Ecclesiastical History of the Council of Nicaea

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Book 1

Preface

The proceedings of the holy, great and ecumenical council of bishops that gathered at Nicaea from practically all the provinces of the Roman world and from Persia. It met by the grace of God and by the decree of our God-loving and pious emperor Constantine, on behalf of the apostolic and orthodox faith and against the wicked and impious doctrines of Arius, that fighter against God.

I read everything that was said, done and defined in that virtuous and holy council, long ago and even earlier, while I was still living in my father's house. I found it all written down, with nothing left out, in a very ancient book of parchment. That book had belonged to the divine and celebrated Dalmatius, who became archbishop of the holy catholic church of the Cyzicenes, the splendid metropolis. It had then passed to the master of what was once our household, I mean my father according to the flesh, who had been counted worthy of the presbyterate of that same most holy church.

When I came upon this sacred book and spent much leisure on it, I was not able to carry everything in memory. For no one could hold in memory, or [on the lips], the boundless sea of what is laid out in it.

But I marked a great many things. I marked the doctrines of our holy fathers and bishops, the teaching of sound speech. I marked their arguments against the Arius-maniacs and their written refutations of the blasphemy that the defiled Arius-maniacs uttered against the Son of God, and indeed also against the Holy Spirit.

I marked also the objections that Arius' philosophers raised against the bishops, and our own side's clear answers to those same sophisms, drawn from the teachings of Scripture.

I marked what was said about the one pre-eternal Godhead of his Son and of the Holy Spirit, a Godhead without beginning and always existing together with God the Father. I marked what was said about the ineffable incarnation of the Son of God, God the Word, from the virgin Mary, the Mother of God, in the last times for the sake of our salvation, and about the apostolic ordinances of the church. In short, the sacred book I have mentioned recorded the whole business transacted there.

Above all it recorded the divine and truly apostolic thoughts of the most faithful emperor Constantine, who sat in the council. I was so delighted with what that sacred book contained that I said to the Lord: "How sweet your words are to my throat, more than honey to my mouth."

So greatly was I amazed at what was written there about the spotless and blameless, orthodox and apostolic faith.

Some time later, by God's good pleasure, I came here, I mean to the province of Bithynia. There had been a great stir and much dispute over the revolt of the unholy Basiliscus against the apostolic and catholic church of God and against the apostolic faith that has its life in that church.

The party of those who shared the mind of the heretic Eutyches was especially fanning the flames and stirring up the imperial court. They deceitfully claimed to us that they held the faith [defined] at Nicaea, I mean by the fathers.

But we exposed them as its enemies, for they did not know what they were saying or what they were insisting on. When I brought forward what the Lord had proclaimed through them, in the Holy Spirit, in that holy company of God's orthodox priests, they leapt away from us. The wretches uttered with their tongues things worse than the blasphemies of Arius against what was defined there, and hurled an anathema at those who think this way.

Because of this, and because of many other disturbances raised against our holy and orthodox faith, I made a very great search everywhere and in every place, and, as the saying goes, moved every rope. That faith has been lived out from the beginning in the church of God, our mother, and came from the holy apostles and from the holy fathers I mentioned, who gathered at Nicaea.

I wanted to search out what was done in that sacred council about the definition of that same holy and apostolic faith. The church of God received this faith "not from men nor through men," but from the Savior of us all and God, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God.

After the dispensation of his coming in the flesh, which is truly the great mystery of godliness, as it is written, he was revealed in flesh and seen by angels.

(For the only-begotten could not be seen by angels in the essence of his divinity, unless he had become flesh.) He fulfilled everything that belonged to the plan of salvation: the suffering he took on willingly for us, the burial, and the resurrection. He yielded these to that holy and sinless flesh of his, through which he made our race immortal. Then, as he went up into the heavens, he himself fixed the divine and venerable definition of this holy and blameless faith. He thundered mightily, as it is written, "The Lord went up into the heavens and thundered," and in another place, "The Lord thundered from heaven,

and the Most High gave his voice." And what did he thunder? What voice did the Most High give? He speaks to the apostles and says, "Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

"For although, out of love for humanity, I have taken your flesh, living and rational, from the all-holy and holy virgin Mary, yet taking on flesh did not add anything to the Trinity of the Father, myself and the Holy Spirit. The Trinity remains a Trinity. So go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the [Holy] Spirit."

