

Greater Expectations

A Tale of Life in the 4th Century

by Edward Rice



Table of Contents

<u>Chapter 1 The Onset to Enterprise.....</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Chapter 2 Apollonia</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Chapter 3 Shipping in the Roman Empire.....</u>	<u>18</u>

Other Books By This Author

at

www.GSBaptistChurch.com

in Paperback at

<http://stores.lulu.com/GSBaptistChurch>

Greater Expectations

A Tale of Life in the 4th Century

by Edward Rice

Chapter 1 The Onset to Enterprise

Despite their petite size and color, perhaps because of it, gold finches are ruthless. The small box of seeds littering the little table was now a literal war zone as the delicate little birds ferociously drove contenders from the bounty. Polycarp was distracted from his early morning reading as he watched one quite frazzled but very gifted warrior keep showing up and conquering the choice perch.

The sun climbed in the Abib sky and began to cut into the light frost that had settled on the little table. Again the chirping flurry caused him to look up from his reading and smile at his little champion with that tufted feather sticking from his chest. He perched on the little stick his aunt had meticulously required in the box of seeds. The little finch had again conquered the prize position. Polycarp grinned at the little scrapper and expected that his own venture here in Apollonia could show a similar success if he could shew such a competitive diligence.

The birds all scattered as Aunt Marie stepped onto the patio and

refilled his coffee cup.

“Is it amazing how many birds gather at that little feeder?” she glowed.

“If they were gathering their seeds from the golden rods on the hill I would have likely finished my reading this morning.” Polycarp responded not looking up from his scroll of papers.

“They make almost as amazing a study if you would watch them” she said disappearing back into the house. Study always had amazed Polycarp.

Chet was due back from the docks and Marie was trying to time breakfast to his arrival. Polycarp turned his attention back to his readings. His uncle had a complete collection of the minor prophets and he wanted to read Zachariah in his stay here. The sun warmed the patio and the smell of breakfast wafted from the house. The weariness of his voyage still wore on him but a days rest had made him hungry for his aunt's fried eggs and mutton.

He read from the scroll. "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee."

Now his mind was racing faster than the text as he pondered the adventure his father had initiated and entrusted with young Polycarp. His father, Marcion, had a growing mercantile in Smyrna

when he took over a shipping route of a Macedonian supplier. The expansion, just as Rome had expanded involvement in Byzantium, had been successful beyond imagination with three more suppliers up the Sea of Adria attaching to his mercantile.

Marcion's brother Chet, was handling the business here in Apollonia and Polycarp was here to expand the outreach into northern Italy. Polycarp thought of the scrappy little gold finch who took over the perch. "I wonder if I will have as much success in Verona; I wonder if God will dwell with me and make my way prosperous like He promised Israel to make her way prosperous."

His thoughts were interrupted by his uncles arrival from the docks and his aunts call that breakfast was on the table. The birds scattered as Polycarp carefully rolled the scroll and headed into the house for a family breakfast that would surely reminded him of home back in Smyrna.

"The crates from your father are all lined up in the dock house and Clement has guards hired for all week to keep the thieves at bay." his uncle reported with more ease in his voice than was present last night. Chet was accustomed to receiving his brothers shipments through the Egnatian Way which was well guarded and well traveled by Roman soldiers. This new shipping line connecting the Aegean and Adrian seas made him nervous at least.

Chet's oldest boy, Clement, was to venture along with Polycarp up into northern Italy. His seat was empty for breakfast. The family

joined hands around a table of bounty as Chet led in table grace.

"Thank you Lord, especially for your bounty and blessing, your health and care that you show for us each day. Thank you for your watch-care and keeping on Polycarp as he journeyed over the perilous seaway. Thank you for the food now before us, the hands that have prepared it and bless it now to our health and strength as you bless our health and strength to your service this day. In the name of our Lord and Saviour we pray, and for his names sake., Amen."

Caleb added from the doorway, "And thank you Lord for the safe delivery of every crate from Uncle Marcion. "

As Polycarp sipped from his hot coffee he saw the large eyes of his young cousin staring at him. "Uncle Chet, I think it would be good for Cyril to come with us up the Adrian sea next week," he said with sincerity in his voice.

Chet saw the 5 year old's eyes grow even larger. "Perhaps you would take him on as a journeyman." Chet replied, "He needs to start learning a good trade, he counts well and has learned all his letters already." As they both turned to Cyril his awe turned to a shy fear and he looked to his mother for help. He found none.

"I could have his laundry all done and his bags all packed in no time at all." his mom reported.

