THE QUESTION

Who was Malchus, and why does Tertullian say Christ's patience was wounded in his wound?

Asked by a THF member on November 18, 2026 · published November 21, 2026 · 8 numbered quotations · the 20 early Christian passages and 74 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/who-was-malchus-and-why-does-tertullian-say-christs-patience-was-wounded-in

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

Malchus was the servant of the chief priest whose right ear Simon Peter cut off when Jesus was arrested. Jesus refused that avenging sword and healed the ear. Tertullian says Christ's patience was wounded in Malchus's wound, because Peter's violence went against the patient mercy Jesus was showing even to those arresting Him.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

IN THIS STUDY

1	Malchus was the chief priest's servant	2
2	Jesus stopped the sword and healed Malchus	2
3	A relative of Malchus later spotted Peter	2
4	Tertullian lists Christ's patience toward His enemies	3
5	Malchus's wound was a wound to Christ's patience	3
6	Christ's patience reaches even those against Him	4
7	Christians are called to the same patience	4
	What these passages don't tell us	5
	The Sources: 20 early Christian passages and 74 Bible verses, with links	5

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

POINT 1 OF 7

Malchus was the chief priest's servant

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tatian's Diatessaron weaves the four Gospels into one story. When the crowd came to arrest Jesus, Simon Cephas, that is Peter, drew a sword and struck a servant of the chief priest. This account gives the servant's name: Malchus. He was not a soldier or a leader, but a servant in the high priest's house.

1 “He drew it, struck the servant of the chief priest, and cut off his right ear. The name of that servant was Malchus.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tatian,** *Diatessaron* 48 (c. 150–180 AD) **Source 4, page 5** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 7

Jesus stopped the sword and healed Malchus

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Jesus did not praise Peter for defending Him. He told Peter to put the sword away, because He chose to drink the cup the Father had given Him. Then He touched the wounded man's ear and healed it. The one who came to arrest Him received mercy from Him.

2 “Jesus said to Cephas, "The cup that my Father has given Me, shall I not drink it? Put the sword into its sheath, for all who take the sword shall die by the sword.”

later in the same passage

“Leave it at this." And He touched the ear of the man who was struck and healed it.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tatian,** *Diatessaron* 48 (c. 150–180 AD) **Source 4, page 5** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 3 OF 7

A relative of Malchus later spotted Peter

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Later that night, while Peter stood in the courtyard, another servant of the chief priest recognized him. Tatian notes this man was a relative of the one whose ear Simon cut off. This is the only other detail these passages give about Malchus: he had family serving in the same household.

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

3 “After a little while, one of the servants of the chief priest, a relative of the man whose ear Simon cut off, saw him.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tatian,** *Diatessaron* 49 (c. 150–180 AD) **Source 5, page 5** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 7

Tertullian lists Christ's patience toward His enemies

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

In his chapter on Christ's patience, Tertullian walks through the Lord's life step by step. Christ was not angry with a town that rejected Him, even when His disciples wanted fire from heaven. He was kind to the ungrateful and gave way to those who plotted against Him. This list leads straight into the night of His arrest.

4 “He was not even angry with that city which had refused to receive Him, in Luke 9:51-56, even when the disciples wanted fire from heaven to be thrown at once on such an insulting town.”

later in the same passage

“He cared for the ungrateful. He gave way to those who laid traps for Him.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *On Patience* 3 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 7, page 6** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 5 OF 7

Malchus's wound was a wound to Christ's patience

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

This is the line in the study. Right before it, Tertullian says Jesus, who could have called legions of angels, did not approve even one disciple's avenging sword. Peter's blow went against the patience Jesus was showing, so that patience was wounded too. Jesus then condemned the sword and healed Malchus, making things right for a hurt He had not caused.

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

5

"The patience of the Lord was wounded in the wound of Malchus. And so He also, for the future, cursed the works of the sword; and by restoring health, He made satisfaction to the man whom He Himself had not hurt, through Patience, the mother of Mercy."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *On Patience* 3 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 7, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 7

Christ's patience reaches even those against Him

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Cyprian also wrote on patience. He says Christ still receives even those who killed Him if they repent, and he points to Paul, who once fought against the Church. Healing Malchus fits this same pattern: Christ answered His enemies with mercy instead of harm.

6

"After all these things, He still receives His murderers, if they will be converted and come to Him."

later in the same passage

"Even the one who shed Christ's blood is made alive by Christ's blood. Such is the patience of Christ, so great is His patience, and if it had not been so great, the Church would never have had Paul as an apostle."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD) **Source 13, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 7 OF 7

Christians are called to the same patience

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tertullian draws the lesson for believers. Instead of striking back like Peter, a Christian endures and leaves judgment to the Lord. He urges us to give back to Christ the patience He first showed to us.