The holy apostles received from the Lord this holy and venerable definition of the right and blameless faith, and they proclaimed it to the whole church of God under heaven. So the word of the prophet was fulfilled in it, which says: "Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

This definition, and this venerable gift, given to us through the divine apostles by the Son of God, was attacked after a great many years. The persecution against the church of God had ceased, and the enemy of our salvation, eager to corrupt it, used Arius as his city, so to speak, and armed himself against that same holy and blameless faith. He brought in foreign, blasphemous words against the Savior, and with them he threw the church of the Lord throughout the whole world into confusion.

For this reason the most faithful emperor Constantine gathered that great multitude of bishops, the council at the city of Nicaea. I had already investigated all its proceedings, as I said above, and I could scarcely find clear accounts of what was examined and written down there. These were scattered among various men who loved learning.

One was a certain John, a presbyter, an old man and thoroughly versed in the Scriptures, who recorded them in very old notebooks, though not the whole account.

I also drew on various other writers: Eusebius Pamphili, bishop of Caesarea, and Rufinus, presbyter of Rome, both of whom had shared in that holy council, and very many others.

Yet I did not find a consistent, harmonious sequence in the holy book I first came upon, as I said above. Only the admirable Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, traveled the highway of truth without swerving, from the coming of the Lord down to the times of the great Constantine.

But I could not find the whole story either, except what I recognized as true in the book I read first. I gathered material from both sources and thought it necessary to write it down in this book, for the common benefit and encouragement of those who will read this writing.

My account will therefore begin, with the ever-living Word of God preparing the way and guiding my steps, from the times of the reign of the most devout, Christ-bearing emperor Constantine, who commanded the council of bishops to assemble in the city of Nicaea.

For in another work, if God is willing, I will set down his birth and the course of the reign of his father Constantius, the most God-loving emperor. On the beginning of the reign of Constantius.

Chapter 1

After the tyrants Diocletian and Maximian laid aside the imperial purple and returned to private life, as Eusebius says, a short time passed. Then the emperor Constantius, who had been gentle all his life and very kind to his subjects, and who had made himself very dear to the divine Word, left his legitimate son Constantine as emperor and Augustus in his place. He ended his life by the common law of nature, and after his death he was granted all the honor that is owed to an emperor. He had been a most good and mild emperor.

He alone among the emperors of our time ruled worthily of his office through the whole length of his reign. In every other respect he showed himself most gracious and generous to everyone. He reached a glorious and thrice-blessed end of life. Alone among them, during his own reign, he died peacefully and with honor, leaving a lawful son as his successor, a son who was wise and most devout in everything.

His son Constantine, from the very beginning of his rule, was proclaimed a perfect emperor and Augustus by the armies. Long before that, he had been proclaimed by God himself, the King of all. He made himself a zealous follower of his father's devotion toward our faith.

And after other matters: So we have said that Constantine became an emperor son of an emperor, devout son of a most devout father, and wise in everything. He was honored with understanding and piety. God, the King of all and Savior, raised him up against the most impious men. When he drew up his forces in a lawful war, God fought at his side in the most astonishing way. Maxentius fell at Rome before Constantine. The other, who ruled in the East, did not outlive him by long. He too ended his life by a most shameful death. Licinius, who had not yet then gone mad, was sent against him by Constantine, the emperor most beloved of God.

Constantine, first in honor and rank among the emperors, first took pity on those who were being tyrannized at Rome. He called on the heavenly God and his Word, the Savior of all, Jesus Christ, as his ally through prayers, and advanced with his whole army to win back for the Romans the freedom of their ancestors. So says Eusebius. Concerning the emperors of the same period, Constantine, Maxentius and Maximin.

Chapter 2

Rufinus did not set his account in order, nor in the sequence and harmony of truth, alongside the history of Eusebius, the great Eusebius Pamphili. Nevertheless, whatever I find related to Eusebius' work, gathered from Rufinus himself and from the other writers, I will insert into this book, as I said above. Rufinus also says this:

After the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian and the death of Constantius, these emperors were left ruling the Roman realm at the same time. Constantine had received his father's portion. It began from what is called Europe and extended to the Danube. It included both Scythias, all the Celts, the Illyrians and Sauromatians, the barbarian land reaching to the river Rhine, Macedonia and the sea beside it, Thessaly and Achaia, and all the land toward the setting sun that the Ionian Sea bounds as it turns back.

