

3.4-Julian’s “war” with Persia (362-363)

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| Socrates | Sozomen | Theodoret |
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| Persians march against Julian | | |
| | | <p>3.21.1 No sooner had the Persians heard of the death of Constantius than they took heart, proclaimed war, and marched over the frontier of the Roman Empire. Julian therefore determined to muster his forces, though they were a host without a God to guard them. First he sent to Delphi, to Delos and to Dodona, and to the other oracles and enquired of the seers if he should march.</p> <p>3.21.2 They bade him march and promised him victory. One of these oracles I subjoin in proof of their falsehood. It was as follows. “Now we gods all started to get trophies of victory by the river beast and of them I, Ares, bold raiser of the din of war, will be leader.”</p> <p>3.21.3 Let them that style the Pythian, a god wise in word and prince of the muses ridicule the absurdity of the utterance. I who have found out its falsehood will rather pity him who was cheated by it. The oracle called the Tigris “beast” because the river and the animal bear the same name.</p> <p>3.21.4 Rising in the mountains of Armenia, and flowing through Assyria it discharges itself into the Persian Gulf. Beguiled by these oracles the unhappy man indulged in dreams of victory, and after fighting with the Persians had visions of a campaign against the Galileans,</p> <p>3.21.5 For so he called the Christians, thinking thus to bring discredit on them.</p> <p>3.21.6 But, man of education as he was, he ought to have bethought him that no mischief is done to reputation by change of name, for even had Socrates been called Critias and Pythagoras Phalaris they would have incurred no disgrace from the change of name—nor yet would Nireus if he had been named Thersites have lost the comeliness with which nature had gifted him.</p> |

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| | | 3.21.7 Julian had learned about these things, but laid none of them to heart and supposed that he could wrong us by using an inappropriate title. He believed the lies of the oracles and threatened to set up in our churches the statue of the goddess of lust. |
| Julian arrives in Antioch and is ridiculed by the citizens | | |
| <p>3.17.1 The emperor having extorted immense sums of money from the Christians, hastening his expedition against the Persians, arrived at Antioch in Syria.</p> <p>3.17.2 There, desiring to show the citizens the glorious effects of his rule, he unduly lowered the prices of commodities; neither taking into account the circumstances of that time, nor reflecting how much the presence of an army inconveniences the population of the provinces, and of necessity lessens the supply of provisions to the cities.</p> <p>3.17.3 The merchants and retailers therefore left off trading, being unable to sustain the losses which the imperial edict entailed upon them.</p> <p>3.17.4 The Antiochians not bearing the insult—for they are a people naturally impatient with insult—instantly broke forth into insults against Julian; caricaturing his beard also, which was a very long one, and saying that it ought to be cut off and manufactured into ropes. They added that the bull which was impressed upon his coin, was a symbol of his having desolated the world.</p> <p>3.17.5 For the emperor, being excessively superstitious, was continually sacrificing bulls on the altars of his idols; and had ordered the impression of a bull and altar to be made on his coin.</p> <p>3.17.6 Irritated by these scoffs, he threatened to punish the city of Antioch, and returned to Tarsus in Cilicia, giving orders that preparations should be made for his speedy departure.</p> <p>3.17.7 At this, Libanius the sophist took occasion to compose two orations, one addressed to the emperor on behalf of the Antiochians, the other to the inhabitants of Antioch on the emperor’s displeasure.</p> <p>3.17.8 It is however affirmed that these compositions were merely written, and never recited in public.</p> | <p>5.19.1 Julian, having determined upon undertaking a war against Persia, traveled to Antioch in Syria. The people loudly complained, that, although provisions were very abundant the price affixed to them was very high.</p> <p>5.19.2 Accordingly the emperor, out of liberality towards the people, as I believe, reduced the price of provisions to so low a scale that the vendors fled the city. A scarcity in then ensued, for which the people blamed the emperor; and their resentment found vent in ridiculing the length of his beard, and the bulls which he had had stamped upon his coins; and they satirically remarked, that he upset the world in the same way that his priests, when offering sacrifice, threw down the victims.</p> <p>5.19.3 At first his displeasure was aroused, and he threatened to punish them and prepared to depart for Tarsus. Afterwards, however, he suppressed his feelings of indignation, and repaid their ridicule by words alone; he composed a very elegant work under the title of “Aversion to Beards,” which he sent to them.</p> | |

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| <p>3.17.9 Julian abandoning his former purpose of revenging himself on his satirists by injurious deeds, expended his wrath in reciprocating their abusive taunts; for he wrote a pamphlet against them which he entitled Antiochicus, or Misopogon, thus leaving a permanent stigma upon that city and its inhabitants.</p> <p>3.17.10 But we must now speak of the evils which he brought upon the Christians at Antioch.</p> | <p>5.19.4 He treated the Christians of the city precisely in the same manner as at other places, and endeavored, as far as possible, to promote the extension of paganism. I shall here recount some of the details connected with the tomb of Babylas, the martyr, and certain occurrences which took place about this period in the temple of Apollo at Daphne.</p> | |
| Julian consults an oracle in Daphne | | |
| | <p>5.19.5 Daphne is a suburb of Antioch, and is planted with cypresses and other trees, beneath which all kinds of flowers flourish in their season. The branches of these trees are so thick and interlaced that they may be said to form a roof rather than merely to afford shade, and the rays of the sun can never pierce through them to the soil beneath. It is made delicious and exceedingly lovely by the richness and beauty of the waters, the temperateness of the air, and the breath of friendly winds.</p> <p>5.19.6 The Greeks invent the myth that Daphne, the daughter of the river Ladon, was here changed into a tree which bears her name, while she was fleeing from Arcadia, to evade the love of Apollo. The passion of Apollo was not diminished, they say, by this transformation; he made a crown of the leaves of his beloved and embraced the tree. He afterwards often fixed his residence on this spot, as being dearer to him than any other place.</p> <p>5.19.7 Men of grave temperament, however, considered it disgraceful to approach this suburb; for the position and nature of the place seemed to excite voluptuous feelings; and the substance of the fable itself being erotic, afforded a measurable impulse and redoubled the passions among corrupt youths.</p> <p>5.19.8 They, who furnished this myth as an excuse, were greatly inflamed and gave way without constraint to</p> | |

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| | <p>immoral deeds, incapable of restraining themselves, or of enduring the presence of those who showed restraint. Anyone who dwelt at Daphne without a mistress was regarded as callous and ungracious, and was shunned as an abominable and abhorrent thing.</p> <p>5.19.9 The pagans likewise manifested great reverence for this place on account of a very beautiful statue of the Daphnic Apollo which stood here, as also a magnificent and costly temple, supposed to have been built by Seleucus, the father of Antiochus, who gave his name to the city of Antioch.</p> <p>5.19.10 Those who attach credit to fables of this kind believe that a stream flows from the fountain Castalia which confers the power of predicting the future, and which is similar in its name and powers to the fountain of Delphi. It is related that Hadrian here received knowledge of his future greatness, when he was but a private individual.</p> <p>5.19.11 And that he dipped a leaf of the laurel into the water and found written upon it an account of his destiny. When he became emperor, it is said, he commanded the fountain to be closed, in order that no one might be enabled to pry into the knowledge of the future. But I leave this subject to those who are more accurately acquainted with mythology than I am.</p> | |
| <p>3.18.1 Having ordered that the pagan temples at Antioch should be opened, he was very eager to obtain an oracle from Apollo of Daphne.</p> | <p>5.19.12 When Gallus, the brother of Julian, had been declared Caesar by Constantius, and had fixed his residence at Antioch, his zeal for the Christian religion and his veneration for the memory of the martyrs determined him to purge the place of the pagan superstition and the outrages of adulterers.</p> <p>5.19.13 He considered that the easiest method of accomplishing this would be to erect a house of prayer in the temple and to transfer there the tomb of Babylas, the martyr, who had, with great reputation to himself,</p> | <p>3.10.1 Julian, wishing to make a campaign against the Persians, dispatched the trustiest of his officers to all the oracles throughout the Roman Empire, while he himself went as a suppliant to implore the Pythian oracle of Daphne to make known to him the future. The oracle responded that the corpses lying hard by were becoming an obstacle to divination; that they must first be removed to another spot; and that then he would utter his prophecy, for, said he, "I could say nothing, if the grove be not purified."</p> <p>3.10.2 Now at that time there were lying there the relics of the victorious martyr Babylas and the lads who had gloriously suffered with him, and the lying prophet was plainly stopped from uttering his wonted lies by the holy influence of Babylas. Julian was aware of this, for</p> |