Young Cyril was not unacquainted with the families ability to spin a yarn and looked back at Polycarp. "I could be your a-count-ant,"

he struggled with pronunciation of the job.

It was a title his father had acquainted him with when he successfully counted out 100 building sticks he had been playing with. Now Polycarp blushed with a little shyness of his own, not knowing exactly how to respond to his cousin's quick acceptance of his offer. Polycarp had not seen Chet and Marie in seven years and this first meeting with their youngest son was a joy. The whole family here had looked up to Polycarp's family back in Smyrna and young Cyril was now in the presence of a legend, his older cousin.

"So how many plates are we going to wash" Marie broke in on the moment and Cyril began circling the table and counting the place settings. His sister laughed and picked at him for counting Clements seat when the plate was unused. Marie tucked some meat and egg into a scone and wrapped it in a cloth napkin.

"Do make sure Clement gets this breakfast," she said as she tucked the package into the pocket of Chet's coat which hung by the door. "I do worry about that boy and his excitement." She gave her husband a quick hug and disappeared into the kitchen with hands full of dishes.

When she returned Chet was coming from his office with a small scroll. Everyone was seated at the table when he opened it to a section marked by a small brass clip. The children sat attentively as he carefully began reading aloud from the worn page.

"The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; To

know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;"

Polycarp glanced at his four cousins marveling at the close attention they paid to their father's words as each watched the scroll opened in front of them.

Like his own, this family was in love with the Proverbs of Solomon and read a section each day after breakfast. As Cyril sat on his father's knee carefully following his father's finger past each word sister1 and sister2 followed along in another scroll and Caleb and Polycarp followed the scroll he held. The girls had carefully copied a section each week and sister2 was eager that Polycarp follow along in the scroll that she had copied. Her pride and glee bubbled across the table as my turn to read my three lines of text approached.

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels," Polycarp read carefully.

He glanced at her sparkling smile as her brother, Caleb read the neatly written text.

"To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings." Caleb read aloud.

Before Chet read in turn he pointed at the next two words and Cyril carefully spelled out the letters "T, H, E, The, F, E, A, R, "fea ..., fea ... " Smiles and sparkling eyes surrounded the table as

Chet continued the reading for Cyril.

"Fear ... of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

The familiarity of the the Proverbs of Solomon and the daily family reading around the breakfast table took Polycarp back to his boyhood home. He was named after the famous Bishop at Smyrna because his father, Marcion, was named after the gnostic philosopher and arch rival of the famed Gospel Preacher. When his father was converted to the Christ, he wished to do some correcting on his namesake and named his first born son Polycarp. Polycarp, the Bishop of the Church at Smyrna was recommended to that office by his mentor the Apostle John himself. Bishop Polycarp had called the gnostic philosopher Marcion "the first born of Satan" despite his being the son of the bishop of a Church in Sinope, up in Pontus. Now young Polycarp, the first born son of one Marcion, the Christian ship owner, was always reminded of his namesake the martyred Bishop of the Church of Smyrna. In Smyrna, where young Polycarp grew up, his name was always contrasted with his father's name with knowing expectations. As Polycarp was to venture out into Apollonia on this mercantile adventure of his career he was to find that the name Polycarp son of Marcion would raise eyebrows and draw attention all across Greece and Italy.

His thoughts were racing with excitement and expectation as his uncle Chet closed the family alter prayer time with a

hearty : "Amen!"

"Well Polycarp, if you have rested well and are up to some work lets get down to the docks and go through your father's ship." Chet said as he handed his carefully wrapped scroll to his son and reached for his coat. "They should have finished unloading all the crates by now."

"I am well rested and well fed." said Polycarp, "Aunt Marie, thank you for the spectacular breakfast and superb coffee." he said as he kissed his aunt on her cheek.

As she touched his hand she said "Polycarp, it is such a joy to have you here after all these years, you have turned into such a gentleman."

"Now Chet be a honey and bring in some more water before you head back down to the docks." The gleam and smile Marie threw at Chet made Polycarp feel right at home and he smiled at the sparkle in his uncles eye.

"And don't forget the breakfast I packed for Clement, it is there in your pocket." Marie said as she patted the pocket and hugged his neck.

"We will be back for some lunch before you know it." Chet said as he and I headed out the door and down the alleyway of Apollonia towards the docks.

Greater Expectations

A Tale of Life in the 4th Century
by Edward Rice

If you have never read a historical novel, you really must. Please start here.
If you would read a historical novel of the 4th century, you really have to start here.