7

"You wound that violent man more by enduring, because he will be struck by Him for whose sake you endure."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *On Patience* 8 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 10, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

8 “Let us repay to Him the patience that He has paid out for us.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *On Patience* 16 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 9, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- These passages tell us only Malchus's role, his wound and healing, and that a relative served in the same house.
- They do not say whether Malchus ever became a follower of Jesus or what happened to him later.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 20 early Christian passages and 74 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–20, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 21–56, in Bible order), then 38 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *20 passages from 8 writers*

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · sources 1–3*

1 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (1885 English; on point 7) “know not what they do.” If any one, the more he is injured, displays the more patience, blessed is he… [continues online] **read ›**
2 *Epistles of Ignatius* (1885 English; on point 7) “advantage in patience? what advantage in [enduring] stripes… [continues online] **read ›**
3 *Epistle to the Romans* (1885 English; on point 7) “ye well to the end, in the patience of Jesus Christ. Amen… [continues online] **read ›**

Tatian, *c. 150–180 AD · sources 4–5*

4 *Diatessaron* 48 **Quotes 1, 2, page 2** “Cephas had a sword. He drew it, struck the servant of the chief priest, and cut off his right ear. The name of that servant was Malchus. Jesus said to… [continues online] **read ›**
5 *Diatessaron* 49 **Quote 3, page 3** “man." After a little while, one of the servants of the chief priest, a relative of the man whose ear Simon cut off, saw him. He argued and said, "Truly… [continues online] **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 6–10*

6 *On Patience* 13 (on point 4) far, then, I have spoken about patience as simple and consistent, and as it exists only in the mind. Yet I also work to describe its many forms in the… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *On Patience* 3 **Quotes 4, 5, pages 3, 4** "patience of the Lord was wounded in the wound of Malchus… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *On Patience* 12 (on point 4) adulterer. The other she amends. So too, she is found in those holy examples of patience in the Lord's parables. The shepherd's patience seeks and finds the wandering… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *On Patience* 16 **Quote 8, page 5** "is the rule, this is the discipline, and these are the works of patience that is heavenly and true; that is, Christian patience, not the false and shameful kind found… [continues online] **read ›**

10 *On Patience* 8 **Quote 7, page 4** "You wound that violent man more by enduring, because he will be struck by Him for whose sake you endure." **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · source 11*

11 *Against Celsus* 10 (1885 English; on point 2) "even to Him who wished to help Him, and who smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear, He said: Put up your sword into its sheath… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 12–16*

12 *Treatises* (1885 English; on point 6) "in bearing with the Jews, how great equanimity and how great patience, in turning the unbelieving to the faith by persuasion, in soothing the unthankful by concession, in answering gently… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Treatises* (1885 English) **Quote 6, page 4** "and so great is the patience of Christ… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *Epistles* (on point 5) "priest," in Matthew 8:4. Later, at the time of His passion, when He had received a blow from a servant of the priest, and the servant said to Him… [continues online] **read ›**

15 *Treatises* (on point 7) men who, in earlier times, bore the pattern of Christ, were careful above all else to preserve patience with strong and steady calmness in the praise of their virtues. So… [continues online] **read ›**

16 *Treatises* (on point 7) beloved brothers, since we have carefully considered both the benefits of patience and the evils of impatience, let us hold fast with full watchfulness to the patience by which we… [continues online] **read ›**

Archelaus, *c. 270–300 AD · source 17*

17 *Disputation with Manes* 1 (1885 English; on point 7) "that our Lord bade us offer the other cheek also to him who smote the one… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · sources 18–19*

18 *Divine Institutes* 17 (on point 7) "a happy and unconquered patience endured these execrable lacerations of their bodies without a groan… [continues online] **read ›**

19 *Divine Institutes* 23 (on point 7) For our present discussion, it will be enough to prove this from one virtue alone. For example, patience is a great and chief virtue, which the common voices of the… [continues online] **read ›**

Peter of Alexandria, *c. 300–311 AD · source 20*

20 *Canonical Epistle* (1885 English; on point 7) "27:2 As it was with Him it happens to those who walk keeping Him before them as an example, recollecting His divine words, in which, confirming us, He speaks… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *36 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

21 **Genesis 49:18** waiting for the salvation of the Lord. **read ›**

22 **Exodus 4:7** And he said again, "Put your hand into the fold of your robe." So he put his hand into the fold of his robe, and he brought it out of the fold of his robe, and it was restored again to the color of its flesh. **read ›**

23 **Exodus 4:25** Then Zipporah took a stone and circumcised the foreskin of her son; and she fell at his feet and said, "The blood of the circumcision of my child has stopped." **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

24 **Exodus 4:26** So he departed from him, because she had said, “The blood of the circumcision of my child has stopped.” **read ›**

25 **Exodus 21:19** if the man rises and walks about outside with a staff, the one who struck him shall be guiltless; only he shall pay for his loss of time and for his healing. **read ›**

26 **Exodus 21:25** burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise. **read ›**

27 **Deuteronomy 25:12** you shall cut off the hand; your eye shall not spare her. **read ›**