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| <p>3.18.2a But the demon that inhabited the temple remained silent through fear of his neighbor, Babylas the martyr; for the coffin which contained the body of that saint was close by.</p> <p>3.18.2b When the emperor was informed of this circumstance, he commanded that the coffin should be immediately removed.</p> <p>3.18.3 Upon which the Christians of Antioch, including women and children, transported the coffin from Daphne to the city, with solemn rejoicings and chanting of psalms.</p> <p>3.18.4 The psalms were such as cast reproach on the gods of the heathen, and those who put confidence in them and their images.</p> | <p>presided over the church of Antioch, and suffered martyrdom.</p> <p>5.19.14 It is said that from the time of this transfer, the demon ceased to utter oracles. This silence was at first attributed to the neglect into which his service was allowed to fall and to the omission of the former cult; but results proved that it was occasioned solely by the presence of the holy martyr.</p> <p>5.19.15 The silence continued unbroken even when Julian was the sole ruler of the Roman Empire, although libations, incense, and victims were offered in abundance to the demon.</p> <p>5.19.16 For when eventually the oracle itself spoke and indicated the cause of its previous silence, the emperor himself entered the temple for the purpose of consulting the oracle, and offering up gifts and sacrifices with entreaties to grant a reply. The demon did not openly admit that the hindrance was occasioned by the tomb of Babylas, the martyr, but he stated that the place was filled with dead bodies, and that this prevented the oracle from speaking.</p> <p>5.19.17 Although many burials had taken place at Daphne, the emperor perceived that it was the presence of Babylas, the martyr, alone which had silenced the oracle, and he commanded his tomb to be removed. The Christians, therefore, assembled together and conveyed the coffin to the city, about forty stadia distant, and deposited it in the place where it is still preserved, and to which the name of the martyr has been given.</p> <p>5.19.18 It is said that men and women, young men and maidens, old men and children drew the casket, and encouraged one another by singing psalms as they went along the road, apparently for the purpose of lightening their labor, but in truth because they were moved by zeal and spirit for their kindred religious belief, which the emperor had opposed.</p> <p>5.19.19 The best singers sang first, and the multitude replied in chorus, and the following was the burden of their song: "Confounded are all they who worship graven images, who boast themselves in idols."</p> | <p>his ancient piety had taught him the power of victorious martyrs, and so he removed no other body from the spot, but only ordered the worshippers of Christ to translate the relics of the victorious martyrs.</p> <p>3.10.3 They marched with joy to the grove, put the coffin on a car and went before it leading a vast concourse of people, singing the psalms of David, while at every pause they shouted "Shame be to all them that worship molten images." For they understood the translation of the martyr to mean defeat for the demon.</p> |

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| | <p>5.20.5 The body of the martyr Babylas was, for the reasons previously mentioned, removed to Daphne, and was subsequently conveyed elsewhere. Soon after it had been taken away, fire suddenly fell upon the temple of the Daphnic Apollo, the roof and the very statue of the god were burned, and the naked walls, with the columns on which the portico and the back part of the edifice had rested, alone escaped the conflagration. The Christians believed that the prayers of the martyr had drawn down fire from heaven upon the demon; but the pagans reported the Christians as having set fire to the place.</p> <p>5.20.6 This suspicion gained ground; and the priest of Apollo was brought before the tribunal of justice to render up the names of those who had dared the act of arson; but though bound and subjected to the cruelest tortures, he did not name anyone. Hence the Christians were more fully convinced than before, that it was not by the deed of man, but by the wrath of God, that fire was poured down from heaven upon the temple. Such were the occurrences which then took place.</p> <p>5.20.7 The emperor, as I speculate, on hearing that the calamity at Daphne had been occasioned by the martyr Babylas, and on being further informed that the honored remains of the martyrs were preserved in several houses of prayer near the temple of the Apollo Didymus, which is situated close to the city of Miletus, wrote to the governor of Caria. He commanded him to destroy with fire all such buildings as were furnished with a roof and an altar, and to throw down from their very foundations the houses of prayer which were incomplete in these respects.</p> | |
| Julian tortures Theodore | | |
| <p>3.19.1 Then indeed the emperor's real temper and disposition, which he had until then kept as much as possible from observation, became fully visible.</p> <p>3.19.2 For he who had boasted so much of his philosophy, was no longer able to restrain himself; but being antagonized almost to madness by these reproachful hymns, he was ready to inflict the same cruelties on the</p> | <p>5.20.1 The event related above aroused the indignation of the emperor as much as if an insult had been offered him, and he was determined to punish the Christians; but Sallust, a praetorian prefect, although a pagan, tried to dissuade him from this measure.</p> | |

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| <p>Christians which Diocletian's agents had formerly performed against them.</p> <p>3.19.3 Since, however, his concern about the Persian expedition afforded him no leisure for personally executing his wishes, he commanded Sallust the Praetorian Prefect to seize those who had been most conspicuous for their zeal in psalm-singing, in order to make examples of them.</p> <p>3.19.4 The prefect, though a pagan, was far from being pleased with his commission.</p> <p>3.19.5 But since he dared not disobey it, he caused several of the Christians to be apprehended, and some of them to be imprisoned.</p> <p>3.19.6 One young man named Theodore, whom the heathens brought before him, he subjected to a variety of tortures, causing his body to be so lacerated and only released him from further punishment when he thought that he could not possibly outlive the torments.</p> <p>3.19.7 Yet God preserved this sufferer, so that he long survived that confession.</p> <p>3.19.8 Rufinus, the author of the <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> written in Latin, states that he himself conversed with the same Theodore a considerable time afterwards, and enquired of him whether in the process of scourging and racking he had not felt the most intense pains.</p> <p>3.19.9 His answer was, that he felt the pain of the tortures to which he was subjected for a very short time; and that a young man stood by him who both wiped off the sweat which was produced by the acuteness of the ordeal through which he was passing, and at the same time strengthened his mind, so that he rendered this time of trial a season of delight rather than of suffering. Let this suffice concerning the most wonderful Theodore.</p> | <p>5.20.2a The emperor, however, could not be appeased, and Sallust was compelled to carry out his command and arrest and imprison many Christians.</p> <p>5.20.2b One of the first whom he arrested was a young man named Theodore, who was immediately stretched upon the rack. But although his flesh was lacerated by the application of the nails, he addressed no supplication to Sallust, nor did he implore a diminution of his torments. On the contrary, he seemed as insensible to pain as if he had been merely a spectator of the sufferings of another and bravely received the wounds; and he sang the same psalm which he had joined in singing the day before, to show that he did not repent of the act for which he had been condemned.</p> <p>5.20.3 The prefect, struck with admiration at the fortitude of the young man, went to the emperor and told him that, unless he would desist speedily from the measure he had undertaken, he and his party would be exposed to ridicule while the Christians would acquire more glory. This representation produced its effect, and the Christians who had been arrested were set at liberty.</p> <p>5.20.4 It is said that Theodore was afterwards asked whether he had been sensible of any pain while on the rack, and that he replied that he had not been entirely free from suffering, but had his pains assuaged by the attentions of a young man who had stood by him, who had wiped off the perspiration with the finest linen cloth and supplied him with coolest water by which he eased the inflammation and refreshed his labors. I am convinced that no man, whatever magnanimity he may possess, is</p> | <p>3.11.1 Julian could not endure the shame brought upon him by these doings and on the following day ordered the leaders of the choral procession to be arrested. Sallustius was prefect at this time and a servant of iniquity, but he nevertheless was anxious to persuade the sovereign not to allow the Christians who were eager for glory to attain the object of their desires.</p> <p>3.11.2 When, however, he saw that the emperor was impotent to master his rage, he arrested a young man adorned with the graces of a holy enthusiasm while walking in the Forum, hung him up before the world on the stocks, lacerated his back with scourges, and scored his sides with claw-like instruments of torture. And this he did all day from dawn till the day was done; and then put chains of iron on him and ordered him to be kept in ward.</p> <p>3.11.3a Next morning, he informed Julian of what had been done, and he reported the young man's constancy and added that the event was for themselves a defeat and for the Christians a triumph. Persuaded of the truth of this, God's enemy suffered no more to be so treated and ordered Theodorus to be let out of prison, for so was named this young and glorious combatant in truth's battle.</p> <p>3.11.3b On being asked if he had had any sense of pain on undergoing those most bitter and most savage tortures he replied that at the first indeed he had felt some little pain, but that then had appeared to him one who continually wiped the sweat from his face with a cool and soft kerchief and bade him be of good courage. "Therefore," said he, "when the executioners gave over I was not pleased but vexed, for now there went away with them he who brought me refreshment of soul."</p> |

