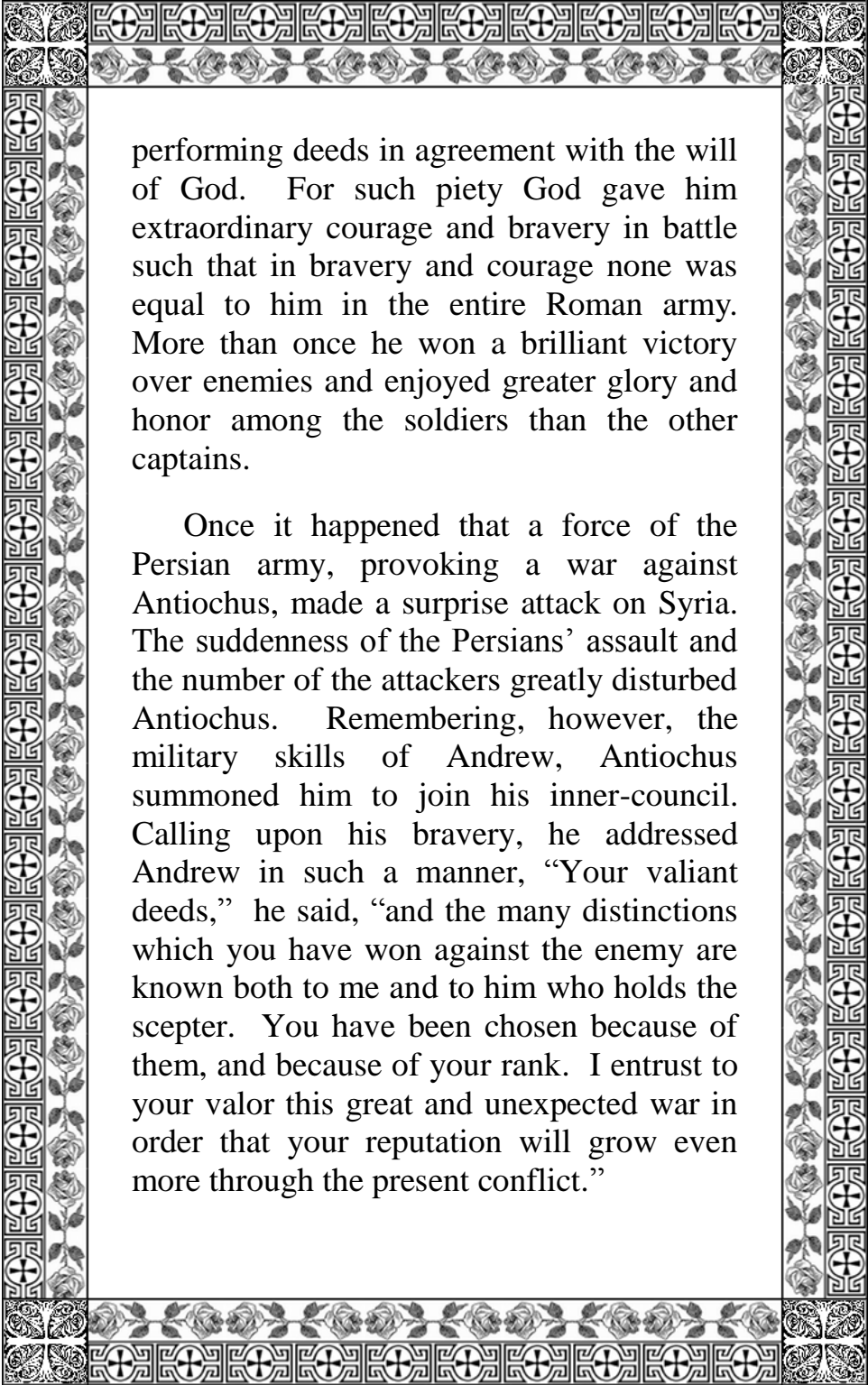


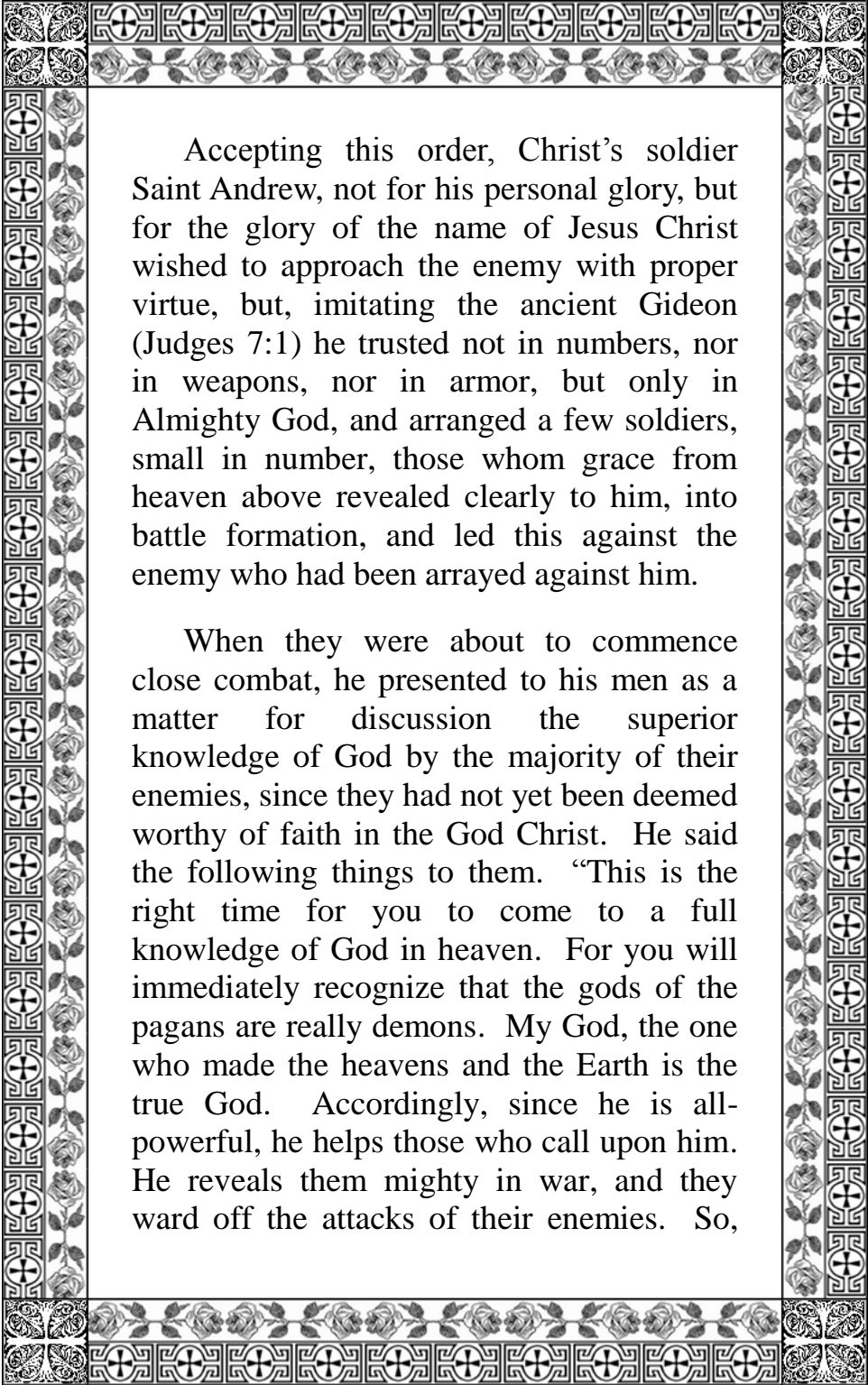
## The Passion of Saint Andrew the Commander

The impious Maximianus<sup>1</sup>, when he ruled the eastern part of the Roman Empire, instituted a widespread persecution of Christians. At that time in Syria there was a certain chief of the armies by the name of Antiochus, a man of cruel character and a zealous servant of the idols, who breathed threats against and murder of believers in Christ. The emperor entrusted him with jurisdiction over all of Syria and ordered him to torture and execute Christians for which purpose was assigned to him a large number of captains together with the Roman troops assigned to them. Among these captains, like a fragrant flower, a lily in the midst of thorny bushes, under Antiochus' command was the follower of Christ, Andrew, who adhered to the original holy faith in Christ in secret until when, at the appointed time, he revealed this faith to the entire world, openly professing before all the name of Christ. Although not yet baptized, with a firm faith he nourished in his heart a warm love for Christ, avoiding all deeds displeasing to God and zealously