Missed The Corrected Chapter 1? Goto www.GSBaptistChurch.com/novel

Chapter 2 Apollonia

The city of Apollonia was larger than Polycarp was expecting. He followed his uncle through the streets trying to keep his bearings as they zigzagged down the hill toward the docks. Chet and Marie had built their large house on the edge of the town with their back yard filled with a mountain. The descent down to the docks wove its way through an amazing assortment of small shops and amazing businesses which Polycarp tried to take note of as his uncle set a steady pace toward his goal. Chet, the eighth born of Cyril, son of Ulfilas, was named after the eighth letter of the Hebrew Alphabet. Marcion, Polycarp's father was only six years older than Chet, but Polycarp was panting and puffing just to keep pace with his uncle.

"I am amazed at the number of shops and businesses here in Apollonia" Polycarp blurted managing to catch his breath.

"Yes, it is quite amazing. When the Empire divided into these dioceses, each ruled by their own Vicar, each watching out for their own interests, business here has more than tripled in three years." replied Chet without a single strain in his breathing. "Tyconius, our

Vicar in the Epirus Dioceses, has worked closely with your Vicar in the Phygia Dioceses to capture excellent trade relationships. All the trade routes are busy like this and will continue while the Roman Augusti and the Roman Caesar struggle for control." Chet continued.

"Father says the gold of Verona and Venice must find a path to Byzantium and I can build the corridor." Polycarp panted the well rehearsed words.

"Your father is wise." Chet responded, smiling at the adventure in Polycarp's voice. "With all the Romans heading to Persia the gold is ripe for picking."

As they reached the base of the hill the little shops turned to larger businesses. A large lumber yard was bustling with workers. Across the street a pottery shop and then a blacksmith shop were both burning the shavings of the carpenters and a sweet smell and working echos filled the whole street.

Chet had done well in his seven year old venture into Apollonia. Each shop they passed yelled a greeting and waved to the familiar merchant who had brought them rich business from the Romans. He and Marcion grew up in Thessalonica, right on the Romans Egnatian Way. Their father launched Marcion with one of his ships to Asia Minor where he became the merchant man of Smyrna.; Marcion then convinced Chet to venture to the east along the Egnatian Way and set up his mercantile on the docks of Apollonia

where his ships were finding rich trade revenues into Italy.

Polycarp was now eager to venture the lucrative trade corridor up the Sea of Adria and further extend his grand father's vision of a far reaching trade corridor.

The smell of sweet burning wood turned into the harsh smell of sea and fish as they turned down the first street connection to the docks. Polycarp reacted to the smell of the salt air with a renewed anticipation for the quest he had outlined with his father. He would only be here with his Aunt and Uncle for a few short weeks before sailing for Venice, Italy. All his life Polycarp had been involved in his father's Mercantile and Shipping business. In his earliest memories he was playing around the docks and shops which now, again, are bustling with commerce and opportunities. The new surge in trade and wealth and the smell of the sea awakens floods of his memories.

"Polycarp", yelled a voice from within a storefront darkened by stacks and stacks of buckets and baskets. As Polycarp peered through the stacks and through the hanging wares inside, his cousin Clement came out and greeted him with a hardy hand clasp.

"It is good to see you well rested and ready for a days work my cousin," Clement said, giving him a push on his shoulder.

"I will be down at the ship," Chet yelled over his shoulder without breaking his stride.

"Come in and meet my friend Kerrin", said Clement pulling

Polycarp by the arm.

"Kerrin, this is my cousin, Polycarp from Smyrna; Polycarp, this is Kerrin.". Polycarp's eyes, adjusting to the light, saw a beautiful dark eyed smile beaming from the back corner of the shop.

"I have heard so much about you that it is good to finally meet you." Kerrin spoke softly through the smile.

Polycarp touched her shoulder as he lightly brushed first his left cheek then his right against her face in a customary greeting.

"The advantage is truly mine," said Polycarp; aware of the blush rising in his own face and smiling at the one in Kerrin's.

"So what has my cousin told you about my coming to town?" inquired Polycarp, glancing around the little shop laden with wood crafts.

"Only that you and he would be headed off to the North to spy out the Italian women for their beauty," said Kerrin.

Polycarp glanced to Clement who grew a little blush of his own because of Kerrin's bold frankness with Polycarp.

"It is truly a business venture that draws us there and any beauty found in northern Italy would certainly pale in the presence of one so beautiful as you." Polycarp responded wryly as he touched her hand.

"Why Thank you." Kerrin beamed with a broad smile.

"Oh, Please!" said Clement, "I wanted you to meet Kerrin, not court her, Polycarp."