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| | <p>capable, without the special assistance of Divine Power, of manifesting such entire indifference about the body.</p> | <p>3.11.4 But the demon of lying divination at once increased the martyr's glory and exposed his own falsehood; for a thunderbolt sent down from heaven burnt the whole shrine and turned the very statue of the Pythian into fine dust, for it was made of wood and gilded on the surface.</p> <p>3.11.5 Julianus the uncle of Julian, prefect of the East, learnt this by night, and riding at full speed came to Daphne, eager to bring succor to the deity whom he worshipped; but when he saw the so-called god turned into powder he scourged the officers in charge of the temple, for he conjectured that the conflagration was due to some Christian. But they, maltreated as they were, could not endure to utter a lie, and persisted in saying that the fire had started not from below but from above. Moreover some of the neighboring rustics came forward and asserted that they had seen the thunderbolt come rushing down from heaven.</p> |
| Jews attempt to rebuild their temple | | |
| <p>3.20.1 The emperor in another attempt to molest the Christians exposed his superstition.</p> <p>3.20.2 Being fond of sacrificing, he not only himself delighted in the blood of victims, but considered it a personal offense if others did not do likewise.</p> <p>3.20.3 And as he found but few persons of this stamp, he sent for the Jews and enquired of them why they abstained from sacrificing, since the law of Moses required it?</p> | <p>5.22.1 Though the emperor hated and oppressed the Christians, he manifested benevolence and humanity towards the Jews. He wrote to the Jewish patriarchs and leaders, as well as to the people, requesting them to pray for him, and for the prosperity of the empire.</p> <p>5.22.2 In taking this step he was not motivated, I am convinced, by any respect for their religion. For he was aware that it is, so to speak, the mother of the Christian religion, and he knew that both religions rest upon the authority of the patriarchs and the prophets; but he thought to grieve the Christians by favoring the Jews, who are their most persistent enemies.</p> | |

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| <p>3.20.4 On their replying that it was not permitted for them to do this in any other place besides Jerusalem, he immediately ordered them to rebuild Solomon's temple.</p> <p>3.20.5 Meanwhile he himself proceeded on his expedition against the Persians. The Jews who had long desired to obtain a favorable opportunity to rebuild their temple in order that they might offer sacrifice inside, applied themselves very vigorously to the work. Moreover, they conducted themselves with great insolence toward the</p> | <p>5.22.3 But perhaps he also calculated upon persuading the Jews to embrace paganism and sacrifices. For they were only acquainted with the mere letter of Scripture, and could not, like the Christians and a few of the wisest among the Hebrews, discern the hidden meaning.</p> <p>5.22.4 Events proved that this was his real motive, for he sent for some of the chiefs of the race and exhorted them to return to the observance of the laws of Moses and the customs of their fathers. On their replying that because the temple in Jerusalem was overturned, it was neither lawful nor ancestral to do this in another place than the metropolis out of which they had been cast, he gave them public money, commanded them to rebuild the temple, and to practice the cult similar to that of their ancestors, by sacrificing after the ancient way.</p> <p>5.22.5 The Jews entered upon the undertaking, without reflecting that, according to the prediction of the holy prophets, it could not be accomplished. They sought for the most skillful artisans, collected materials, cleared the ground, and entered so earnestly upon the task, that even the women carried heaps of earth and brought their necklaces and other female ornaments towards defraying the expense.</p> <p>5.22.6 The emperor, the other pagans, and all the Jews, regarded every other undertaking as secondary in importance to this. Although the pagans were not well-disposed towards the Jews, yet they assisted them in this enterprise, because they reckoned upon its ultimate success and hoped by this means to falsify the prophecies of Christ. Besides this motive, the Jews themselves were impelled by the consideration that the time had arrived for rebuilding their temple.</p> | <p>3.20.1 Julian, who had made his soul a home of destroying demons, went his frenzied way, ever raging against true religion. He accordingly now armed the Jews too against the believers in Christ. He began by enquiring of some whom he got together why, though their law imposed on them the duty of sacrifices, they offered none. On their reply that their worship was limited to one particular spot, this enemy of God immediately gave directions for the re-erection of the destroyed temple, supposing in his vanity that he could falsify the prediction of the Lord.</p> <p>3.20.2 Of which, in reality, he exhibited the truth. The Jews heard his words with delight and made known his orders to their countrymen throughout the world. They came with haste from all directions, contributing alike money and enthusiasm for the work.</p> <p>3.20.3 And the emperor made all the provisions he could, less from the pride of generosity than from hostility to the truth. He dispatched also as governor a fit man to carry out his impious orders. It is said that they made mattocks, shovels, and baskets of silver.</p> |

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| <p>Christians, and threatened to do them as much mischief, as they had themselves suffered from the Romans.</p> <p>3.20.6 The emperor having ordered that the expenses of this structure should be defrayed out of the public treasury, all things were soon provided, such as timber and stone, burnt brick, clay, lime, and all other materials. necessary for building.</p> <p>3.20.7 On this occasion, Cyril bishop of Jerusalem, called to mind the prophecy of Daniel, which Christ also in the holy gospels has confirmed, and predicted in the presence of many persons, that the time had indeed come ‘in which one stone should not be left upon another in that temple,’ but that the Savior’s prophetic declaration should have its full accomplishment.</p> <p>3.20.8 Such were the bishop’s words. And on the night following, a mighty earthquake tore up the stones of the old foundations of the temple and dispersed them all together with the adjacent structures.</p> <p>3.20.9 Terror consequently possessed the Jews on account of the event; and the report of it brought many to the spot who lived far away.</p> | <p>5.22.7 When they had removed the ruins of the former building, they dug up the ground and cleared away its foundation; it is said that on the following day when they were about to lay the first foundation, a great earthquake occurred, and by the violent agitation of the earth, stones were thrown up from the depths, by which those of the Jews who were engaged in the work were wounded, as likewise those who were merely looking on.</p> <p>5.22.8 The houses and public porticos, near the site of the temple, in which they had diverted themselves, were suddenly thrown down; many were caught thereby, some perished immediately, others were found half dead and</p> | <p>3.20.4 When they had begun to dig and to carry out the earth a vast multitude of them went on with the work all day, but by night the earth which had been carried away shifted back from the ravine of its own accord. They destroyed moreover the remains of the former construction, with the intention of building everything up afresh.</p> <p>3.20.5a But when they had got together thousands of bushels of chalk and lime, of a sudden a violent gale blew, and storms, tempests and whirlwinds scattered everything far and wide. They still went on in their madness, nor were they brought to their senses by the divine longsuffering.</p> <p>3.20.5b Then first came a great earthquake, fit to strike terror into the hearts of men quite ignorant of God’s dealings.</p> |