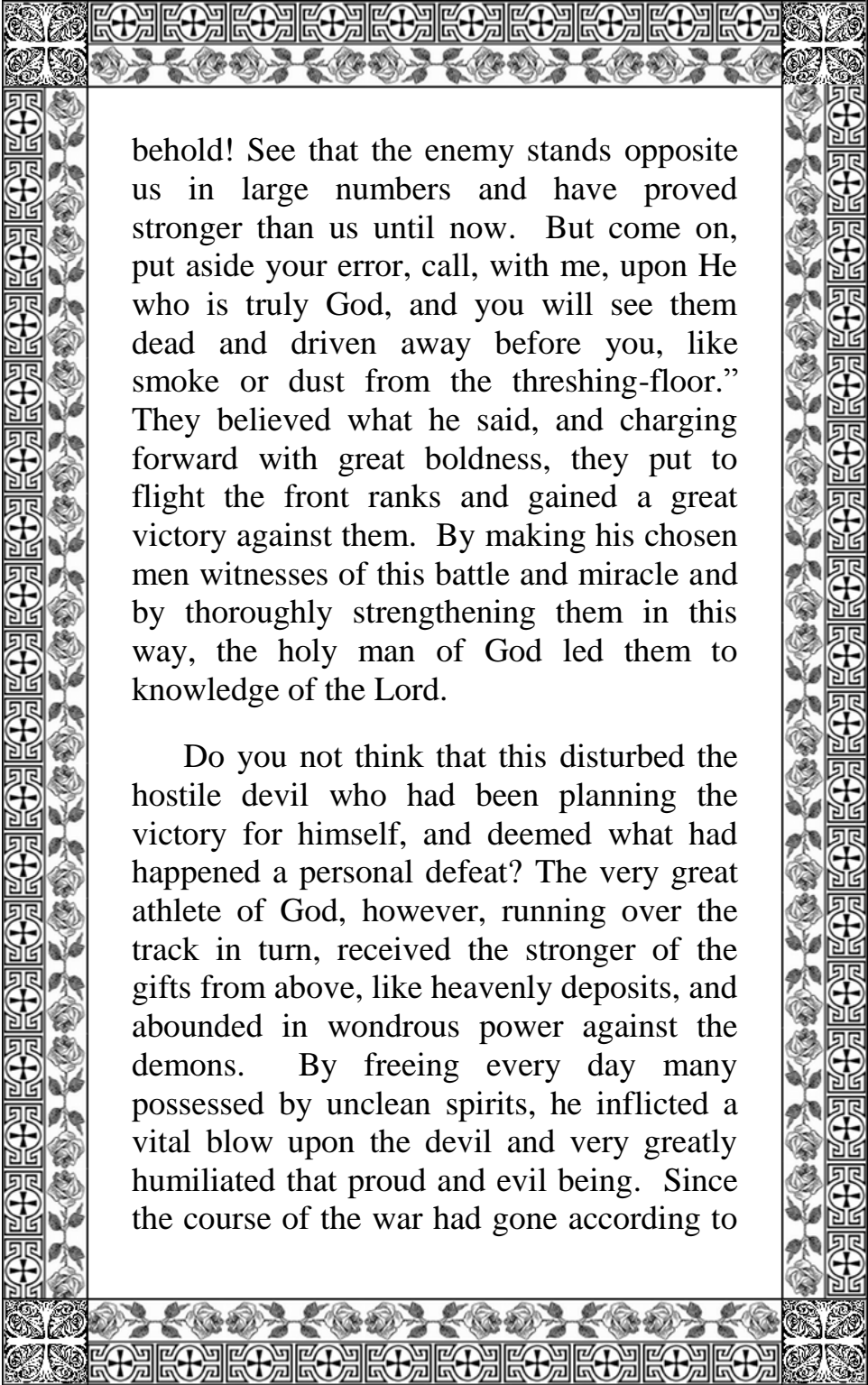
performing deeds in agreement with the will of God. For such piety God gave him extraordinary courage and bravery in battle such that in bravery and courage none was equal to him in the entire Roman army. More than once he won a brilliant victory over enemies and enjoyed greater glory and honor among the soldiers than the other captains.

Once it happened that a force of the Persian army, provoking a war against Antiochus, made a surprise attack on Syria. The suddenness of the Persians' assault and the number of the attackers greatly disturbed Antiochus. Remembering, however, the military skills of Andrew, Antiochus summoned him to join his inner-council. Calling upon his bravery, he addressed Andrew in such a manner, "Your valiant deeds," he said, "and the many distinctions which you have won against the enemy are known both to me and to him who holds the scepter. You have been chosen because of them, and because of your rank. I entrust to your valor this great and unexpected war in order that your reputation will grow even more through the present conflict."



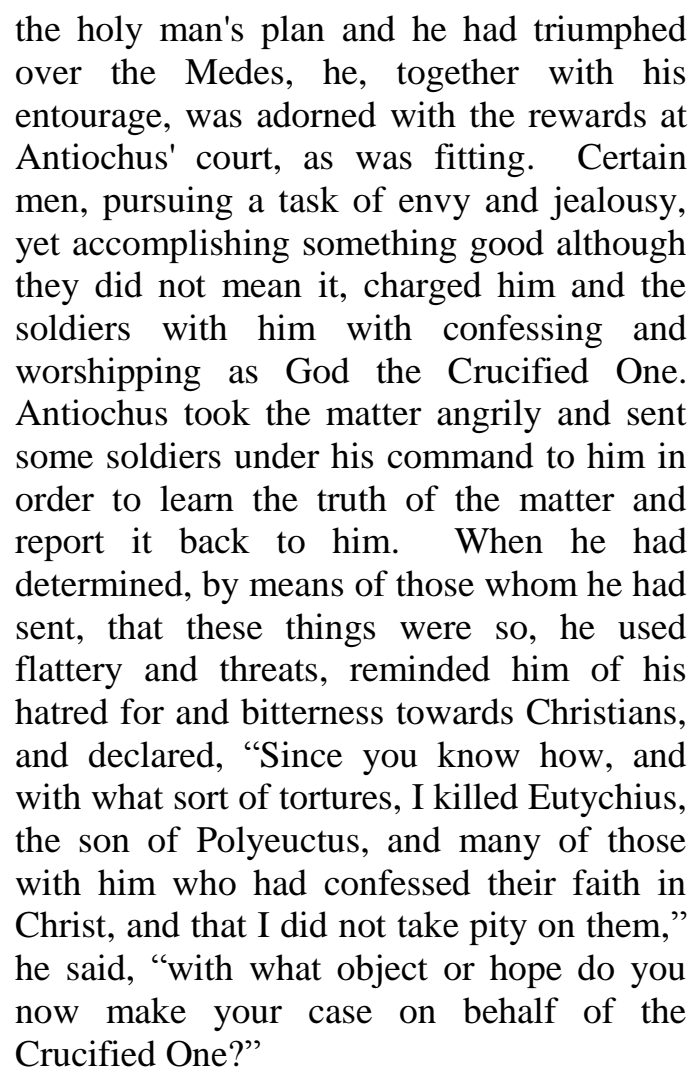
Accepting this order, Christ's soldier Saint Andrew, not for his personal glory, but for the glory of the name of Jesus Christ wished to approach the enemy with proper virtue, but, imitating the ancient Gideon (Judges 7:1) he trusted not in numbers, nor in weapons, nor in armor, but only in Almighty God, and arranged a few soldiers, small in number, those whom grace from heaven above revealed clearly to him, into battle formation, and led this against the enemy who had been arrayed against him.

