is the one who has brought all of the Word of God together when he writes,

> But in every respect, too, He is man, the formation of God; and thus He took up man into Himself, the invisible becoming visible, the incomprehensible being made comprehensible, the impassible becoming capable of suffering, and the Word being made man, thus summing up all things in Himself: so that as in super-celestial, spiritual, and invisible things, the Word of God is supreme, so also in things visible and corporeal He might possess the supremacy, and, taking to Himself the pre-eminence, as well as constituting Himself Head of the Church, He might draw all things to Himself at the proper time.[492]

Jacob Rodriguez sees Irenaeus's view of the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ in Scripture as Irenaeus's well-formulated *regula fidei* which according to Rodriguez, will bring the possibility "of seeing and worshiping Christ."[493]

Justin Martyr held a high view of the unity of Scripture. For Justin this unity was verified in Jesus Christ fulfilling Old Testament prophecy. Although for different reasons, Justin's

---

what is revealed through the Cross of Christ expounded through the Scriptures…what Christ is preached as having done, in the Gospel, is what he has done in directing the economy from the beginning, in all the symbolic actions and words recorded in Scripture."

[491] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* III.16.2-4. Irenaeus attributes several speakers form Scripture who verify the prophecy fulfillment found in Jesus Christ.

[492] Ibid., III.16.6.

[493] Jacob A. Rodriguez, "Irenaeus's Missional Theology: Global Christian Perspectives from an Ancient Missionary and Theologian," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 59, no.1 (March 2016): 137.

explanation of how the Old and New Testament was unified in the person of Jesus Christ comes through in his *Dialogue with Trypho* especially clear. Justin speaks to Trypho in several different areas about how it is Christ alone who fulfills various Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah.[494] Justin links the truthfulness of God to the truthfulness of Scripture and the fulfillment of prophecies found in Jesus Christ told from this Scripture when he writes,

> But since the Scripture is true, God is always willing that such even as you be neither foolish nor lovers of yourselves, in order that you may obtain the salvation of Christ, who pleased God, and received testimony from Him, as I have already said, by alleging proof from the holy words of prophecy.[495]

Like Irenaeus, Justin also devoted a large portion of his *First Apology* to run through a litany of prophecies fulfilled by Jesus Christ which centered on Jesus Christ's passion.[496] In fact, between chapters 31-53 of *First Apology*, Justin treats more than twenty different Old Testament prophecies as proofs for Jesus being the fulfillment of them and therefore validating not only the identity of Jesus Christ as the Messiah but also validating the continuity and unity of Scripture in the process. Christopher A. Hall attests, "Justin, Irenaeus and others claimed that when

---

[494] See Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 65, 74, 76-8, 84, 89, 98.

[495] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 92.10.

[496] Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 35. "And how Christ after He was born was to escape the notice of other men until He grew to man's estate, which also came to pass, hear what was foretold regarding this. There are the following predictions:—"Unto us a child is born, and unto us a young man is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulders;" which is significant of the power of the cross, for to it, when He was crucified, He applied His shoulders, as shall be more clearly made out in the ensuing discourse. And again the same prophet Isaiah, being inspired by the prophetic Spirit, said, "I have spread out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people, to those who walk in a way that is not good. They now ask of me judgment, and dare to draw near to God." And again in other words, through another prophet, He says, "They pierced My hands and My feet, and for My vesture they cast lots." And indeed David, the king and prophet, who uttered these things, suffered none of them; but Jesus Christ stretched forth His hands, being crucified by the Jews speaking against Him, and denying that He was the Christ. And as the prophet spoke, they tormented Him, and set Him on the judgment-seat, and said, Judge us. And the expression, "They pierced my hands and my feet," was used in reference to the nails of the cross which were fixed in His hands and feet. And after He was crucified they cast lots upon His vesture, and they that crucified Him parted it among them. And that these things did happen, you can ascertain from the Acts of Pontius Pilate. And we will cite the prophetic utterances of another prophet, Zephaniah, to the effect that He was foretold expressly as to sit upon the foal of an ass and to enter Jerusalem. The words are these: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."

Christians read the Old Testament they readily discern its unity with the New."[497] Hall also links Justin and Irenaeus's use of the Old Testament prophecies as an apologetic trait of their writing.[498]

For Irenaeus and Justin, the continuity and unity of Scripture bound in the Old Testament prophecy fulfilling of Jesus Christ was especially important in the expression of the Christian faith. Their particular backgrounds at the time may slightly differ with Justin arriving on the Roman scene thirty years earlier than Irenaeus and Justin possibly being more private than the outspoken bishop of Lyons. Also, Justin and Irenaeus differed greatly as to the usefulness of philosophy when determining not only the truth but in understanding the Gospel.[499] Both did attempt to address the Marcionites in their own apologetic and polemic style and both considered those who altered Scripture to justify their sensuality and Epicurean ways as, at the least heterodox, and at the worst, "inspired by demons"[500] and were studying the Scripture in order to, "twist ropes out of sand."[501]

While Marcionite heresy was in the context of Justin's time and place, it has only minor appearances in the whole of Justin's work[502] while Irenaeus is very pointed and specific in the Marcionite and Valentinian heresies and their representative sects he chooses to address. Recent scholarship points towards Irenaeus possibly gathering research and writing some of his

---

[497] Hall, *Reading Scripture*, 135.

[498] Ibid.

[499] See Wendy Elgersma Helleman, "Justin Martyr and the *Logos*: An Apologetical Strategy," *Philosophia Reformata* 67, no.2 (2002): 128-47. Helleman astutely brings to light the *respectability* of Justin's use of Jesus Christ as the divine *logos* in comparison with the other Greek myths that were respected and paid heed to in Justin's time.

[500] Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 26.4-5.

[501] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* I.8.1.

[502] Moll, "Justin," 150.

Adversus Haereses while still in Rome and in contact with Justin.[503] This is only to say that Justin and Irenaeus were close enough in time and geographic location to not only have dealt with similar issues of Gnosticism but to have developed their responses enough to show their different approaches.[504] Each of these apologetic and polemic approaches were different enough in their philosophical and theological approach but both Justin Martyr and Irenaeus held a high regard for the continuity and unity of the Old and New Testament Scriptures that would be prophetically fulfilled and upheld by the messiah, Jesus Christ.

Ethical Dimensions of Irenaeus's Understanding of Suffering within The Polemics and Apologetic of *Adversus Haereses*

As has been shown, Irenaeus understood the incarnation of Jesus Christ to be part and parcel with the validity of the Old Testament, Gospels, and Christian faith. The validity of the character of Jesus is thoroughly clear for Irenaeus. For Irenaeus, even the suffering of Jesus Christ helps validate the divine identity and ethic Jesus displayed. Irenaeus uses the Gnostic Valentinus's understanding of suffering and it not affecting Aeon to illustrate the Valentinian idea of naming Jesus Christ one of the Aeons as "ignorant" due to how Jesus Christ did truly suffer. For if Jesus Christ did truly suffer and the Gnostic Aeon cannot truly suffer, then there is a great inconsistency and impossibility to Jesus suffering and not suffering.[505] This is only to say

---

[503] Giullano Chiapparini, "Irenaeus and the Gnostic Valentinus: Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Church of Rome around the Middle of the Second Century," *Zeitschrift fur antikes Christentum* 18, no. 1 (January 2014): 99.

[504] Skarsaune, "Justin," 73.

[505] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* II.17.7. Here the "younger Aeon" is Jesus Christ to the Gnostic Valentinians. "For they can no longer maintain that, of beings so produced, some are impassible and others passible. If, then, they declare all impassible, they do themselves destroy their own argument. For how could the youngest Æon have suffered passion if all were impassible? If, on the other hand, they declare that all partook of this passion, as indeed some of them venture to maintain, then, inasmuch as it originated with Logos, but flowed onwards to Sophia, they will thus be convicted of tracing back the passion to Logos, who is the Nous of this Propator, and so acknowledging the Nous of the Propator and the Father Himself to have experienced passion.

that Irenaeus's understanding of suffering and its ethical implications was not held to be something that was an impassible and illusionary suffering which many of the Gnostics believed but that suffering was to be witnessed, among other places, in the real suffering and passion of Jesus Christ. As Gustaf Wingren writes about Irenaeus's understanding of the reality of suffering found in Jesus Christ, "Through His birth, temptations, and suffering, Christ becomes a man among men."[506]

With the understanding of suffering rooted in the real experience of the suffering and passion of Jesus Christ, Irenaeus is sure to explain a purpose found in suffering that will help inform one's ethics in light of suffering. This purpose is found in how one is to bear under suffering much like Jesus did when he suffered on earth. Irenaeus writes tongue-in-cheek (contra Gnostic theodicy) of Jesus Christ's identifying with humanity and humanity identifying with him through the crucible of suffering that one must endure,

> This also does likewise meet the case of those who maintain that He suffered only in appearance. For if He did not truly suffer, no thanks to Him, since there was no suffering at all; and when we shall actually begin to suffer, He will seem as leading us astray, exhorting us to endure buffering, and to turn the other cheek, if He did not Himself before us in reality suffer the same; and as He misled them by seeming to them what He was not, so does He also mislead us, by exhorting us to endure what He did not endure Himself. In that case, we shall be even above the Master, because we suffer and sustain what our Master never bore or endured. But as our Lord is alone truly Master, so the Son of God is truly good and patient, the Word of God the Father having been made the Son of man. For He fought and conquered; for He was man contending for the fathers… [507]

The identifying of Jesus Christ with humanity through the crucible of suffering that each endures helps inform Irenaeus's ethic towards suffering so that when the issues of suffering arose, especially in comparison the various Gnostic understandings of suffering, Irenaeus could

---

[506] Gustaf Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation: A Study in the Biblical Theology of Irenaeus* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1947), 120.

[507] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* III.18.6. Here Irenaeus is stating how Jesus Christ actually did suffer by rhetorically showing how Jesus did in fact endure suffering and didn't mislead his followers by not enduring suffering.

comment that Jesus Christ was unlike the impassible Aeon that would suffer but rather Jesus Christ was,

> …as I have pointed out, one God the Father, and one Christ Jesus, who came by means of the whole dispensational arrangements connected with Him, and gathered together all things in Himself. But in every respect, too, He is man, the formation of God; and thus He took up man into Himself, the invisible becoming visible, the incomprehensible being made comprehensible, the impassible becoming capable of suffering, and the Word being made man…[508]

While Jesus Christ identified with the suffering of humanity it is in His resurrection that Irenaeus sees suffering redeemed for those who are Jesus Christ's disciples or as he compares the righteous with those who are the heretics,

> … it behooves the righteous first to receive the promise of the inheritance which God promised to the fathers, and to reign in it, when they rise again to behold God in this creation which is renovated, and that the judgment should take place afterwards. For it is just that in that very creation in which they toiled or were afflicted, being proved in every way by suffering, they should receive the reward of their suffering; and that in the creation in which they were slain because of their love to God, in that they should be revived again…[509]

Here Irenaeus is speaking of the fruits of labor and suffering which the righteous will receive at the "resurrection of the just" which he alludes to later in the same chapter.[510] This points towards a type of redemptive suffering which Irenaeus's Gnostic opponents eschewed due to their view of the illusion of suffering which would not carry any spiritual weight after death. John Behr concurs with the idea of redemptive suffering for the righteous followers of Jesus when he writes, "the strength of God is manifest in the weakness of human beings, bestowing

[508] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* III.16.6.

[509] Ibid., V.32.1.

[510] Ibid., V.32.2.

incorruptibility on those who follow him...and so become, in this way, living images of Christ."[511]

This is to say that the ethic of redemptive suffering for the believer was an intrinsic part of Irenaeus's understanding of the Christian faith and was also, to Irenaeus, a superior understanding of suffering compared to his Gnostic opponents. Gustaf Wingren writes of how this understanding of suffering permeated much of Irenaeus's writing, "The background of this whole view is the fact that the Church *now* in the present time is *suffering*, and suffering unjustly, but is patiently bearing its martyrdom."[512]

Elizabeth Castelli speaks of the suffering which the Early Church endured and how suffering in the Early Church of Irenaeus's time was something which the Christian culture was built around, particularly martyrdom. She writes of what she believes this type of suffering did for the church,

> Indeed, martyrdom can be understood as one form of refusing the *meaningless* of death itself, of insisting that suffering and death do not signify emptiness and nothingness… Meaningful suffering is always already present in the Christian worldview as a fundamental interpretive category, and Christian theorists repeatedly connect it to earlier textual remnants of such suffering [Old Testament and Gospels]. So, although the cultural production that will take place in the early centuries of Christian culture making elaborates and complicates this central dimension of Christian storytelling, it is all glossing an idea without a precise origin, an idea whose preexistence is the sine qua non of the Christian project.[513]

What Castelli seems to be saying is that the stories of suffering and martyrdom, although connected to the Scriptures of the Old Testament and the Gospels, relay a central theme of suffering – a theme which is "without a precise origin." The issue with this particular understanding of suffering in the Early Church is that due to Castelli's omission of Irenaeus from

---

[511] Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 202.

[512] Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation*, 198.

[513] Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, 34-5.

her study of the Early Church's attitude towards suffering and martyrdom, her estimation of the *cultural production* of Christianity seems to leave out one of its most notable and primary early leaders and theologians, Irenaeus himself. Castelli's omission of Irenaeus, for the purpose of this study, has the possibility of making her original estimation of the role of suffering in the Early Church and her understanding of the ethic of suffering somewhat deficient.

Without being too simplistic, Irenaeus is often looked at historically in how he refuted heresies and through his refutation and polemic he was seen not only as the primary heresiologist of the Early Church but also as one of early Christianity's most important theologians.[514] While undoubtedly his *Adversus Haereses* is a primary polemic and apologetic work, especially in relation to the Gnostic threats of his time, one is able to discern from his work various primary elements of an ethic of suffering that were integral not only for Irenaeus but for the Early Church as well. Particularly in the last third of his fifth volume, Irenaeus elaborates on not only the redemptive aspect of suffering found in the Parousia and the reward which God will give his righteous disciples, but Irenaeus's ethic of suffering is also informed by a promised sharing in fellowship with Jesus Christ. This fellowship with Jesus Christ is something that is promised in the present, and especially apparent in the Lord's Supper, as well as the future reign and dwelling with Jesus Christ in heaven.[515]

---

[514] Grant, *Irenaeus of* Lyons, 1. Grant considers Irenaeus, "as the most important Christian controversialist and theologian between the apostles and third-century genius Origen." See Michael Holmes, "Formation of a Second Testament in Early Christianity," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 418. Holmes views Irenaeus as the, "representative of the 'proto-orthodox' strand of early Christianity." See Karl Shuve, "Irenaeus's Contribution to Early Christian Interpretation of the Song of Songs," in *Irenaeus: Life Scripture Legacy,* eds. Paul Foster and Sara Parvis (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 88. Shuve illustrates the theological and historical importance of Irenaeus by linking him to Origen when he writes, "…as much as Origen was a brilliant innovator in his biblical interpretation, his debts to his predecessor – here, Irenaeus – are patent."

[515] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* V.33.1-2.according to the time appointed by the Father, united to His own workmanship, inasmuch as He became a man liable to suffering, [it follows] that every objection is set aside of those who say, "If our Lord was born at that time, Christ had therefore no previous existence." For I have shown that the Son of God did not then begin to exist, being with the Father from the beginning; but when He became incarnate,

While the Gnostic audience of Irenaeus's time primarily viewed suffering as something of which a special knowledge (gnosis) could eventually free them, Irenaeus's view of suffering embedded in Jesus Christ the suffering Savior gave believers hope for the present. This is due to the fellowship they shared with Jesus Christ who understood suffering and who they were shown victory through and over it.[516] Irenaeus's concern to emphasize Christ's suffering is intentional as it served as a polemic against his Gnostic adversaries.[517] This is to illustrate how Irenaeus's ethic of suffering was an integral part of his theology and polemic, even though it took a minor role to what many theologians over the years had emphasized. These particular ethics of suffering which are rooted in the identity and messiahship of Jesus for the believer were meant for the believer to remember their identity now as His disciples. To this Irenaeus writes,

> …according to the time appointed by the Father, united to His own workmanship, inasmuch as He became a man liable to suffering, it follows that every objection is set aside of those who say, "If our Lord was born at that time, Christ had therefore no previous existence." For I have shown that the Son of God did not then begin to exist, being with the Father from the beginning; but when He became incarnate, and was commenced afresh the long line of human beings, and furnished us, in a brief, comprehensive manner, with salvation; so that what we had lost in Adam—namely, to be according to the image and likeness of God—that we might recover in Christ Jesus.[518]

This early Christian identity, recovered in Jesus Christ and shown to be connected to his suffering, was important polemically as Irenaeus explained what he believed to be the passibility of God compared to the impassibility of the Gnostic Aeons and Demiurge which were above

---

and was made man, He commenced afresh the long line of human beings, and furnished us, in a brief, comprehensive manner, with salvation; so that what we had lost in Adam—namely, to be according to the image and likeness of God—that we might recover in Christ Jesus.

[516] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, III.16.9.

[517] Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation*, 117. Wingren notes how little scholarly attention has been paid to the human suffering of Jesus Christ in Irenaeus's writings. Wingren believes that theologians have often overemphasized the soteriological aspect of Christ's sacrifice and passion and therefore making Christ's human suffering less of a plotting point.

[518] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* III.18.1.

suffering.[519] The concept of suffering, which included an ethic of suffering, found in Irenaeus's *Adversus Haereses* was meant to include the believer in the identity of Jesus Christ. This in turn would testify to the world around them of the truth in Jesus Christ to which they held closely despite their adversaries and persecutors.

Apologetic Uses of Suffering by Irenaeus

Because Irenaeus is often viewed chiefly as the primary heresiologist of the Early Church,[520] it can serve this work by better clarifying the difference between polemics and apologetics, of which Irenaeus uses both in his *Adversus Haereses*. Polemics are generally negative in nature as they are used, as they are in the case of Irenaeus, to bring attention to discrepancies and inconsistencies with the orthodox Christian view that would surface in the Gnostic view of God, Jesus Christ, (and for the benefit of this work), suffering. Taking the scholarly cue from Lewis Ayres and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz,[521] polemics often for Irenaeus was a combination of anti-Gnostic and anti-pagan concerns to argue that Jesus Christ was passible and did suffer on the cross rather than being a Gnostic version of Christ who became a spirit and left the body of Jesus during the Passion and crucifixion.[522]

Apologetically, Irenaeus defended the faith by defending the proto-orthodox faith contra the Marcionites, Valentinians, and other Gnostic sects. Whereas polemics often in the Early

---

[519]Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, see 2.23.21-2, 3.11.3, 3.16.9, 4.34.3.

[520] Holmes, "Formation," 418-19.

[521]Lewis Ayres and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, "Doctrine of God: Polemic and Development," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 866. Ayres and Radde-Gallwitz demonstrate how early polemics were formed by using third century church father Origen's style of exegesis and literary techniques.

[522] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, II.17.7.

