



KATOOMBA

— BAPTIST CHURCH —

CHRIST'S CHURCH THROUGH THE AGES

LESSON 13: IRENÆUS OF LYON (PART 1)



BIOGRAPHY

- Born c. AD 130 in Smyrna, Asia Minor.
- Unlike many other early Christian contemporaries, Irenaeus was born and raised in a Christian family.
- He was priest (presbyter) of the Church of Lyon (Lugdunum) in Gaul during the reign of the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (AD 161-180).
- Under the persecutions of that time, many of the clergy suffered imprisonment and torture for their faith.
- In AD 177, Irenaeus was sent to the Church of Rome to deliver a letter to Eleutherius, concerning the new Montanist heresy that had begun to arise at the time.
- During this journey, the sitting (and first) Bishop of Lyon, Pothinus (from whom the letter was sent) was martyred along with five other Christians from the church.
- Irenaeus was then appointed as the next Bishop of Lyon.

AGAINST HERESIES

- *'On the Detection and Overthrow of the So-Called Gnosis'*
- *'Adversus Haereses'*
- Written c. AD 180, around the beginning of Irenaeus' time as Bishop of Lyon.
- Therein, he identifies and details the various heretical cults that had arisen in the first one-hundred years since the time of the Apostles.
- He primarily focusses upon Gnosticism and Marcionism.

"As I have already observed - the Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the whole world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points of doctrine just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth." (I.10.2)

"For even creation reveals Him who formed it, and the very work made suggests Him who made it, and the world manifests Him who ordered it." (II.9.1)

“But God being all Mind, and all Logos, both speaks exactly what He thinks, and thinks exactly what He speaks. For His thought is Logos, and Logos is Mind, and Mind comprehending all things is the Father Himself.” (II.28.5)

“For indeed the enemy would not have been fairly vanquished, unless it had been a man [born] of a woman who conquered him. For it was by means of a woman that he got the advantage over man at first, setting himself up as man's opponent... And therefore, does the Lord profess Himself to be the Son of man, comprising in Himself that original man out of whom the woman was fashioned, in order that, as our species went down to death through a vanquished man, so we may ascend to life again through a victorious one; and as through a man death received the palm of victory against us, so again by a man we may receive the palm against death.” (V.21.1)

“For we offer to Him His own, announcing consistently the fellowship and union of the flesh and Spirit. For as the bread, which is produced from the earth, when it receives the invocation of God, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two realities, earthly and heavenly; so also our bodies, when they receive the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, having the hope of the resurrection to eternity.” (IV.18.5)