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| <p>3.20.10 When therefore a vast multitude was assembled, another wonder took place. Fire came down from heaven and consumed all the builders' tools.</p> <p>3.20.11 So that the flames were seen preying upon mallets, irons to smooth and polish stones, saws, hatchets, adzes, in short, all the various implements which the workmen had procured as necessary for the undertaking.</p> <p>3.20.12 And the fire continued burning among these for a whole day. The Jews indeed were in the greatest possible alarm, and unwillingly confessed Christ, calling him God.</p> <p>3.20.13 Yet they did not do his will; but influenced by their preconceptions they still clung to Judaism.</p> <p>3.20.15 They were therefore 'blinded' as the apostle says and cast away the good which they had in their hands. And thus the temple, instead of being rebuilt, was at that time wholly overthrown.</p> | <p>mutilated of hands or legs, others were injured in other parts of the body.</p> <p>5.22.9 When God caused the earthquake to cease, the workmen who survived again returned to their task, partly because such was the edict of the emperor, and partly because they were themselves interested in the undertaking.</p> <p>5.22.10 Men often, in endeavoring to gratify their own passions, seek what is injurious to them, reject what would be truly advantageous, and are deluded by the idea that nothing is really useful except what is agreeable to them. When once led astray by this error, they are no longer able to act in a manner conducive to their own interests, or to take warning by the calamities which are visited upon them. The Jews, I believe, were just in this state.</p> <p>5.22.11 For, instead of regarding this unexpected earthquake as a manifest indication that God was opposed to the re-erection of their temple, they proceeded to recommence the work. But all parties relate, that they had scarcely returned to the undertaking, when fire burst suddenly from the foundations of the temple, and consumed several of the workmen. This fact is fearlessly stated and believed by all. The only discrepancy in the narrative is that some maintain that flame burst from the interior of the temple, as the workmen were striving to force an entrance, while others say that the fire proceeded directly from the earth. In whichever way the phenomenon might have occurred, it is equally wonderful.</p> | <p>3.20.5c And, when still they were not awed, fire running from the excavated foundations burnt up most of the diggers, and put the rest to flight.</p> <p>3.20.6 Moreover when a large number of men were sleeping at night in an adjacent building it suddenly fell down, roof and all, and crushed the whole of them.</p> |

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| <p>3.20.14 Even a third miracle which afterwards happened failed to lead them to a belief of the truth. For the next night, luminous impressions of a cross appeared imprinted on their garments, which at daybreak they in vain attempted to rub or wash out.</p> | <p>5.22.12 A more tangible and still more extraordinary prodigy ensued. Suddenly the sign of the cross appeared spontaneously on the garments of the persons engaged in the undertaking. These crosses were disposed like stars, and appeared the work of art.</p> <p>5.22.13 Many were therefore led to confess that Christ is God and that the rebuilding of the temple was not pleasing to Him. Others presented themselves in the church, were initiated, and besought Christ with hymns and supplications to pardon their transgression.</p> <p>5.22.14 If any one does not feel disposed to believe my narrative, let him go and be convinced by those who heard the facts I have related from the eyewitnesses of them, for they are still alive. Let him inquire, also, of the Jews and pagans who left the work in an incomplete state, or who, to speak more accurately, were able to commence it.</p> | <p>3.20.7 On that night and also on the following night the sign of the cross of salvation was seen brightly shining in the sky, and the very garments of the Jews were filled with crosses, not bright but black.</p> <p>3.20.8 When God’s enemies saw these things, in terror at the heaven-sent plagues they fled, and made their way home, confessing the Godhead of Him who had been crucified by their fathers. Julian heard of these events, for they were repeated by everyone. But like Pharaoh he hardened his heart.</p> |
| 1 January, 363 - Julian dismisses a Persian embassy | | |
| <p>3.19.10 About this time Persian ambassadors came to the emperor, requesting him to terminate the war on certain express conditions.</p> <p>3.19.11 But Julian abruptly dismissed them, saying, ‘You shall very shortly see me in person, so there will be no need of an embassy.’</p> | | |
| Julian’s Persian expedition | | |
| <p>3.21.1 The emperor meanwhile invaded the country of the Persians a little before spring, having learned that the races of Persia were greatly weakened and totally spiritless in winter.</p> <p>3.21.2 For from their inability to endure cold, they abstain from military service at that season, and it has become a proverb that ‘a Mede will not then draw his hand from underneath his cloak.’ And well knowing that the Romans were hardened enough to brave all the rigors of the atmosphere he let them loose on the country.</p> | <p>6.1.1a I have narrated in the preceding book the occurrences which took place in the Church, during the reign of Julian.</p> <p>6.1.1b This emperor, having determined to carry on the war with Persia, made a rapid transit across the Euphrates in the beginning of spring, and, passing by Edessa from hatred to the inhabitants, who had long professed Christianity, he went on to Carrae, where there was a temple of Jupiter, in which he offered up sacrifice and prayer.</p> <p>6.1.2 He then selected twenty thousand armed men from among his troops, and sent them towards the Tigris,</p> | |

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| <p>3.21.3 After devastating a considerable tract of country, including numerous villages and fortresses, they next assailed the cities.</p> | <p>in order that they might guard those regions, and also be ready to join him, in case he should require their assistance. He then wrote to Arsacius, king of Armenia, one of the Roman allies, to bespeak his aid in the war.</p> <p>6.1.3 In this letter Julian manifested the most unbounded arrogance. He boasted of the high qualities which had, he said, rendered him worthy of the empire, and acceptable to the gods for whom he cared. He reviled Constantius, his predecessor, as an effeminate and impious emperor, and threatened Arsacius in a grossly insulting way. And since he understood that he was a Christian, he intensified his insults, or eagerly and largely uttered unlawful blasphemies against Christ, for he was wont to dare this in every case. He told Arsacius that unless he acted according to his directions, the God in whom he trusted would not be able to defend him from his vengeance.</p> <p>6.1.4 When he considered that all his arrangements had been duly made, he led his army through Assyria. He took a great many towns and fortresses, either through treachery or by battle, and thoughtlessly proceeded onwards, without reflecting that he would have to return by the same route. He pillaged every place he approached and pulled down or burnt the granaries and storehouses.</p> | |
| <p>3.21.4 And having besieged the great city Ctesiphon, he reduced the king of the Persians to such straits that the latter sent repeated embassies to the emperor, offering to surrender a portion of his dominions, on condition of his quitting the country, and putting an end to the war.</p> <p>3.21.5 But Julian was unaffected by these pleas, and showed no compassion to a suppliant foe. Nor did he think of the adage, 'To conquer is honorable, but to be more than conqueror gives occasion for envy.'</p> <p>3.21.6 Giving credit to the divinations of the philosopher Maximus, with whom he met continually, he was deluded into the belief that his exploits would not only equal, but exceed those of Alexander of Macedon; so that he spurned with contempt the pleas of the Persian monarch.</p> <p>3.21.7 He even supposed in accordance with the teachings of Pythagoras and Plato on 'the transmigration of</p> | | |

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| <p>souls,' that he was possessed of Alexander's soul, or rather that he himself was Alexander in another body.</p> <p>3.21.8 This ridiculous fancy deluded and caused him to reject the negotiations for peace proposed by the king of the Persians.</p> | | |
| | <p>6.1.5 As he was journeying up the Euphrates, he arrived at Ctesiphon, a very large city, to which the Persian monarchs have now transferred their residence from Babylon. The Tigris flows near this spot. As he was prevented from reaching the city with his ships, by a part of the land which separated it from the river, he judged that either he must pursue his journey by water, or leave his ships and go to Ctesiphon by land. He interrogated the prisoners on the subject. Having ascertained from them that there was a canal which had been blocked up in the course of time, he caused it to be cleared out. And, when he thus made a connector between the Euphrates and the Tigris,</p> <p>6.1.6 he proceeded towards the city, his ships floating along by the side of his army. But the Persians appeared on the banks of the Tigris with a formidable display of horse and many armed troops, of elephants, and of horses. And Julian became conscious that his army was besieged between two great rivers and was in danger of perishing, either by remaining in its present position, or by retreating through the cities and villages which he had so utterly devastated so that no provisions were attainable. Therefore, he summoned the soldiers to see horse-races, and proposed rewards to the fleetest racers.</p> <p>6.1.7 In the meantime he commanded the officers of the ships to throw over the provisions and baggage of the army so that the soldiers, seeing themselves in danger by the want of necessaries, might turn about boldly and fight their enemies more desperately. After supper he sent for the generals and tribunes and commanded the embarkation of the troops. They sailed along the Tigris during the night and came at once to the opposite banks and disembarked.</p> <p>6.1.8 But their departure was perceived by some of the Persians, who exhorted one another to oppose them, but</p> | |