Church emerged out of, "hotly contested common texts and images"[523] that was often the Old Testament and the Gospels. Irenaeus utilized an apologetic method somewhat similar to his contemporary Justin Martyr when referring to messianic prophecies from Hebrew Scriptures that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.[524] Irenaeus is primarily different in apologetic from Justin Martyr as he spends less time referring to philosophers and more time referring to the texts and thought of Gnostic mysticism. What is true in both cases of Justin Martyr's and Irenaeus's apologetic is that they tailored their particular apologetic discourse to the audience which they were addressing. For Irenaeus he wrote with confidence that the Gospel was not only superior in its message but able to convince the Gnostics who, to Irenaeus, seemed to have posed a great threat to the cohesiveness of the early proto-orthodox church.[525] This was not too daunting for Irenaeus as he forcefully set out his five-volume work *Adversus Haereses*. As Jacob Rodriguez notes about Irenaeus's apologetic confidence, "The cumulative evidence suggests that Irenaeus had a profound understanding of the translatable nature of the gospel."[526]

For Irenaeus the apologetic use of suffering is quite often used to discuss the corporal reality of Jesus Christ versus the fabricated concept of Jesus Christ being an impassible Aeon which the Gnostics often made Jesus out to be.[527] In this particular passage Irenaeus does not use

---

[523] Ayres and Radde-Gallwitz, "Doctrine of God," 866.

[524] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* V.15.1. This section particularly concerns the resurrection of Jesus Chris and the people of God.

[525] See Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 21. Grant outlines several of Gnostic threats and their spreading geographical movement during Irenaeus's lifetime.

[526] Rodriguez, "Irenaeus's Missional," 138.

[527] See Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* 3.18.6. "This also does likewise meet the case of those who maintain that He suffered only in appearance. For if He did not truly suffer, no thanks to Him, since there was no suffering at all; and when we shall actually begin to suffer, He will seem as leading us astray, exhorting us to endure buffering, and to turn the other cheek, if He did not Himself before us in reality suffer the same; and as He misled them by seeming to them what He was not, so does He also mislead us, by exhorting us to endure what He did not endure Himself. In that case we shall be even above the Master, because we suffer and sustain what our Master never bore

polemic devices which use rhetoric and language that gives a sharpened jab against the thought and philosophy of his Gnostic audience but rather Irenaeus communicates what could be seen as a more pastoral tone when speaking of God's love for the human race than Irenaeus does in some of his other polemical writing. John Behr commenting on this section of *Adversus Haereses* writes that Irenaeus's use of Christ's suffering, particularly Jesus Christ's Passion, is to help his readers understand, "the cup that results from Christ's Passion is the epitome in which salvation is granted."[528]

The corporal reality of Jesus Christ and his real suffering which he endured was not only meant for Jesus Christ himself but as a witness to the suffering that Jesus had warned his disciples about in Matt 16:24, Mark 8:34, and Luke 9:23.[529] Irenaeus explains that this suffering was real not only to Jesus Christ but to his disciples and therefore holds apologetic weight for his Gnostic audience as to the identity of Jesus the Messiah and the message of the Gospel. Irenaeus writes,

> For these things Christ spoke openly, He being Himself the Saviour of those who should be delivered over to death for their confession of Him, and lose their lives. If, however, He was Himself not to suffer, but should fly away from Jesus, why did He exhort His disciples to take up the cross and follow Him,—that cross which these men represent Him as not having taken up, but speak of Him as having relinquished the dispensation of suffering? For that He did not say this with reference to the acknowledging of the *Stauros* (cross) above, as some among them venture to expound, but with respect to the suffering which He should Himself undergo, and that His disciples should endure, He

---

or endured. But as our Lord is alone truly Master, so the Son of God is truly good and patient, the Word of God the Father having been made the Son of man. For He fought and conquered; for He was man contending for the fathers, and through obedience doing away with disobedience completely: for He bound the strong man, and set free the weak, and endowed His own handiwork with salvation, by destroying sin. For He is a most holy and merciful Lord, and loves the human race."

[528] Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 143.

[529] "Then He said to *them* all, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.'" (Luke 9:23)

> implies when He says, "For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever will lose, shall find it." And that His disciples must suffer for His sake.[530]

For Irenaeus the suffering which Jesus had undergone was an important apologetic point due to Jesus Christ, "exhort[ing] His disciples to take up the cross and follow Him."[531] Irenaeus is saying that for Jesus Christ to ask his disciples to take up their cross and suffer as he did is proof that suffering was real for the incarnate Christ and that if Jesus would ask his disciples to suffer as he did this could negate the Gnostic idea of a dualistic Christ who did not suffer in the flesh but left the body of Christ during the suffering of the Passion.[532]

The point of Jesus Christ's passion is salvific for Irenaeus but the suffering of Jesus Christ also points towards the willingness of Jesus to endure suffering for even the sake of his enemies.

> For the Word of God, who said to us, "Love your enemies, and pray for those that hate you", Himself did this very thing upon the cross; loving the human race to such a degree, that He even prayed for those putting Him to death. If, however, any one, going upon the supposition that there are two Christs, forms a judgment in regard to them, that Christ shall be found much the better one, and more patient, and the truly good one, who, in the midst of His own wounds and stripes, and the other cruelties inflicted upon Him, was beneficent, and unmindful of the wrongs perpetrated upon Him, than he who flew away, and sustained neither injury nor insult.[533]

Irenaeus then follows this statement with a more pastoral plea for his Gnostic audience to embrace the truth of a suffering Christ who endured the suffering and did not "fly away" and avoid forgiving His enemies while on the Cross. Irenaeus expresses this in order to show the

---

[530] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* III.18.4-5.

[531] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* III.18.4-5.

[532] For Irenaeus this distinct relationship between God, in Jesus Christ, and humanity is not only found in his descriptions of how Jesus asks his disciples to share in the suffering in which he shared but as Sophie Cartwright expresses, "Irenaeus correspondingly defines creation by its relationship to its creator." Sophie Cartwright, "The Image of God in Irenaeus, Marcellus, and Eustathius," in *Irenaeus:Life, Scripture, Legacy* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 176. Cartwright contends that Irenaeus saw Gnostic cosmology as something which was incomprehensible due to the necessity of creatures being connected to their creator.

[533] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* III.18.5.

superior love and humanity of Jesus compared to the Gnostic version of the disembodied spirit Jesus who will not endure suffering and as he implies, would not represent a noble or divine Messiah for his disciples to follow since the Gnostic messiah Jesus appears to want to avoid suffering while challenging his disciples to endure it. As Sara Parvis states about Irenaeus's corporal and visceral Jesus Christ, "There is no Teflon-coated Christ who escapes all real suffering…There is the God of love, the Christ who suffered and died to save humankind, the Spirit poured out on all flesh."[534]

The idea of Irenaean theodicy which in part addresses the issue of suffering has been explored by many theologians and apologists through the centuries. Irenaeus is credited for having elucidated the concept of "soul making."[535] Hicks writes about Irenaeus' contribution to solving the problem of evil and God's use of suffering, "Irenaeus suggests that man was created as an imperfect, immature creature who was to undergo moral development and growth and finally be brought to the perfection intended for him by his Maker."[536] Suffering and the understanding of a systematic theodicy for Irenaeus, according to Hicks, was a part and parcel of the some of the earliest Christian thought.[537] This is to say that apologetically, suffering was intrinsically connected to the issue of pain and suffering in the Early Church with Irenaeus as much as it was to John Hicks in the twentieth century.

---

[534] Sara Parvis, "Irenaeus, Women, and Tradition," in *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 164.

[535] John Hicks is the most noted of these theologians who furthers the concept of Irenaean theodicy with his "vale of soul-making" exploration. See John Hicks, *Evil and the Love of God* (Hong Kong: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1985).

[536] Ibid., 214.

[537] Ibid., 215.

Irenaeus also writes of how suffering proves, among other things, that Jesus was God in the flesh when he mentions how Jesus was the fulfillment of prophecy which spoke about the sufferings that the Messiah was supposed to endure,

> … read with earnest care the prophets, and you will find that the whole conduct, and all the doctrine, and all the sufferings of our Lord, were predicted through them… Moreover, there is in fact none among the fathers, nor the prophets, nor the ancient kings, in whose case any one of these things properly and specifically took place. For all indeed prophesied as to the sufferings of Christ, but they themselves were far from enduring sufferings similar to what was predicted. And the points connected with the passion of the Lord, which were foretold, were realized in no other case.[538]

For Irenaeus the suffering of Jesus Christ was something that was foretold by the prophets and was fulfilled by Jesus Christ. Irenaeus included the visceral and corporal suffering of a real Jesus not only to address the Gnostic concept of an impassible Christ who did not suffer but to also prove that Jesus Christ was a real Messiah who fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament and could be viewed as a reliable witness to sufferings of humanity. While Irenaeus concentrated often on the particularly Gnostic idea of suffering, the suffering of Jesus Christ as prophesied in the Old Testament was used by Irenaeus and could have served as yet another apologetic bridge between his Gnostic audience and the second century church.

[538] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* IV.34.1,3.

CHAPTER 6

CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE[539]

Introduction

The following chapter will approach the apologetics and understanding of suffering of North African theologian, Cyprian of Carthage (200-258) who has been referred to as a hero of the African church.[540] This chapter will give a brief introduction to the biographical and sociological context of Cyprian's life and writings and will then move into dimensions of his works with special attention given to the philosophical, biblical, and ethical components of Cyprian's understanding of suffering. After reviewing Cyprian's understanding of suffering in his works *Epistles* and *Treatises*, this chapter will summarize how Cyprian used suffering as an apologetic bridge to those who would read his writings.

Social and Cultural Context of Cyprian's Work

The challenge to presenting a complete picture of Carthage during Cyprian's time is the small amount of literature to be found. What is helpful when examining the documents which Cyprian left behind is the fact that because of the tension that arose from the *lapsi* controversy, "Fabrications, blatant lies or outrageous interpretations of events would have discredited Cyprian and failed to win support of the clergy and laity who were in danger."[541] This meaning to say that

[539] It should be noted that portions of this chapter have been taken from my seminar papers during the Ph.D. program at Liberty University's Rawlings School of Divinity. Particularly, the mentioned papers are from Dr. Ed Smither's *Latin Fathers* seminar and Dr. Ken Cleaver's *Patristic Exegesis* seminars.

[540] J. Patout Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop* (London, UK: Routledge, 2002), 176.

[541] Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop*, 12.

the writing we have that is left behind is reliable due to the necessity of it being reliable at the time of Cyprian's life because of lives that were dependent on the truth being expressed.

By the time of Irenaeus's death in 202 persecutions under Septimius Severus were in full swing under a burgeoning population of Christians in Africa and Egypt. This persecution was particularly noted with the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas in Carthage in 203. By the time of Cyprian becoming bishop of his native city of Carthage several Roman emperors had come and gone and intermittent persecutions of Christians had occurred in Africa. Early Church Fathers Origen and Tertullian had begun to make their mark on the North African Christian landscape with their various works that particularly comprised of anti-Gnostic writings, doctrinal treatises, and various commentaries on Scripture, including Origen's massive *Hexapla.*

The Roman Empire, as much as we know from this time,[542] was showing signs of disintegration due to several civil wars on several primary borders including Asia Minor, Syria, and Germany. The "Imperial Crisis" of the Third Century Public was beginning to take its toll with sentiment towards Christians at the time of the beginning of Cyprian's bishopric (248) beginning to sour due to some resentment against Christians not honoring the traditional gods of the Roman Empire.[543] Yet, Christian schooling flourished in Antioch and Alexandria starting in 215 and continued during Cyprian's time in Carthage. According to Eusebius, ten years before Cyprian became bishop of Carthage the emperor Maximinus succeeded Alexander and, "raised a persecution, and commanded at first only the heads of the churches be slain, as the abettors and agents of evangelical truth."[544]

---

[542] Henry Chadwick, *The Church in Ancient Society: From Galilee to Gregory the Great* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 145. Chadwick remarks that, "Unfortunately sources for the secular history of the time are jejune."

[543] Ibid.

[544] Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 6.28.

In the formation of intellectual history during the second and third centuries it appears that the movement throughout the Roman Empire migrated from south to north. The movement of the Early Church to evangelize outside the Jewish population of Africa spread early on in the inception of Christianity and eventually reached the port city of Carthage around 150.[545] One thing is for sure in the city of Carthage at the time of Cyprian's conversion to Christianity there was a vast amount of government corruption and violent exhibits of state-sponsored gladiatorial circuses which had disgusted Cyprian and which helped him turn to a conscience-clearing Christianity.[546] As Cyprian found himself in the bishopric of Carthage a definite move away from house-churches to separate buildings for worship began, as in the case in Hermopolis Magna in Egypt where a Greek temple was converted into an actual church.[547]

Compared to Justin Martyr and Irenaeus of Lyons, the time of Cyprian for the church was marked by greater stability even though state-sponsored and local persecutions would still flare from time to time. Although for five years before the beginning of Cyprian's rule the emperor Philip the Arab showed tolerance and even sympathy towards the Christian community.[548] Like Justin and Irenaeus there were particular issues with particular sects that displayed a departure from orthodox Christianity. These sects such as the Manicheans, Arians, and Sabellians were not outright Gnostic but were heterodox in how they viewed the relationship of the Trinity and also how they held to types of modalism which were outside the orthodox beliefs of the church in Carthage and Rome.

---

[545] Thomas C. Oden, *Early Libyan Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 68.

[546] Chadwick, *The Church*, 145-6.

[547] Thomas C. Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 166.

[548] Chadwick, *The Church*, 149.

Although Philip the Arab has shown some sympathies towards the Christian community during his reign, that would change with the emperor Decius who starting in latter part of 249 required an empire-wide sacrifice to the gods of which the emperor knew most Christians wouldn't partake. Although Christians may have enjoyed some relative peace during Philip's reign, Decius believed the Christians were responsible for several defeats and plagues that were present at the time. As Henry Chadwick explains, "Although the edict was of universal application, they [the Christians] were the community in the firing line."[549] Cyprian fled in exile but continued to oversee the church in Carthage until his return in 251. Yet, state-wide persecutions continued. During Cyprian's role as bishop of Carthage he witnessed six distinct waves of persecution against Christians in Carthage and the surrounding areas. The period between the end of 249 and 251 were the most intense and trying for the Carthage church. During this wave of persecution and martyrdom we begin to see Cyprian's unfolding response and pastoral leadership concerning the confessors and martyrs.

What ensued for the church in Carthage is the notable *lapsi* controversy. The controversy erupted over those baptized Christians who had, under Decius's edict, offered sacrifice to the pagan gods or tasted sacrificial meat offered to the pagan gods. Cyprian was willing to grant readmission into the Carthaginian church for the repentant *lapsi* while Novatian would not. What ensued was a period of time where the imprisoned or languishing martyrs of the church would grant, under assumed authority from the church, letters of peace to the *lapsi*. Cyprian spoke against the letters of peace being granted by the martyrs and in that process, while helping to solidify the authority of the church with approval of the church in Rome, possibly alienated some

[549] Chadwick, *The Church,* 149.

of the martyrs and members of the church in Carthage.[550] Yet, Cyprian's tone towards his church, the lapsed, and the confessors of Carthage remained pastoral. Cyprian writes,

> And for this reason I beg you that you will designate by name in the certificate those whom you yourselves see, whom you have known, whose penitence you see to be very near to full satisfaction, and so direct to us letters in conformity with faith and discipline.[551]

Throughout the time of Cyprian's rule as bishop in Carthage he sought to bring unity and purity to a troubled church that was suffering under Decian persecution and those outside of the church who sought to siphon away believers under the guise of a false peace or the espousal of being the true, *lapsi*-free church. Because of the relatively long period of peace for the church in Carthage, Cyprian was now contending with weakened believers who sought reinstatement while at the same time dealing with those who could upend the authority structure of the church in Carthage.[552] Throughout the various disagreements and disruptions within the persecuted church at Carthage its leader Cyprian and his followers as well as the more than 150 other churches of North Africa were enduring various types and degrees of suffering.[553]

Genre, Style, and Structure Markers in Cyprian's *Epistles*

In relation to the writings of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, Cyprian's *Epistles* were written mostly during his exile after escaping the Decian persecution. Cyprian was still able to direct the church in Carthage by letter and also with a small commission of bishops and presbyters from

---

[550] Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop*, 4.

[551] Cyprian, *Epistles*, 10.4.

[552] See Éric Rebillard, "The West (2): North Africa," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 308-9.

[553] Éric Rebillard, "The West," 308-9. "Some Christians fled, as Cyprian himself did; others bought false certificates of sacrifice; others just sacrificed. Even if few Christians died, the edict of Decius caused a major disruption in the Carthaginian church, especially as dissension arose regarding the way to deal with the lapsed."

neighboring churches. The primary content of the letters deals with: church discipline, issues with the Decian persecution, reconciling apostates to the faith, instructions on how to work with the schismatic groups, chastity and holiness issues, and concerns on the baptism of heretics, and the persecution of Valerian. His letters were not just to communicate with the churches of North Africa but also Cappodocia (*Ep*. 75), Gaul (*Ep*. 68), Spain (*Ep*. 67), and especially Rome (*Ep.*20, 27, 29, etc.)

The particular structure of Cyprian's *Letters* appears to be a collection of sermons, exhortations, correspondence to various clergy, and testimonial collections of Scripture. Cyprian's 2 volume collection is not lengthy by any means but as Michael Fahey expresses, "his style and personal stamp are so obvious that there can be no doubt that he composed these letters."[554] Within his writing style and structure is a particular biblical exegesis which helped establish the church's identity which,[555] for the purpose of this work, also ties in with Cyprian's understanding of suffering.[556]

Of the three Church Fathers examined in this work, Cyprian mentioned philosophical issues the least.[557] Where Justin and Irenaeus have intimations of polemic in their writings,

---

[554] Michael Andrew Fahey, *Cyprian and the Bible: A Study in Third-Century Exegesis* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1971), 18.

[555] David E. Wilhite, "Cyprian's Scriptural Hermeneutic of Identity: The Laxist 'Heresy,'" *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 32, no.1 (2010): 60.

[556] Cyprian, *Epistles*, 80.1. Cyprian quotes Matt 28:20 to comfort the confessors who are suffering in prison. "I send this letter in my stead to your ears and to your eyes, by which I congratulate and exhort you that you persevere strongly and steadily in the confession of the heavenly glory; and having entered on the way of the Lord's condescension, that you go on in the strength of the Spirit, to receive the crown, having the Lord as your protector and guide, who said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

[557] Ibid., 51.16.1. Cyprian does call out Novatian and his following after pagan philosophy, which permitted judging all sins as equal. "The principle of the philosophers and stoics is different, dearest brother, who say that all sins are equal, and that a grave man ought not easily to be moved. But there is a wide difference between Christians and philosophers. And when the apostle says, "Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit," we are to avoid those things which do not come from God's clemency, but are begotten of the presumption of a too rigid philosophy." This is one of the handful of references to pagan philosophy which Cyprian makes and there are is only one other overt reference to philosophy in which Cyprian makes a more general

Cyprian may come across as the most pastoral of the three. While Cyprian was heavily influenced by Tertullian it was, "his sober judgment and pastoral instincts [which] gained him his hearing."[558] Cyprian, the "Pope" of Carthage was so named because of his, "fatherly and spiritual care of the flock entrusted to him."[559]

To speak of Cyprian without mentioning Tertullian's influence would be like excluding the Nile from the Medjerda. As most North African Christians of his time, Cyprian was heavily influenced by the broad scope of writing and legacy Tertullian had left behind.[560] Although Cyprian did not share Tertullian's rejection of the church's ability to forgive sins, which would eventually become part of the lapsist controversy, Cyprian did try to emulate "the master" in rhetorical style and address. The influence of Tertullian on Cyprian may be fit for another study but suffice to say Tertullian is still considered today as a major influence in western theology[561] which owes much to Tertullian and other African Latin Fathers.

Often the second and third centuries AD have carried the title of, "The Golden Age of Martyrdom." Before the controversies of the *letters of peace* issued by confessors, Tertullian recognized the efficacy and witness of martyrs for growth and inspiration among fellow believers. One can notice how Tertullian and Cyprian share the same sentiment towards the efficacy of martyrdom when Tertullian writes,

---

statement against Novatian and philosophy later in the same letter, "Whoever he may be, and whatever he may be, he who is not in the Church of Christ is not a Christian. Although he may boast himself, and announce his philosophy or eloquence with lofty words, yet he who has not maintained brotherly love or ecclesiastical unity has lost even what he previously had been." Cyprian, *Epistles*, 51.24.2.