Maximin, Diocletian's son [that is, his adopted son], governed all the nations of the East, as Eusebius says. Maxentius governed Rome and the lands from Italy as far as the Ocean itself. Concerning the tyranny of Maxentius.

Chapter 3

After the lawful burial of his father and the customary honors, Constantine therefore considered quiet inaction to be a loss, given the misfortune of the Romans.

For he heard that the city of Rome was suffering under the evils of Maxentius. His manner of ruling had turned into the cruelty of a tyrant. He handed many of the men in office over to death without trial. He imposed fines, banishments, redistributions of land, and promotions, all without examination. He also lusted after other men's wives, and either corrupted them by wickedness or forced them by his orders. In the end it was unsafe to have a beautiful wife, and there was much murder in the city for those who kept faith with chastity.

Constantine, most beloved of God, heard these things and very many others that do not belong to the present work, and he was stirred to anger. For the injustice done to others causes real grief to men who love God's people. Concerning the emperor Constantine, and how he took the field against the tyrant Maxentius.

Chapter 4

It seemed good to him at last to take up arms and come to the aid of the Romans who were suffering such things. To rescue them from their evils was the same as saving all mankind.

But first he resolved to call back the cities that had broken away from Roman rule. Some he won by words, some by arms, and some by the kindness of his generosity. He made their taxes lighter and gave them equal access to a hearing. Rebellions and arrogance he dissolved wisely, more by silence than by fear. He knew that the nations of the Saurians, the Franks and the Germans love novelty, and that they are quick to rush into uprisings against their kings and often make their own whim into law.

He also brought under his rule the Spaniards, the Britons, the islands there, and the remaining peoples, all who live as witnesses of the sunset. They are said to know whether the sun truly sinks into the ocean, or whether it passes around the water and turns back toward us by another road. He also conquered the barbarian tribes there by force of arms, treating the fighting as a side matter to the real task.

Some he subdued, some he paid, and some he made friends instead of enemies and familiar companions instead of old foes. He brought them all back as allies. He distressed no one and besieged no one, and he hurried on toward the rescue of others.

For where God fights alongside, everything is set right, and it goes beyond human reckoning. With this God-loving purpose, Constantine, most faithful in every respect, crossed the Rhine to the right. With a small army he passed over many mountains and many nameless rivers, and he subdued many barbarian tribes. He won over ten nations of the Gauls, the Franks and the Spaniards, and then led his army toward the mountains of Italy.

When Maxentius heard this, he fell into an unexpected panic. He had never expected anyone to cross so great a country, fenced in by mountains, rivers, assorted barbarians and the natural hardships of the wilderness. For the desolation of a region often becomes the greatest fortification of a kingdom.

So he decided to leave Rome with great speed, lead his army out against the enemy, and make the first move somewhere in Italy. When the two sides drew up facing each other and saw each other's standards, the hopes of battle were unequal. Maxentius' men had been

brought out from Rome and were pouring out in ranks. They had enjoyed a long rest and respite, so they seemed fit for battle and appeared to bear a spirit worthy of a city that was their match.

But those drawn up with Constantine had covered a great deal of country, and out of desire they had been gathering much plunder and spoil of war. They had used up their strength in running toward victory rather than enjoying what they had taken, and by now they were giving out from weariness and giving way under the constant strain. Concerning the cross that appeared in heaven to the emperor Constantine.

Chapter 5

The battle was not yet decided and the lines were evenly matched, when God armed Constantine from heaven. He showed him in the sky, in a form of light, the saving sign of the cross. Letters revealed the meaning of the vision, saying: “By this, conquer.”

To unbelievers this account seems a myth, a fiction made up to please our doctrines. But to those used to believing the truth, the proof of the matter is plain. For God, who painted this sign, afterward showed by deed the truth of the inscription’s grace.

Perhaps what we write does not yet persuade. We are writing history first, because from the beginning we are gathering only a little of what is useful from the things he lived through. But we should not disbelieve in what follows. In our own generation, those who fought beside Constantius, the son of Constantine, saw it with their own eyes, and healed the old unbelief with fresh sights.

For if those who contradict these things are Hebrews, far less believable are the things believed in their own books. A sea crossed on foot, water made into a wall, a deep traveled as a road, God speaking in a bush, a flame giving law, a trumpet sounding without an instrument over the desert, angels drawn up in battle line, commanders of the Lord’s host fighting for the army, and hailstones and darts of fire hurled instead of the usual spears. Yet all of us who are sensible agree with these without examining them.