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| | <p>those still asleep the Romans readily overcame. At daybreak, the two armies engaged in battle; and after much bloodshed on both sides, the Romans returned by the river, and encamped near Ctesiphon.</p> | |
| | <p>6.1.9 The emperor, being no longer desirous of proceeding further, burnt his vessels, as he considered that they required too many soldiers to guard them. He then commenced his retreat along the Tigris, which was to his left. The prisoners, who acted as guides to the Romans, led them to a fertile country where they found abundance of provisions.</p> <p>6.1.10 Soon after an old man, who had resolved to die for the liberty of Persia, allowed himself to be taken prisoner and was brought before the emperor. On being questioned as to the route, and seeming to speak the truth, he persuaded them to follow him as capable of transporting the army very speedily to the Roman frontiers.</p> <p>6.1.11 He observed that for the space of three or four days' journey this road would be difficult, and that it would be necessary to carry provisions during that time, as the surrounding country was sterile. The emperor was deceived by the discourse of this wise old man and approved the march by this route. On advancing further,</p> | <p>3.25.1 Julian's folly was yet more clearly manifested by his death. He crossed the river that separates the Roman Empire from the Persian, brought over his army, and then forthwith burned his boats, so making his men fight not in willing but in forced obedience.</p> <p>3.25.2 The best generals tend to fill their troops with enthusiasm, and, if they see them growing discouraged, to cheer them and raise their hopes; but Julian, by burning the bridge of retreat, cut off all good hope.</p> <p>3.25.3 A further proof of his incompetence was his failure to fulfill the duty of foraging in all directions and providing his troops with supplies. Julian had neither ordered supplies to be brought from Rome, nor did he make any bountiful provision by ravaging the enemy's country. He left the inhabited world behind him, and persisted in marching through the wilderness.</p> <p>3.25.4 His soldiers had not enough to eat and drink; they were without guides; they were marching astray in a desert land. Thus they saw the folly of their most wise emperor.</p> |

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| | <p>after the lapse of three days, they were cast upon an uncultivated region.</p> <p>6.1.12 The old prisoner was put to torture. He confessed that he had exposed himself voluntarily to death for the sake of his country, and was therefore prepared to endure any sufferings that could be inflicted on him. The Roman troops were now worn out by the length of the journey and the scarcity of provisions, and the Persians chose this moment to attack them.</p> | |
| <p>3.21.9 Because the latter was convinced of the uselessness of his pleas, he was forced to prepare for conflict. And therefore, on the next day after the rejection of his embassy, he drew out in order of battle all the forces he had.</p> <p>3.21.10 The Romans indeed censured their prince, for not avoiding an engagement when he might have done so with advantage. Nevertheless, they attacked those who opposed them, and again put the enemy to flight.</p> | | |
| June 26th, 363 - Julian's death | | |
| <p>3.21.11 The emperor was present on horseback, and encouraged his soldiers in battle; but confiding simply in his hope of success, he wore no armor.</p> <p>3.21.12 In this defenseless state, a dart cast by someone unknown, pierced through his arm and entered his side, making a wound.</p> <p>3.21.13a In consequence of this wound he died.</p> | <p>6.1.13a In the heat of the conflict which ensued a violent wind arose, and the sky and the sun were totally concealed by the clouds, while the air was at the same time mixed with dust. During the darkness which was thus produced, a horseman, riding at full gallop, directed his lance against the emperor and wounded him mortally. After throwing Julian from his horse, the unknown assailant secretly went away.</p> | <p>3.25.5 In the midst of their murmuring and grumbling they suddenly found him who had struggled in mad rage against his Maker wounded to death. Ares who raises the war-din had never come to help him as he promised. Loxias had given lying divination; he who glads him in the thunderbolts had hurled no bolt on the man who dealt the fatal blow the boasting of his threats was dashed to the ground.</p> |
| Speculation about Julian's death | | |
| <p>3.21.13b Some say that a certain Persian hurled the javelin, and then fled; others assert that one of his own men was the author of the deed, which indeed is the best corroborated and most current report.</p> <p>3.21.14 But Callistus, one of his body-guards, who celebrated this emperor's deeds in heroic verse, says in narrating the particulars of this war, that the wound of which he died was inflicted by a demon. This is possibly a mere poetical fiction, or perhaps it was really the fact.</p> | <p>6.1.13b Some conjectured that he was a Persian; others, that he was a Saracen.</p> <p>6.1.14a There are those who insist that he who struck the blow was a Roman soldier, who was indignant at the imprudence and temerity which the emperor had shown in exposing his army to such peril.</p> | <p>3.25.6 The name of the man who dealt that righteous stroke no one knows to this day. Some say that he was wounded by an invisible being, others by one of the Nomads who were called Ishmaelites; others by a trooper who could not endure the pains of famine in the wilderness.</p> |

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| <p>3.21.15 For vengeful furies have undoubtedly destroyed many persons.</p> <p>3.21.16 Be the case however as it may, this is certain, that the ardor of his natural temperament rendered him incautious, his learning made him vain, and his affection for clemency exposed him to contempt.</p> <p>3.21.17 Thus Julian ended his life in Persia, as we have said, in his fourth consulate, which he bore with Sallust his colleague. This event occurred on the 26th of June, in the third year of his reign, and the seventh from his having been created Caesar by Constantius, he being at that time in the thirty-first year of his age.</p> | <p>6.2.10 Julian himself was well aware from where the mortal stroke proceeded, and what was the cause of its infliction. For, it is said, when he was wounded, he took some of the blood that flowed from the wound, and threw it up into the air, as if he had seen Jesus Christ appearing, and intended to throw it at him, in order to reproach him with his slaughter.</p> <p>6.2.11 Others say that he was angry with the sun because it had favored the Persians and had not rescued him, although, according to the doctrine of the astronomers, it had presided at his birth. It was to express his indignation against this body of light that he took blood in his hand and flung it upwards in the air.</p> <p>6.2.12 I know not whether, on the approach of death, as is wont to be the case when the soul is in the act of being separated from the body and when it is enabled to behold diviner spectacles than are allotted to men, and so Julian might have beheld Christ. Few allusions have been made to this subject, and yet I dare not reject this hypothesis as absolutely false; for God often suffers still more improbable and astonishing events to take place in order to prove that the religion named after Christ is not sustained by human energy.</p> | <p>3.25.7 But whether it was man or angel who applied the steel, without doubt the doer of the deed was the minister of the will of God. It is related that when Julian had received the wound, he filled his hand with blood, flung it into the air and cried, "Thou hast won, O Galilean." Thus he gave utterance at once to a confession of the victory and to a blasphemy. So infatuated was he.</p> |
| Libanius writes about Julian's death | | |
| <p>3.22.10 Then also Libanius composed a funeral oration on him, which he designated Julianus, or Epitaph.</p> <p>3.22.11 In these he celebrates with lofty eulogies almost all his actions; but in referring to the books which Julian wrote against the Christians, he says that with them he has clearly demonstrated the ridiculous and trifling character of their sacred books.</p> | <p>6.1.14b Libanius, the sophist, a native of Syria, the most intimate friend of Julian, expressed himself in the following terms concerning the person who had committed the deed:</p> | <p>3.23.1 Another instance is that of an excellent man at Antioch, entrusted with the charge of young lads, who was better educated than is usually the case with pedagogues, and was the intimate friend of the chief teacher of that period, Libanius the far-famed sophist. Now Libanius was a heathen expecting victory and bearing in mind the threats of Julian, so one day, in ridicule of our belief he said to the pedagogue,</p> |