"Your cousin seems to be far more dashing than you told me Clement," said Kerrin moving back to her task of counting and arranging merchandise.

Clement was two years his junior and Polycarp grinned at the flash of Jealousy but knew he should not pursue this tact and picked up a small wooden box with a stem sticking out beneath a carved hole. It was arranged with several similar ones but this size was familiar to Polycarp.

"So coming to Apollonia as one named Polycarp of Smyrna must make you quite a person of interest." said Kerrin.

"How so?" responded Polycarp with his eyebrows raised.

"Well I should expect that everyone would want you to teach in their Church before they would expect you to sell them a Persian rug."she said with some inquisitive glee.

Polycarp again blushed with her frankness.

"O no I am but a disciple indeed and not a pastor, or even a deacon." said Polycarp modestly examining the little box for an opening door.

Kerrin was watching his response carefully, smiling at the awkward moment she had gendered, and pondering his fumbling with the box.

"Surely Clement has told you of me with some misunderstanding," said Polycarp as he pulled a small knife and pried up on the top of the little box.

"Clement has told me nothing of your knowledge of the Scriptures," Kerrin said moving round the over stacked shelves of her little shop to stand beside Polycarp. "It is your name that speaks so boldly of your purpose."

Clement was perched on a wooden stool watching the two. "Kerrin does not think you and I will be successful business men in Italy." He said as he leaned the stool back to the wall and stretched his legs onto a crate as a foot stool. "She is trying to find us another line of work." Clement suggested wryly.

"If you break another stool you will pay for it." she said to Clement without glancing his way. "I think a mercantile venture into Italy would be very successful. The right person could pull it off very well. I just don't think you could pull it off that well." she said taking the box from Polycarp. "As for your cousin here, I barely know him," her voice softened as she looked up into Polycarp's eyes.

She pulled the little stem from the box and the cover opened easily and hung to the side on a little string. She spun the box around so Polycarp could look inside where she reached to pull another little stick. The back of the box lifted and the three sides folded down onto the base. The box now stacked neatly in a pile tied together with a loop of string. As she finished tying the bow she handed the stack to Polycarp.

"We have three different sizes of these and twenty one of them

fold neatly into this crate which takes up almost no space at all on your big ship," she said with a twinkling smile.

Polycarp took the package from her and pulled the bow loose. It was remarkably light and the sides easily interlocked with the base which he stood on the shelf before him. "So who would want twenty one little boxes with holes in them?" Polycarp inquired.

"Oh, they are all the rave here in Apollonia", she said picking up two from the shelf. "If you fill them with seed, put one on your porch and hang one in your window the song birds beat a path to your door," she said as she gracefully spun around and placed one on a crate and hung the other from a cord hanging down from a beam above.

Polycarp was charmed by her dance and only realized he was gawking at her when the box he held collapsed before he could get the back piece pinned in place.

"And who would feed song birds and why would you?" Polycarp asked.

"Your Aunt Marie started the rave," Kerrin said. "She says the feeders make a very interesting study of God's Creation," she continued. "Every lady in the church bought a couple and now you could not find a home in our Roman Diocese that isn't feeding the birds. Why, every house in Italy will be wanting one."

Polycarp smiled at her enthusiasm and marketing savvy, and at his Aunts genius.

"I have only been in town a day and Aunt Marie had shown me the joy of watching God's birds fight over this little perch" he said, placing the little stick in the feeder while examining how it locked the lid in place.

"I would like to meet the craftsman who made this collapsible little food box.", he said.

"You will meet Kerrin's Uncle before we leave, but I think yours is waiting on us on the ship." Clement said knowing his father's energy and impatience .

"It is a pleasure meeting you Kerrin", Polycarp said removing his cap and bowing slightly towards his host.

"I hope to see more of your wares before we go north."

"The pleasure is mine and I hope to show them to you." she smiled at his politeness.

Clement was headed down the wide cobbled street at a pace as grueling as his father's. Each shop they passed hailed him with a "Good morning Clement," and he responded with an equally personal greeting.

"Hey Clement is this your cousin Polycarp?", said a young lad struggling to push a large open cart up the hill.

"Pedro it is good to see you but you are a couple hours past day break". Clement exclaimed as he reached over and gave the little bell on the bread cart a clang, clang.

"It is my third trip!", Pedro said as he set the brake on the

emptied cart. Clement did not break his pace and was already talking to the next shop as Pedro reached into a white sack and tossed Polycarp a fresh scone of bread.

"Thank you, yes I am Polycarp" and he caught the biscuit which to his surprise was still warm and soft.