When they were about to commence close combat, he presented to his men as a matter for discussion the superior knowledge of God by the majority of their enemies, since they had not yet been deemed worthy of faith in the God Christ. He said the following things to them. "This is the right time for you to come to a full knowledge of God in heaven. For you will immediately recognize that the gods of the pagans are really demons. My God, the one who made the heavens and the Earth is the true God. Accordingly, since he is all-powerful, he helps those who call upon him. He reveals them mighty in war, and they ward off the attacks of their enemies. So,



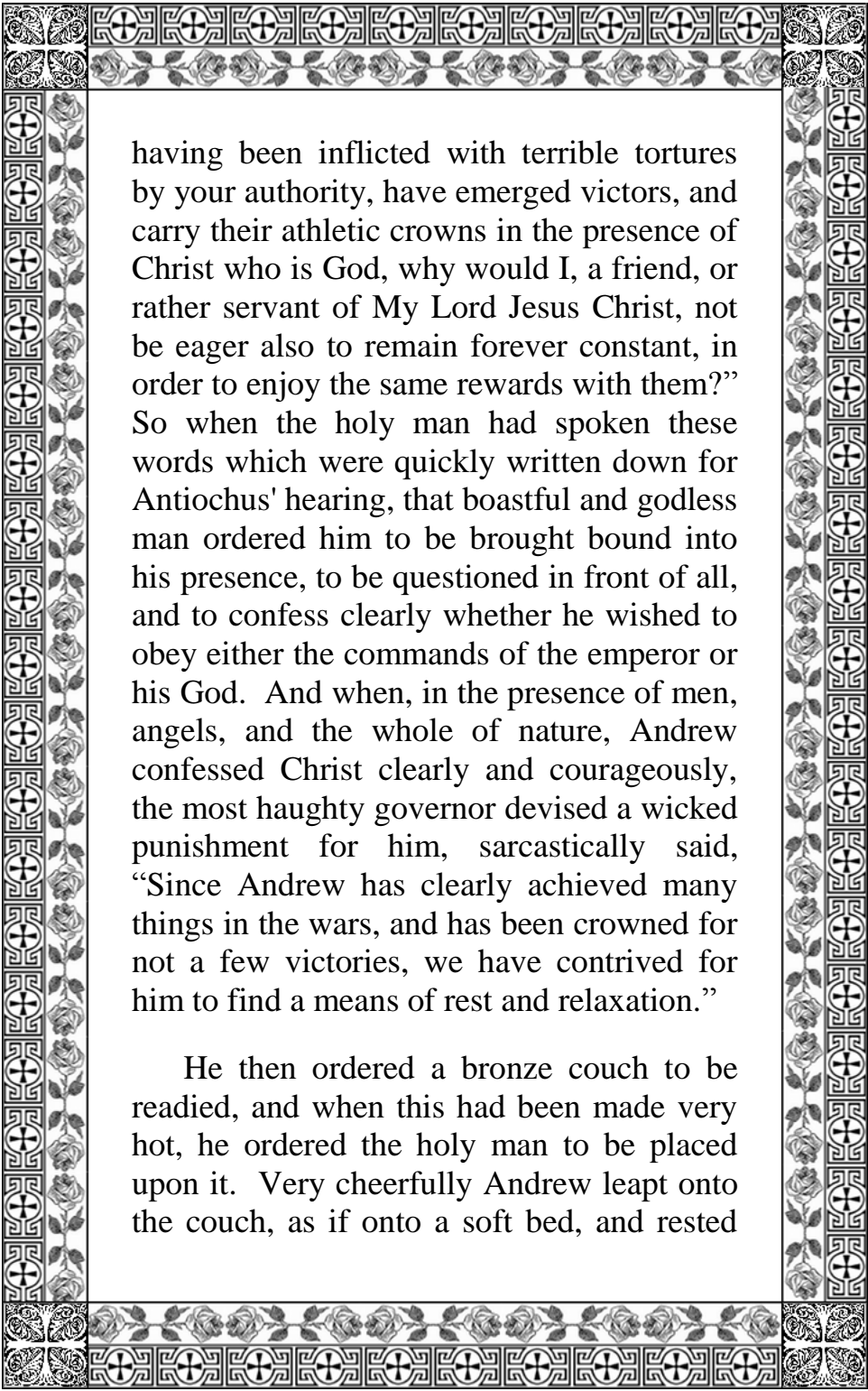
behold! See that the enemy stands opposite us in large numbers and have proved stronger than us until now. But come on, put aside your error, call, with me, upon He who is truly God, and you will see them dead and driven away before you, like smoke or dust from the threshing-floor.” They believed what he said, and charging forward with great boldness, they put to flight the front ranks and gained a great victory against them. By making his chosen men witnesses of this battle and miracle and by thoroughly strengthening them in this way, the holy man of God led them to knowledge of the Lord.

Do you not think that this disturbed the hostile devil who had been planning the victory for himself, and deemed what had happened a personal defeat? The very great athlete of God, however, running over the track in turn, received the stronger of the gifts from above, like heavenly deposits, and abounded in wondrous power against the demons. By freeing every day many possessed by unclean spirits, he inflicted a vital blow upon the devil and very greatly humiliated that proud and evil being. Since the course of the war had gone according to



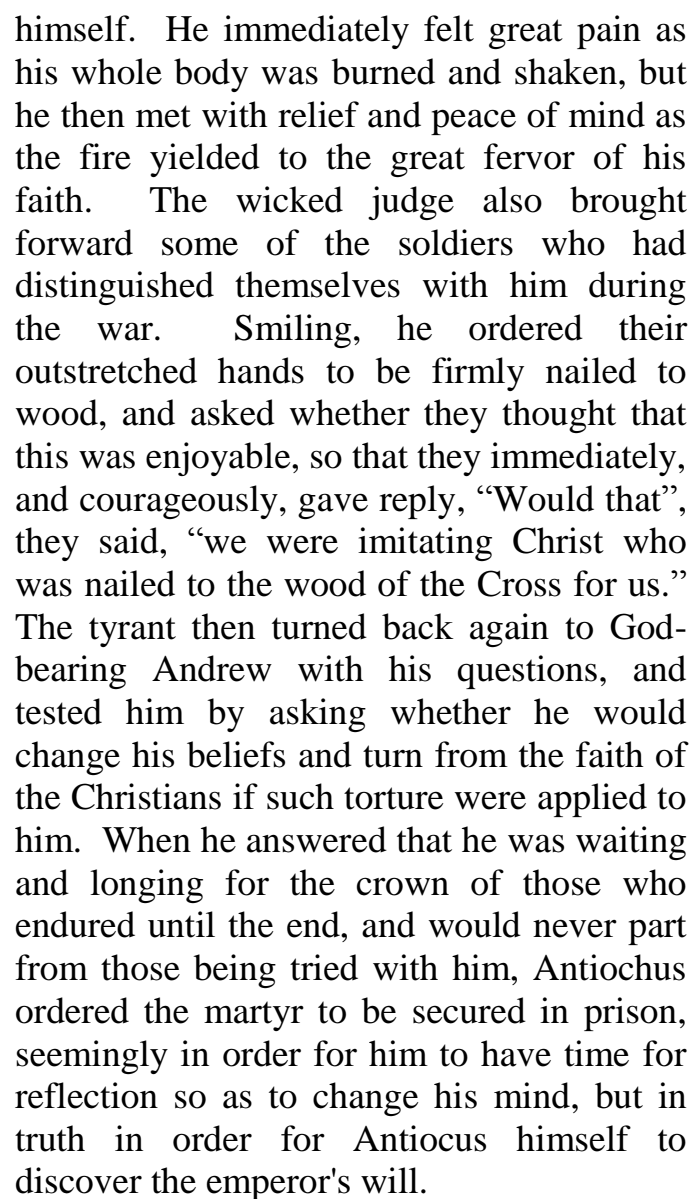
the holy man's plan and he had triumphed over the Medes, he, together with his entourage, was adorned with the rewards at Antiochus' court, as was fitting. Certain men, pursuing a task of envy and jealousy, yet accomplishing something good although they did not mean it, charged him and the soldiers with him with confessing and worshipping as God the Crucified One. Antiochus took the matter angrily and sent some soldiers under his command to him in order to learn the truth of the matter and report it back to him. When he had determined, by means of those whom he had sent, that these things were so, he used flattery and threats, reminded him of his hatred for and bitterness towards Christians, and declared, "Since you know how, and with what sort of tortures, I killed Eutychius, the son of Polyeuctus, and many of those with him who had confessed their faith in Christ, and that I did not take pity on them," he said, "with what object or hope do you now make your case on behalf of the Crucified One?"