[558] F. L. Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 441.

[559] Decret. *Early Christianity in North Africa,* 72.

[560] Oden, *Early Libyan Christianity*, 125.

[561] Decret, *Early Christianity*, 45.

> If this is so, then martyrdom will be another baptism. For "I have withal," saith He, "another baptism." Whence too, it was there that flowed out of the wound in the Lord's side water and blood, the materials of either baptism.[562]

Only fifty years after these words from Tertullian we read Cyprian's conviction towards martyrdom as a type of efficacious second baptism,

> Let us only who, by the Lord's permission, have given the first baptism to believers, also prepare each one for the second; urging and teaching that this is a baptism greater in grace, more lofty in power, more precious in honour—a baptism wherein angels baptize—a baptism in which God and His Christ exult—a baptism after which no one sins any more—a baptism which completes the increase of our faith—a baptism which, as we withdraw from the world, immediately associates us with God. In the baptism of water is received the remission of sins, in the baptism of blood the crown of virtues.[563]

This demonstrates how Cyprian's writing not only was influenced by Tertullian's writing but how martyrdom was an integral part of his world and writing.[564]

Within Cyprian's treatises and letters there are many references to martyrs (both living and dead) that have endured humiliation, imprisonment, hard labor, torture, and ultimately death. Cyprian was sure to encourage those suffering for Christ with the example set by previous martyrs such as Stephen, Perpetua, Felicitas, Mappalicus and the disciples of Jesus Christ. Cyprian wrote with pastoral concern but also with the authority of a bishop, whom which many of the surrounding churches paid heed.[565] Caught in the middle of the Decian persecutions Cyprian was forced to further develop a theology of martyrdom. Challenges presented by schismatic groups as well as the great number of lapsed who desired readmission into the church had to be constantly on Cyprian's dossier. Throughout Cyprian's writing, it is obvious that the bishop of Carthage has to draw a line in the sand concerning unity and the authority of the

---

[562] Tertullian *On Modesty,* 22.26-8.

[563] Cyprian*, Exhortation to Martyrdom, Addressed to Fortunatus,* 11.4.

[564] See also Cyprian, *Epistles,* 8, 10, 55, 76, 78-9.

[565] Burns, *Cyprian the Bishop*, 120. Burns gives examples of the weight of authority Cyprian held as bishop and how surrounding churches would often concur with his judgments.

bishopric. Because boundaries had to be defined, Cyprian had to address the gray areas of authority and efficacy of the martyr's witness.

Many attempts to classify and evaluate the term μαρτύρων (witness or martyr) can leave one thinking there is no viable or accurate clarification of what a martyr really is. For the sake of this endeavor's length and clarity the arguments of what μαρτύρων actually means will be given summative and not exploratory space. The issue primarily is how Cyprian viewed martyrs and confessors of his time. Yet in order to do that one has to look at the terminology, with all of its cultural baggage, with which Cyprian used to express his ideas.

W. H. C. Frend's *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* devotes some time to the origin and concept of martyr. Drawing on how the word martyr was used by Eusebius and the *Shepherd of Hermas*, Frend is sure to show the definite distinction of martyrs writing, "It seems that, even in the Lyons community's rudimentary state of development, the martyrs were already regarded as a class apart."[566] Elizabeth Castelli in *Martyrdom and Memory* locates the word usage to be rooted in, "the courtroom context where the "martyr" is the "witness" who testifies to what he has seen."[567]

Since the Old Testament, the idea of suffering for one's faith by a persecuting world has been acknowledged. In Rev 2:13 and 17:6 one can read the terms μάρτυς and μαρτύρων being used to describe those who were put to death for *witnessing* the name of Christ. Candida Moss in *Ancient Christian Martyrdom* seems to side with some scholars that these martyr references were described out of, "paranoia than from actual persecution."[568] It would be difficult to ascribe to

[566] W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Cambridge, UK: James Clarke and Co Ltd, 2008), 14.

[567] Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory,* 133.

[568] Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom,* 13.

this idea since Christian scholars mostly agree that many of the disciples themselves became martyrs for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, because of the seminal New Testament martyrdom of Stephen, the idea of a martyr suffering and being put to death for witnessing the name of Jesus Christ is not far-fetched or born out of any author's fearful delusions.

Shelly Matthews in *Perfect Martyr* sees Stephen as possibly a fictional creation of the author used to further the ideology of *enemy love* as a part of Christian identity.[569] Matthews does not take into account the Revelation passages using the word *martyr* and she pays little attention to the prophets of the Old Testament who suffered and died for their faith as well. This is all to express that the concept of martyr, one who willingly lays down his or her life in confessing and witnessing the name of Jesus Christ, has been held long before Cyprian worked with the definition.

The title of confessor and martyr is used where there has been some gray area. Before Cyprian, confessors were mostly seen as those who could claim the confessional qualities of the martyr as one who bore witness to Christ.[570] What seems very compelling in defining *martyr* is Tertullian's usage of the term. Through a period of several decades Tertullian moves from a nebulous defining of the term *martyr* that included the idea of being a faithful surviving *witness* and he settles on the word *martyr* being understood more clearly. Here one can even witness some of Tertullian's treatment of the word martyr becoming more distinct:

> What "martyr" (continues to be) an inhabitant of the world supplicating? pence in hand? subject to physician and usurer? Suppose, now, (your "martyr") beneath the glaive, with head already steadily poised; suppose him on the cross, with body already outstretched; suppose him at the stake, with the lion already let loose; suppose him on the axle, with the fire already heaped; in the very certainty, I say, and possession of martyrdom:[571]

---

[569] Shelly Matthews, *Perfect Martyr* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 133-4.

[570] Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution*, 15.

[571] Tertullian, *On Modesty*, 22.

Compared to Tertullian's maturing of the word *martyr* by the time we read Cyprian forty years later there is a definite distinction of what the title *martyr* means apart from the confessors who lived to tell of their confessions before the Roman tribune.

Cyprian and the church of Carthage did not have the luxury of playing semantic games between the words *martyr* and *confessor.* The very identity and efficacy of the church's witness and unity were bound in these terms. Much of Cyprian's tenure as bishop of Carthage dealt with defining who was considered faithful or lapsed, heretical or schismatic and the rival congregations that subsequently arose.[572] While the *lapsi* appealed for readmission into the church, Cyprian had to determine who in the body of Christ remained faithful despite persecution and threats from the Roman Empire. As Dunn observes:

> This seems typical of Cyprian's position: one cannot make too much of a distinction between holding and putting into practice false beliefs on the one hand and creating a rival community separated from the local bishop on the other, because one would invariably lead to the other.[573]

The problem was compounded when confessors that had survived persecution and had become schismatic were requesting rebaptism and readmission into the church. Much of Cyprian's writing is devoted to dealing with schisms and heresies. To Cyprian, he saw belief and daily life with the church as inseparable. To him it was all inseparable and any heretical or schismatic digression from this holistic faith was worthy of church discipline. In fact, to Cyprian the schismatic was a heretic and there was no difference between the two.[574] Cyprian's all or

---

[572] Geoffrey D. Dunn, "Heresy and Schism According to Cyprian of Carthage," *Journal of Theological Studies* 55, no. 2 (Oct 2004): 559.

[573] Dunn, "Heresy and Schism," 566.

[574] Ibid., 574.

nothing approaches to schismatic issues would at times push how he chose to respectfully deal with martyrs and confessors.

Because of schisms over rebaptizing *lapsi* several different non-recognized schismatic churches began to congregate and subsequently begin to practice the rites of the church *catholica.* Imposition of hands, baptism and communion were what Cyprian spent time addressing. Cyprian was determined to confront one of these groups who had come to be known as the, "Church of Martyrs." They declared they had the power to perform these rites without deferring to the ecclesial chain of command that was already in place. Cyprian's response to this is consistent and persevering. Hans von Campenhausen writes, "Cyprian in never tired…in his struggles against rebellious schismatics, arrogant martyrs, and refractory laymen."[575]

The Church of the Martyrs, under the leadership of Lucianus, saw themselves as being able to participate in the rites of the church because of their self-appointed special communal connection with the martyr. Although Cyprian honored the martyrs he set about in his writing defining the hierarchy place of the martyr in light of schismatic groups attempting to create a different ecclesial structure by inserting the martyr as an effective priest-like role.[576] It is within this conflict that Cyprian's definition and recognition of the martyr is deepened and depended on in order to reign in any further schism. Cyprian's desire to address schisms that were beginning to arise came in the form of, among other things, apologetic writing—to which we now turn.

---

[575] Hans von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiatical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Century*, translated by J. A. Baker (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishing, 1969), 269.

[576] Brent Allen, "Cyprian's Reconstruction of the Martyr Tradition," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 53, no. 2 (April 2002): 251-2.

Cyprian's Apologetic Work in His *Epistles* and *Exhortation to Martyrdom* in Philosophical and Biblical Relation to Justin Martyr and Irenaeus

Because of the number of issues that plagued the Carthaginian church due to the *lapsi* controversy, the majority of Cyprian's apologetic work consisted of what Alister McGrath regards, "Cyprian of Carthage so cogently argued in the third century, no salvation outside of the church."[577] In comparison to Justin Martyr, Cyprian was much more apologetically concerned with the truth of the Gospel that was understood within the general circumference of the church whereas Justin was much more outwardly concerned with his apologetics as he addressed Jewish and pagan influences around him. Irenaeus, who is directly influenced by Justin Martyr and much more polemic than either Justin or Cyprian, was more focused on those close to the church than Justin but not as pastoral as Cyprian in terms of Cyprian's pastoral desire for unity in the church.[578] This pastoral desire for unity can be seen as Cyprian expresses it in several ways.[579]

As said before, Cyprian (like Irenaeus of Lyons) rarely engages philosophy directly like Justin Martyr. Both Irenaeus and Cyprian addressed philosophy but in ways which denigrated philosophy rather than acknowledge any of its merits like Justin. What is interesting to note is that Anthony Meredith in his *Christian Philosophy in the Early Church* mentions that by the time of Tertullian and Irenaeus there was "an anti-philosophical bias" which had been lodged in

---

[577] Alister McGrath, *Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 206.

[578] Arnold Smeets, "Traces of Care and Involvement: A Semiotic reading of *De Vnitate,"* in *Cyprian of Carthage: Studies in His Life, Language, and Thought*, eds. Henk Bakker, Paul van Geest, and Hans van Loon (Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2010), 109-10. Smeets comments on Cyprian's desire for unity in his writing, "The core-business of the discourse seems to be to bring 'you' in connection with the actor 'I,' holding them together as a 'we,'…these figures signify the structure of unity: a conjunction between a punctual origin and a spatial dynamics, which forms an unanimous plurality."

[579] See Cyprian, *Treatise,* 1.2, 24-6; 9.15; 10.6, 17.

the Early Church's thinking[580] and Meredith does not even mention Cyprian as one who had any congruent connections or contributions to philosophy at all. This is not to say that Cyprian did not have any philosophical background since it is likely a part of Cyprian's background in that he was a professor of rhetoric at Carthage before his conversion.[581] Although Cyprian very rarely gave overt reference to philosophical thought, he possessed about as much philosophical background as Irenaeus did.[582]

In terms of Cyprian's apologetic work it can be safely said that like Irenaeus of Lyons and Justin Martyr, Cyprian "repeatedly engaged in all four elements of a robust apologetic program."[583] For the sake and space of this present endeavor, there will only be a brief reference to how Cyprian expressed his particular apologetic compared to Justin and Irenaeus. This is only to help in understanding how Cyprian could be regarded as an apologist despite the schismatic and persecutory forces with which Cyprian had to contend.

Following Palmer's outline of a robust apologetic, Cyprian displays a positive declaration of the benefits of the faith throughout his *Epistles* and *Treatises*. In Cyprian's *Epistles* one can read of how Cyprian is thankful for the confession of the martyrs and the confessors of the Christian faith,

---

[580] Meredith, *Christian Philosophy*, 117.

[581] Alban Butler, "St. Cyprian, Archbishop of Carthage, Martyr," in *The Lives of the Saints* (Dublin: James Duffy, 1866), 192.

[582] Allen Brent, *Cyprian and Roman Carthage* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 115. Brent notes that Cyprian shared the same type of pagan cosmological background as Minucius Felix and other apologists of his time which included a somewhat Christianized version of Stoic metaphysics which sought to give rational explanation to the "Signs of the End found in Scripture."

[583] Palmer, "Cyprian the Apologist," 124. According to Palmer the four elements of a robust apologetic are: "(1) a positive declaration of the benefits of the faith, including but not limited to salvation; (2) an argument for the coherence of the faith as a worldview that makes sense and fits well with the world as it really is; (3) a defense of the faith against false charges brought against it by the outside enemies of the church; and (4) a defense of the faith against heresies and other internal forces of division that would weaken it. These four elements may be referred to in shorthand as (1) benefits; (2) coherence; (3) rebuttal; and (4) strengthening."

> I gladly rejoice and am thankful, most brave and blessed brethren, at hearing of your faith and virtue, wherein the Church, our Mother, glories. Lately, indeed, she gloried, when, in consequence of an enduring confession, that punishment was undergone which drove the confessors of Christ into exile; yet the present confession is so much the more illustrious and greater in honour as it is braver in suffering.[584]

In terms of Cyprian arguing for the coherence of the Christian faith and its worldview, Cyprian writes to the people of Thibaris concerning how to cope with the suffering that is a part of the Christian life,

> But how grave is the case of a Christian man, if he, a servant, is unwilling to suffer, when his Master first suffered; and that we should be unwilling to suffer for our own sins, when He who had no sin of His own suffered for us! The Son of God suffered that He might make us sons of God, and the son of man will not suffer that he may continue to be a son of God! If we suffer from the world's hatred, Christ first endured the world's hatred. If we suffer reproaches in this world, if exile, if tortures, the Maker and Lord of the world experienced harder things than these, and He also warns us, saying, "If the world hate you, remember that it hated me before you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." Whatever our Lord and God taught, He also did, that the disciple might not be excused if he learns and does not.[585]

With defending false claims brought against the church by the outside world, Cyprian writes of how these accusations should be met,

> we repudiated those things which from the other party had been heaped together with bitter virulence into a document transmitted to us; alike considering and weighing, that in so great and so religious an assembly of brethren, in which God's priests were sitting together, and His altar was set, they ought neither to be read nor to be heard. For those things should not easily be put forward, nor carelessly and rudely published, which may move a scandal by means of a quarrelsome pen in the minds of the hearers, and confuse brethren, who are placed far apart and dwelling across the sea, with uncertain opinions. Let those beware, who, obeying either their own rage or lust, and unmindful of the divine law and holiness, rejoice to throw abroad in the meantime things which they cannot prove; and although they may not be successful in destroying and ruining innocence, are satisfied with scattering stains upon it with lying reports and false rumours. Assuredly, we should exert ourselves, as it is fitting for prelates and priests to do, that such things, when they are written by any, should be repudiated as far as we are concerned. For

[584] Cyprian, *Epistles*, 8.2-3.

[585] Ibid., 55.6.2-5.

> otherwise, what will become of that which we learn and which we declare to be laid down in Scripture: "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile?"[586]

Finally, regarding the fourth and probably most used apologetic of Cyprian, a defense against heresy and internal schism can be seen when Cyprian writes about the error which Novatian is practicing and thereby making himself a denier of Christ's true church,

> And now a deserter and a fugitive from the Church, as if to have changed the clime were to change the man, he goes on to boast and announce himself a confessor, although *he* can no longer either be or be called a confessor of Christ who has denied Christ's Church. For when the Apostle Paul says, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church;"—when, I say, the blessed apostle says this, and with his sacred voice testifies to the unity of Christ with the Church, cleaving to one another with indivisible links, how can he be with Christ who is not with the spouse of Christ, and in His Church? Or how does he assume to himself the charge of ruling or governing the Church, who has spoiled and wronged the Church of Christ?[587]

As shown, Cyprian's apologetic in his *Epistles* was at least adequate to display that he was more than writing about church unity and church governance.[588] While Cyprian may not have the notoriety as an apologist like Justin Martyr or the polemic character of writing like Irenaeus, Cyprian can rightly take his place as an apologist alongside both of the mentioned church fathers. Philosophically, Cyprian did not use philosophic references as much as Justin but was more removed from overt reference to philosophy as Irenaeus was. Cyprian and Irenaeus did share a common approach to using philosophy in that they both mentioned it very rarely. Cyprian and Irenaeus also shared a common ground in how they framed some basic concepts about their worldview. For Irenaeus it was the Hellenistic hypothesis of first principles "first principles" (i.e. the canon of Scripture) in order to help hypothesize how valid Scripture was, particularly in

---

[586] Cyprian, *Epistles*, 41.2.3-7.

[587] Ibid., 48.5-7.

[588] Brent, *Cyprian and Roman Carthage*, 1. Brent, along with other patristic scholars, often note these two elements as being the greatest contributions of Cyprian as bishop.

prophecy fulfillment and the identity of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. For Cyprian, the pagan cosmological background of Minucius Felix and other apologists of his time, which had a somewhat Christianized version of Stoic metaphysics, helped Cyprian give rational explanation to the eschatological events found in Scripture. To be sure, Justin also had pagan philosophical roots as did Cyprian and Irenaeus. These particular philosophical roots that each of the three church fathers shared often were used to serve their apologetic and their understanding of the faith.

In terms of Cyprian's apologetic work having a biblical tie to Justin and Irenaeus's apologetic work, in Cyprian's *To the People of Thibaris, Exhorting to Martyrdom*, one can glean a very thorough theology of how persecution and suffering can be approached and endured. He begins to encourage the believers in several Scriptures outlining the *imitatio Christi* they are to follow. Cyprian also assures the faithful believers of their heavenly reward[589] (specifically the crown of faith) that is found throughout Cyprian's other encouraging epistles.

The assurance of heavenly reward that is claimed in Scripture is also mentioned in Justin's *First Apology* when he writes about the prophets from Scripture who attest to the rewards for the faithful,

> We have learned from the prophets, and we hold it to be true, that punishments, and chastisements, and good rewards, are rendered according to the merit of each man's actions. Since if it be not so, but all things happen by fate, neither is anything at all in our own power.[590]

---

[589] Cyprian, *To the People of Thibaris, Exhorting to Martyrdom*, 55.3.

[590] Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 43.2. Justin also refers to the heavenly reward in *First Apology* 15 for those who suffer for Christ's sake and pray for their enemies, "But I say unto you, Pray for your enemies, and love them that hate you, and bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you." And that we should communicate to the needy, and do nothing for glory, He said, "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow turn not away; for if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what new thing do ye? even the publicans do this. Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where robbers break through; but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt." This same Scripture is also used by Justin in his *Dialogue with Trypho* 96when writing about how praying for one's enemies will help Christ give "good things" through the promise of Christ (*Dial*. 96.5)

Like Cyprian, Justin also believes that these heavenly rewards which have been intimated by previous philosophers were previously informed by the prophets of Scripture and, "have enabled them to understand and interpret these things."[591] While Cyprian does not overtly use philosophical arguments and references like Justin Martyr,[592] both Cyprian and Justin do hold a high regard for the authority of Scripture and its promises of rewards as well as the suffering that would accompany the believer as well as the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

John Behr astutely points out how Irenaeus viewed not only the Gospel of Jesus Christ but the whole of Scripture as a universal collection which contains, "all the various aspects of God's work, creation as well as salvation, into one all-embracing and singular divine plan."[593] This was an important apologetic stance for Irenaeus as he sought to refute those Gnostic sects who claimed to be able to interpret Scripture by some type of secret knowledge.[594] Like Irenaeus and Justin, Cyprian regarded the whole of Scripture as something which testified to the truth and validity of the claims that were found therein. Cyprian and Justin both regarded all of Scripture as a complete whole to draw from and receive "God's fullness"[595]

Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian also shared a common usage of the word Gospel to not only mean the gospel of salvation found in Jesus Christ but the Gospel also to mean the full attestation

---

[591] Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 44.9. "He foretells by the Spirit of prophecy that He will bestow meet rewards according to the merit of the actions done, always urging the human race to effort and recollection, showing that He cares and provides for men."