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| <p>3.22.12 Had this sophist contented himself with extolling the emperor's other acts, I should have quietly proceeded with the course of my history.</p> <p>3.22.13 But since this famous rhetorician has thought proper to take occasion to attack the Scriptures of the Christian faith, we also propose to pause a little and in a brief review consider his words. [cf. below]</p> | <p>6.1.15 "You desire to know by whom the emperor was slain. I know not his name. We have a proof, however, that the murderer was not one of the enemies; for no one came forward to claim the reward, although the king of Persia caused proclamation to be made, by a herald, of the honors to be awarded to him who had performed the deed. We are surely beholden to the enemy for not taking for themselves the glory of the action, but for leaving it to us to seek the slayer among ourselves.</p> <p>6.1.16 Those who sought his death were those who lived in habitual transgression of the laws, and who had formerly conspired against him, and who therefore perpetrated the deed as soon as they could find an opportunity. They were impelled by the desire of obtaining a greater degree of freedom from all control than they could enjoy under his government. And they were, perhaps, mainly driven by their indignation at the attachment of the emperor to the service of the gods, to which they were averse."</p> | <p>"What is the carpenter's son about now?"</p> <p>3.23.2 Filled with divine grace, he foretold what was shortly to come to pass.</p> <p>3.23.3 "Sophist," said he, "the Creator of all things, whom you in derision call carpenter's son, is making a coffin." After a few days the death of the wretch was announced. He was carried out lying in his coffin. The vaunt of his threats was proved vain, and God was glorified.</p> |
| | <p>6.2.1 In the document above quoted, Libanius clearly states that the emperor fell by the hand of a Christian; and this, probably, was the truth. It is not unlikely that some of the soldiers who then served in the Roman army might have conceived the idea, since Greeks and all men until this day have praised tyrannicides for exposing themselves to death in the cause of liberty, and spiritedly standing by their country, their families, and their friends.</p> <p>6.2.2 Still less is he deserving of blame, who, for the sake of God and of religion, performed so bold a deed. Beyond this I know nothing accurately concerning the men who committed this murder besides what I have narrated. All men, however, concur in receiving the account which has been handed down to us, and which</p> | |

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| | evidences his death to have been the result of Divine wrath. A proof of this is the Divine vision which one of his friends had, which I will now proceed to describe. | |
| Visions and Predictions of Julian's death | | |
| | <p>6.2.3 He had, it is related, traveled into Persia, with the intention of joining the emperor. While on the road, he found himself so far from any habitation that he was obliged, on one night, to sleep in a church. He saw, during that night, either in a dream or a vision, all the apostles and prophets assembled together, and complaining of the injuries which the emperor had inflicted on the Church, and consulting concerning the best measures to be adopted.</p> <p>6.2.4 After much deliberation and embarrassment two individuals arose in the midst of the assembly, desired the others to be of good cheer, and left the company hastily, as if to deprive Julian of the imperial power.</p> <p>6.2.5 He who was the spectator of this marvel did not attempt to pursue his journey, but awaited, in horrible suspense, the conclusion of this revelation. He laid himself down to sleep again, in the same place, and again, he saw the same assembly; the two individuals who had appeared to depart the preceding night to effect their purpose against Julian, suddenly returned and announced his death to the others.</p> <p>6.2.6 On the same day a vision was sent to Didymus, an ecclesiastical philosopher, who dwelt at Alexandria; and, who, being deeply grieved at the errors of Julian and his persecution of the churches, fasted and offered up supplications to God continually on this account.</p> <p>6.2.7 From the effects of anxiety and want of food during the previous night, he fell asleep while sitting in his chair. Then being, as it were, in an ecstasy, he beheld white horses traversing the air, and heard a voice saying to those who were riding thereon, "Go and tell Didymus that Julian has been slain just at this hour; let him communicate this intelligence to Athanasius, the bishop, and let him arise and eat."</p> <p>6.2.8a I have been credibly informed that the friend of Julian and the philosopher beheld those things. Results</p> | |

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| | <p>proved that neither of them were far from having witnessed the truth.</p> <p>6.2.8b But if these instances do not suffice to prove that the death of Julian was the effect of Divine wrath on account of his persecution of the Church, let the prediction of one of the ecclesiastics be called to mind.</p> <p>6.2.9 When Julian was preparing to enter upon the war against the Persians, he threatened that on the termination of the war he would treat the Christians with severity, and boasted that the Son of the Carpenter would be unable to aid them; the ecclesiastic above mentioned to that answered that the Son of the Carpenter was then preparing him a wooden coffin in view of his death.</p> | <p>3.24.1 A man who in the body imitated the lives of the bodiless, namely Julianus, surnamed in Syrian Sabbas, whose life I have written in my “Religious History,” continued all the more zealously to offer his prayers to the God of all, when he heard of the impious tyrant’s threats.</p> <p>3.24.2 On the very day on which Julian was slain, he heard of the event while at his prayers, although the Monastery was distant more than twenty stages from the army. It is related that while he was invoking the Lord with loud cries and supplicating his merciful Master, he suddenly checked his tears, broke into an ecstasy of delight, while his countenance was lighted up and thus signified the joy that possessed his soul.</p> <p>3.24.3 When his friends beheld this change they begged him to tell them the reason of his gladness. “The wild boar,” said he, “the enemy of the vineyard of the Lord, has paid the penalty of the wrongs he has done to Him; he lies dead. His mischief is done.” The whole company no sooner heard these words than they leaped with joy and struck up the song of thanksgiving to God.</p> <p>3.24.4 And from those that brought tidings of the emperor’s death they learnt that it was the very day and hour when the accursed man was slain that the aged Saint knew it and announced it.</p> |

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| Abomination discovered after Julian's death | | |
| | | <p>3.26.1 Julian had left Edessa on his left because it was adorned with the grace of true religion, and while in his vain folly he was journeying through Carroe, he came to the temple honored by the impious.</p> <p>3.26.2 And after going through certain rites with his companions in defilement, he locked and sealed the doors, and stationed sentinels with orders to see that none came in till his return.</p> <p>3.26.3 When news came of his death, and the reign of iniquity was succeeded by one of piety, the shrine was opened, and within was found a proof of the late emperor's manliness, wisdom, and piety. For there was seen a woman hung up on high by the hairs of her head, and with her hands outstretched. The villain had cut open her belly, and so I suppose learnt from her liver his victory over the Persians.</p> <p>This was the abomination discovered at Carroe.</p> <p>3.27.1 It is said that at Antioch a number of chests were discovered at the palace filled with human heads, and also many wells full of corpses. Such is the teaching of the evil deities.</p> |
| Antioch rejoices at Julian's death | | |
| | | <p>3.28.1 When Antioch heard of Julian's death she gave herself up to rejoicing and festivity. And not only was exultant joy exhibited in the churches, and in the shrines of martyrs, but even in the theatres the victory of the cross was proclaimed and Julian's prophecy held up to ridicule. And here I will record the admirable utterance of the men at Antioch, that it may be preserved in the memory of generations yet to come.</p> <p>3.28.2 For with one voice the shout was raised, "Maximus, you feel, where are your oracles? For God and Christ has conquered." This was said because there lived at that time a man of the name of Maximus, a pretender to philosophy, but really a worker of magic, and boasting himself to be able to foretell the future. But the Antiochenes, who had received their divine teaching from the glorious yokefellows Peter and Paul, and were</p> |

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| | | <p>full of warm affection for the Master and Savior of all, persisted in hating Julian to the end.</p> <p>3.28.3 Their sentiments were perfectly well known to the object of them, and so he wrote a book against them and called it "Misopogon." This rejoicing at the death of the tyrant shall conclude this book of your history, for it were to my mind indecent to connect with a righteous reign the impious sovereignty of Julian.</p> |
| Miraculous signs during Julian's reign | | |
| | <p>5.21.1 Among so many remarkable events which occurred during the reign of Julian, I must not omit to mention one which affords a sign of the power of Christ, and proof of the Divine wrath against the emperor. Having heard that at Caesarea Philippi, otherwise called Paneas, a city of Phoenicia, there was a celebrated statue of Christ which had been erected by a woman whom the Lord had cured of a flow of blood, Julian commanded it to be taken down and a statue of himself erected in its place.</p> <p>5.21.2 But a violent fire from heaven fell upon it and broke off the parts contiguous to the breast; the head and neck were thrown prostrate, and it was transfixed to the ground with the face downwards at the point where the fracture of the bust was; and it has stood in that fashion from that day until now, full of the rust of the lightning.</p> <p>5.21.3 The statue of Christ was dragged around the city and mutilated by the pagans; but the Christians recovered the fragments, and deposited the statue in the church in which it is still preserved. Eusebius relates, that at the base of this statue grew an herb which was unknown to the physicians and empirics, but was efficacious in the cure of all disorders.</p> <p>5.21.4 It does not appear a matter of astonishment to me, that, after God had vouchsafed to dwell with men, he should condescend to bestow benefits upon them. It appears that innumerable other miracles were wrought in different cities and villages; accounts have been accurately preserved by the inhabitants of these places only, because they learned them from ancestral tradition; and how true this is, I will at once show.</p> | |