In reply to this he said, "You greatly strengthen my resistance by the things which you have said. For if all those you named,

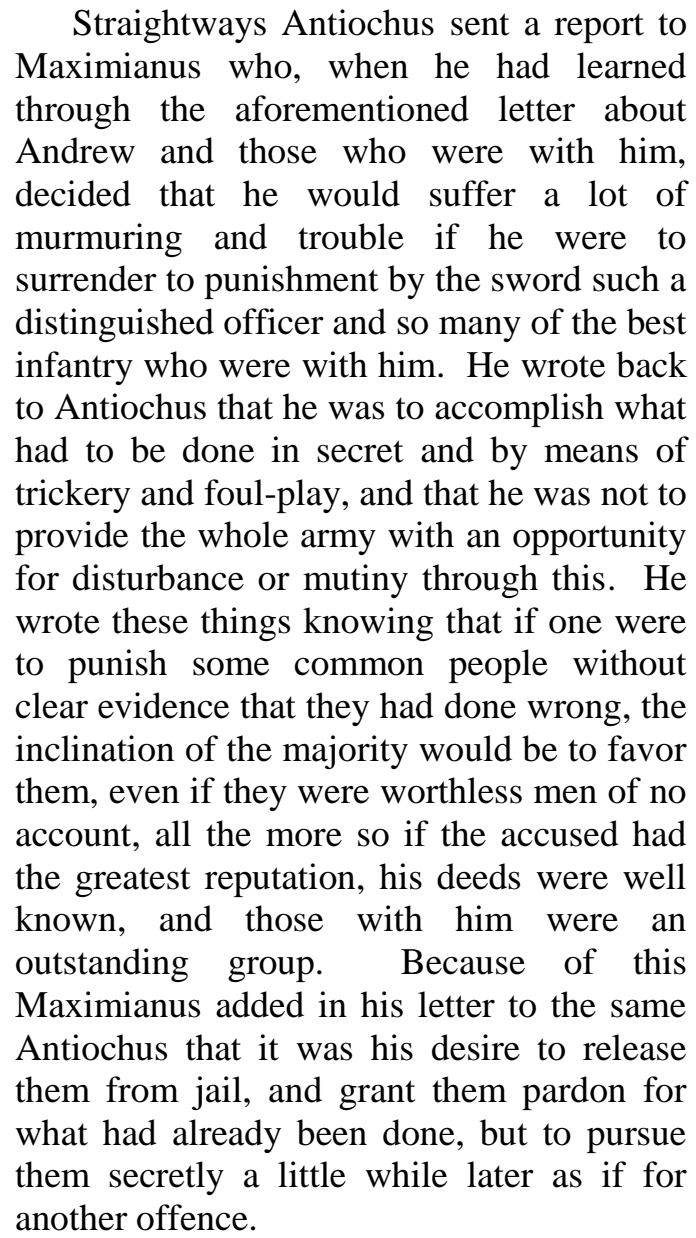


having been inflicted with terrible tortures by your authority, have emerged victors, and carry their athletic crowns in the presence of Christ who is God, why would I, a friend, or rather servant of My Lord Jesus Christ, not be eager also to remain forever constant, in order to enjoy the same rewards with them?” So when the holy man had spoken these words which were quickly written down for Antiochus' hearing, that boastful and godless man ordered him to be brought bound into his presence, to be questioned in front of all, and to confess clearly whether he wished to obey either the commands of the emperor or his God. And when, in the presence of men, angels, and the whole of nature, Andrew confessed Christ clearly and courageously, the most haughty governor devised a wicked punishment for him, sarcastically said, “Since Andrew has clearly achieved many things in the wars, and has been crowned for not a few victories, we have contrived for him to find a means of rest and relaxation.”

He then ordered a bronze couch to be readied, and when this had been made very hot, he ordered the holy man to be placed upon it. Very cheerfully Andrew leapt onto the couch, as if onto a soft bed, and rested

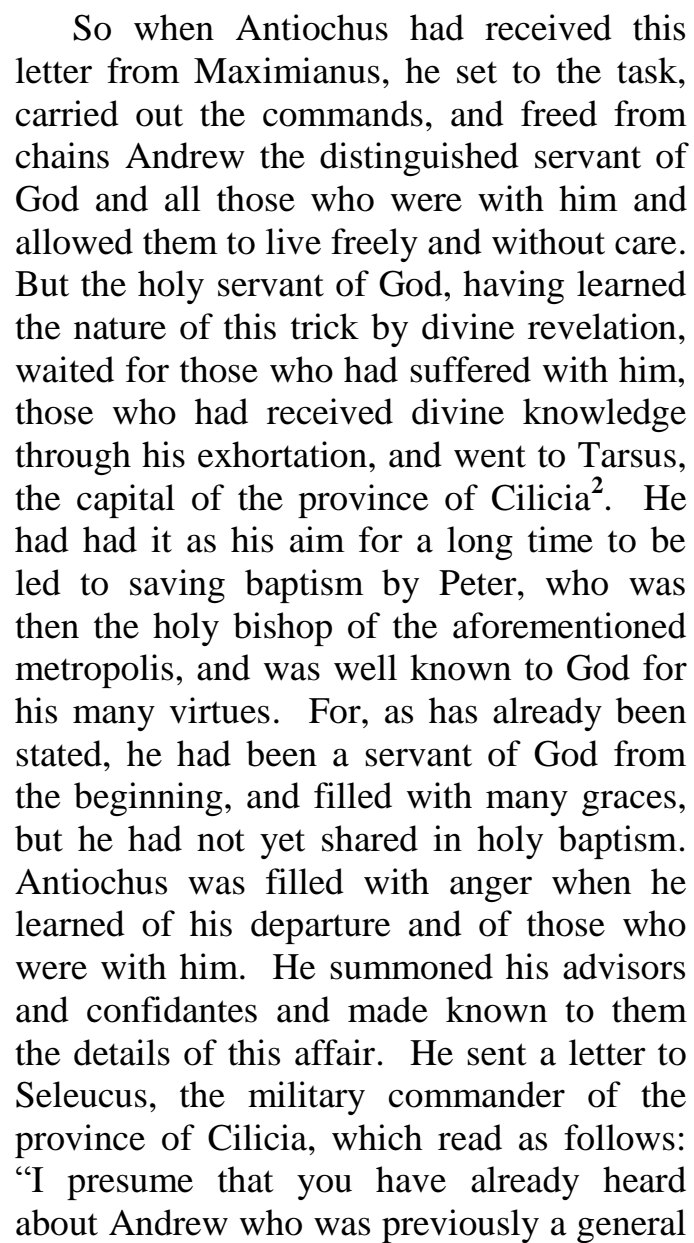


himself. He immediately felt great pain as his whole body was burned and shaken, but he then met with relief and peace of mind as the fire yielded to the great fervor of his faith. The wicked judge also brought forward some of the soldiers who had distinguished themselves with him during the war. Smiling, he ordered their outstretched hands to be firmly nailed to wood, and asked whether they thought that this was enjoyable, so that they immediately, and courageously, gave reply, "Would that", they said, "we were imitating Christ who was nailed to the wood of the Cross for us." The tyrant then turned back again to God-bearing Andrew with his questions, and tested him by asking whether he would change his beliefs and turn from the faith of the Christians if such torture were applied to him. When he answered that he was waiting and longing for the crown of those who endured until the end, and would never part from those being tried with him, Antiochus ordered the martyr to be secured in prison, seemingly in order for him to have time for reflection so as to change his mind, but in truth in order for Antiochus himself to discover the emperor's will.