[592] Michael Sage, *Cyprian* (Philadelphia: The Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, Ltd., 1975), 135. Michael Sage points out how Cyprian was probably very familiar with pagan mythology and philosophy but was less likely to use specific references to it but rather Cyprian was more apt to "use secular rhetoric for Christian purposes."

[593] Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 125. Irenaeus called this universal collection, among other things, "the economy of our salvation." Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 3.1.1.

[594] Ibid., 126.

[595] Cyprian, *Epistles*, 73.4. Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 112.1.

of all the Scriptures. For Justin, the all-encompassing Gospel was referred to when speaking about the doctrines of the Gospel which included the Old Testament prophets and the law and the whole of Scripture that point to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.[596] For Irenaeus, the Gospel included the heart of the Christian message of salvation in Jesus Christ while at the same time the Gospel for Irenaeus was something which pointed to the law and the prophets which heralded the Messiah, Jesus Christ.[597] This is all to say that Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian all shared the common ground of the entirety of Scripture as their base reference for their faith.

Ethical Dimension of Cyprian's Pastoral Understanding of Suffering Within *Epistles'* and *Exhortation to Martyrdom*

At the time of Cyprians treatise, *On Mortality* the Christian and pagan world of Rome was enduring a decimating plague. Even though the Christians of Cyprian's time are celebrating the end of the Decian persecution, the celebration is short-lived due to the ensuing plague which was claiming pagan and Christian lives alike. In the opening argument of Cyprian's treatise, *On The Mortality*, Cyprian describes how suffering for the believer due to the plague or sickness is something which, "has been foretold by Christ"[598] and is something which should not be feared nor embraced at the same time because of the promise of immortality after this life. Because of this promise of immortality through Jesus Christ, Cyprian was attempting to help his Christian audience understand that suffering of all kinds[599] is something which,

[596] Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 100.

[597] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 10.2.

[598] Cyprian, *Treatise VII,* 1.

[599] Ibid., 5.1. Cyprian does not only address the suffering that comes from persecution but also, "So many persecutions the soul suffers daily, with so many risks is the heart wearied."

> …when our sadness shall be turned into joy, the Lord Himself again declares, when He says, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you." Since, therefore, to see Christ is to rejoice, and we cannot have joy unless when we shall see Christ, what blindness of mind or what folly is it to love the world's afflictions, and punishments, and tears, and not rather to hasten to the joy which can never be taken away![600]

Again, Cyprian is not advising his readers to embrace suffering or actually hasten their earthly end but rather to cope with suffering in a way that shows their faith. Immediately after this encouragement for the believers to look forward to seeing Jesus face-to-face, Cyprian admonishes the believer that the focus in the suffering of this world is, "because faith is lacking, because no one believes that the things which God promises are true."[601]

Allen Brent argues that Cyprian is drawing on some particularly Stoic eschatological ideas of renunciation of self and the *senectus* or aging of the world which will one day come to restoration. Brent also believes, as this author does, that Cyprian does not lead the believer to take hope in a more Stoic understanding of rebirth or restoration but rather that, "death is a gateway to eternal life."[602] While Brent does seem to conclude that Cyprian's eschatological perspective on suffering remains the same[603] and is firmly rooted in Stoic terms, it does appear that Cyprian is able to articulate a distinctly Christian ethic towards suffering that is not as couched in Stoic terms as Brent describes.

What seems to be missing in Brent's analysis of what he believes to be Cyprian's more Stoic understanding of suffering and eternal reward are three sections of *On Mortality* which Brent does not touch on. Sections five, six, and seven of *On Mortality*. These particular sections

---

[600]Cyprian, Treatise *VII*, 5.1.

[601] Ibid.

[602] Brent, *Cyprian and Roman Carthage*, 106.

[603] Ibid., 108.

are less involved with Stoic references to suffering as Brent describes[604] and are firmly rooted in Scriptural encouragements that Cyprian employs in the face of the suffering of the believers of his time. Cyprian refers to both John 16:20 and John 16:22 when encouraging the believers to remember that their sorrow shall be turned into a joy that no one can take away.[605] This understanding of an immutable joy is foreign to Stoic philosophy and ethic which would claim that pain is something to primarily avoid in order to obtain joy rather than something that can be transformed into joy as the Scriptures describe.

Cyprian also refers to Phil 1:21 in the seventh section of *On Mortality* when he writes,

> Remembering which truth, the blessed Apostle Paul in his epistle lays it down, saying, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain;" counting it the greatest gain no longer to be held by the snares of this world, no longer to be liable to the sins and vices of the flesh, but taken away from smarting troubles, and freed from the envenomed fangs of the devil, to go at the call of Christ to the joy of eternal salvation.[606]

Here it is possible to view Cyprian's writing as leaning towards a more Stoic understanding of suffering except that Cyprian concludes that to be taken away from the difficulties and suffering of this world means "to go at the call of Christ to the joy of eternal salvation."[607] Certainly the joy eternal salvation at the call of Christ was something which the Stoic philosophy and ethic did not comprehend or embrace. Therefore Cyprian's ethic of suffering which he encouraged Christian believers to embrace as they were enduring the effects of a city-wide plague, was firmly rooted in a Scriptural understanding of suffering based on one's relationship to Jesus Christ.[608] While Allen Brent is astute in observing the Stoic undertones of Cyprian's pastoral

---

[604] Brent, *Cyprian and Roman Carthage*, 106-8. The Stoic terminology which Brent highlights Cyprian using have to do with *senectus* (old age) and the Stoic metaphor of the world being "one house."

[605] Cyprian, *Treatise VII,* 5.2,4.

[606] Cyprian, *Treatise VII,* 7.2.

[607] Ibid.

[608] Cyprian, *Treatise VII,* 7.8. "It disturbs some that this mortality is common to us with others; and yet what is there in this world which is not common to us with others, so long as this flesh of ours still remains, according to the law of our first birth, common to us with them? So long as we are here in the world, we are associated with the human race in fleshly equality, but are separated in spirit. Therefore until this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal receive immortality, and the Spirit lead us to God the Father, whatsoever are the disadvantages of the flesh are common to us with the human race." Here Cyprian continues to encourage believers that the suffering they are enduring is not uncommon to the human condition regardless of faith but also, the faith they have in God will help ensure the immortality and incorruptible condition they will receive after their earthly life.

response to suffering, it could be said that Cyprian's challenge for Christian believers to live lives with a knowledge of their relationship to God through Jesus Christ is the foundation of their hope more so than a Stoic understanding of hope in changing residences.[609]

Apologetic Uses of Suffering by Cyprian

Of the three church fathers presented in this work it could arguably be asserted that Cyprian of Carthage witnessed more turbulent and difficult times of suffering than either Irenaeus or Justin Martyr. Not only was Cyprian and Christian believers exposed to random and state-sanctioned persecutions of Decius Trajan (249-251) and Valerian (253-260) but Cyprian also consoled and comforted his congregation during the plague period of 252-254 where Christians were not only dying just as often as pagans were from the plague but were at times being held responsible for the plague itself. Cyprian also had to navigate the *lapsi* controversy and those who had fallen away from the faith as well as those who were truly suffering for the Christian faith. This is in no way meant to diminish the particular challenges that both Justin and Irenaeus had faced but this is only meant to demonstrate that Cyprian had witnessed a greater variety of suffering on a large scale than either Justin or Irenaeus.

What is certain, in what will follow, is that in each of these periods of time, Cyprian was able to not only comfort or instruct Christian believers in their suffering but Cyprian was able to give apologetic value to the suffering that Christians of these times endured. *To Donatus* is often regarded to be one of Cyprian's earliest works as well as being apologetic in its tone and thrust.[610] After Cyprian lays out a multitude of issues that the world of his time were plagued

[609] Brent, *Cyprian and Roman Carthage*, 107. While Cyprian does use the Stoic metaphor of changing houses when one house is suffering old age and dilapidation, Cyprian's treatise *On Mortality* climaxes with more overt references towards hope in the face of suffering to be found in relationship to God and the promises of immortality and freedom from suffering in relationship to God.

[610] Palmer, "Cyprian the Apologist," 47.

with (e.g., gruesome gladiatorial combat and state-sanctioned pedophilia[611]) he contrasts the Christian perspective and philosophy towards the world and "what crafty mischief of the foe that previously attacked us."[612] Cyprian lifts up the Christian view towards heaven and the, "beauty perpetually vivid, in perfect honor, in permanent splendor"[613] in direct contrast to the decay and suffering of the present temporal world which Cyprian attests to which will fall into decay and become tarnished with age.[614]

In Cyprian's, *To the Martyrs and Confessors*, Cyprian is encouraging and lauding those who were confessing the name of Jesus Christ and enduring the suffering of torture and exile because of their Christian witness. Cyprian writes,

> but all whom the danger has shut up in a glorious company are animated to carry on the struggle with an equal and common warmth of virtue, as it behoves the soldiers of Christ in the divine camp: that no allurements may deceive the incorruptible stedfastness of your faith, no threats terrify you, no sufferings or tortures overcome you, because "greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world;" nor is the earthly punishment able to do more towards casting down, than is the divine protection towards lifting up.[615]

---

[611] Cyprian, *To Donatus*, 7-8. In this work, Cyprian is not writing as a bishop so much as he is writing not long after his conversion and baptism. M.M. Sage and Allen Bent also argue that this work was more of an evangelistic tract, especially due in part to the sheer amount of critical remarks Cyprian was making towards the culture in North Africa. See Sage, *Cyprian* 128; Brent, *St. Cyprian of Carthage*, 47. Cyprian does not exclude himself from this audience and as one who was very much a part of the culture itself until his conversion. See Cyprian, *To Donatus*, 3.1-2.

[612] Ibid., 14.4

[613] Ibid., 15.6.

[614] Ibid., 15.7. It is important to note that while Cyprian contrasts the immoral spectacle of his present culture with the Christian view this is in no way a contrast that is meant to form, as Elizabeth Castelli writes, "a competitive marketing plan" with the brutal theatre of ancient Rome and Carthage. See Elizabeth Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, 117. Indeed, if Cyprian were trying to form some type of competitive propaganda using the martyrs it still stands to reason that the apologetic value of the suffering of the martyrs would still testify of a different and even redeemable type of suffering which the Christians endured.

[615] Cyprian, *To the Martyrs and Confessors*, 1.5. This particular address to the martyrs and confessors occurred before the *lapsi* controversy and so the integrity of the confessors and martyrs and confession and actions are less prone to controversy or question. Throughout Cyprian's *Epistles* he extols the virtue and example of the martyrs for other believers and for Rome. See Hummel, *The Concept of Martyrdom according to St. Cyprian of Carthage*, 143-6. It is also interesting that while Candida Moss in her book, *The Myth of Persecution*, is able to tell of the controversy of the *lapsi* and the "moral weakness" of those who had sacrificed to the emperor or ran away when persecution came, she is altogether silent on the actions and testimonies of Cyprian before the *lapsi* controversy. See Candida Moss, *The Myth of Persecution*, 147-51.

In the same letter Cyprian praises the value of the confessors and martyr's suffering by writing how the struggle of these faithful is helping to prove the truth of the greatness of God and the truth of who Jesus Christ is when he writes,

> This truth is proved by the glorious struggle of the brethren, who, having become leaders to the rest in overcoming their tortures, afforded an example of virtue and faith, contending in the strife, until the strife yielded, being overcome. With what praises can I commend you, most courageous brethren?[616]

For Cyprian the truth of the Christian faith was being proved by the actions of those who would confess and suffer the consequences in the perseverance of their faith.[617] Cyprian encouraged his congregation to follow these proving actions of the martyrs and confessors and he saw these actions as something which strengthened the church and thus was a positive example to all those who witnessed them.[618] This would help lend to the apologetic value of coherence where the virtuous actions of the confessors and martyrs makes sense with the culture around them that at least attempts to hold virtue and honor as something that is to be esteemed. One can view Cyprian's report of the suffering of the martyrs and confessors as having an apologetic value due to Cyprian's attestation that the martyrs and confessors are suffering for the truth, namely the truth of the Gospel.[619]

---

[616]Cyprian, *To the Martyrs and Confessors*, 1.6-7.

[617] Ibid., 1.9.

[618] Ibid., 1.40. "I not only beseech but exhort the rest of you, that you all should follow that martyr now most blessed, and the other partners of that engagement,—soldiers and comrades, stedfast in faith, patient in suffering, victors in tortures,—that those who are united at once by the bond of confession, and the entertainment of a dungeon, may also be united in the consummation of their virtue and a celestial crown; that you by your joy may dry the tears of our Mother, the Church, who mourns over the wreck and death of very many; and that you may confirm, by the provocation of your example, the stedfastness of others who stand also."

[619] Ibid., 1.26-9. Cyprian writes of how the suffering and struggle of the martyrs is a "proof," a "testimony," and something that was "exhibited" for all to see. "The present struggle has afforded a proof of this saying. A voice filled with the Holy Spirit broke forth from the martyr's mouth when the most blessed Mappalicus said to the proconsul in the midst of his torments, "You shall see a contest to-morrow." And that which he said with the

While in some ways it should be expected that Cyprian would testify to the faithfulness and virtue of the martyrs of his time, Cyprian also testified to the endurance of Cornelius and his suffering at the hands of the state. Cyprian writes of Cornelius having victory over the "tyrant" whom he conquered by his faith,

> Is not he to be esteemed among the glorious confessors and martyrs, who for so long a time sate awaiting the manglers of his body and the avengers of a ferocious tyrant, who, when Cornelius resisted their deadly edicts, and trampled on their threats and sufferings and tortures by the vigour of his faith, would either rush upon him with the sword, or crucify him, or scorch him with fire, or rend his bowels and his limbs with some unheard-of kind of punishment? Even though the majesty and goodness of the protecting Lord guarded, when made, the priest whom He willed to be made; yet Cornelius, in what pertains to his devotion and fear, suffered whatever he could suffer, and conquered the tyrant first of all by his priestly office, who was afterwards conquered in arms and in war.[620]

This particular declaration about the character of Cornelius can serve apologetically as showing the benefits of the Christian faith as Cyprian lauds Cornelius as one who is victorious over the Roman state that sought to persecute him. The victory of one's faith over the Roman state that at times sought to persecute all Christians would have rung clearly in the minds and hearts of the Christian believers who were often personally witnessing the persecution of the Roman state in their own lives. The need for authentic and effectual martyrdoms was real in the midst of the *lapsi* controversy and the fairly complicated edicts of Decian which could place Christians in compromising positions with the church and the state.[621] The very meaning of suffering that was

---

testimony of virtue and faith, the Lord fulfilled. A heavenly contest was exhibited, and the servant of God was crowned in the struggle of the promised fight."

[620] Cyprian, *Epistle LI, To Antonianus About Cornelius and Novatian*, 9.2-3. While there is not enough space in this work to elaborate, it is noteworthy to mention how the *lapsi* controversy adds possible weight to the *apologetic of suffering* argument when reviewing Cyprian's testimony of the character of a suffering martyr like Cornelius compared to a schismatic leader like Novatian who was one who had, according to Cyprian, "heresy he had introduced" and whose character was under question. While both Cornelius and Novatian suffered under the Decian persecution, it is the suffering of the more orthodox Cornelius which is mentioned and upheld as the model behavior of the believer being persecuted rather than the more schismatic and heretical Novatian's behavior.

[621] See Allen Brent, *Cyprian and Roman Carthage*, 223-5.

authentically rooted in martyrdom which would have apologetic weight in Cyprian's time was not only one which both pagan and Christian could share[622] but also the Christian community could claim as being something as effectual and authentic.[623]

In Cyprian's epistle to Sergius, Rogatianus, and the other confessors in prison, Cyprian refers to the suffering that would be endured by not only Christ but by the believers who would follow in example because, "the Lord also in Himself has appointed an example, teaching that none shall attain to His kingdom but those who have followed Him in His own way."[624] Cyprian tells of how Jesus Christ is one who is not only numbered with the prophets but is foretold by the prophets of His suffering and death.[625] Cyprian also refers to how Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies and Scriptures that among others things mention the Suffering Servant who is the Messiah.[626]

[622] G. W. Bowersock, *Martyrdom and Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 44.

[623] Ibid., 19.

[624] Cyprian, *Epistle LXXX: Cyprian to Sergius, Rogatianus, and the Other Confessors in Prison*, 2.8.

[625] Cyprian, *Epistle VIII: To the Martyrs and Confessors*, 17. Here Cyprian also quotes prophecies from Isaiah which describe the suffering servant and how Jesus was the first to "wage the war" fought by the apostles and contemporaries of Cyprian as well.

[626] Cyprian, *LXII*: *To Caecilius, on the Sacrament of the Cup of the Lord*, 1-8.

CHAPTER 7

HISTORY AND WHERE THE THREE FATHERS MEET

Introduction

The understanding of suffering that is held between Justin, Cyprian, and Ireaeus is inextricably and primarily linked to the suffering which Jesus Christ endured on the cross. As it has been shown, Justin, Cyprian, and Irenaeus each drew from the historical event of Jesus Christ's suffering on the cross. This was not only to encourage believers but to give an apologetic response in the midst of an unbelieving and declining pagan world which viewed all kinds of suffering as something which was to be avoided if possible and/or was something that was a result of their own sin and was inflicted on them by the very pagan gods they worshipped. As it has been shown, the advent of Christianity in the midst of pagan culture introduced with it a different understanding of suffering which, among other things, highlighted the possibility of a redemptive aspect of suffering. Did this redemptive aspect of suffering which the Early Church and her Fathers regarded continue or carry through the ages after the sun had set on their age? Attention will now be directed to this question.

A Concise History of the Theology of Suffering from the Early Church to the Present

While there has been dialogue on the concept and understanding of suffering between Justin, Cyprian, and Irenaeus, it may help to serve the reader to understand how the Early Church and surrounding pagan culture interacted on the concept of suffering, specifically as they both had to cope with the reality of death and grief. The San Gennaro catacombs of Naples, which date back to the second century AD, served as a burial location for some of the pagan nobility of

Naples. In the following centuries, this pagan family allowed Christian burial and interment of remains to be held right next to their own *loculi*.

This practice of tolerating and allowing Christian *loculi* next to pagan *loculi* culminated in an act of tolerance when Januarius (San Gennaro) was martyred under the Diocletian persecution and his remains were permitted to be interred in the pagan catacombs of which are now named San Gennaro, a variant of Januarius, the bishop of Benevento who was martyred for his Christian faith. Before Januarius was buried in these catacombs there were several Christians and their families who were buried there as well. This is to only draw attention to how Christians and pagans were burying the deceased alongside one another in the catacombs where Christians often gathered to worship and remember their loved ones who had passed away.