28 **Joshua 5:8** After they had been circumcised, they rested, staying there in the camp until they were healed. **read ›**

29 **2 Samuel 10:4** So Hanun took David’s servants and shaved off their beards, and cut off their cloaks in the middle as far as their hips, and sent them away. **read ›**

30 **1 Chronicles 19:4** So Hanun took David’s servants and shaved them, and cut off half of their cloaks as far as the tunic, and sent them away. **read ›**

31 **1 Chronicles 25:26** the nineteenth, Mallothi; his sons and his brothers, twelve; **read ›**

32 **Proverbs 3:11** Son, do not make light of the discipline of the Lord, nor lose heart when you are rebuked by him; **read ›**

33 **Proverbs 7:5** that she may keep you from the woman who belongs to another, the wicked woman, if that woman assails you with flattering words. **read ›**

34 **Proverbs 7:9** when there is the stillness of night and darkness, **read ›**

35 **Proverbs 14:3** Out of the mouth of fools comes a staff of arrogance, but the lips of the wise guard them. **read ›**

36 **Proverbs 15:24** The thoughts of the man of understanding are ways of life, that he may turn aside from Hades and be saved. **read ›**

37 **Proverbs 16:9** God is far from the ungodly, but he listens to the prayers of the righteous. Better is a small income with righteousness than much produce with unrighteousness. Let a man’s heart consider just things, that his steps may be set straight by God. (Septuagint Proverbs 15:29 (Proverbs 16:9 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

38 **Proverbs 16:12** An evildoer is an abomination to a king, for the throne of rule is prepared with righteousness. **read ›**

39 **Ecclesiastes 3:4** a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; **read ›**

40 **Ecclesiastes 3:9** What advantage does the worker have in that at which he labors? **read ›**

41 **Ecclesiastes 3:16** And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, and there was the ungodly man; and the place of the righteous, and there was the godly man. **read ›**

42 **Ecclesiastes 7:4** The heart of the wise is in a house of mourning, and the heart of fools is in a house of gladness. **read ›**

43 **Ecclesiastes 7:5** It is better to hear the rebuke of a wise man than for a man to hear the song of fools. **read ›**

44 **Ecclesiastes 7:7** For oppression drives a wise man mad and destroys his noble heart. **read ›**

45 **Ecclesiastes 7:12** For wisdom in its shadow is like the shadow of silver, and the advantage of the knowledge of wisdom will give life to him who has it. **read ›**

46 **Isaiah 5:4** What more shall I do for my vineyard that I have not done for it? For I waited for it to produce grapes, but it produced thorns. **read ›**

47 **Isaiah 6:6** And one of the seraphim was sent to me, and he had in his hand a coal, which he had taken from the altar with the tongs; **read ›**

48 **Isaiah 7:22** and it shall be that, from drinking a great deal of milk, everyone who is left upon the land shall eat butter and honey. **read ›**

49 **Ezekiel 40:24** And he brought me toward the south, and behold, a gate facing south; and he measured it, and its side rooms, and its posts, and its porches, according to these measures. **read ›**

50 **Matthew 26:51** Behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. **read ›**

51 **Mark 14:47** But a certain one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. **read ›**

52 **Luke 13:6** He spoke this parable. “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. **read ›**

53 **Luke 22:50** A certain one of them struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

54 **Luke 22:51** But Jesus answered, “Allow this much.” And he touched his ear and healed him. **read ›**

55 **John 18:10** Simon Peter therefore, having a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus. **read ›**

56 **John 18:26** One of the high priest’s slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *38 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Matthew 3:15 · 5:23 · 5:25 · 18:21 · 19:9 · 19:12 · 26:41 · 26:52 · 26:61

Luke 6:37 · 9:51 · 12:50 · 15:3 · 15:11

John 1:1 · 1:14 · 7:38 · 11:25 · 11:42 · 18:4 · 18:6

Acts 26:23

Romans 6:10

1 Corinthians 2:8 · 7:34 · 7:39

2 Corinthians 5:17

Galatians 3:28 · 6:14

Ephesians 4:26

Philippians 3:8 · 3:19

Colossians 2:23

1 Thessalonians 4:5

1 Timothy 5:3

Titus 1:10

Hebrews 5:8

1 John 1:1

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “Who was Malchus, and why does Tertullian say Christ's patience was wounded in his wound?” on November 18, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 21, 2026.

Library only. This study was written only from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed above, with a link to read it.

How it was made. Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.

How to cite this study. The Historic Faith, “Who was Malchus, and why does Tertullian say Christ's patience was wounded in his wound?” Early Church Questions, published November 21, 2026, https://thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/who-was-malchus-and-why-does-tertullian-say-christs-patience-was-wounded-in. To cite one quotation, add its number and source, for example “quote 1, source 4.”

© 2026 The Historic Faith. Selection, arrangement and editing by THF; machine-compiled text and public-domain quotations are not claimed. For personal study; please don’t republish.

THEHISTORICFAITH.COM

THE END OF THIS STUDY