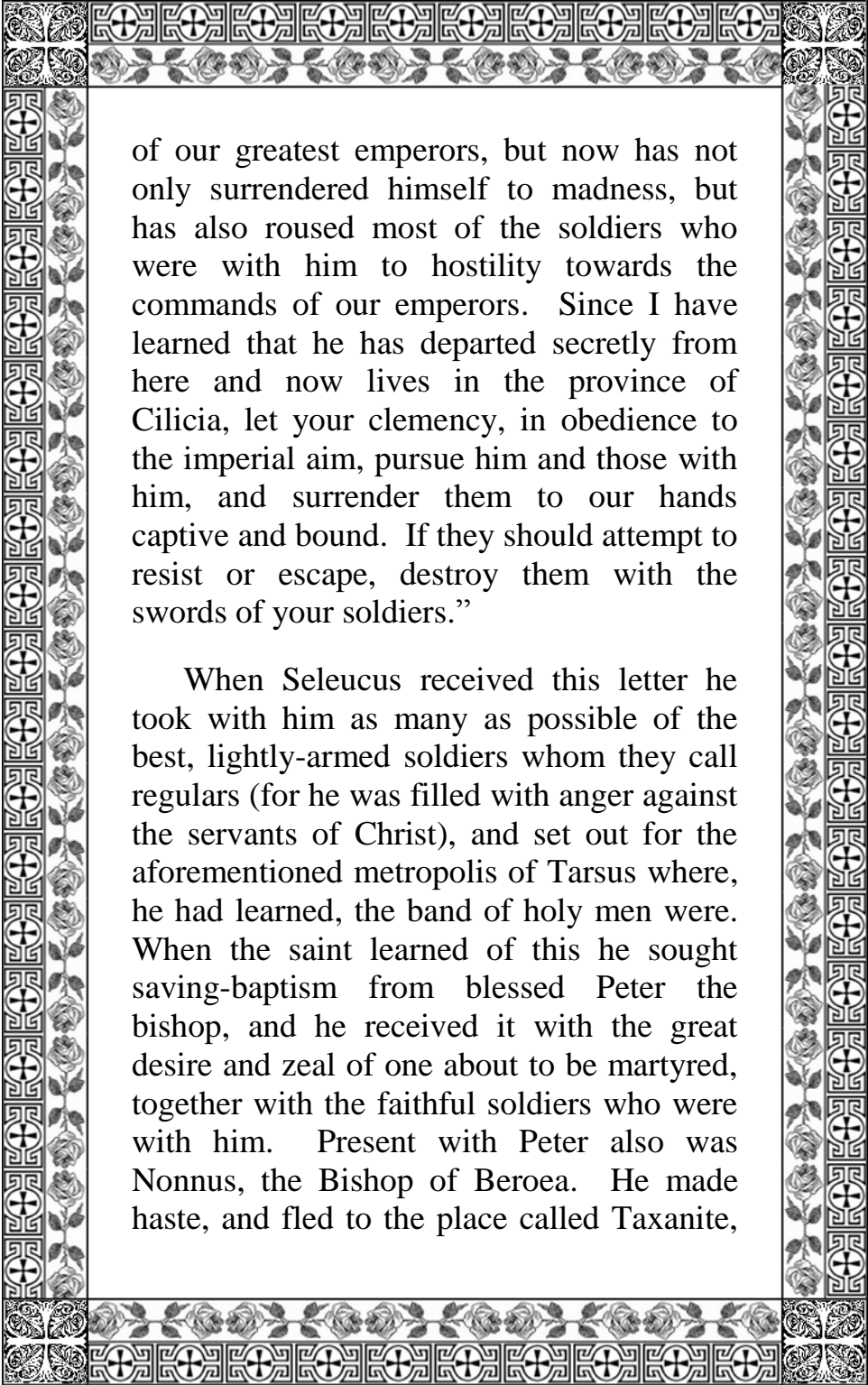


Straightways Antiochus sent a report to Maximianus who, when he had learned through the aforementioned letter about Andrew and those who were with him, decided that he would suffer a lot of murmuring and trouble if he were to surrender to punishment by the sword such a distinguished officer and so many of the best infantry who were with him. He wrote back to Antiochus that he was to accomplish what had to be done in secret and by means of trickery and foul-play, and that he was not to provide the whole army with an opportunity for disturbance or mutiny through this. He wrote these things knowing that if one were to punish some common people without clear evidence that they had done wrong, the inclination of the majority would be to favor them, even if they were worthless men of no account, all the more so if the accused had the greatest reputation, his deeds were well known, and those with him were an outstanding group. Because of this Maximianus added in his letter to the same Antiochus that it was his desire to release them from jail, and grant them pardon for what had already been done, but to pursue them secretly a little while later as if for another offence.



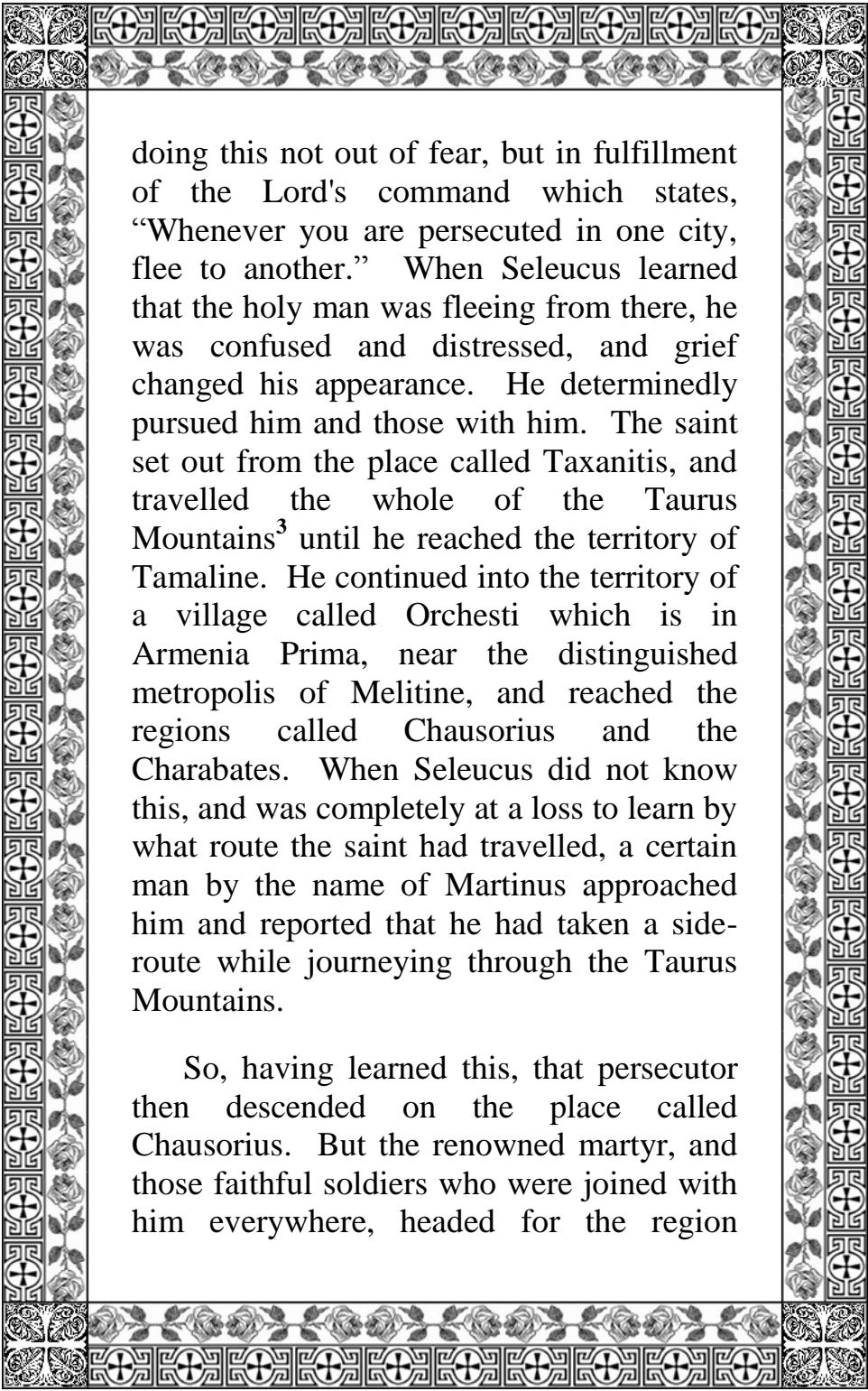


So when Antiochus had received this letter from Maximianus, he set to the task, carried out the commands, and freed from chains Andrew the distinguished servant of God and all those who were with him and allowed them to live freely and without care. But the holy servant of God, having learned the nature of this trick by divine revelation, waited for those who had suffered with him, those who had received divine knowledge through his exhortation, and went to Tarsus, the capital of the province of Cilicia<sup>2</sup>. He had had it as his aim for a long time to be led to saving baptism by Peter, who was then the holy bishop of the aforementioned metropolis, and was well known to God for his many virtues. For, as has already been stated, he had been a servant of God from the beginning, and filled with many graces, but he had not yet shared in holy baptism. Antiochus was filled with anger when he learned of his departure and of those who were with him. He summoned his advisors and confidantes and made known to them the details of this affair. He sent a letter to Seleucus, the military commander of the province of Cilicia, which read as follows: "I presume that you have already heard about Andrew who was previously a general