While the statewide persecutions of Christians occurred at a greater rate between AD 249 and 311, there appeared to be a greater tolerance of Christians in the area of Naples than in Rome.[627] Although this tolerance seemed to have its limits when bishop Januarius was beheaded, it still stands to record that Christians were at least tolerated to the point of being allowed to bury their loved ones adjacent to pagan nobility. This is only to point out how, in the practice of burying and remembering the loved ones who had passed on, both pagan and Christians were exposed to each other's burial customs and more notably, to each other's funerary arts, inscriptions, and frescoes which accompanied expressions of grief and more relevant to this dissertation, expressions of hope.

By the third century, Christians in Rome would eventually form their own catacombs such as San Sebastian, Priscilla, and Domitilla. However, in the case of some of the catacombs found in Naples, Christian believer and non-believer continued to bury their loved ones next to

[627] Benjamin Taylor, *Naples Declared: A Walk Around the Bay* (London: Penguin Books, 2013), 62. Taylor, a Guggenheim Fellow, describes the tolerance of Christians and the subsequent tolerance of pagans after Constantine's Edict of Milan as one that, "tolerated spontaneous devotion."

each other (as in the case of the catacombs of San Gennaro) well into the Medieval era. This is to illustrate that while Christians continued to bury their loved ones in what was once the pagan catacombs of San Gennaro, there were definite shared expressions of what provided comfort and hope to those who were facing the reality of death. In the catacombs of San Gennaro there are definite pagan frescoes which display, much like the pagan catacombs found in Rome, scenes of earthly accomplishments and pleasures such as hunting and family celebrations. This is also the case in the Vatican Necropolis of Rome where pagan mausoleums depicted similar scenes of earthly enjoyments and successes. This is in stark contrast to the early funerary art of Christians of the second and third century which depicted images of hope in a bodily resurrection and immortality.[628] Some of these were depictions of the peacock (an appropriated symbol of immortality) and stories from the Old and New Testament which depict safe passage with the Old Testament story of Noah and resurrection with the New Testament story of Lazarus.

The images of hope beyond death and the grave were quite different than many of the pagan frescoes which primarily gloried in the accomplishments of the present life.[629] Noteworthy is the catacomb of Saint Sebastian where the pagan Clodius Hermes and his family had a family mausoleum. Throughout much of the artwork found in the mausoleum one can find typical frescoes and paintings commemorating the earthly accomplishments of Clodius and his family. However, towards the top of the mausoleum the artwork and inscriptions reflect distinct Christian symbolism which reflected his family's conversion to Christianity. This is primarily to illustrate how Christian hope beyond suffering and death not only served to comfort the Christian believer but also served as a graphic illustration for anyone, pagan or Christian, who would take

[628] Antonio Baruffa, *The Catacombs of St. Callixtus* (Vatican City: L.E.V., 2006), 86.

[629] Florence Dupont, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1989), 24.

time to understand the meaning behind these funerary arts of the catacombs. Funerary art which expressed the Christian beliefs of those who were buried along with their families continues even to the present time and are helpful in determining the beliefs of those who were interred. However, the focus on resurrection with Jesus Christ and safe passage through suffering and death began to alter at the same time that the church began to grow in power and cultural influence.

With Augustine, suffering was not completely from God's hand. Augustine helped conceptualize biblical applications of what it means to suffer. He saw that God may allow suffering but God is not the author of the evil that often is the agent behind the suffering. Augustine also alluded to the suffering of the Early Church being something that other heretical sects, such as the Circumcellions and Donatists may not take credit for since they are misled in whom they follow.[630]

In the Medieval Era several prominent scholars and church leaders often viewed the suffering of the Church believers to be something which the Father God has participated with His children through Jesus Christ. God was not an impersonal and indifferent God to Aquinas but one who, through Jesus Christ, "was made a participant of our affliction."[631] This idea is more developed than the Early Church Father's concept of suffering with Christ in that Aquinas is furthering the idea that the Christian believer does not suffer alone but that God willingly chose to be on earth. While being on earth, God will suffer with humanity in a way that does not take away from His divinity but at the same time illustrates his willingness to participate with

[630] William Harmless, ed., *Augustine in His Own Words* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University Press, 2010), 267. Augustine writes to Donatist churches that are advocating violence against catholic believers in the form of the Circumcellions, "You see, you are suffering from your own evil deeds, not for Christ, when you stir up violence against the peace of Christ. What kind of madness is it to claim the glory of martyrdom when you are being justly punished for your evil life and deeds of brigandage?"

[631] Thomas Aquinas, *In Psalmos Davidis Expositio*, 40.7.7.

humanity's suffering much like a parent suffers with a child who is ill or injured.[632] This type of divine compassion is also further elaborated on by medieval theologian Anselm of Canterbury when he writes

> Hereupon consider also in how wonderful a bond He hath united thee with Himself. The Apostle establisheth it, that thou art the body of Christ. *Ye are*, saith he, *the body of Christ and members in particular.*[633]

The Fathers of the European Reformation had varying attitudes and issues with the Early Church Fathers. Martin Luther held Augustine in high standing and much of his commentary on Romans is said to have been heavily influenced by Augustine's own commentary and thought.[634] In the New Testament the apostle Paul encourages believers in the midst of their suffering.[635] Luther's commentary on Romans 8 views suffering as something that faith must use in order to, "kill the old Adam and to constrain the flesh."[636] While Luther does not see the apologetic value of suffering he comments,

> The Holy Spirit assures us that we are God's children no matter how furiously sin may rage within us, so long as we follow the Spirit and struggle against sin in order to kill it. Because nothing is so effective in deadening the flesh as the cross and suffering, Paul comforts us in our suffering.[637]

---

[632] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* 2-2.30. a.1, ad 2. "…if there are some persons so united to us as to be, in a way, something of ourselves, such as children or parents, we do not have compassion at their distress but rather we suffer as in our ow wounds."

[633] Anselm, *Meditation I :Considering the Dignity and the Misery of Human Nature,* 5.

[634] Irena Dorota Backus, ed., *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West, vol.1* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 577. Backus states, "It is undisputed that Luther's statements in his letters can be verified from the text of the [Augustine's] lecture."

[635] "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him,* that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom 8:16-18 (ESV)

[636] Martin Luther and J. Theodore Muller, ed., *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2003), xvii.

[637] Ibid.

This comment is closely in relation to Augustine's view toward suffering for the believer in Romans 8 where Augustine speaks about the necessity of the flesh being put to death through suffering as Christ did when taking humanity's sin and bringing redemption through the cross.[638] John Calvin also makes reference to suffering via Augustine in his commentary on Romans 8 as well.[639]

While some leaders of the European Reformation were well aware of the Early Church Fathers and some components of their theology of suffering, one can also find a lack of knowledge concerning the Early Church Fathers even though there was a resurgence of wanting to learn from the "Doctors of the Early Church." With Balthasar Hubmaier, who grew up in the Catholic faith and became a staunch Anabaptist leader, early in his life he respected the Early Church Fathers' writings but as he fought against entrenched Catholicism he became increasingly hostile to anything that may emit from the Catholic Church–including any teaching from the Early Fathers. Hubmaier seemed to have lacked in his understanding of the Early Church, as Samuel M. Jackson states, "Arguing from the Scriptures he was a Samson in controversy; when he began to speak of the Fathers and history he became as other men—and weaker than many."[640] This is to highlight that all of the Reformation leaders were not informed by the witness of the Early Church.

---

[638] Augustine, *Letters*: *To Januarius,* Ch. 2.2.88. "a certain transition from death to life has been consecrated in that Passion and Resurrection of the Lord. For the word Pascha itself is not, as is commonly thought, a Greek word: those who are acquainted with both languages affirm it to be a Hebrew word. It is not derived, therefore, from the Passion, because of the Greek word πάσχειν, signifying to suffer, but it takes its name from the transition, of which I have spoken, from death to life; the meaning of the Hebrew word Pascha being, as those who are acquainted with it assure us a passing over or transition. To this the Lord Himself designed to allude, when He said," He that believeth in Me is passed from death to life."

[639] John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995), 108.

[640] Samuel Macauley Jackson, *Heroes of the Reformation* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1905), 235.

Charles Wesley represents a move after the Enlightenment and, according to Randy Maddox, the core of his personal library was founded in, "Anglican doctrinal standards and the writings of Early Church fathers."[641] What is salient to this study is that while Wesley was seeking to understand what the Primitive church should be he was admonishing his hearers to read their Bibles as he referenced the witness of the Early Church in doing the same. Wesley used the Early Church's faithfulness to show how their behavior influenced and persuaded the heathen culture they had lived in. He writes

> Fly back to Christ, and keep in the good old way,
> which was 'once delivered to the saints;'
> the way that even a Heathen bore testimony of:
> 'That the Christians rose early every day to sing hymns to Christ as God.'[642]

While many notable theologians and preachers referenced the Early Church Fathers and the church, the record of how the leading scholars and preachers regarded Early Church suffering is mostly non-existent. At this juncture of Western theological history and doctrinal development there were primarily three views on suffering. With the Catholics there was much more social ostracism and antagonism by many who saw the Catholics holding on to what they believed to be a superstitious religion. The Catholic Church, in holding out against reformation-minded pressure, made no real diversion from their doctrine of suffering which mostly emanated from the Catholic catechism section entitled, "The Anointing of the Sick." Before the Second Vatican Council much of Catholic doctrine of suffering was focused on the redemptive aspect of suffering.

---

[641] Randy Maddox, "Theology of John and Charles Wesley," in *T & T Companion to Methodism*, edited by Charles Yrigoyen, (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 24.

[642] Thomas Jackson, ed., *The Works of John Wesley,* vol. 11 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1872), 398.

One interesting development of eternal suffering in Hell came through Enlightenment thinking which contradicted the Catholic conception. Enlightenment thinking among many Christians began to view the suffering from sin to be paid in the here and now and not a consequence of a vindictive God. This was an anathema to the Catholic Church as they were concerned this view, which held no threat of eternal punishment, would result in social destruction by people abandoning all morals and self-restraint. This fear from the Catholic Church only served to bolster their traditional doctrine of suffering until modern times.

Lutheranism began to make alterations in forming their theology of suffering. Lutheran Theologian Frederick Quitman (1760-1832) was a proponent of Christian rationalism which, as affected by the Enlightenment, sought to elevate reason over revelation and subsequently in his theology and sermons, explain away miracles. When asked about the role of suffering in the life of the believer, Quitman replied that, "the very suffering of the pious are intended as a means for their moral improvement and to render them more fit for the enjoyment of eternal glory."[643] This seems a far cry from Luther's doctrine of suffering that saw trials as something by which Christians could receive grace.

With Calvinism and covenantal theology, Jonathan Edwards, undeniably one of the most influential theologians and preachers during the Enlightenment, at times denied total adherence to Calvinism but in Edwards' practical doctrine of the church he shared much with Calvin.[644] The Protestant church was like an adolescent to both these men where she would struggle and suffer on her way to becoming a pristine bride of Christ.[645] In this struggle and suffering of the

[643] Benjamin A. Kolodziej, "Frederick Henry Quitman and the Catechesis of the American Lutheran Enlightenment," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 70, no.3 (July/October 2006): 349.

[644] Thomas Davis, ed., *John Calvin's American Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 89-90.

[645] Ibid., 93.

church both Calvin and Edwards experienced dissonance within the sanctifying process of suffering.

The doctrine of suffering to Edwards, Witherspoon and Calvinists of this time was marked by a consistent view of suffering as being the result of sin. John Witherspoon, who took up the Calvinist mantle after Edwards' passing, explains how suffering was something to be endured even though the work of endurance was slow, painful and full of doubts. In that progress of suffering, faith will lead to more sanctification which leads to God's glorification.[646] Again Witherspoon draws on our relationship with God through suffering, "This, my brethren, is one of the greatest and most important objects of prayer, and what believers should wrestle for with the greatest fervor and importunity."[647] Witherspoon also sees suffering as a way to keep us detached from this mortal and sorrowful world and how suffering can crucify sin and bring us closer to God.

Balthasar Hubmaier cited the Early Church Fathers often and referenced Origen throughout much of his work on infant baptism. While Hubmaier cited Origen the most often he drew from the work of four other church Fathers. The irony in the early Anabaptist and Baptist use of the church Fathers was in how they suffered under persecution from the government much like the Early Church did but there is little reference to the Early Church in regards to how it endured persecution and suffering as they had.

By the time of the Enlightenment, Anabaptist and Baptist thought towards the Early Church Fathers and suffering were fairly scant, including any reference at all to church Fathers themselves. Roger Williams does seem to mention the use of the Church Fathers when trying to

---

[646] Gordon Tait, *The Piety of John Witherspoon: Pew, Pulpit, and Public Forum* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2000), 70.

[647] John Witherspoon, *The Works of John Witherspoon* (Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2012), 255.

advocate for the freedom of conscience in the United States.[648] As Perry Miller states about Rogers Willaims, "Williams was so intense a Biblicist that he made little use, in his writings, of secondary sources, of the works of the Fathers, or of Protestant theologians."[649] This attitude towards the Early Church Fathers is indicative of many if not all the early Baptists of the eighteenth century and thus, record on their views towards the Early Church and how it coped with suffering are largely absent. Again this is partially due to their rejection of so much of the Catholic Church and its tradition in which the Early Church's tradition and writings were often lumped in with this rejection.

Nineteenth-century theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher often viewed the Early Church as a decent source for dogmas and confessional documents as well as decrees by the Early Church Councils but these, according to Schleiermacher, should not be binding to the Christian community.[650] Going into the twentieth century there seemed that a, "liberal de-Hellenization and Biblicist avoidance of the Fathers was the approach of much twentieth century Protestant theology."[651] The lack of substantial material about the church Fathers, much less commentary on their approach to suffering, has led to the perception that "The Fathers were basically ignored."[652]

---

[648] Roger Davis, *On Religious Liberty: Selections from the Works of Roger Williams* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 123. It is interesting to note how Roger Williams was willing to almost align himself with Catholic views toward the Church Fathers in order to propagate freedom of conscience.

[649] Perry Miller, *The Complete Writings of Roger Williams, Volume 7: Perry Miller on Roger Williams* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 14.

[650] H. R. Mackintosh & J. S. Stewart, eds., *The Christian Faith*: *Friedrich Schleiermacher* (London: A & C Black, 1999), 117.

[651] Jason Robert Radcliff, *Thomas F. Torrance and the Church Fathers* (Cambridge: James Clark & Co., 2014), 27.

[652] Radcliff, *Thomas F. Torrance*, 27.

Coming into the latter half of the twentieth century with Karl Barth, Thomas Torrance, John Henry Newman and others there has been an increased awareness of the Early Church in the Ancient, Catholic, and Orthodox Greek traditions. This has also received a type of countering to the perceived impressions of reliable accounts of suffering that the Early Church endured by author/scholars such as Candida Moss, Judith Perkins, Elizabeth Castelli and others. This countering of the classical view of the Early Church and the Fathers often centers on a method of feminist historiography and cultural contextualization that often concludes the suffering and martyrology which emanated from the Early Church are terms which should, as Elizabeth Castelli writes, "be reconfigured in light of ethical problematics" in order to not result in "overprivileging of the self-sacrificial dimensions of the 'martyr.'"[653]

A more nuanced approach to the issue of suffering in the Early Church has been offered by Judith Perkins who writes,

> Interpreting these authors' textual emphasis on pain as merely a reflection of the pathology of aberrant individuals of the early empire is an unfair simplification of the text. Such a reading prevents the recognition that their emphasis on pain and suffering reflects a wide spread cultural concern, which during the period was using representations of bodily suffering to construct a new subjectivity of the human person.[654]

For Perkins, the concept of suffering as being a "channel for encountering the divine" was an almost concurrent development between Ignatius of Antioch and Aristides.[655] Perkins claims that the word *pathos*, suffering, was first used by Ignatius to describe Christ's death.[656] She uses this reference to help bolster her argument of how Ignatius and Aristide's work, *The Tales*, both have

---

[653] Castelli. *Martyrdom and Memory*, 202-3. The particular authors mentioned are clear about these mentioned methodologies and approaches when defining and elaborating on the Early Church, suffering, and martyrology.

[654] Perkins, *The Suffering Self*, 173.

[655] Ibid, 189.

[656] Ibid.

a cultural connection and that both draw from the "new" idea that suffering offered a divine encounter. This has bearing on the work at hand in that Perkins is in some ways viewing the suffering of the Early Church as a type of innovation to communicate the relationship one has with the divine.

To a degree, Perkins has identified the concept that the Early Church saw suffering as a connection to the divine, namely Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, there are some discrepancies with the history of suffering in the Early Church and biblical community as well as the testimony of the Holy Scriptures. Other scholars such as Candida Moss have also admittedly named themselves a part of a skeptical group that looks at the suffering of the Early Church as "neither accidental nor historical" and that persecution and suffering were "an important cultural influence in the formation of the Christian canon."[657] This is pertinent to the work at hand as Moss and other scholars such as Denis Farkasfalvy and William Farmer have made claims about the suffering and persecution of the Early Church to be more mythology than historical fact or possible witness of their faith. Moss writes,

> …the traditional history of Christian martyrdom is mistaken. Christians were not constantly persecuted, hounded, or targeted by the Romans. Very few Christians died, and when they did, they were often executed for what we in the modern world would call political reasons…It may be unfortunate, it may be unfair, but it is not persecution,[658]

What makes this admission from Moss so interesting is that a year previously in her *Ancient Christian Martyrdom* she writes of how, "There is, however, a general sense among scholars that early Christians…may in historical reality have suffered more from paranoia than

---

[657] Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*, 13. Moss also believes that the authors of the Scriptural accounts, "do not appear to have shared our skepticism" when it comes to much of an actual historical persecution of the Early Church. This skeptical notion is later revealed in her following work, *The Myth of Persecution* (New York: Harper Collins, 2013).

[658] Moss, *The Myth of Persecution*, 7.

from actual persecution."[659] When one traces her idea of what "a general sense among scholars" is, one finds that she has referenced one particular author which does certainly seem like a far cry from "a general sense among scholars."[660] This is all to say that after centuries of relative quiet about the suffering of the Early Church it is within the last several decades that there have been a resurgent interest in the Early Church's processing of pain, suffering, persecution, and martyrdom. While there have been some attempts at producing scholarly work on the suffering and martyrology of the Early Church within this time frame,[661] the general tenor of most work produced in the last few decades is one of casting suspicion on whether the witness of the Early Church towards suffering is authentic or not.

While the issues of genuine persecution of the Church may at time come under question, it is not beyond the scope of the experience of the Church as a whole over the millennia to have experienced suffering and address its implications in the culture the Church finds itself. Throughout the ages of humanity God has sought to make Himself known in every facet of human history which includes the suffering of humanity as well as the redeeming of that suffering. As Thomas G. Weinandy states,

> The significance of human history, from within a Jewish/Christian tradition, is not found in the annals of God becoming God. Rather, biblical history chronicles the immanent actions of the wholly transcendent, perfectly loving and all-powerful God by which history assumes a more than this-worldly historical significance. Through God's actions in history, history is given a purpose and terminus that exceeds the historical created order; history now leads to a trans-historical heaven, that is, sharing in the life and love of

[659] Moss, *Ancient Christian Martyrdom*, 13.

[660] Ibid., 172.