For when God wills, nothing is impossible. And if those who reject the marvel are Greeks, we have much to say that we would rather not say. How many things did the oracle-givers declare divinely to Alexander, when he was about to cross over to the war at the Granicus and the battle line against Darius? Yet their fictions have no visible proof. And how did a divine spirit announce by a voice to the philosopher Socrates the outcome of things he should not do? And what of the accounts about Pythagoras of Samos, put together by his disciples?

I will not even mention the inventions of the poets, or how some of their famous men recorded that certain beings counted as gods among them fought alongside them. I leave this out so that no one will think I am weighing myths against true things, or things that never happened against things that did.

For the many-sided power of Christ's grace, from the time it blossomed among human beings, has been a remedy and a cure in heaven and on earth, in the sea, in plants, in wood, in clothing, in sickness and in health, in food and in drink. It has been so, it is so, and it will be so. Those who have tried it know this, and we ourselves will set it out at the proper time as the history goes on. Concerning the sign which Emperor Constantine made as a copy of the cross that appeared to him in heaven.

Chapter 6

So Constantine took the sight of the wonder and turned it into the form of a trophy. He fitted it together with gold-bonded stones and made it into the shape of a very tall spear, and he gave it to the cavalry officers at the head of his army to carry. From then on he looked for the promise of the writing to be fulfilled in actual deeds.

He was not disappointed in his hope. He believed what he had seen all the more quickly, and he received a victory that came faster than the vision itself. Concerning the victory of the godly Emperor Constantine over the impious Maxentius.

Chapter 7

Constantine, then, cut short the great toil of war by his faith, and he drew up his battle line bravely against the army from Rome, with no fear of it. Maxentius, however, was afraid of Constantine's strength, and he was also wary of the Romans' hatred of him, for most of them had turned against him because of his debauchery. So he decided to pursue his plot by treachery. The treachery was a bridge [put together] as a kind of contraption † by such men.

For what appeared on the surface was a crossing meant to receive Constantine, but what lay hidden was a snare of deception built under his steps. He had only to cross a little way, and the contraption would be released and the enemy caught, finding in that spot an unexpected grave of destruction.

That was how Maxentius prepared the traps for Constantine's crossing. But divine grace wrapped the craftsman of evil in his own clever schemes. Before Constantine could be caught, the tyrant himself fell first into his own devices. There he became the killer of the tyrant, that is, of himself, and prepared a good plot against himself. Before Rome, near the bridge called the Milvian, the aforesaid Maxentius himself went down into the river and drowned. So the whole Roman people cried out, saying:

"Let us sing to the Lord, for he has been gloriously glorified," as Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, says. "Horse and rider he has thrown into the sea. He became my helper and protector for salvation. And who is like you among the gods, Lord? Who is like you? Glorified among the holy ones, wonderful in glory, working marvels."

To this the same writer adds: These things, and whatever is akin and similar to them, were the words with which Constantine, by his very deeds, praised God, the ruler of all and the cause of his victory, and his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Then he rode into Rome with triumph. All the people together received him with bright eyes and with their whole souls, as a deliverer, savior and benefactor, with shouts of praise and insatiable joy. Even little children and women came, along with the members of the senate, the other most distinguished men, and the whole Roman people.

But he had an innate reverence for God. He was not shaken at all by the shouting, nor puffed up by the praises, and he was well aware that the help had come from God. At once

he ordered the trophy of the Savior's passion to be set up under the hand of his own statue. So they placed the statue in the most public spot in Rome, holding the sign of the cross in its right hand, and he commanded that this inscription be set up in these very words, in the Roman language:

"By this saving sign, the true proof of courage, I saved your city from the yoke of the tyrant and set it free. I also freed the senate and the Roman people and restored them to their ancient distinction and splendor." So much from Eusebius. Concerning Licinius, who was sent by the godly Constantine against the tyrant in the East.