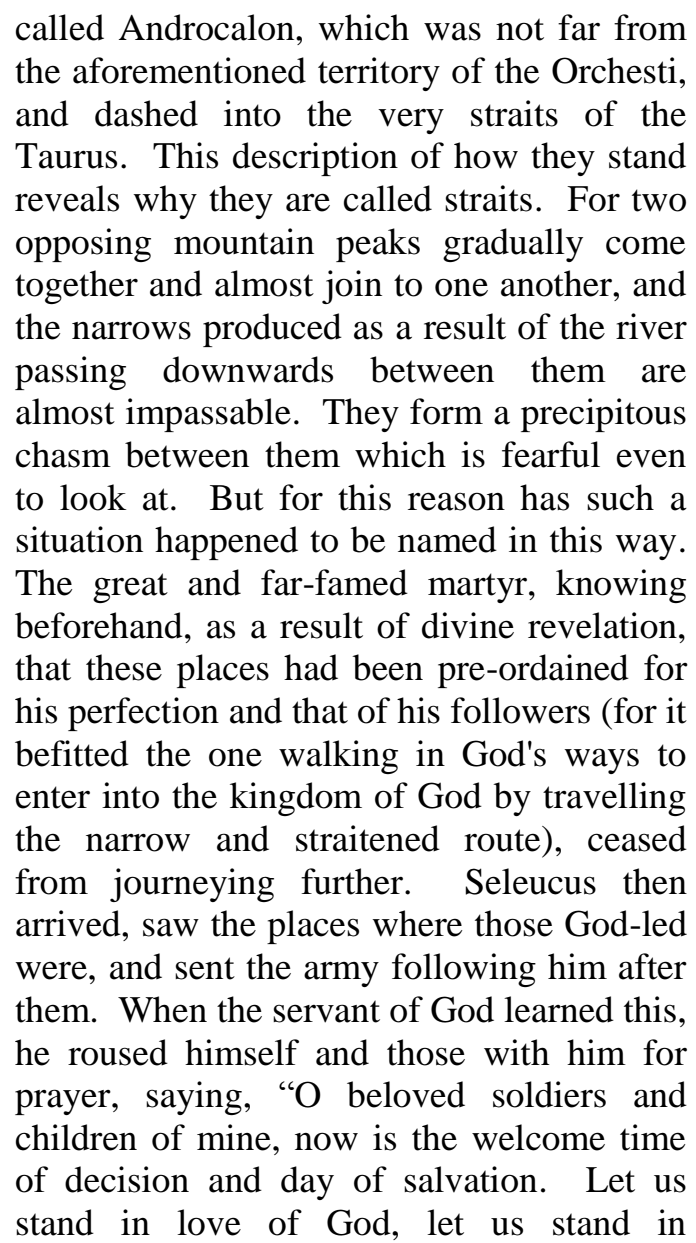
of our greatest emperors, but now has not only surrendered himself to madness, but has also roused most of the soldiers who were with him to hostility towards the commands of our emperors. Since I have learned that he has departed secretly from here and now lives in the province of Cilicia, let your clemency, in obedience to the imperial aim, pursue him and those with him, and surrender them to our hands captive and bound. If they should attempt to resist or escape, destroy them with the swords of your soldiers.”

When Seleucus received this letter he took with him as many as possible of the best, lightly-armed soldiers whom they call regulars (for he was filled with anger against the servants of Christ), and set out for the aforementioned metropolis of Tarsus where, he had learned, the band of holy men were. When the saint learned of this he sought saving-baptism from blessed Peter the bishop, and he received it with the great desire and zeal of one about to be martyred, together with the faithful soldiers who were with him. Present with Peter also was Nonnus, the Bishop of Beroea. He made haste, and fled to the place called Taxanite,

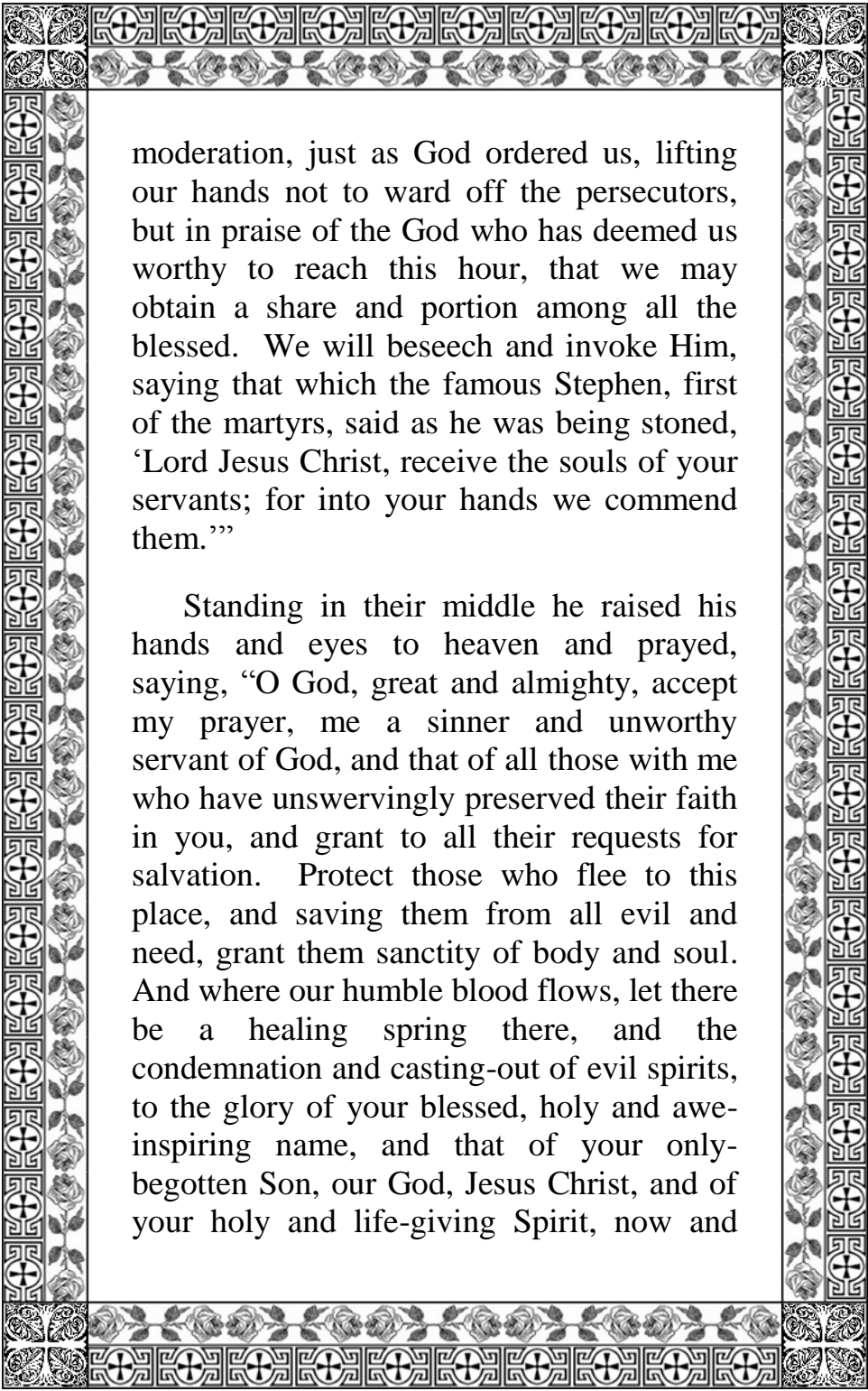


doing this not out of fear, but in fulfillment of the Lord's command which states, "Whenever you are persecuted in one city, flee to another." When Seleucus learned that the holy man was fleeing from there, he was confused and distressed, and grief changed his appearance. He determinedly pursued him and those with him. The saint set out from the place called Taxanitis, and travelled the whole of the Taurus Mountains<sup>3</sup> until he reached the territory of Tamaline. He continued into the territory of a village called Orchesti which is in Armenia Prima, near the distinguished metropolis of Melitine, and reached the regions called Chausorius and the Charabates. When Seleucus did not know this, and was completely at a loss to learn by what route the saint had travelled, a certain man by the name of Martinus approached him and reported that he had taken a side-route while journeying through the Taurus Mountains.