[661] In works by Craig Hovey, *To Share the Body* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008) and Bryan Litfin, *Early Christian Martyr Stories* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014) seem to share a more classical adherence to the authenticity of the Early Church's suffering but these works are much fewer than those of the more skeptical group which Candida Moss claims to be a part.

the Father by being conformed into the likeness of the glorified risen Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.[662]

Continuity of Suffering as Apologetic Shown between Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian

As has been shown, the emphasis of the theology of suffering and how the Church has viewed the Early Church Fathers has changed over the millennia. What will be attempted in this section is to show how Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian maintained some continuity of thought regarding the apologetic expression and use of suffering. While each of these three fathers of the Early Church lived and believed as Christians in different cultural, ecclesiological, and environmental contexts; they did each (as shown earlier in chapters 3-5) have their own ethical and apologetic concerns which they addressed. One of these primary ethical issues is how believers would cope with all types of suffering in a way that would reflect their belief and faith in Jesus Christ and at the same time bear a marked difference from unbelievers who had to cope with suffering on various levels just as Christian believers had. While it is most certain that much of the apologetic would in time offered by the Early Church Fathers "ripen into polemic"[663]

When speaking of continuity of thought between Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian, there can be perceived a continuity that retains a foundational core and at the same time showing some unique conceptualization and expression from each of the fathers.[664] One of these foundational cores which show itself in each of the father's expression of apologetic suffering is the reference to the suffering of Jesus Christ as being the fulfillment of OT scriptures and prophecies. This

---

[662] Thomas G. Weinandy, "God and Human Suffering: His Act of Creation and His Acts in History," in *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering*, eds. James F. Keating and Thomas Joseph White (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009), 110-11.

[663] Mark Edwards, "Apologetics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, edited by. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 561.

[664] David S. Dockery, "Life in the Spirit in Pauline Thought," in *Scribes and Scripture: New Testament Essays in Honor of J. Harold Greenlee*, edited by David Alan Black (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 69-71.

fulfillment of OT prophecies that Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian all reference is expressed in ways that are meant for their particular audiences.

For example, Irenaeus refers to these OT fulfillments of Christ as the Suffering Servant in order to help show some of the Gnostic sects the necessity of Jesus's real, corporal suffering in order to fulfill the prophecies that point towards the divinity of Jesus. Cyprian, like Justin and Irenaeus, also point towards the suffering of Jesus Christ as an example that all believers are to emulate since what Jesus was doing is the *model* and *example* of truth. Justin refers to the suffering of Jesus that fulfilled OT prophecies as an indicator that Jesus has a divine identity because of how Scripture had foretold of His suffering as was detailed in Isaiah. Justin's expression of Jesus fulfilling the Suffering Servant prophecies of Isaiah were also meant, especially in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, to show the messianic prophecies being fulfilled and among other things, how suffering was an integral part of the divine identity of Jesus.

Another foundational core which Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian share is how when believers suffer, especially persecution for their faith, they share in the sufferings of Jesus Christ who also suffered. Cyprian and Irenaeus quote some of the Pauline epistles which talk about sharing in the sufferings of Jesus Christ. Yet, each of the three fathers understood that the suffering of Christians, when based in an understanding and faith in Jesus Christ and His suffering, is a type of suffering which was quite different from what the people around them experienced. This *remarkable* suffering was for many, including Justin himself, something that helped others come to faith in Jesus Christ.[665]

One other foundational core of continuity between these three fathers is shown in how each of them regarded suffering as something that has victory and triumph as one if its positive

[665] See Justin Martyr, *Second Apology*, 12.1-2.

and ultimate benefits. For Justin Martyr, the triumph of those faithful who would inherit the blessing of a heavenly rest would be the elimination of suffering itself.[666] Irenaeus saw the triumphant aspect suffering in light of one's faith in Jesus Christ as having positive and eternal benefits because of the superior life that one would live both here on earth and in heaven.[667] These benefits included a superior way of loving and forgiving which those outside of the faith, like the Gnostics, could not comprehend or grasp. For Cyprian, part of the ultimate victory of redemptive suffering for a believer would be the ability for the believer to transcend the tyrant state and inherit the promises of heaven and the lordship of God, a just and true king.[668] Cyprian exclaimed this idea by saying that the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar was conquered by Daniel and the three youths were victorious, "even in their very captivity itself."[669]

Lastly, the continuity of apologetic suffering between these three fathers can be shown in the foundational core of a *shared witness* with one another, which each of the three fathers urged their readers to example as true believers. This shared witness was founded in following Jesus Christ in His life which included His sufferings as well. Each of the believers would witness to each other how to endure suffering despite hardship and persecution. This witness of suffering would help apologetically because of the *strengthening*[670] it would bring to the community of believers in the midst of possible division and schism as in the cases of Cyprian and Irenaeus. In the case of Justin, strengthening that would occur because of this shared witness of suffering for

[666] Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 57.2-3.

[667] See Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, III.18.5.

[668] See Cyprian, *Epistle* 68.8.

[669] Ibid.

[670] Palmer, "Cyprian the Apologist," 14. *Strengthening* of the believer's community is one of the four hallmarks of Palmer's and other's working definition of apologetics.

the faith and identification with Jesus's suffering would strengthen the community of believers because of not only their shared faith and truth but also the community having the knowledge of who was truly a part of their community of faith.[671]

These are the four foundational cores of continuity shown in apologetic suffering that can be found in Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Cyprian of Carthage: *(1) the reference to the suffering of Jesus Christ as being the fulfillment of OT scriptures and prophecies; (2) believers and fathers sharing in the sufferings of Jesus Christ who also suffered; (3) regarding suffering as something that has victory and triumph as a positive and ultimate benefits; and (4) a shared witness with one another*. These four foundational cores of continuity help strengthen the argument that even though each of these three fathers lived and led in unique and different cultures and times from one another, their understanding of how Christian suffering could serve their faith apologetically retained some core convictions between these three Early Church Fathers.

The Translatable and Untranslatable between Cultures

As was shown earlier in this chapter, the understanding of what suffering meant and what authority or voice the Early Church Fathers had changed from age to age. John Henry Newman, in his *An Essay on the Development of Doctrine* believed that an organized continuity of Catholic doctrine, such as a doctrine of suffering, develops and changes from age to age and gives seed to an ever modifying doctrine which, "by the Paraclete, it is fashioned into maturity."[672] While this understanding of doctrinal development has been embraced by many of

[671] Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 16.3.

[672] John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Doctrine* (London: W. Blanchard and Sons, 1845), 350.

the Roman Catholic tradition, this type of development for the Early Church Fathers would have been less welcomed. One only has to read Irenaeus and his argument of how the Church is of "one mouth" regardless of the language or ability or disability of the people that are passing down doctrine.[673] Cyprian also, in the face of heresy, reminds his readers that according to 1 Tim 6:3-5 one must consent to the "wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ and His doctrine" or else be withdrawn from by other believers in fear of losing the "light of the way of salvation."[674]

Because the church's inception was based on the living Word, Jesus Christ, who suffered and is, "the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb 2:10), it is critical to acknowledge the biblical precedent regarding suffering as all traditions seek to develop a doctrine of suffering. This doctrinal dynamic development by post-apostolic traditions is scripturally plausible. As the kingdom of God and the resurrection of Jesus Christ are realities for believers, "with both present and future components"[675] these indicate the perpetual activity or *development* of a theology of suffering and thus various traditions' doctrine which seeks to flesh out and communicate God's Word as the Early Church Fathers attempted.

In terms of trying to bridge the ages between the Early Church Fathers and how they approached suffering in comparison to the current Church in North America, it is necessary that in reading the above examples found in the doctrinal development of suffering that one does not think it is anywhere near a thorough detailing of modern doctrines of suffering. Each of the traditions mentioned has manifold complexities and additional facets of doctrines of suffering than there is insufficient room to write. There is no conscious effort to single out one theological

---

[673] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* 1.10.2.

[674] Cyprian, *Epistle XXXIX*, 6.3.

[675] Malcom B. Yarnell, *The Formation of Christian Doctrine* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2007), 127.

leaning over the other when it comes to the development of a doctrine of suffering. I have focused on some key representatives of the Early Church which would highlight traditional doctrine and their respective apologetic focus.

What can be said with some veracity is how the doctrine of suffering in modern time became more multi-faceted among the traditions and even within the traditions themselves. As important as the contributions of the aforementioned theologians have been, the common denominator of how traditions regard the authority and revelatory character of Scripture also play a determining factor in doctrinal development of suffering. From Irenaeus to Origen to Augustine the idea of the rule of faith combined with the authority of the Church was used to help them navigate the less plain and obvious truths of Scripture.[676]

As self-consciousness emerged as one of modernism's leanings, the effect it had on the doctrines of suffering in the traditions described became more self-focused than God-focused and/or Scripture-focused. In search for the idealistic, socially reforming and *feeling* gospel of modernism, each of the traditions have lost or ignored the Early Church Fathers' precedence and scriptural concepts of the meaning and coping with suffering such as: *the reference to the suffering of Jesus Christ as being the fulfillment of OT scriptures and prophecies; believers and fathers sharing in the sufferings of Jesus Christ who also suffered*; and *a shared witness with one another*.

The doctrines of suffering from Schleiermacher, Barth, and others have had profound effect on denominations and individuals within American Christianity which for the most part have moved into post-modernism. The questions of, "Why?" and "How?' concerning humanity's suffering drives the believer like Job to cry out for an answer to suffering. There are many

[676] See Augustine, *On Christian Learning*, 3.2.2, translated by Edmund Hill, *Teaching Christianity* (Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1996), p. 169.

vibrant resources and traditions, especially within the Early Church, that may help the believer understand the role and place of their suffering. Both Catholic and Protestant have the ability to, as Brian E. Daley states, "stay close to the springs of our Christian faith."[677] Unfortunately, there have been many factors of modernism and postmodernism as well that have devitalized some traditions' ability to address suffering within a Christian worldview. The temptation for many traditions is to campaign for their doctrinal development of suffering.

What may be integral for the future of many Christian traditions in this sense is advocacy for a commonality in a doctrine of suffering based on the suffering servant and Savior found in Old and New Testament Scriptures. This is especially true as surrounding culture continually attempts to machinate a code of morality which often plays well with the market morality of the current culture. Although John Cornwell asks for vigilance in secular science's way of dictating identity, his warning applies across the culture when he writes, "we should be vigilant for facile attempts at theoretical closure, attempts at theoretical closure attempts to define human identity as scientististic, final, limited and necessary givens."[678] If the Church would want to maintain its distinct identity apart from the surrounding culture it may help if the Church would invite once again the memories of its formative past and how suffering was approached so that it may help continue define and establish its identity and reclaim the Early Church Fathers foundational cores of apologetic suffering.

[677] Brian E. Daley, "Old Books and Contemporary Faith," in *Ancient Faith for the Church's Future*, eds. Mark Husbands and Jeffrey P. Greenman (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008, 67.

[678] John Cornwell, "The Scientific Search for the Soul," in *Unfinished Journey: The Church 40 Years After Vatican 2*, ed. Austen Ivereigh (London: The Tablet Publishing Company, 2003, 181.

Continuity from Scripture to Apologist

Stuart Hall describes the view of Scripture by the Early Church Fathers as one that had the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ encapsulated in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This encapsulation emphasized as Hall writes, "Christ's divine supernatural powers and his concrete, suffering humanity."[679] For Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian the suffering and risen Christ was part and parcel of their understanding of Scripture and subsequently integral to many of their apologetic writings. As it has already been shown, each of the Early Church Fathers in this work relied on the witness of Scripture in not only their apologetics as a whole but in their Christian understanding of suffering. As shown in the first chapter, suffering on the part of a human agent or divine agent, in the case if Jesus Christ, has been part of the biblical witness to illustrate God's intervention in human affairs as well as part of marker of the identity of Jesus Christ.

What Barnabas Lindars has termed, the "Passion apologetic" of Scripture with its emphasis on the "Passion predictions" which was "dependent on the use of Isaiah 53"[680] helps contribute to the discussion at hand. Lindars states that "there are few actual verbal links"[681] between the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 and Jesus Christ of the New Testament. However, as it has been shown, one of the primary verbal links which Lindars may have overlooked כָּאַב and its New Testament Greek counterpart πάσχω. כָּאַב is found in Isaiah 53 in the description of the Suffering Servant and has been already shown its strong intertextual link to πάσχω in chapter 1. This is only to point out how the same Passion narrative which included the Suffering Servant in

[679] Hall, *Doctrine and Practice,* 244.

[680] Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), 81.

[681] Ibid.

Isaiah 53 is the same Passion narrative, which has already been shown, that Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian used extensively and integrally in their apologetic and pastoral writing.

Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian understood the connection of the Old Testament with the new, especially when dealing with apologetic issues such as OT prophecy being fulfilled by Jesus in Isaiah.[682] All three of these Early Church Fathers approached Scripture with both a literal and typological/allegorical approach which, among other things, assumed a deeper meaning was to be found in OT Scriptures. This can be applied to the Suffering Servant passages found in Isaiah where a deeper meaning was indeed held by the vast majority of Christians who had read or heard these passages. The foundational core of Jesus Christ's suffering and resurrection prophesied in the OT and fulfilled in the NT helps illustrate the continuity that each of these three Church Fathers carried throughout their apologetic works.

Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian each mentioned suffering found in the writing of the apostle Paul. Each of the fathers wrote of not only the salvific purpose of Christ's suffering but also how Paul mentioned how believers are to identify with and find their identity in the sufferings of Jesus Christ as they themselves were suffering. For Justin Martyr, he maintains this continuity of apologetic suffering from the Scriptures when he alludes to Gal 3:10-14 as Justin writes about suffering on "behalf of the human family" in order that humanity might be redeemed from the curse of the law[683] Irenaeus also employs Pauline Epistles when writing to his Gnostic critics about the corporal humanity and real divinity of Jesus Christ. Irenaeus write about how all are made alive in Christ (1 Cor.15:21-22)[684] and how Christ has humbled Himself and became

---

[682] Hall, *Reading Scripture*, 135.

[683] Justin Martyr, *Dialogue,* 95.1-7. See Rodney Werline, "The Transformation of Pauline Arguments in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*," *Harvard Theological Review* 92, no.1 (June 2011): 79-93.

[684] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses III.*19.1.

obedient to death on a cross (Phil 2:8). Cyprian describes the same rejoicing as Paul does in regards to those who suffer for Christ and their inheriting an incorruptible crown (1 Cor 9:24-25).[685] This is all to say that all three Early Church Fathers show a continuity of apologetic suffering drawn from the witness of the New Testament Gospels and Pauline Epistles. Lindars views several of these Pauline Scriptures as part of the Passion apologetic which he believes is found in Scripture and helps lend to the idea of a continuity of suffering as part of an apologetic shared between the Scriptures and the Early Church Fathers.[686]

Concluding Remarks

Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Cyprian have been the focus of this study on the apologetic use of suffering among the Early Church Fathers. A search for the meaning of suffering has been conducted through the Old and New Testament along with the Greco-Roman philosophical tradition that was concurrent with the Patristic traditions and writings of Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian and their understanding of suffering. There has also been an inquiry into the particular types of apologetics that each of the three Fathers employed with the culture around them. As these elements of suffering and apologetics have been analyzed, common threads and continuity of the Early Church Fathers expressions of suffering have come to light.

When suffering is part of the three fathers' apologetic, it is employed to emphasize: *the reference to the suffering of Jesus Christ as being the fulfillment of OT Scriptures and prophecies; believers and fathers sharing in the sufferings of Jesus Christ who also suffered*; and *a shared witness with one another*. Each of the three Fathers alludes to or quotes Old and New Testament Scriptures which affirm the "passion apologetic" as well as affirm the emphases

[685] Cyprian, *Epistle,* 10.4.2-3. See also Epistles 6.1.2, 6.3.1, 6.4.

[686] Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, 81, 135, 205.

above. This continuity between Early Church Father and Scripture helps dispel some of the notions that the Early Church was creating a definition of suffering and martyrdom out of a socio-politically conditioned response but instead was forming an expression of suffering which emanated from the prophecy-fulfilling and historic person of Jesus Christ of the Old and New Testament.

According to the Christian tradition, biblical history tells and portends of the immanent actions of the Messiah, found in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, as God in history, brings a greater meaning to just what occurs on this created earth but rather transcends many components of the created order, including human suffering of all kinds. This is due to how God, in Jesus Christ, transcended the historical created order by becoming part of the historical created order and having ultimate victory through death and resurrection over what would normally confine the created order—namely, suffering and death. Because of this ontological interpolation in the historical created order by a God, in Jesus Christ, who historically has been prophesied as one to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows (Isa 53:4), believers may hopefully await the day when Christ returns, "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." (Rev 21:4)

For Justin, suffering was of course part and parcel of both the earthly plan of Jesus Christ and found fulfillment in the resurrection in Calvary. For Justin, as Christopher Bowland notes, "it is possible to experience the benefits of that heavenly dimension during earthly existence."[687]

[687] Christopher Bowland, "The Eschatology of the New Testament Church," in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, edited by Jerry L. Walls (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 69.

In the soul-making of Irenaeus there is also "an explicit eschatological trajectory"[688]which helps complete the issue of theodicy and suffering for the Christian believer since there will be consummation of all suffering when believers see God face-to-face. This is what Cyprian referred to when he believed in what Brian Daley saw as Irenaeus' belief of a "greater consolation"[689] despite the "shipwrecks and disasters [of life] that are imminent around them."[690] For the Early Church and her Fathers, suffering was not the end in this life but a glorious participation for each believer that would arrive at its complete redemption in heaven.

In the meantime it may serve Christian believers and the Christian community of faith to not surpass the cross too quickly for the resurrection and to remember that, "the kingdom of God has come in the form of a suffering servant."[691] That while in the midst of almost certain suffering on this earth, Christian believers can not only wait with hope of the day of full redemption of their suffering but as they wait, they can seek to communicate an apologetic of suffering which Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyprian communicated to a world that often follows nontranscendental and/or worldly philosophies.

---

[688] Michael L. Peterson, "Eschatology and Theodicy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, edited by Jerry L. Walls (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 521.

[689] Brian E. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic), 41.

[690] Cyprian, *Treatise VII*, 25.1.

[691] Hovey, *To Share*, 69.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Resources

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Martin Ostwald. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1962.

Athanasius. *Against the Arians*. Translated by John Henry Newman, in *NPNF*, 2nd Series. Volume IV, edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

———. *Against the Heathen* (= *Contra Gentes*), translated by A. Robertson, in *NPNF*, 2nd Series. Volume IV, edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

———. *History of the Arians,* translated by M. Atkinson in *NPNF*, 2nd Series. Volume IV, edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

———. *Life of Antony*, translated by H. Ellershaw, in *NPNF*, 2nd Series. Volume IV, edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers: 1994.

———. *On the Incarnation*, translated by Archibald Robertson, in *Christology of the Later Fathers*, edited by E. R. Hardy (Westminster Press: Philadelphia, 1954); also in NPNF, 2nd Series. Volume IV, edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

Augustine. *Confessions and Enchiridion*. Translated by Albert C. Outler. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955.

———. *On Christian Learning*. Translated by Edmund Hill in *Teaching Christianity.* Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1996.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (selections), translated by John Allen, in *Calvin: On God and Political Duty*, edited by John T. McNeill. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1950.

Clement of Alexandria. *Exhortation to the Heathen*, translated by William Wilson, in *ANF*, Volume II, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

———. *Stromateis*, I-III, in *The Fathers of the Church*. Volume 85, translated by John Ferguson. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1991.

———. *Stromateis*, I-VIII. Translated by William Wilson, in *ANF*. Volume II, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

———. *The Instructor* (= *Paidagogos*). Translated by William Wilson in *ANF*. Volume II, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

Cyprian. *The Epistles of Cyprian*. Translated by Ernest Wallis in *ANF*. Volume V, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2012.

———. *Exhortation to Martyrdom, Addressed to Fortunatus.* Translated by Ernest Wallis, in *ANF*. Volume V, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2012.