Chapter 8

Rufinus, or Gelasius, says this: After these events the Roman senate asked that Licinius, who was the brother-in-law of the God-beloved Constantine through Constantine's sister Constantia, should rule jointly with Constantine. Constantine sent him out again to the East against the tyrant there, taking thought for the safety of the Christians in those parts. The pious Constantine had received such great benefits from God, and he was eager to offer thanksgiving to his benefactor. This meant ending the persecution of Christians, calling back those in exile, releasing those in prison, restoring their property to those whose goods had been confiscated, and rebuilding the churches. He did all of this with great eagerness, because his mind was set on the things of Christ. Being altogether a Christian, he acted in everything as a Christian: he raised up the churches of God and honored them with costly offerings, and he also ordered that the temples of the pagans be pulled down and destroyed by fire. Concerning the madness of Maximinus, the tyrant in the East.

Chapter 9

The tyrant in the East, however, was ravaging the churches of God. This is what brought him down. He was not able to bear the greatness of the rule that had been entrusted to him beyond his worth. Lacking any sound or kingly judgment, he set about his business in a crude and tasteless way. Above all, his soul was senselessly lifted up with boastful pride. Already he had begun to dare to act insolently even against his partners in the empire, and above all against Constantine, who surpassed him in everything: in birth, upbringing and education, in rank and understanding, and, the crowning thing of all, in self-control and in godliness toward the true God. Maximinus began by setting himself up for honors above them.

He carried this to the height of raving arrogance. He broke the agreements he had made with Licinius and took up a war with no truce. Then in a short time he threw everything into confusion, stirred up every city, gathered an army of countless thousands, and marched out to battle against Licinius, and so against Constantine, who had sent Licinius. But when he came to close fighting, he was left without the oversight of God, since the victory was granted by the one God of all to Constantine, who then held the power.

First the accursed man lost the multitude of armed men in whom he trusted. He was stripped of the guards around him, who left him wholly alone and fled to the victor. The wretch quickly took off the royal dress that did not suit him, stripping himself in a cowardly, base and unmanly way, and slipped into the crowd. Then he ran off, hiding in the fields and villages, and barely escaped the hands of the soldiers, seeking his own safety.

By these very deeds the divine oracles can be shown to be entirely trustworthy and true, where it is said: “A king is not saved by a great army, and a giant will not be saved by the greatness of his strength. A horse is a false hope for safety, and he will not be saved by the greatness of his power. Behold, the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those who hope in his mercy, to deliver their souls from death.” But the ungodly man was struck all at once by the scourge of God, and in a second clash of war he ended his life.

His end was not like that of generals and commanders, who often show courage in battle for the sake of virtue and their friends and bravely endure a glorious death. Being ungodly and a fighter against God, he stayed at home and hid, while the battle line stood drawn up in

the field, and there he paid the penalty. He was struck all at once by the scourge of God, so that, driven by terrible pains and agonies, he fell on his face and wasted away with hunger, and his whole flesh was melted away by an unseen fire sent from God. As his flesh ran away, his whole former appearance vanished, and only a kind of ghost of dry bones was left, like a skeleton from long ago. Those present could think only that his body had become a tomb for his soul, buried in the shape of a corpse that had wholly wasted away.

The heat burned him still more fiercely from the depth of his marrow, and his eyes leapt out and fell from their sockets, leaving him blind. Even so, while he still drew breath, he confessed to the Lord and called on death. At the very last he admitted that he suffered these things justly because of his drunken violence against Christ, and he gave up his soul. Concerning the renewal of the churches.

Chapter 10

So Maximin was removed. He was the only one of the enemies of true religion still left, and he had proved the worst of them all. Then, by the grace of almighty God, the rebuilding of the churches began again from their foundations. And the word of Christ, shining out to the glory of the God of all, gained greater boldness than before.

Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, the best of men in every way, wrote this in the ninth volume of his Ecclesiastical History. As I said above, I am gathering material from his labors and from others for this little book, and I set down the account briefly. I am pressing on with great eagerness toward the high, shining, holy and divine mountain, the apostolic and virtuous council of God's priests at Nicaea. For I see the prophet taking me by the hand and urging me on:

"Come," he says, "let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will tell us his way, and we will walk in it. For out of Zion will go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem."

For in truth that divine gathering of God's orthodox priests was Zion and Jerusalem, the loftiest mountain of the Lord and the house of the God of Jacob. By the Holy Spirit they examined the matter, and through the writings of the prophets, the Gospels and the apostles they set out very clearly the truth "about the word of life." That is, the Son of God is truly uncreated in the nature of his deity and not a creature, as the God-fighting and utterly impious Arius blasphemed against him. He is also of the same substance as the Father who begot him before all ages, and of the same stuff. In the same way they showed that the Holy Spirit is of the same deity and substance as the Father and the Son.