So, having learned this, that persecutor then descended on the place called Chausorius. But the renowned martyr, and those faithful soldiers who were joined with him everywhere, headed for the region

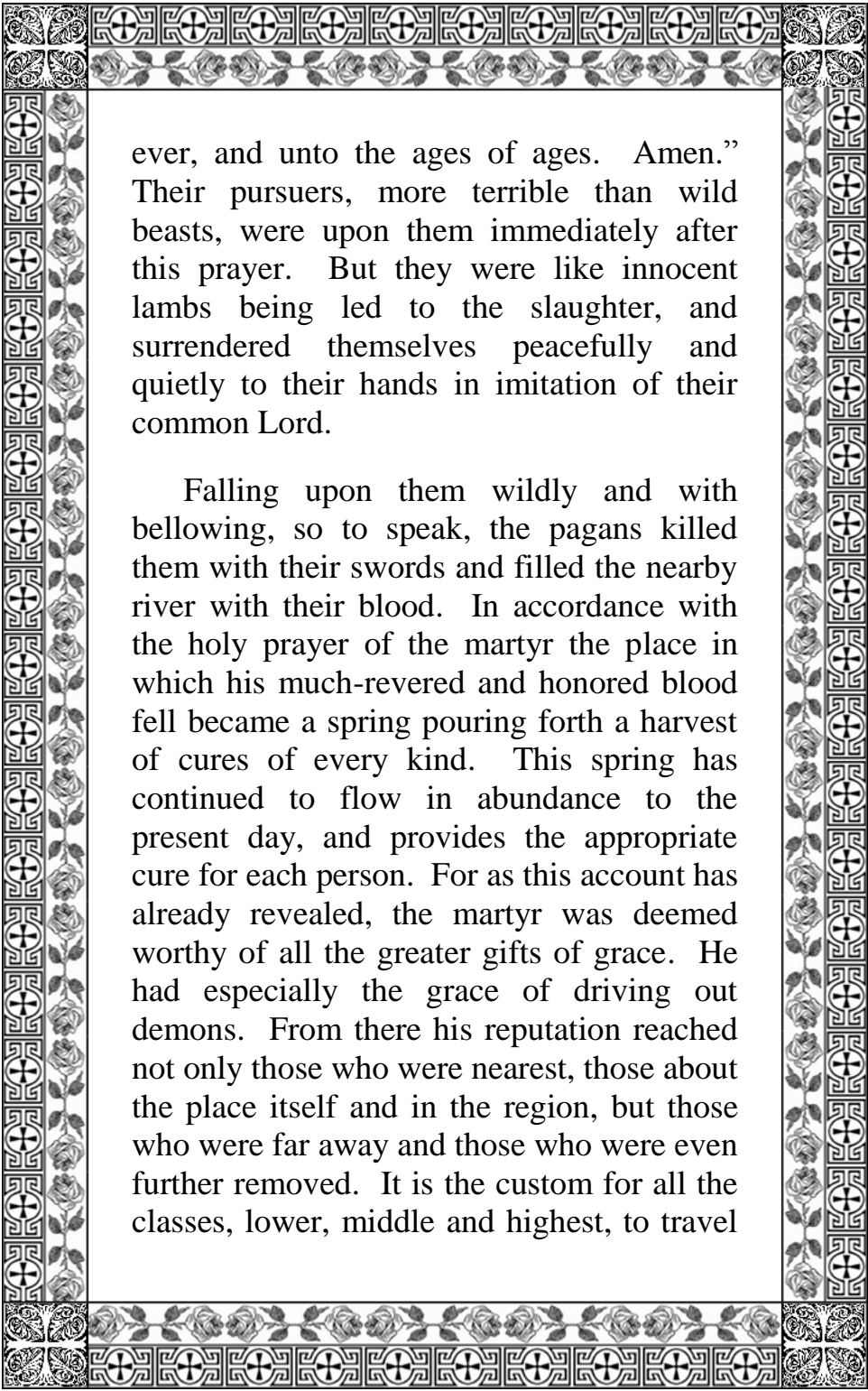


called Androcalon, which was not far from the aforementioned territory of the Orchesti, and dashed into the very straits of the Taurus. This description of how they stand reveals why they are called straits. For two opposing mountain peaks gradually come together and almost join to one another, and the narrows produced as a result of the river passing downwards between them are almost impassable. They form a precipitous chasm between them which is fearful even to look at. But for this reason has such a situation happened to be named in this way. The great and far-famed martyr, knowing beforehand, as a result of divine revelation, that these places had been pre-ordained for his perfection and that of his followers (for it befitted the one walking in God's ways to enter into the kingdom of God by travelling the narrow and straitened route), ceased from journeying further. Seleucus then arrived, saw the places where those God-led were, and sent the army following him after them. When the servant of God learned this, he roused himself and those with him for prayer, saying, "O beloved soldiers and children of mine, now is the welcome time of decision and day of salvation. Let us stand in love of God, let us stand in



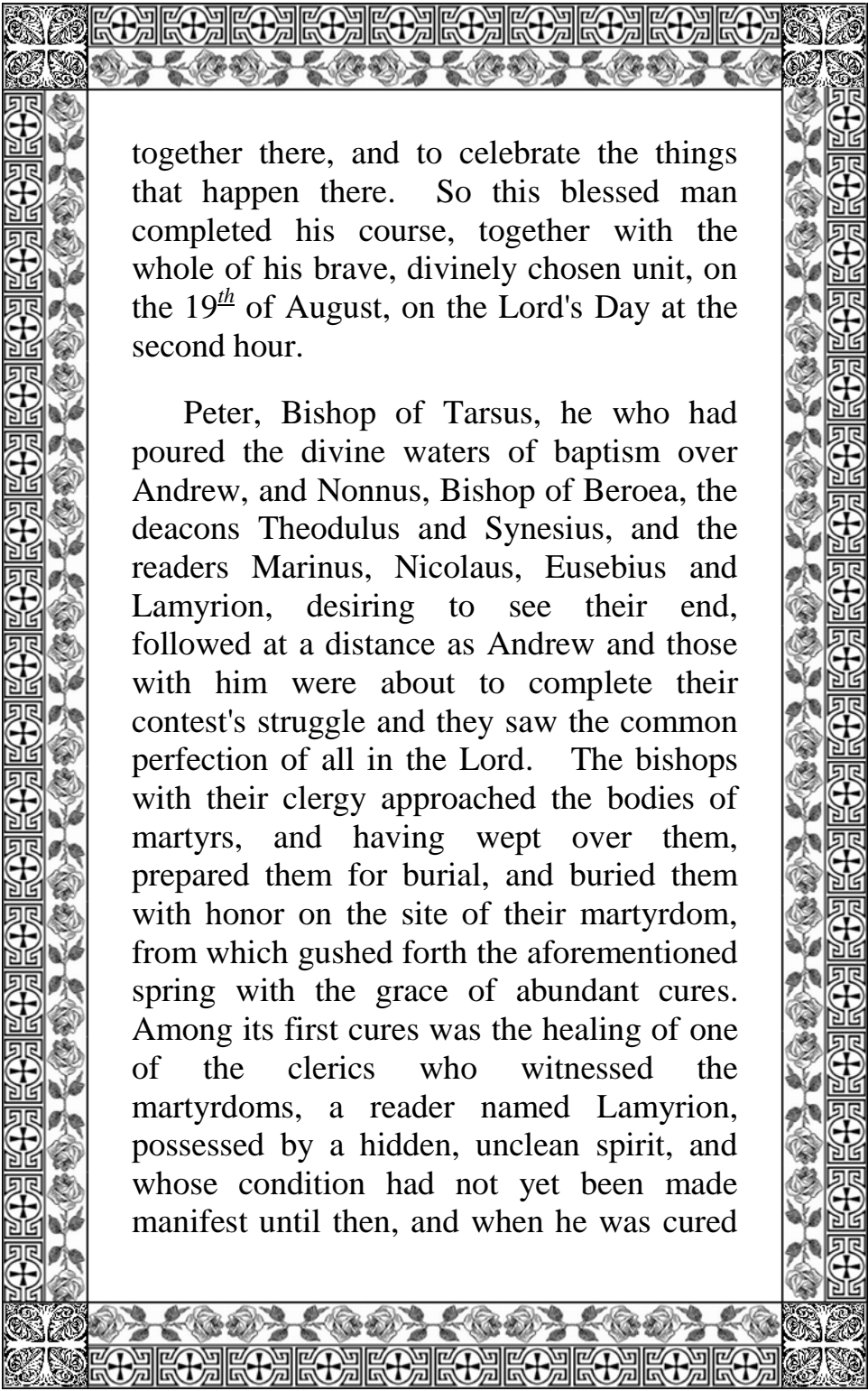
moderation, just as God ordered us, lifting our hands not to ward off the persecutors, but in praise of the God who has deemed us worthy to reach this hour, that we may obtain a share and portion among all the blessed. We will beseech and invoke Him, saying that which the famous Stephen, first of the martyrs, said as he was being stoned, ‘Lord Jesus Christ, receive the souls of your servants; for into your hands we commend them.’”

