

The Life of Apollonius of Tyana was written by the Athenian sophist **Flavius Philostratus** about A.D. 217. Apollonius was born in the city of Tyana in ancient Cappadocia (= modern Turkey) about the beginning of the first century A.D. and lived until the reign of Nerva (A.D. 96–98). A wandering, ascetic philosopher and perhaps even a charlatan who claimed to possess supernatural abilities, Apollonius traveled throughout the Roman Empire and perhaps even as far east as India.

Shortly after A.D. 217, Julia Domna, the wife of Roman emperor **Septimius Severus**, asked Philostratus to produce a pagan answer to the Christ of the Christians. In response, Philostratus wrote this *Life*, wherein he depicted Apollonius as a saintly man with miraculous powers who, like Jesus, could heal the lame (*Life* 3.39), the paralyzed (*Life* 3.39), the blind (*Life* 3.39), and the demon-possessed (*Life* 3.38), and who could even raise the dead (*Life* 4.45). On one occasion, he miraculously extricated himself from a chain around his ankle (*Life* 7.38). Philostratus also claimed that miraculous circumstances attended Apollonius's birth (*Life* 1.4–5), and that Apollonius had mysteriously disappeared at his trial before the Roman emperor **Domitian** (*Life* 8.5).

According to Philostratus, the death of Apollonius remains a mystery, so that he himself even questions whether Apollonius ever actually died (*Life* 8.29). But at the end of his account, Philostratus adds various reports of Apollonius's supposed death and even the claim of some that he could still communicate with the living after his own death (*Life* 8.31).

In this episode (*Life* 6.43), Philostratus claims that Apollonius once healed a boy suffering from rabies (or hydrophobia). But one can easily see how markedly inferior the details of this story are when compared with similar stories in the Bible.

PHILOSTRATUS

THE LIFE OF APOLLONIUS OF TYANA

THE EPISTLES OF APOLLONIUS AND THE
TREATISE OF EUSEBIUS

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

F. C. CONYBEARE, M.A.

LATE FELLOW AND PRAELECTOR OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
OXFORD

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II



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MCMLXXXIX

CAP.
XLII. ἔκκοπτεν, παρελθὼν ἐς τοὺς Ἴωνας ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος, "τὰ μὲν προστάγματα οὐ πρὸς ἐμέ," ἔφη, "ταῦτα, μόνος γὰρ ἴσως ἀνθρώπων οὕτε αἰδοίων δέσμαι οὕτε οἴνου, λέληθε δὲ ὁ θαυμασιώτατος τῶν μὲν ἀνθρώπων φειδόμενος, τὴν δὲ γῆν εὐνοχίξω." ὅθεν ἐς θάσος ἡ Ἴωνία ἦλθε πρῆσβύσασθαι πρὸς τὸν Βασιλέα ὑπὲρ ἀμπελώνων καὶ παραιτήσασθαι νόμον, ὃς ἐκέλευε καὶ δημοῦσθαι τὴν γῆν καὶ μὴ φυτεύεσθαι.

XLIII

CAP.
XLIII. Κάκωια ἐν Ταρσοῖς τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἄδουσι· κύων ἐνεπεπτάκει ἐφήβῳ λυττῶν, καὶ ἀπῆγε τὸν ἔφηβον τὸ δῆγμα ἐς τὰ τῶν κυνῶν πάντα, ἰλάκτει τε γὰρ καὶ ὠρύετο καὶ τετράπους ἔθει τῶ χειρε ὑπέχων τῷ δρόμῳ. νοσοῦντι δ' αὐτῷ τριακοστὴν ἡμέραν ἐφίσταται μὲν ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος ἄρτι ἐς τοὺς Ταρσοὺς ἦκων, κελεύει δὲ ἀνιχνευθῆναι οἱ τὸν κύνα, ὃς ταῦτα εἰργάσατο, οἱ δ' οὔτε ἐντετυχηκῆναι τῷ κυνὶ ἔφασαν, ἔξω γὰρ τείχους εἰληφῆθαι αὐτὸν τοῦ ἐφήβου πρὸς ἀκουτίοις ἄντρος, οὔτ' αὖν τοῦ νοσοῦντος μαθεῖν, ἥτις ἡ ἰδέα τοῦ κυνός, ἐπεὶ μηδὲ αὐτὸν ἔτι οἶδεν. ἐπισχῶν οὖν, "ὦ Δάμι," ἔφη, "λευκὸς ὁ κύων λάσσιος προβαιτευτικὸς Ἀμφιλοχικῷ ἴσος, προσέστηκε δὲ τῇ δεινῇ κρήνῃ τρέμων, τὸ γὰρ ὕδωρ καὶ ποθεῖ καὶ δέδουκεν· ἄγε μοι τοῦτου ἐπὶ τὴν του ποταμοῦ ὄχθην, ἐφ' ἧς

Apollonius, who was visiting the Ionians, remarked: CAP.
"These rescripts do not concern me, for I, alone XLII
perhaps of mankind, require neither to beget my
kind nor to drink wine; but our egregious sovereign
seems not aware that he is sparing mankind, while
he eunuchises the earth." This witticism em-
boldened the Ionians to send a deputation to the
emperor in behalf of their vines, and ask for a repeal
of the law which ordered the earth to be laid waste
and not planted.

