

# CLEMENT TO THE CORINTHIANS Lesson Five (1 Clement 20-27)

*Clement had seen the blessed apostles and conversed with them, their teaching was still ringing in his ears.* (Irenaeus)

## 1 Clement 20: Appeal to Nature

**The heavens move at his direction.** Appeal to nature as a form of Greek and Roman rhetoric. Cf. Psalm 19, Maariv blessing: "He orders the stars in their heavenly constellations as he wills ...removing light before darkness and darkness before light, He causes day to pass and brings night."

**Indescribable judgments of the underworld.** That is the judgments of Gehenna.

**Thus far you shall come.** Job 38:11.

**But especially abundantly to us who have taken refuge.**

Nature will erupt in miraculous fertility in the Messianic Era and all creatures will live peaceably. Those in Messiah will experience nature at her best and most abundant.

**To whom be the glory and the majesty forever and ever.**

**Amen.** Typical apostolic doxology.

Address: *Jesus Christ*

Ascription of glory: *To whom be the glory and majesty.*

Statement of duration: *Forever and ever.*

Liturgical Conclusion: *Amen.*

## 1 Clement 21: Godly Instruction

**The Spirit of the LORD is a lamp.** Proverbs 20:27.

**Senseless men who exalt themselves.** The schismatics in Corinth.

**Let us respect our leaders; let us honor our elders.** Apostolic rule in Ignatius to honor the bishop as the Master.

**His breath is in us.** The Neshamah.

## 1 Clement 22: Instruction of Christ

**Through the Holy Spirit.** In apostolic thought, the Spirit of Messiah spoke through David's Psalms.

**Come, my children, listen to me.** Psalm 34:11-17

**Many are the afflictions of the sinner.** Psalm 32:10.

## 1 Clement 23: Do not Doubt Consequences

**Let us not be double-minded.** Cf. James 4:8; "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded." Literally "Double-souled." (δίψυχος *dipsuchos*)

**Wretched are the double-minded.** Unknown source. Cf. 2 Peter 3:2-4.

**He will come quickly.** Isaiah 13:22, LXI "It will come soon, and will not tarry."

**The Lord will come suddenly into his temple.** "And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 3:1)

Cf. Habakkuk 2:3: "For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay."

## 1 Clement 24: The Resurrection

**Christ the firstfruit.** Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:20; 15:23.

**The resurrection that regularly occurs.** Clement brings an appeal to nature as evidence of the resurrection.

**These seeds, falling to the earth dry and bare, decay.**

Rabbinic and apostolic literature often points to the germination of seeds as a type of resurrection.

But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?"

You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. (1Co 15:35-38)

## 1 Clement 25: The Phoenix

**The remarkable sign which is seen in the regions of the East.** Clement appeals to the legend of the Phoenix as an example of resurrection. Cf. Psalm 92:12 (LXX 91:13): "The righteous man will flourish like the palm tree, He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon." Readers confused the palm tree (phoenix, φοῖνιξ) with the Phoenix.

**Heliopolis.** City of the sun. Northern Cairo.

## 1 Clement 26: Lesson from the Phoenix

**And you will raise me up.** Psalm 28:7

**I lay down and slept; I rose up.** Psalm 3:5; 23:4

**And you will raise this flesh of mine.** Job 19:26.

## 1 Clement 27: God is Faithful

**Who will say to him, "What have you done."** Wisdom of Solomon 12:12; cf. Siddur, Morning Blessings *Attah Hu*: "Who among all your handiwork, those above and those below, can say to you, "What are you doing."

For who shall say, What hast thou done? or who shall withstand thy judgment? or who shall accuse thee for the nations that perish, whom thou made? or who shall come to stand against thee, to be revenged for the unrighteous men? (Wis 12:12)

**The heavens declare the glory of God.** Psalm 19:1-3.