———. *On the Unity of the Church* (= Treatise I). Translated by Ernest Wallis, in *ANF*, Volume I, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

———. *To the People of Thibaris, Exhorting to Martyrdom*. Translated by Ernest Wallis, in *ANF*. Volume V, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2012.

Cyril of Jerusalem. *Catechetical Lectures*. Translated by Edward Hamilton Gifford, in *NPNF*. 2nd Series, Volume VII, edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

Diogenes Laertius. *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*. Translated by C. D. Yonge. London: George Bell & Sons, 1901.

Epictetus. *Of Human Freedom*. Translated by Robert Dobbin. London: Penguin Books, 2008.

Eusebius of Caesarea. *Church History*. Translated by Arthur Cushman McGiffert in *NPNF*. 2nd Series, Volume I, edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

Eusebius of Caesarea and Paul L. Maier. *Eusebius—the Church History: A New Translation with Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1999.

Gelasius, *Letter Twelve to the Emperor Anastasius* in Hugo Rahner *Church and State in Early Christianity*. Translated by Leo Donald Davis, S. J. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992.

Horace. *Horace's Satires and Epistles.* Translated by Jacob Fuchs. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1977.

Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Translated by A. Cleveland Coxe. Buffalo, NY: The Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1885.

———. *Against Heresies*. Translated by Alexander Roberts and William H. Rambaut, in *ANF*. Volume I, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers: 1994.

Justin Martyr. *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, in *The Fathers of the Church*. Volume 6. Translated by Thomas B. Falls. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1948.

———. *Exhortation to the Greeks* in *The Fathers of the Church*. Volume 6. Translated by Thomas B. Falls. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1948.

———. *First Apology*, in *The Fathers of the Church*. Volume 6, translated by Thomas B. Falls. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1948.

———. *Second Apology*, in *The Fathers of the Church*. Volume 6, translated by Thomas B. Falls. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1948.

———. *The First and Second Apologies*. Translated by Leslie William Barnard. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997.

Livy, *The Early History of Rome*. Translated by Aubrey De Selincourt. London: Penguin Books, 2005.

Marcus Aurelius and Christopher Gill. *Marcus Aurelius: Meditations*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*. Translated by George Long. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1997.

Marcus Minucius Felix. *Minucius Felix Octavius.* Translated by Christoph Schubert. Freiburg: Herder, 2014.

Ovid. *Ovids Erotic Poems: "Amores" and "Ars amatoria."* Translated by Len Krisak and Sarah Ruden. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

Plato. *Apology*, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato: Including the Letters*. Edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, Bollingen Series LXXI. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.

———. *Essential Dialogues of Plato*. Overland Park, KS: Digireads Com, 2013.

———. *Essential Dialogues of Plato*. Translated by Benjamin Jowett. New York: Barnes and Nobles Classics, 2005.

———. *Gorgias*. Translated by W.C. Hembold. NewYork: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1952.

———. *Parmenides*, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato: Including the Letters*. Edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, Bollingen Series LXXI. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.

———. *Republic*. Translated by Benjamin Jowett. New York: Vintage Books, 1991.

———. *Symposium*. Translated by Kenneth Dover. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

———. *Selected Dialogues of Plato*. Translated by Benjamin Jowett. New York: Random House Publishing, 2009.

———. *The Republic*. Translated with notes and interpretive essay by Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 1991.

———. *Timaeus*. Translated by Peter Kalkavage. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001,

Plotinus. *Enneads* in *Plotinus: A Volume of Selections*. Translated and edited by A. H. Armstrong. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1953.

———. *The Six Enneads*. Translated by Stephen MacKenna. London: Penguin Books, 1991.

Polycarp. *Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. *The Heavenly Hierarchy*, in *The Works of Dionysius the Areopagite*, Part II. Translated by John Parker. Merrick, NY: Richwood Publishing Co., 1976.

Sallust. *Sallust's Conspiracy of Catiline and the Jugurthine War*. Translated by John Selby Watson. Philadelphia: David McKay, 1896.

Seneca. *Anger, Mercy, Revenge*. Translated by Robert A. Kaster and Martha C. Nussbaum. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

———. *The Stoic Philosophy of Seneca: Essays and letters of Seneca*. Translated by Moses Hadas. New York: Norton, 1968.

Tertullian. *Apology*, in *Tertullian: Apology, De Spectaculis*. Translated by Gerald H. Rendall. New York: Loeb Classical Library, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931.

———. *Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Commodian, Origen*. Peabody, PA: Hendrickson, 1995.

Vergil. *Eclogues*. Translated by Barbara Hughes Fowler. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Secondary Sources

Adcock, F. E. *Roman Political Ideas and Practice.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972.

Allen, David L. "Substitutionary Atonement and Cultic Terminology in Isaiah 53." In *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*, edited by. Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser, 171-90. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2012.

Allert, Craig D. *Revelation, Truth, Canon and Interpretation: Studies in Justin Martyrs Dialogue with Trypho*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

Allison, Gregory. *Historical Theology*: *An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

Altaner, Berthold. *Patrology*. Translated by Hilda C. Graef. New York: Herder and Herder, 1960.

Amato, Joseph A. *Victims and Values: A History and a Theory of Suffering.* New York: Praeger, 1990.

Arnold, Clinton E. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002.

Arnold, E. Vernon. *Roman Stoicism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1911.

Ashbrook Harvey, Susan and Hunter, David G., eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Ayres, Lewis and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz. "Doctrine of God: Polemic and Development." In *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*. Edited by Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter, 866. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Backus, Irena, ed. *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Bainton, Roland H. *Early Christianity.* Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1960.

Bakker, Henk, Paul van Geest, and Hans van Loom, eds. *Cyprian of Carthage: Studies in His Life and Thought*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, Bondgenotenlaan, 2010.

Barker, Ernest. *From Alexander to Constantine: Passages and Documents Illustrating the History of Social and Political Ideas, 336 BC-AD 337.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956.

Barker, Ethel. *Rome of the Pilgrims and Martyrs*. London: Meuthen & Co. Ltd., 1913.

———. *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle.* New York: Dover Publication, 1959.

Barnard, Leslie W. *Justin Martyr: His Life and Thought.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

Barnes, Timothy D. *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study.* Rev. ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985.

Barufffa, Antonio. *The Catacombs of St. Callixtus.* Vatican City: L. E. V., 2006.

Baynes, Norman H. "Eusebius and the Christian Empire," *Mélanges Bidez: Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales*, 2 (1934), 13-18.

Behr, John. *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Bellinzoni, A. J. *The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967.

Benz, Ernst. *The Eastern Orthodox Church: Its Thought and Life.* Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1963.

Berkowitz, Peter. *Virtue and the Making of Modern Liberalism.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Berlin, Isaiah. *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas.* New York: Random House, 1992.

Biesty, Stephen. *Rome in Spectacular Cross-Section.* Oxford: Scholastic, Inc., 2003.

Birley, Anthony R. *Marcus Aurelius: A Biography*. London: Routledge, 2012.

Bisconti, F., R. Giuliani and B. Mazzei, eds. *La Catacomba Di Priscilla*. Bologna, Italy: Tau Editrice, 2013.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. "The Sacrificial Life and Death of the Servant (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)." *Vetus Testamentum* 66, no.1 (January 2016): 1-23.

Boa, Kenneth D. and Robert M. Bowman, Jr. *Faith Has its Reasons: Interpretive Approaches to Defending the Christian Faith*. Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2006.

Bock, Darrell. "Isaiah 53 in Acts 8." In *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*, edited by Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser, 133-44. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2012.

Bock, Darrell L. and Mitch Glaser,eds. *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2011.

Botterweck, G. Johannes, Heinz-Josef Fabry, and Helmer Ringgren, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament,* Vol 11. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.

Bowersock, G. W. *Martyrdom and Rome*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Bowland, Christopher. "The Eschatology of the New Testament Church." In *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, edited by Jerry L. Walls (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 56-72.

Brakke, David. *Athanasius and Asceticism.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.

Brakke, David, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and Jorg Ulrich, eds. *Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009.

Braun, Willi, ed. *Rhetoric and Reality in Early Christianity.* Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005.

Braund, Susan A. *Beyond Anger: A Study of Juvenal's Third Book of Satires*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Brent, Allen. *Cyprian and Roman Carthage*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

———. "Cyprian's Reconstruction of the Martyr Tradition." *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 53, no. 2 (April 2002): 243-56.

———. *Ignatius of Antioch and the Second Sophistic: A Study of an Early Christian Transformation of Pagan Culture*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006.

———. *Juvenal: "Satires"*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Briggs, Charles A., Frances Brown, S. R. Driver, Heinrich Friedrich Wilhelm. Gesenius, and Edward Robinson. *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament: With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1976.

Brown, Michael L. "Jewish Interpretations of Isaiah 53." In *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*, edited by Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser, 61-86. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2012.

———. *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus, Volume Two: Theological Objections*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000.

Burns, J. Patout. *Cyprian the Bishop*. London: Routledge, 2002.

———.“The Role of Social Structures in Cyprian’s Response to the Decian Persecution.” *Studia Patristica* 31. Edited by E. A. Livingstone, 260-67. Leuven: Peeters, 1997.

———. *Theological Anthropology: Sources of Early Christian Thought.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981.

Bush, L. Russ, ed. *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

Butler, Alban. “St. Cyprian, Archbishop of Carthage, Martyr.” In *The Lives of the Saints*, 165-201. Dublin: James Duffy, 1866.

Caird, George Bradford and Lincoln Douglas Hurst. *New Testament Theology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Calvin, John. *Isaiah*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2000.

Cameron, Averil, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse*, Sather Classical Lectures. Volume 55. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991.

Carcopino, Jerome. *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

Carson, Donald Arthur. *The Gospel According to John*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2016.

Cartwright, Sophie. “The Image of God in Irenaeus, Marcellus, and Eustathius.” In *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy,* edited by Paul Foster and Sara Parvis, 170-84. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

Casey, Robert P. “Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Platonism.” *Harvard Theological Review*, Volume 18, Number 1 (January 1925), 39-101.

Castelli, Elizabeth A. *Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Castelo, Daniel. *The Apathetic God: Exploring the Contemporary Relevance of Divine Impassibility*. Milton Keynes, UK: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2009.

Chadwick, Henry. *The Church in Ancient Society: From Galilee to Gregory the Great*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

———. *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition: Studies in Justin, Clement, and Origen.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.

———. *Justin: Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

———. *The Early Church*, rev. ed. New York: Penguin Books, 1993.

Chiapparini, Giullano. "Irenaeus and the Gnostic Valentinus: Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Church of Rome around the Middle of the Second Century." *Zeitschrift fur Antikes Christentum* 18, no. 1 (January 2014): 90-112.

Childs, Brevard S. *Isaiah*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

Chilton Bruce. "Justin and Israelite Prophecy." In *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*. Edited by Sara Parvis and Paul Foster, 77-87. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

Chisolm Jr., Robert B. "Forgiveness and Salvation in Isaiah 53." In *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*. Edited by Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser, 191-210. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2012.

Christensen, Michael J. and Jeffrey A. Wittung, eds. *Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions.* Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007.

Chroust, Anton-Hermann, "The Function of Law and Justice in the Ancient World and the Middle Ages," *Journal of the History of Ideas*. Volume 7, Issue 3 (June 1946), 298-320.

Clark, Gillian. *Christianity and Roman Society.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Clines, David J. A. *Job 1-20*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015.

Cochrane, C. N. *Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1957.

Cornwell, John. "The Scientific Search for the Soul." In *Unfinished Journey: The Church 40 Years After Vatican 2*. Edited by Austen Ivereigh, 167-83. London: The Tablet Publishing Company, 2003.

Cowan, Steven B., William Lane Craig, John M. Frame, Kelly James Clark, and Paul D. Feinberg. *Five Views on Apologetics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.

Cross, F. L. and E.A. Livingstone. *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.

Culpepper, Gary. "'One Suffering in Two Natures': An Analogical Inquiry into Divine and Human Suffering." In *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering*, edited by James F. Keating and Thomas Joseph White, 77-98. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009.

Daley, Brian E. *The Hope of the Early Church.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

———. "Old Books and Contemporary Faith." In *Ancient Faith for the Church's Future*. Edited by Mark Husbands and Jeffrey P. Greenman, 53-68. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

Danker, Frederick W. and Kathryn Krug. *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Decret, Francois. *Early Christianity in North Africa.* Translated by Edward Smither. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2009.

DeHaan, M. R. *Broken Things.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1948.

Dehandschutter, Boudewijn. *Polycarpiana: Studies on Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity: Collected Essays.* Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979.

Deleuze, Gilles. *The Logic of Sense*. Translated by Mark Lester. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.

Dillon, J. T. *Musonius Rufus and Education in the Good Life*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004.

Dockery, David S. "Life in the Spirit in Pauline Thought." In *Scribes and Scripture: New Testament Essays in Honor of J. Harold Greenlee*. Edited by David Alan Black, 57-71. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992.

Donfried, Karl P. and Peter Richardson. *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2003.

Downey, Sharon D. "The Evolution of the Rhetorical Genre of Apologia." *Western Journal of Communication* 57, (Winter 1993): 1-51.

Dudley, Donald Reynolds. *The Civilization of Rome*. New York: The New American Library, 1960.

Dulles, Avery. *A History of Apologetics*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2005.

Dunderberg, Ismo, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Tuomas Rasimus, eds. *Stoicism in Early Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.

Dunn, Geoffrey D. "Heresy and Schism According to Cyprian of Carthage." *Journal of Theological Studies* 55, no. 2 (Oct 2004): 551-74.

———. "The White Crown of Works: Cyprian's Early Pastoral Ministry of Almsgiving in Carthage." *Church History* 73, no. 4 (Dec 2004): 715-40.

Dupont, Florence. *Daily Life in Ancient Rome.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., 1994.

Edgar, William & K. Scott Oliphint. *Christian Apologetics Past and Present (*Vol. 1 *To 1500).* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2009.

Edwards, Mark. "Apologetics." In *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*. Edited by Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter, 549-61. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Ehrman, Bart D. *Gods Problem: How the Bible Fails to Answer our Most Important Question—Why We Suffer*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2009.

———. *How Jesus Became God: The Exaltation of a Jewish Preacher from Galilee*. New York: HarperOne, 2015.

Eliot, T. S. *Christianity and Culture: The Idea of a Christian Society and Notes Toward the Definition of Culture.* New York: Harcourt Brace, 1977.

Emerton, J. A. and C. E. B. Cranfield, eds. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Volume 2, in *The International Critical Commentary.* Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979.

Engberg, Jakob. "'From Among You are We. Made, not Born are Christians': Apologists' Accounts of Conversion before 310 AD." In *Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics*, eds. David Brakke, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and Jorg Ulrich, 49-79. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009.

Engberg-Pedersen,Troels. *Paul and the Stoics*. Edinburgh: Clark, 2000.

Esler, Phillip F. *The Early Christian World*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Evans, C. Stephen. *The Historical Christ and the Jesus of Faith: the Incarnational Narrative as History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

Evans, Craig A. "Isaiah 53 in the Letters of Peter, Paul, Hebrews, and John." In *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53*, edited by Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser, 145-70. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2012.

Evans, Robert F. *One and Holy: The Church in Latin Patristic Thought.* London: SPCK, 1972.

Fahey, Michael Andrew. *Cyprian and the Bible: A Study in Third-Century Exegesis*. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1971.

Falkner, John Alfred. *Cyprian: the Churchman*. Jennings & Graham: Cincinnati, 1906.

Fee, Gordon D. *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009.

Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity.* 3rd. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003.

———. *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*. New York: Garland Publishers, 1990.

Ferguson, John. "The Achievement of Clement of Alexandria," *Religious Studies*. Volume 12, Issue 1 (1976), 59-80.

Forlines, F. Leroy. *The Quest for Truth: Answering Life's Inescapable Questions*. Nashville: Randall House Publications, 2001.

Fortin, Ernest L. *The Birth of Philosophic Christianity: Studies in Early Christian and Medieval Thought*. Edited by J. Brian Benestad. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1996.

Fowler, W. W. *The City-State of the Greeks and Romans.* New York: MacMillan, 1893.

Fox, Robin Lane. *Pagans and Christians*. London: Penguin, 2006.

Frame, John M. "A Presuppositionalist's Response." In *Five Views on Apologetics*, edited by Stanley N. Gundry and Steven B. Cowan, 207-64. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.

France, R. T. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007.

———. *The Gospel of Mark*. Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1998.

Frede, Michael. "Eusebius's Apologetic Writings." In *Apologetics*. Edited by Mark J. Edwards, Martin Goodman, Simon Price, and Chris Rowland, 223-50. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Frend, W. H. C. *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church.* Cambridge, UK: James Clarke and Co Ltd, 2008.

Fuhrmann, Christopher J. *Policing the Roman Empire: Soldiers, Administration, and Public Order*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Fustel de Coulanges, N. D. *The Ancient City: A Study on the Religion, Laws, and Institutions of Greece and Rome*. Translated by Willard Small. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1956.

Garland, David E. *Luke*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.

Geisler, Norman L. and Patrick Zukeran. *The Apologetics of Jesus: A Caring Approach to Dealing with Doubters*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009.

Geivett, Douglas and Gary R. Habermas, eds. *In Defense of Miracles*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

Gesenius, Wilhelm, Benjamin Davies, Emil Roediger, E. Kautzsch, and E. C. Mitchell. *Gesenius Grammar*. Andover: W.F. Draper, 1880.

Gillian Clark. *Christianity and Roman Society*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Giuliani, Raffaella. *The Catacombs of Priscilla*. Translated by Raffaella Bucolo. Vatican City: Pontifical Commission of Sacred Archeology, 2016.

———. *The Catacombs of SS. Marcellino and Pietro*. Translated by Raffaella Bucolo. Vatican City: Pontifical Commission of Sacred Archeology, 2015.

Gomola, Aleksander. "Conceptual Blends with Shepherd(s)/Sheep Imagery in Selected Patristic Writings." *Studia Religiologica* 47, no. 4: 275-84.

Goodenough, E. R. *The Theology of Justin Martyr.* Jena: Verlag Frommannsche Buchhandlung, 1923.

Goodman, Martin. *The Roman World: 44 BC-AD 180*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Grant, Robert M. "Eusebius and the Martyrs of Gaul." In *Les Martyrs de Lyon*, Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Reserche Scientifique, no. 575, 129-36. Paris: CNRS, 1978.

———. "Five Apologists and Marcus Aurelius." *Vigilae Christianae* 42 (1988): 1-17.

———. "Forms and Occasions of the Greek Apologists." *Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni* 52, no. 2 (June 1986): 204-31.

———. *Irenaeus of Lyons*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Green, Joel B. *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Gregg, Brian Han. *What Does the Bible Say About Suffering?* Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016.

Guinness, Os. *Fool's Talk*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2015.

Guroian, Vigen. *Ethics After Christendom: Toward an Ecclesial Christian Ethic.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1994.

Haas, Frans A. J. de, and Jaap Mansfeld. *Aristotle: On Generation and Corruption*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2004.

Habel, Norman C. *The Book of Job, A Commentary*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985.

———. *The Risen Jesus & Future Hope*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Pub., 2003.

Halsberghe, Gaston H. *The Cult of Sol Invictus*. Leiden: Brill, 1972.

Hall, Christopher A. *Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

Hall, Stuart G. *Doctrine and Practice in the Early Church*. London, UK: SPCK, 2005.

Hallman, Joseph M. *The Descent of God*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004.

Hammond, Mason. *The City in the Ancient World.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972.

Harris, Murray J. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013.

Hartog, Paul, and Polycarp. *Polycarps Epistle to the Philippians and the Martyrdom of Polycarp: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Hayes, John H. *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.