Standing in their middle he raised his hands and eyes to heaven and prayed, saying, “O God, great and almighty, accept my prayer, me a sinner and unworthy servant of God, and that of all those with me who have unswervingly preserved their faith in you, and grant to all their requests for salvation. Protect those who flee to this place, and saving them from all evil and need, grant them sanctity of body and soul. And where our humble blood flows, let there be a healing spring there, and the condemnation and casting-out of evil spirits, to the glory of your blessed, holy and awe-inspiring name, and that of your only-begotten Son, our God, Jesus Christ, and of your holy and life-giving Spirit, now and



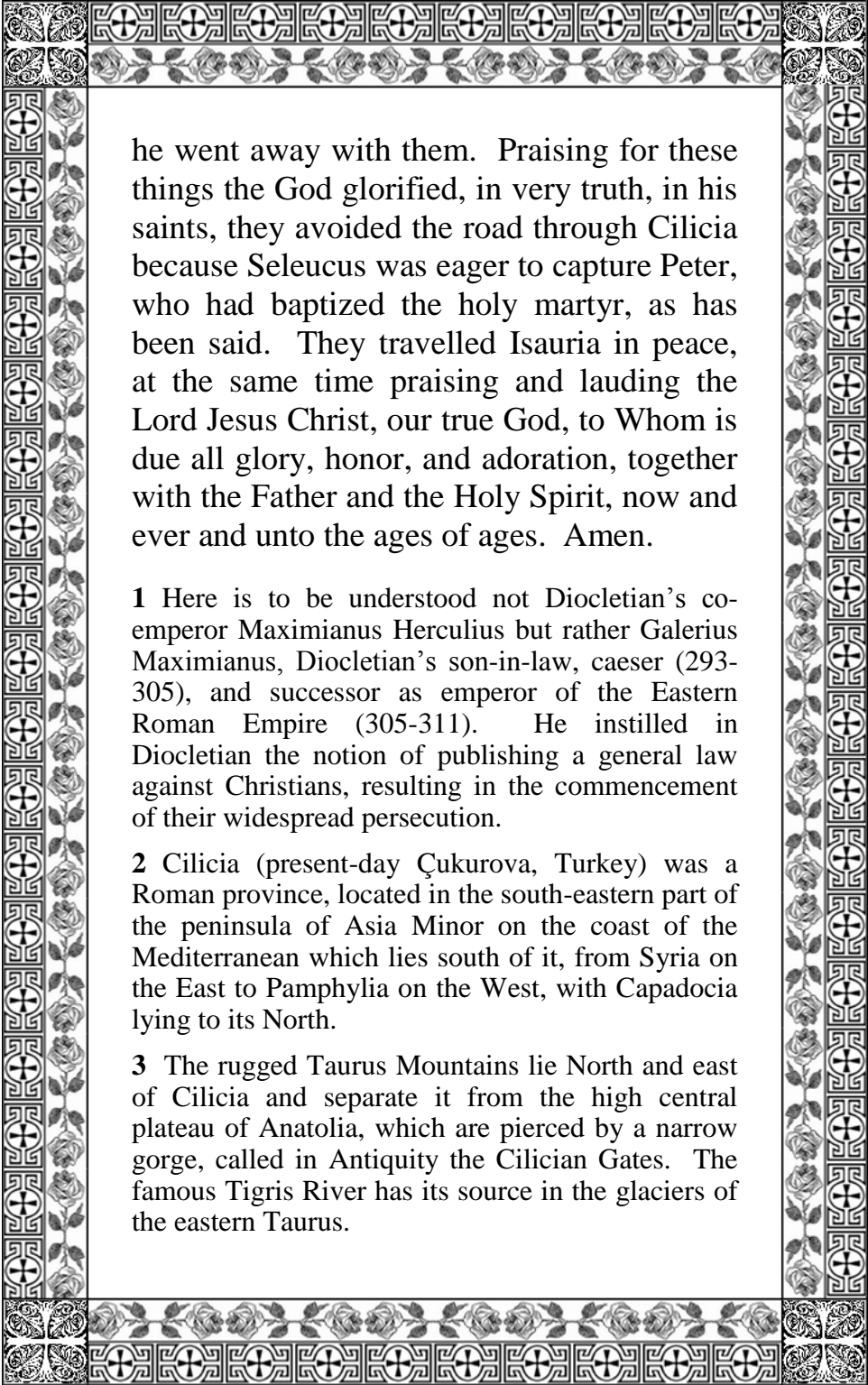
ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.” Their pursuers, more terrible than wild beasts, were upon them immediately after this prayer. But they were like innocent lambs being led to the slaughter, and surrendered themselves peacefully and quietly to their hands in imitation of their common Lord.

Falling upon them wildly and with bellowing, so to speak, the pagans killed them with their swords and filled the nearby river with their blood. In accordance with the holy prayer of the martyr the place in which his much-revered and honored blood fell became a spring pouring forth a harvest of cures of every kind. This spring has continued to flow in abundance to the present day, and provides the appropriate cure for each person. For as this account has already revealed, the martyr was deemed worthy of all the greater gifts of grace. He had especially the grace of driving out demons. From there his reputation reached not only those who were nearest, those about the place itself and in the region, but those who were far away and those who were even further removed. It is the custom for all the classes, lower, middle and highest, to travel



together there, and to celebrate the things that happen there. So this blessed man completed his course, together with the whole of his brave, divinely chosen unit, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August, on the Lord's Day at the second hour.

Peter, Bishop of Tarsus, he who had poured the divine waters of baptism over Andrew, and Nonnus, Bishop of Beroea, the deacons Theodulus and Synesius, and the readers Marinus, Nicolaus, Eusebius and Lamyron, desiring to see their end, followed at a distance as Andrew and those with him were about to complete their contest's struggle and they saw the common perfection of all in the Lord. The bishops with their clergy approached the bodies of martyrs, and having wept over them, prepared them for burial, and buried them with honor on the site of their martyrdom, from which gushed forth the aforementioned spring with the grace of abundant cures. Among its first cures was the healing of one of the clerics who witnessed the martyrdoms, a reader named Lamyron, possessed by a hidden, unclean spirit, and whose condition had not yet been made manifest until then, and when he was cured



he went away with them. Praising for these things the God glorified, in very truth, in his saints, they avoided the road through Cilicia because Seleucus was eager to capture Peter, who had baptized the holy martyr, as has been said. They travelled Isauria in peace, at the same time praising and lauding the Lord Jesus Christ, our true God, to Whom is due all glory, honor, and adoration, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**1** Here is to be understood not Diocletian's co-emperor Maximianus Herculius but rather Galerius Maximianus, Diocletian's son-in-law, caesar (293-305), and successor as emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire (305-311). He instilled in Diocletian the notion of publishing a general law against Christians, resulting in the commencement of their widespread persecution.

**2** Cilicia (present-day Çukurova, Turkey) was a Roman province, located in the south-eastern part of the peninsula of Asia Minor on the coast of the Mediterranean which lies south of it, from Syria on the East to Pamphylia on the West, with Capadocia lying to its North.

**3** The rugged Taurus Mountains lie North and east of Cilicia and separate it from the high central plateau of Anatolia, which are pierced by a narrow gorge, called in Antiquity the Cilician Gates. The famous Tigris River has its source in the glaciers of the eastern Taurus.