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| | <p>5.21.5 There is a city now called Nicopolis, in Palestine, which was formerly only a village, and which was mentioned by the divine book of the Gospel under the name of Emmaus. The name of Nicopolis was given to this place by the Romans after the conquest of Jerusalem and the victory over the Jews.</p> <p>5.21.6 Just beyond the city where three roads meet, is the spot where Christ, after His resurrection, said farewell to Cleopas and his companion, as if he were going to another village; and here is a healing fountain in which men and other living creatures afflicted with different diseases wash away their sufferings.</p> <p>5.21.7 For it is said that when Christ together with His disciples came from a journey to this fountain, they bathed their feet in it and from that time the water became a cure for disorders.</p> <p>5.21.8 At Hermopolis, in the Thebais, is a tree called Persis, of which the branches, the leaves, and the least portion of the bark, are said to heal diseases, when touched by the sick.</p> <p>5.21.9 For it is related by the Egyptians that when Joseph fled with Christ and Mary, the holy mother of God, from the wrath of Herod, they went to Hermopolis. When entering at the gate, this largest tree, as if not enduring the advent of Christ, inclined to the ground and worshiped Him.</p> <p>5.21.10 I relate precisely what I have heard from many sources concerning this tree. I think that this phenomenon was a sign of the presence of God in the city. Or perhaps, as seems most probable, the tree, which had been worshiped by the inhabitants, after the pagan custom, was shaken, because the demon, who had been an object of worship, started up at sight of Him who was manifested for purification from such agencies. It was moved of its own accord; for at the presence of Christ the idols of Egypt were shaken, even as Isaiah the prophet had foretold.</p> <p>5.21.11 On the expulsion of the demon, the tree was permitted to remain as a monument of what had occurred, and was endued with the property of healing those who</p> | |

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| | believed. The inhabitants of Egypt and of Palestine testify to the truth of these events, which took place among themselves. | |
| Natural disasters during Julian's reign | | |
| | <p>6.2.13 It is, however, very obvious that throughout the reign of this emperor God gave manifest tokens of His displeasure and permitted many calamities to befall several of the provinces of the Roman Empire. He visited the earth with such fearful earthquakes, that the buildings were shaken, and no more safety could be found within the houses than in the open air.</p> <p>6.2.14 From what I have heard, I conjecture that it was during the reign of this emperor, or, at least, when he occupied the second place in the government, that a great calamity occurred near Alexandria in Egypt, when the sea receded and again passed beyond its boundaries from the reflux waves, and deluged a great deal of the land, so that on the retreat of the waters, the sea-skiffs were found lodged on the roofs of the houses.</p> <p>6.2.15 The anniversary of this inundation, which they call the birthday of an earthquake, is still commemorated at Alexandria by a yearly festival; a general illumination is made throughout the city; they offer thankful prayers to God and celebrate the day very brilliantly and piously. An excessive drought also occurred during this reign.</p> <p>6.2.16 The plants perished and the air was corrupted; and for want of proper sustenance, men were obliged to have recourse to the food usually eaten by other animals. The famine introduced peculiar diseases, by which many lives were lost. Such was the state of the empire during the administration of Julian.</p> | |
| Refutation of what Libanius said concerning Julian | | |
| <p>3.23.1 'When the winter,' says he, 'had lengthened the nights, the emperor made an attack on those books which made the man of Palestine both God, and the Son of God: and by a long series of arguments having proved that these writings, which are so much revered by Christians, are ridiculous and unfounded, he has proved himself wiser and more skillful than the Tyrian old man.'</p> | | |

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| <p>3.23.2 But may this Tyrian sage be forgiving with me, and mildly bear with what has been affirmed, seeing that he has been excelled by his son!’</p> <p>3.23.3 Such is the language of Libanius the Sophist. But I confess, indeed, that he was an excellent rhetorician, but am persuaded that had he not shared the emperor's religious beliefs, he would have said everything the Christians say, and would have intensified the rhetoric, as rhetoricians usually do.</p> <p>3.23.4 For while Constantius was alive he wrote odes to him; but after his death he brought the most insulting and reproachful charges against him.</p> <p>3.23.5 So that if Porphyry had been emperor, Libanius would certainly have preferred his books to Julian’s; and had Julian been a mere sophist, he would have termed him a very indifferent one, as he does Ecebolius in his Epitaph upon Julian.</p> <p>3.23.6 Since then he has spoken in the spirit of a pagan, a sophist, and the friend of him whom he lauded, we shall endeavor to meet what he has advanced, as far as we are able.</p> <p>3.23.7 In the first place he says that the emperor undertook to ‘attack’ these books during the long winter nights.</p> <p>3.23.8 Now to ‘attack’ means to make the writing of a confutation of them a task, as the sophists commonly do in teaching the basics of their art; for he had perused these books long before, but attacked them at this time.</p> <p>3.23.9 But throughout the long contest into which he entered, instead of attempting to disprove anything by sound reasoning, as Libanius asserts, in the absence of truth he made use of sneers and contemptuous jests, of which he was excessively fond; and thus, he sought to hold up to derision what is too firmly established to be overthrown.</p> <p>3.23.10 For everyone who enters into controversy with another, sometimes trying to pervert the truth, and at other times to conceal it, falsifies by every possible means the position of his antagonist.</p> | | |

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| <p>3.23.11 And an adversary is not satisfied with doing malignant acts against one with whom he is at odds, but will speak against him also, and charge upon the object of his dislike the very faults he is conscious of in himself.</p> <p>3.23.12 That both Julian and Porphyry, whom Libanius calls the 'Tyrian old man,' took great delight in scoffing, is evident from their own works.</p> <p>3.23.13 For Porphyry in his History of the Philosophers has treated with ridicule the life of Socrates, the most eminent of all the philosophers, making such remarks on him as neither Meletus, nor Anytus, his accusers, would have dared to utter; of Socrates, I say, who was admired by all the Greeks for his modesty, justice, and other virtues; whom Plato, the most admirable among them, Xenophon, and the rest of the philosophic band, not only honor as one beloved of God, but also are accustomed to think of as having been endowed with superhuman intelligence.</p> <p>3.23.14 And Julian imitated the passion of his 'father' in his book, entitled The Caesars, in which he defames all his imperial predecessors, not sparing even Mark the philosopher.</p> <p>3.23.15 Their own writings therefore show that they both took pleasure in taunts and reviling; and I have no need of profuse and clever expressions to do this. But what has been said is enough concerning their mood in this respect.</p> <p>3.23.16 Now I write these things, using the oration of each as witnesses respecting their dispositions,</p> <p>3.23.17 But of Julian in particular, what Gregory of Nazianzus says in his Second Oration against the Pagans is in the following terms:</p> <p>3.23.18 'These things were made evident to others by experience, after the possession of imperial authority had left him free to follow the bent of his inclinations. But I had foreseen it all, from the time I became acquainted with him at Athens.</p> <p>3.23.19 To there he had come, by permission of the emperor, soon after the change in his brother's fortune. His motive for this visit was twofold.</p> <p>3.23.20 One reason was honorable to him, viz. to see Greece, and attend the schools there; the other was a more</p> | | |