"Polycarp from Smyrna?" Pedro exclaimed in wonder as he released the brake and moved the cart up the smoothly worn stone. "The whole East Coast of Greece will soon be Christian", he smiled steering his cart around some children playing in the street.

As they rounded past the last shop and came into the wide opening exposing the docks, Polycarp bit into the soft fresh bread. The sweet crisp glaze on top awoke the savory dough of fine ground wheat that melted in his mouth.

"What awesome dough." He thought, "they should call this a doughy scone".

"Clement, go up and ask the lumber yard to bring our order down today," Chet yelled to his son from the ship tied to the dock, "And Polycarp come see the grand plans we have for your father's ship." Chet had the excitement of a school boy in his voice as he turned back to Cardone, Polycarp's ship master, who was pointing and measuring on the ship's deck.

Chapter 3 Shipping in the Roman Empire

Appendix
Hebrew Calendar

Month	#	Hebrew	Ref
April	1	Abib (Nisan)	Ex 34:18 (Esther 3:7)
May	2	Zif (Iyar)	1Kings 6:1,37
June	3	Sivan	Esther 8:9
July	4	Tammuz	Ezekiel 8:14
Aug	5	Ab (Av)	
September	6	Elul (Ellul)	Neh 6:15
October	7	Ethanim (Tishri)	1Kings 8:2
November	8	Bul (Marchesvan) (Cheshvan)	1Kings 6:38
December	9	Chisleu (Kislev)	Zech 7:1
January	10	Tebet (Tevet)	Esther 2:16
February	11	Shebat (Sebat) (Shvat)	Zech 1:7
March	12	Adar	Esther 3:7,13, Ezra 6:15
Added	13	Adar Sheini	Added 7 times in 19 years

Family Tree

1. Cyril (75) 245
 1. Sister (deceased) 265
 2. Brother (52) 268
 3. Brother (52) 268
 4. Maricion (50) 270
 1. Sister (deceased) 290
 2. Polycarp (20) 300
 3. Sister 304
 4. Brother 307
 5. Sister 309
 5. Sister 272
 6. Sister 272
 7. Brother 274
8. Chet (44) 276
 1. Clement (18) 302
 2. Sister (14) 306
 3. Caleb (11) 309
 4. Sister (8) 312
 5. Cyril (5) 315

Roman Empire Chronology

Accessed 01/01/2011 From

http://spqr360.com/menu/the_roman_empire.html

- 282-283 Carus emperor
- 282-285 Carinus at first co-emperor with Carus and then sole emperor
- 283 Persian campaign of Carus
- 284-305 Diocletian and Maximian co-emperors
- 293 Diocletian creates tetrarchy with himself and Maximian as co-Augusti in the East and West, and Galerius and Constantius Chlorus as co-Caesars
- 297 The Empire is divided administratively into twelve dioceses, each ruled by a vicarius
- 301 The Edict of Maximum Prices imposed throughout the Empire
- 303 Diocletian persecutes the Christians
- 305 Diocletian abdicates and forces Maximian to do likewise. Galerius and Constantius Chlorus co-Augusti
- 306 Constantine declared co-Augustus after death of his father Constantius Chlorus, but Galerius recognizes the Illyrian Severus in that rank and confers the title of Caesar on Constantine
- 306 Maxentius, son of Maximian, hailed as legitimate successor by the Praetorian Guard and the city of Rome; heads revolt against Constantine. His father comes out of retirement to profit from the situation, first on one side, then on the other
- 308 At an imperial conference of Diocletian, Galerius and Maximian at Carnuntum Licinius is declared Augustus of the West, setting off an armed conflict between all rival contenders
- 310 Maximianus Daia, nephew of Galerius, assumes on his own initiative the title of Augustus
- 311 An edict of tolerance for Christians issued by Galerius shortly before his death
- 312 Constantine's victory over Maxentius in battle at the Milvian Bridge puts Rome in his hands
- 313 Victory of Licinius over Maximianus Daia at the Hellespont is

followed by reconciliation of the two victors

---313 The co-emperors issue the Edict of Milan ending persecution of Christians

---314 Armed conflict breaks out between the co-emperors: truces, claims, counterclaims, and wars follow for ten years with Constantine increasingly victorious

---324 Constantine sole emperor after final defeat, abdication, and execution of Licinius

---325 The Council of Nicaea formulates Nicene Creed and makes Christianity the religion of the Empire

---326 Constantine chooses Byzantium as the new capital of the Empire and renames it Constantinopolis

---337 May 22, death of Constantine the Great