XLIII

HERE too is a story which they tell of him in CAP.
Tarsus. A mad dog had attacked a lad, and as a XLIII
result of the bite the lad behaved exactly like a dog, heals a
for he barked and howled and went on all four feet youth bitten
using his hands as such, and ran about in that dog
manner. And he had been ill in this way for
thirty days, when Apollonius, who had recently
come to Tarsus, met him and ordered a search to be
made for the dog which had done the harm. But they
said that the dog had not been found, because the
youth had been attacked outside the wall when he
was practising with javelins, nor could they learn
from the patient what the dog was like, for he did
not even know himself any more. Then Apollonius
reflected a moment and said: "O Damis, the dog is
a white shaggy sheep-dog, as big as an Amphilochean
hound, and he is standing at a certain fountain
trembling all over, for he is longing to drink the
water, but at the same time is afraid of it. Bring
him to me to the bank of the river, where there are

ΧΛΙΗ
 GAΡ αἱ παλαιστραὶ, μόνον εἰπῶν, ὅτι ὑπ' ἐμοῦ καλοῦτο." ΧΛΙΗ
 ἄλχθεις δ' ὁ κύων ὑπὸ τοῦ Δάμωδος, ὑπεκλίθη τοῖς
 τοῦ Ἀπολλωνίου ποσί, ὥσπερ οἱ Βώμιοι τῶν
 ἱκετῶν κλαίων, ὁ δ' ἡμέρου τε αὐτὸν ἔτι μάλλον
 καὶ τῇ χειρὶ ἐπράυνε, τὸν ἔφηβόν τε ἴσση ἐγγύς
 ξυνέχων αὐτός, ὡς δὲ μὴ λάθῃ τοὺς πολλοὺς μέγα
 ἀπόρητον, "μεθέστηκε μέυ," ἔφη, "ἐς τὸν παῖδα
 τοῦτου ἢ Τηλέφου ψυχῇ τοῦ Μυσοῦ, Μάϊραι δ'
 ἐπ' αὐτῷ ταῦτά βούλονται," καὶ εἰπῶν ταῦτα
 ἐκέλευσε τὸν κύνα περιλχμήσασθαι τὸ δῆγμα, ὡς
 ἱατρός αὐτῷ πάλιν ὁ τρώσας γένουτο. ἐπεστράφη
 τὸ ἐντεῦθεν ἐς τὸν πατέρα ὁ παῖς καὶ ξυνῆκε τῆς
 μητρός, προσεῖπέ τε τοὺς ἥλικας καὶ ἔπτε τοῦ
 Κύδνου, περιώφθη δὲ οὐδὲ ὁ κύων, ἀλλὰ κάκῃν
 εὐξάμενος τῷ ποταμῷ δι' αὐτοῦ ἦκεν. ὁ δ' ἐπεὶ
 διέβη τὸν Κύδνον, ἐπιστάς τῇ ὄχθῃ φωνήν τε
 ἀφῆκεν, ὅπερ ἦκιστα περὶ τοὺς λυττῶντας τῶν
 κυνῶν ξυμβαίνει, καὶ τὰ ὦτα ἀνακλάσας ἔσεισε
 τὴν οὐρὰν, ξυνεὶς τοῦ ἐρρωσθαι, φαρμακοποσία
 γὰρ λύττης ὕδαρ, ἣν θαρσήση αὐτὸ ὁ λυττῶν.
 Τοιαῦτα τοῦ ἀνδρὸς τὰ ὑπὲρ ἱερῶν τε καὶ
 πόλων καὶ τὰ πρὸς δήμους καὶ ὑπὲρ δήμων, καὶ
 τὰ ὑπὲρ τελευεῶτων ἠνοσοῦντων, καὶ τὰ πρὸς
 σοφοὺς τε καὶ μὴ σοφοὺς καὶ τὰ πρὸς Βασιλέας,
 οἱ ξυμβουλον αὐτὸν ἀρετῆς ἐποιούντο.

the wrestling grounds, merely telling him that it is I CHAP.
 who call him." So Damis dragged the dog along, ΧΛΙΗ
 and it crouched at the feet of Apollonius, crying out
 as a suppliant might do before an altar. But he quite
 tamed it by stroking it with his hand, and then he
 stood the lad close by, holding him with his hand;
 and in order that the multitude might be cognizant
 of so great a mystery, he said: "The soul of
 Telephus of Mysia has been transferred into this boy,
 and the Fates impose the same things upon him as
 upon Telephus." And with these words he bade
 the dog lick the wound all round where he had
 bitten the boy, so that the agent of the wound
 might in turn be its physician and healer. After
 that the boy returned to his father and recognised
 his mother, and saluted his comrades as before,
 and drank of the waters of the Cydnus. Nor did
 the sage neglect the dog either, but after offering a
 prayer to the river he sent the dog across it; and
 when the dog had crossed the river, he took his
 stand on the opposite bank, and began to bark, a
 thing which mad dogs rarely do, and he folded back
 his ears and wagged his tail, because he knew that
 he was all right again, for a draught of water cures
 a mad dog, if he has only the courage to take it.

Such were the exploits of our sage in behalf of
 both temples and cities; such were the discourses
 he delivered to the public or in behalf of different
 communities, and in behalf of those who were dead
 or who were sick; and such were the harangues he
 delivered to wise and unwise alike, and to the
 sovereigns who consulted him about moral virtue.