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| <p>secret one, which few knew anything about, for his impiety had not yet presumed to openly avow itself, viz. to have opportunity of consulting the sacrificers and other impostors respecting his own destiny.</p> <p>3.23.21 I well remember that even then I was no bad diviner concerning this person, although I by no means pretend to be one of those skilled in the art of divination.</p> <p>3.23.22 But the fickleness of his disposition, and the incredible extravagancy of his mind, rendered me prophetic; if indeed he is the “best prophet who conjectures correctly” events.</p> <p>3.23.23 For it seemed to me that no good would come from a neck seldom steady, the frequent shrugging of shoulders, an eye scowling and always in motion, together with a frenzied aspect; a gait irregular and tottering, a nose breathing only contempt and insult, with ridiculous contortions of countenance expressive of the same thing; immoderate and very loud laughter, nods as it were of assent, and drawings back of the head as if in denial, without any visible cause; speech with hesitancy and interrupted by his breathing; disorderly and senseless questions, answers no better, all jumbled together without the least consistency or method.</p> <p>3.23.24 Why need I enter into minute particulars? Such I foresaw he would be beforehand as I found him afterwards from experience. And if any of those who were then present and heard me, were now here, they would readily testify that when I observed these prognostics I exclaimed, “Ah! how great a mischief to itself is the Roman empire fostering!”</p> <p>3.23.25 And that when I had uttered these words I prayed God that I might be a false prophet. For it would have been far better [that I should have been convicted of having formed an erroneous judgment], than that the world should be filled with so many calamities, and that such a monster should have appeared as never before had been seen.</p> <p>3.23.26 Although many deluges and fires are recorded, many earthquakes and chasms, and descriptions are given of many ferocious and inhuman men, as well as prodigies of the brute creation, compounded of different races, of</p> | | |

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| <p>which nature produced unusual forms, his end has indeed been such as corresponds with the madness of his career.’ This is the sketch which Gregory has given us of Julian.</p> <p>3.23.27 Moreover, many have demonstrated that in their various compilations they have endeavored to do violence to the truth, sometimes by the corruption of passages of sacred Scripture, other times by either adding to the express words, and putting such a construction upon them as suited their own purpose. Many have proven this by demolishing their trivial objections and exposing their fallacies.</p> <p>3.23.28 Origen in particular, who lived long before Julian’s time, by himself raising objections to such passages of Holy Scripture as seemed to disturb some readers, and then fully meeting them, has shut out the resentful clamors of the thoughtless.</p> <p>3.23.29 And had Julian and Porphyry given his writings a candid and serious perusal, they would have discoursed on other topics, and not have turned to the framing of blasphemous sophisms.</p> <p>3.23.30 It is also very obvious that the emperor in his discourses was intent on beguiling the ignorant, and did not address himself to those who possess the ‘form’ of the truth as it is presented in the sacred Scriptures.</p> <p>3.23.31 For having grouped together various expressions in which God is spoken of more in human form, and more according to the manner of men, he thus comments on them.</p> <p>3.23.32 ‘Every one of these expressions is full of blasphemy against God, unless the phrase contains some occult and mysterious sense, which indeed I can suppose.’</p> <p>3.23.33 This is the exact language he uses in his third book against the Christians.</p> <p>3.23.34 But in his treatise On the Cynic Philosophy, where he shows to what extent fables may be invented on religious subjects, he says that in such matters the truth must be veiled.</p> <p>3.23.35 ‘For,’ to quote his very words, ‘Nature loves concealment; and the hidden substance of the gods cannot endure being cast into polluted ears in naked words.’</p> | | |

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| <p>3.23.36 From which it is manifest that the emperor entertained this notion concerning the divine Scriptures, that they are mystical discourses, containing in them some obscure meaning. He is also very indignant because all men do not form the same opinion of them; and denounces those Christians who understand the sacred oracles in a more literal sense.</p> <p>3.23.37 But it ill became him to rail so vehemently against the simplicity of the vulgar, and on their account to behave so arrogantly towards the sacred Scriptures. Nor was he warranted in turning with aversion from those things which others rightly apprehended, because, alas, they understood them in a manner other than he desired.</p> <p>3.23.38 But now it seems, Porphyry has suffered the same things. For he, having been beaten by some Christians at Caesarea in Palestine and not being able to endure [such treatment], from the working of unrestrained rage renounced the Christian religion. And from hatred of those who had beaten him he began to write blasphemous works against Christians, as Eusebius Pamphilus has proved, who at the same time refuted his writings.</p> <p>3.23.39 So the emperor having uttered disdainful expressions against the Christians in the presence of an unthinking multitude, through the same morbid condition of mind fell into Porphyry's blasphemies. Since therefore they both willfully broke forth into impiety, they are punished by the consciousness of their guilt.</p> <p>3.23.40 But when Libanius the Sophist says in derision, that the Christians make 'a man of Palestine both God and the Son of God,' he appears to have forgotten that he himself has deified Julian at the close of his oration.</p> <p>3.23.41 'For they almost killed,' says he, 'the first one to report his death, as if the messenger had lied against a god.'</p> <p>3.23.42 And a little afterwards he adds, 'O thou cherished one of the gods! thou disciple of the gods! thou associate with the gods!'</p> <p>3.23.43 Now although Libanius may have meant otherwise, yet because as he did not avoid the ambiguity of a word which is sometimes taken in a bad sense, he seems</p> | | |

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| <p>to have said the same things as the Christians had done reproachfully.</p> <p>3.23.44 If then it was his intention to praise him, he ought to have avoided equivocal terms, as he did on another occasion; when being criticized he avoided a certain word, cutting it out of his works.</p> <p>3.23.45 Moreover, that man in Christ was united to the Godhead, so that while he was apparently but man, he was the invisible God, and that both these things are most true, the divine books of Christians distinctly teach.</p> <p>3.23.46 But the heathen before they believe, cannot understand, for it is a divine oracle that declares ‘Unless ye believe, assuredly ye shall not understand.’</p> <p>3.23.47 Wherefore they are not ashamed to place many men among the number of their gods. And would that they had done this, at least to the good, just, and sober, instead of the impure, unjust, and those addicted to drunkenness, like the Hercules, the Bacchus, and the Aesculapius,</p> <p>3.23.48 by whom Libanius does not blush to swear frequently in his orations. And were I to attempt to enumerate the unnatural debaucheries and infamous adulteries of these, the digression would be lengthened beyond measure.</p> <p>3.23.49 But for those who desire to be informed on the subject, Aristotle’s Peplum, Dionysius’ Corona, Rheginus’ Polymnemon, and the whole host of poets will be enough to show that the pagan theology is a tissue of extravagant absurdities.</p> <p>3.23.50 We might indeed show by a variety of instances that the practice of deifying human beings was far from uncommon among the heathen, nay, that they did so without the slightest hesitation. Let a few examples suffice.</p> <p>3.23.51 After the Rhodians had consulted an oracle on some public calamity, a response was given directing them to pay their adoration to Atys, a pagan priest who instituted extravagant rites in Phrygia.</p> <p>3.23.52 The oracle was thus expressed: ‘Atys have mercy, thou great god, the chaste Adonis, the blessed fair-haired Dionysius rich in gifts.’</p> | | |

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| <p>3.23.53 Here Atys, who out of erotic mania had castrated himself, is by the oracle designated as Adonis and Bacchus.</p> <p>3.23.54 Again, when Alexander, king of the Macedonians, passed over into Asia, the Amphictyons courted his favor, and the Pythoness uttered this oracle:</p> <p>3.23.55 ‘To Zeus supreme among the gods, and Athene Tritogenia pay homage, and to the divine king concealed in mortal form. For Zeus begat him in honor to be the protector and dispenser of justice among mortals, Alexander the king.’</p> <p>3.23.56 These are the words of the demon at Delphi, who when he wished to flatter rulers, did not scruple to assign them a place among the gods.</p> <p>3.23.57 The motive here was perhaps to win over by flattery, but what could one say of the case of Cleomedes the fist-fighter, whom they ranked among the gods in this oracle? ‘The last of the heroes is Cleomedes, the Astypalian. Honor him with sacrifices; for he is no longer a mortal.’</p> <p>3.23.58 Because of this oracle Diogenes the cynic, and Oenomaus the philosopher, strongly condemned Apollo.</p> <p>3.23.59 The inhabitants of Cyzicus declared Hadrian to be the thirteenth god; and Hadrian himself deified his own catamite Antinous.</p> <p>3.23.60 Libanius does not term these ‘ridiculous and contemptible absurdities,’ although he was familiar with these oracles, as well as with the work of Adrias on the life of Alexander (the pseudo-prophet of Paphlagonia.) Nor does he himself hesitate to dignify Porphyry in a similar manner, when after having preferred Julian’s books to his, he says, ‘May the Syrian be favorable towards me.’</p> <p>3.23.61 This digression will suffice to repel the scoffs of the sophist, without following him farther in what he has advanced; for to enter into a complete refutation would require an express work. We shall therefore proceed with our history.</p> | | |