Hengel, Martin with Bailey, Daniel P. "The Effective History of Isaiah 53 in the Pre-Christian Period." In *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, edited by Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, 127-139. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, and John Sibree. *The Philosophy of History*. New York: Dover Publications, 1956.

Helleman, Wendy Elgersma. "Justin Martyr and the *Logos*: An Apologetical Strategy." *Philosophia Reformata* 67, no.2 (2002): 128-147.

Herron, Thomas J. *Clement and the Early Church of Rome: One the Dating of Clement's First Epistle to the Corinthians.* Steubensville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 1988.

Hicks, John. *Evil and the Love of God*. Hong Kong: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1985.

Hinchliff, Peter. *Cyprian of Carthage and the Unity of the Christian Church*. London: Geoffrey Chapman Publishers, 1974.

Hitchens, Christopher. "When the King Saved God." *Vanity Fair, (*March 30, 2011).

Holladay, William L., Ludwig Hugo Koehler, and Walter Baumgartner. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: Based upon the Lexical Work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1991.

Holmes, Michael W. "Formation of a Second Testament in Early Christianity." In *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*. Edited by Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter, 415-26. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

———, ed. *The Apostolic Fathers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1992.

Horsley, Richard A., ed. *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society.* Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997.

House, H. Wayne. *Charts of Apologetics and Christian Evidences.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006.

Hovey, Craig. *To Share in The Body*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008.

Howe, Timothy, ed. *Traders in the Ancient Mediterranean.* Chicago: Ares Publishers Inc., 2015.

Hummel, Delhard L. *The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage*. Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1946.

Hurtado, Larry W. *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2006.

Inwood, Brad. *Reading Seneca: Stoic Philosophy at Rome.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005.

Irenaeus and Robert M. Grant. *Irenaeus of Lyons*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Irvine, William B. *A Guide to the Good Life: The Ancient Art of Stoic Joy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Iverson, Kelly R. "A Centurion's 'Confession': A Performance-Critical Analysis of Mark 15:39." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 130, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 300-50.

Jacobsen, Anders-Christian."Apologetics and Apologies – Some Definiitons." In *Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity: Continuity and Discontinuity in Early Christian Apologetics*. Edited by David Brakke, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and Jörg Ulrich, 3-22. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009.

Jaeger, Werner. *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia.* Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1961.

Johnson, Aaron P. *Ethnicity and Argument in Eusebius'* Praeparatio Evangelica. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman Religon and Christianity.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009.

Jones, Christopher P. *Between Pagan and Christian*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014.

Juel, Donald. *A Master of Surprise: Mark Interpreted*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.

Kaiser, Walter C. *The Messiah in the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.

Kannady, Wayne. *Apologetic Discourse and the Scribal Tradition.* Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004.

Kannengiesser, Charles, ed. *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis.* Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2016.

Karavites, Peter, *Evil, Freedom, and the Road to Perfection in Clement of Alexandria.* London: Brill, 1999.

Keating, James F. and Thomas Joseph White, eds., *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009.

Kelly, J. N. D. *Early Christian Doctrines*, 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1960.

Kyle, Donald G. *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome.* New York: Routledge, 1998.

Ladner, Gerhart B. *The Idea of Reform: Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Lapide, Pinchas and Wilhelm C. Linss. *The Resurrection of Jesus: A Jewish Perspective*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002.

Lee, Jung Young. *God Suffers for Us: A Systematic Inquiry into a Concept of Divine Passibility*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974.

Lesbaupin, Ivo. *Blessed are the Persecuted; Christian Life in Roman Empire AD 64-313.* New York: Orbis Books, 1989.

Lewis, C. S. *Surprised by Joy*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1955.

Lewis, Gordon R. *Testing Christianity's Truth Claims*. Lanham: University Press of America, 1990.

Licona, Mike. *The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010.

Lim, Kar Yong. *"The Sufferings of Christ are Abundant in Us" (2 Corinthians 1.5): A Narrative Dynamics Investigation of Paul's Sufferings in 2 Corinthians*. London: T & T Clark, 2009.

Lindars, Barnabas. *New Testament Apologetic.* Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961.

Longenecker, Richard N. *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2016.

Longman, Tremper III. *Job*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012.

Loofs, Friedrich. *Theophilus von Antiochen Adversus Marcionem und die Anderen Theologischen Quellen bei Irenaeus*. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1930.

Louw, J. P. and Eugene A. Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989.

Lundbom, Jack R. *Deuteronomy: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013.

Lyman, Rebecca. "Justin and Hellenism: Some Postcolonial Perspectives." In *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, Sarah Parvis and Paul Foster, eds., 160-8. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007.

MacMullen, Ramsay. *Roman Social Relations: 50 BCE to 284 CE.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974.

Malingrey, Anne-Marie. *"Philosophia": Etude d'un Groupe des Mots dans la Littérature Grecque, des Présocratiques au IVe Siècle Après J.-C.* Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1961.

Malpas, Jeff, and Norelle Lickiss. *Perspectives on Human Suffering*. New York: Springer, 2012.

Matthews, Shelly. *Perfect Martyr*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

May, Gerald G. *The Dark Night of the Soul: A Psychiatrist Explores the Connection between Darkness and Spiritual Growth*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2005.

Mayers, Ronald B. *Balanced Apologetics: Using Evidences and Presuppositions in Defense of the Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1996.

McGrath, Alister E. *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Sceptics Find Faith*. London: SPCK, 2016.

McGowan, Andrew B. *Ancient Christian Worship.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014.

———. *Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth*. New York: HarperOne, 2009.

Meeks, Wayne A. *The Moral World of the First Christians.* Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986.

———. *The Origins of Christian Morality: The First Two Centuries.* New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1993.

Meïr, Ibn Ezra Abraham ben, and M. Friedländer. *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah*. London: Publication for the Society of Hebrew Literature, 1873.

Meister, Chad V. and Khaldoun A. Sweis. *Christian Apologetics: An Anthology of Primary Sources*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

Meredith, Anthony. *Christian Philosophy in the Early Church*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark Ltd., 2012.

Merrigan, Terrence and Frederik Glorieux, eds. *Godhead Here in Hiding; Incarnation and the History of Human Suffering*. Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2012.

Minns, Dennis. *Irenaeus: An Introduction*. London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010.

———. "The *Rescript* of Hadrian." In *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*. Edited by Sara Parvis and Paul Foster, 38-52. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

Moll, Sebastian. "Justin and the Pontic Wolf." In *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*. Edited by Sara Parvis and Paul Foster, 145-51. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

Moo, Douglas J. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996.

Morris, Leon. *The Gospel According to John*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995.

Moss, Candida R. *Ancient Christian Martyrdom: Diverse Practices, Theologies, and Traditions*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012.

———. *The Myth of Persecution: How Early Christians Invented a Story of Martyrdom*. New York: Harper One, 2014.

Mott Gummere, Robert. *Seneca the Philosopher, and His Modern Message*. Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1922.

Moyise, Steve. *Paul and Scripture.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.

Murray, John, *The Epistle to the Romans*, in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, edited by F. F. Bruce. Grand Rapids, MI: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1965.

Musurillo, Herbert. *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs. The Acts of the Christian Martyrs.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Natoli, Joseph and Linda Hutcheson, eds. "Introduction." In *A Postmodern Reader*, vii-xiii. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993.

Newman, John Henry. *An Essay on the Development of Doctrine*. London: W. Blanchard and Sons, 1845.

Nicolai, Vincenzo Fiocci, Bisconti, Fabrizio, and Mazzoleni, Danilo, eds., *The Christian Catacombs of Rome*. Regensburg, Germany: Verlag, Schnell, & Steiner, 1999.

Nolland, John. *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.

O'Brien, Peter Thomas. *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2014.

Oden, Thomas C. *Early Libyan Christianity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011.

———. *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007.

O'Donovan, Oliver and Lockwood O'Donovan, Joan, *From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought.* Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999.

Osborn, Eric F., *Irenaeus of Lyons.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Oswalt, John. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998.

Outler, Albert C. "The 'Platonism' of Clement of Alexandria." *Religion* 20, no. 3 (July 1940), 217-40.

Palmer, Philip. "Cyprian the Apologist." PhD diss., Liberty University, 2014.

Pannenberg, Wolfhart. *Jesus - God and Man.* Translated by Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974.

Panofsky, Erwin. "*Et in Arcadia Ego*: Poussin and the Elegiac Tradition." In *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1955.

Papal Encyclicals Online. "Second Council of Constantinople—533 A.D." Accessed October 20, 2016, http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Councils/ecum05.htm#Sentence%20against%20the%20Three%20Chapters.

Parvis, Paul. "Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: The Posthumous Creation of the *Second Apology*." In *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, edited by Sarah Parvis and Paul Foster, 22-37. Fortress Press: Minneapolis, 2007.

———. "Who Was Irenaeus? An Introduction to the Man and His Work." In *Irenaeus: Life Scripture Legacy,* edited by Paul Foster and Sara Parvis, 15-23. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

Parvis, Sara. "Justin Martyr and the Apologetic Tradition." In *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, edited by Sarah Parvis and Paul Foster, 115-27. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

———. "Introduction: Justin Martyr and His Worlds." In *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, edited by Sarah Parvis and Paul Foster, 1-12. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

———. "Irenaeus, Women, and Tradition." In *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy*. Edited by Paul Foster and Sara Parvis, 160-173. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

Parvis, Sara and Paul Foster, eds. *Justin Martyr and His Worlds.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

———. "Introduction: Irenaeus and His Traditions." In *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy*, 1-13. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

Patrides, C. A. "The Salvation of Satan." *Ideas* 28, no.4 (October-December 1967), 467-78.

Peckham, John C. "Epistemological Authority in the Polemic of Irenaeus." *Didasklia* 19, (January 1, 2008): 23-76.

Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Christianity and Classical Culture.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993.

———. *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*: Vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600).* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.

———. *The Excellent Empire: The Fall of Rome and the Triumph of the Church.* San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987.

Perkins, Judith. *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era*. New York: Routledge, 2007.

Peterman, Gerald W. *Between Pain & Grace: A Biblical Theology of Suffering*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2016.

Peterson, Michael L. "Eschatology and Theodicy." In *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, edited by Jerry L. Walls (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 518-33.

Phan, Peter C. *Social Thought*, Vol. 20. In *Messages of the Fathers of the Church*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1984.

Phillips, Gervase. "Deviance, Persecution and the Roman Creation of Christianity." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 29 (August 5, 2014): 254-86.

Pocock, J. G. A. *Barbarism and Religion* Vol. 3*, The First Decline and Fall.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Popper, Karl. *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. 1: *The Spell of Plato*. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

Presley, Stephen O. "A Loftier Doctrine: The Use of Scripture in Justin Martyr's *Second Apology*." *Perichoresis* 12, no. 2 (June 2014): 179-204.

Press, Gerald A. *Plato: A Guide for the Perplexed*. New York: Continuum Books, 2007.

Quasten, Johannes. *Patrology*, 4 vols. Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, Inc.,1983.

Rankin, David. "Class Distinction as a Way of Doing Church: The Early Fathers and the Christian Plebs." *Vigiliae Christianae* 58, no. 3 (2004): 298-315.

Rebillard, Éric. "The West (2): North Africa." In *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*. Edited by Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter, 307-9. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Reeves, William. *The Apologies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Minutius Felix, in Defence of the Christian Religion*. London: W.B. Black Swan, 1709.

Remes, Pauliina, and Svetla Slaveva-Griffin. *The Routledge Handbook of Neoplatonism*. London: Routledge, 2014.

Richardson, Alan. *Christian Apologetics*. London: SCM Press, 1970.

Roberts, Alexander, James Donaldson, A. Cleveland Coxe, and Allan Menzies. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*. 5 vols. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989.

Robertson, J. "Hermeneutical Horizons. A Challenge to Moderns from Athanasius and Gadamer." *Cultural Encounters* 6 (2010): 35-42.

Rodriguez, Jacob A. "Irenaeus's Missional Theology: Global Christian Perspectives from an Ancient Missionary and Theologian." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 59, no.1 (March 2016): 131-46.

Rotaru, Ioan-Gheorghe. "Man –Body and Soul, as Well as the Relationship between Them in the Conception of St. Justin the Martyr and the Philosopher." *Dialogo* 1, no.1 (November 2014): 94-112.

Rousseau, Phillip. *The Early Christian Centuries*. London, UK: Pearson Education Limited, 2002.

Rutgers, L. V. *Subterranean Rome*. Leuven: Peeters, 2000.

Rutherford, R. B. *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius: A Study*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Sachs, John R. "Apocatastasis in Patristic Theology." *Theological Studies*, 54, no. 5 (December 1993): 617-40.

Sage, Michael M. *Cyprian*. Philadelphia: The Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, Ltd., 1975.

Salisbury, Joyce E. *The Blood of Martyrs: Unintended Consequences of Ancient Violence*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Schaff, Phillip. *History of the Christian Church*: Vol. 2: *Ante-Nicene Christianity: A.D. 100-325.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1910.

Schelkle, K. H., "Staat und Kirche in der patristischen Auslegung vom Rm 13,1-7." *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*, 44 (1952-53), 223-36.

Scherz, Paul. "Grief, Death, and Longing in Stoic and Christian Ethics." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 45, no. 1 (March 2017): 7-28.

Schmutzer, Andrew J. and Gerald W. Peterman. *Between Pain and Grace: A Biblical Theology of Suffering*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2016.

Schoedel, William R. "Theological Method in Irenaeus: (*Adversus Haereses* 2,25-28)." *The Journal of Theological Studies* 35, no.1 (January 1984): 31-49.

Secord, Jared. “The Cultural Geography of a Greek Christian.” In *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy*, edited by Paul Foster and Sara Parvis, 24-36. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

Seow, C. L. *Job 1-21: Interpretation and Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013.

Sesboüé, Bernard. *Tout Récapituler dans le Christ - Christologie et Sotériologie d'Irénée de Lyon.* Paris: Desclee, 2000.

Shotwell, Willis A. *The Biblical Exegesis of Justin Martyr*. London: S. P. C. K., 1965.

Shuve, Karl. “Irenaeus’s Contribution to Early Christian Interpretation of the Song of Songs.” In *Irenaeus: Life Scripture Legacy,* edited by Paul Foster and Sara Parvis, 77-91. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

Sittster, Gerald L. *Water from a Deep Well*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007.

Skarsaune, Oskar. “Justin and His Bible.” In *Justin Martyr and His Worlds*, edited by. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster, 53-76. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.

Slusser, Michael. “How Much Did Irenaeus Learn from Justin?” *Studia Patristica* 40, (2006): 515-20.

Smeets, Arnold. “Traces of Care and Involvement: A Semiotic Reading of *De Vnitate.”* In *Cyprian of Carthage: Studies in His Life, Language, and Thought*. Edited by Henk Bakker, Paul van Geest, and Hans van Loon, 99-114. Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2010.

Snyder, Gregory H. *Teachers and Texts in the Ancient World: Philosophers, Jews and Christians.* New York: Routledge, 2000.

Spieckermann, Herman. “The Conception and Prehistory of the Idea of Vicarious Suffering in the Old Testament.” In *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*. Edited by Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, 1-14. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004.

Steenberg, Irenaeus M. C. “Tracing the Irenaean Legacy.” In *Irenaeus: Life Scripture Legacy,* edited by Paul Foster and Sara Parvis, 190-202. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.

Stuckwisch, D. Richard. “Principles of Christian Prayer from the Third Century: A Brief Look at Origen, Tertullian and Cyprian with Some Comments on Their Meaning for Today.” *Worship* 71, no. 1 (Jan 1997): 2-19.

Stuhlmacher, Peter. “Isaiah 53 in the Gospel and Acts.” In *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources.* Edited by Bernard Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher, 140-56. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004.

Stump, Eleanore. *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Talbert, Charles H. *Learning Through Suffering: The Educational Value of Suffering in the New Testament and Its Milieu*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991.

Taylor, Benjamin. *Naples Declared: A Walk Around the Bay*. London: Penguin Books, 2013.

Tebes, J. M. "Cyprian of Carthage: Christianity and the Social World in the 3rd Century." *Cuadernos de Teologia* 19 (2000): 133-40.

Tiessen, Terrance L. *Irenaeus on the Salvation of the Unevangelized.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1993.

Thiselton, Anthony C. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians a Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013.

Thorsteinsson, Runar M. *Roman Christianity & Roman Stoicism: A Comparative Study of Ancient Morality*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Trzaskoma, Stephen, R. Scott Smith, Stephen Brunet, and Thomas G. Palaima. *Anthology of Classical Myth: Primary Sources in Translation*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2016.

von Campenhausen, Hans. *Ecclesiatical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Century*. Translated by J. A. Baker. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishing, 1969.

von Wahlde, Urban C. *The Gospel and Letters of John*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2010.

Walls, Jerry, ed. *Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Warrington, Keith. "Healing and Suffering in the Bible." *International Review of Mission* 95, no. 1 (January-April 2006): 376-77. Accessed October 17, 2016. http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/ps/i.do?p=AONE&u=vic_liberty&id=GALE|A149515562&v=2.1&it=r&sid=summon&userGroup=vic_liberty&authCount=1.

Weaver, Rebecca H. "Wealth and Poverty in the Early Church." *Interpretation* 41, no. 4 (Oct 1987): 363-81.

Webb, Matilda. *The Churches and Catacombs of Early Christian Rome: Comprehensive Guide*. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2010.

Weeda, Leendert. *Vergil's Political Commentary: In the Eclogues, Georgics, and Aeneid*. Berlin: De Gruyter Open, Ltd., 2015.

Weinandy, Thomas G. "Does God Suffer?," *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* (November 1, 2001): 35-54. Accessed September 21, 2016: http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/ps/i.do?p=AONE&u=vic_liberty&id=GALE|A80344686&v=2.1 &it=r&sid=summon&userGroup=vic_liberty#.

———. *Does God Suffer?* Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000.

———. "God and Human Suffering: His Act of Creation and His Acts in History." In *Divine Impassibility and the Mystery of Human Suffering*, eds. James F. Keating and Thomas Joseph White, 99-116. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2009.

Westra, Laura."Freedom and Providence in Plotinus." In *Neoplatonism and Nature: Studies in Plotinus' Enneads*. Edited by Michael F. Wagner, 125-48. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002.

Wedderburn, Alexander J. M. *A History of the First Christians.* London: T & T Clark International, 2004.

Werline, Rodney. "The Transformation of Pauline Arguments in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*." *Harvard Theological Review* 92, no.1 (June 2011): 79-93.

Wilhite, David E. "Cyprian's Scriptural Hermeneutic of Identity: The Laxist 'Heresy.'" *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 32, no.1 (2010): 58-98.

Wilken, Robert L. *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, Second Edition. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

———. *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought: Seeking the Face of God* .New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

Williams, D. H. *Tradition, Scripture, and Interpretation: A Sourcebook of the Ancient Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006.

Wingren, Gustaf. *Man and the Incarnation: A Study in the Biblical Theology of Irenaeus*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1947.

Witherington, Ben. *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.

Wright, Christopher J. H. *Deuteronomy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996.

Woodard, Roger D. *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007

Yarnell, Malcolm B. *The Formation of Christian Doctrine*. Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2007.

Yeshayahu. “Isaiah - Chapter 53,” in *The Complete Jewish Bible with Rashi Commentary*. Accessed September 22, 2016. http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/15984/jewish/Chapter-53.htm#showrashi=true.

Zimmerli, Walther. “Zur Vorgeschichte von Jes. liii,” *Congress Volume: Rome 1968,* VT Sup 17 (1969): 236-44. Reprinted in Zimmerli, *Studien zur alttestamentlichen Theologie und Prophetie* (1974): 213-21.