And this is for us a high mountain of God from above, as the word declared beforehand. That word was given by the Lord himself through the apostles, and now, through his priests at Nicaea, it has been made plain by the witness of the Scriptures. This is the venerable and holy mountain of the faultless faith. As the account goes on, with the help of God's grace, it will show this to us more clearly.

But let us return to the subject set before us in this church history. Let us take up again the account of how God the King came to the help of his people, and how the tyrants were brought down through his servant, the God-loving emperor Constantine.

Through him the one who alone is "the great Lord, who alone does great wonders, past finding out, of which there is no number," gave peace to his churches throughout the world. He is the one "who changes times and seasons, who removes kings and sets them up, who raises the poor from the earth and lifts the needy from the dunghill. He has brought down rulers from their thrones and exalted the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. He has shattered the arms of the proud." He is the wonder-worker and doer of great deeds, the master of all, the Creator of the whole world, the almighty, the all-good, the one and only God. To him we send up the new song, adding in our hearts: "To him who alone does great wonders, for his mercy endures forever; to him who struck down great kings and killed mighty kings, for his mercy endures forever; for in our lowliness the Lord remembered us."

For all these things let us not cease to sing the praises of the God of all, and of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord. With the Father he is the cause of all good things for us. He is the one who led us into the knowledge of God, the teacher of true devotion to him, the destroyer of the ungodly, the slayer of tyrants, the reformer of our way of life, and the savior of those who had given up hope. Let us all glorify Jesus with one mouth and one heart, because he alone,

as the counsel of an all-good Father [text missing] and by the loving-kindness of the Father, of himself and of the Holy Spirit, looked out for our salvation, since we lay down here below in corruption. He put on our nature fully, like an excellent physician who takes up our weaknesses and bears our diseases. Then, and always, he worked salvation and life for the human race.

This King of kings, always caring for his own people, raised up Constantine, his friend and own servant, and armed him with godliness and faith in himself against the ungodly tyrants: Maxentius at Rome and Maximinus in the East. Through Constantine he destroyed them and gave his own people a bright and deep peace. Concerning the wickedness of Licinius.

Chapter 11

But, says Eusebius the son of Pamphilus, the sight of these things was unbearable to the envy that hates what is good and to the demon who loves evil. Nor was what had happened to the tyrants described above enough to bring Licinius, who had changed for the worse, to sober thinking. His rule was flourishing. He held second place in honor to the emperor, the great Constantine, and had been judged worthy of marriage connection and kinship with him. Yet he fell short of imitating what is good, and he envied the wickedness of the ungodly tyrants and copied their evil ways. He had seen with his own eyes how their lives ended, but he preferred to follow their way of thinking rather than the friendship and goodwill of the better man.

Being envious, then, of his great benefactor, he began a wicked and terrible war against him. He spared no law of nature, and he took no thought of

oaths, of blood-relationship, or of treaties. For Constantine, as a thoroughly good emperor, had given him tokens of true goodwill. He had not begrudged him kinship with himself, and had not refused him a share in a splendid marriage with his sister.

And after other matters: Licinius, however, did the opposite of all this. This hater of God devised all kinds of schemes every day against his better, and contrived every sort of plot, so as to repay his benefactor with evils.

To this he adds: But God was a friend, protector and guardian to Constantine, I mean, and brought into the light and exposed the plans that the tyrant was devising in secret and darkness. So great is the power of virtue, the mighty weapon of godliness, both to ward off enemies and to guard one's own safety. Our most God-beloved emperor Constantine, protected by help from God, escaped the many tangled plots of that man of ill name.

When the tyrant saw that his secret scheming was by no means going as he wished, since God was exposing every trick and piece of villainy against the man he loved, he could no longer keep it hidden, and so chose open war.

Having decided to fight Constantine face to face, he now also set out to take the field against the God of all, as Constantine's guardian, whom he knew Constantine worshiped. And then he began to drive out the godly people under his rule.

And after other matters: The manner of his envy against them was strange, such as had never been heard of. For the cities around Amaseia and the rest of the cities of Pontus, which he ordered to be crushed with evils, he outdid every extreme of cruelty. There some of the churches of God were thrown down from top to bottom, razed to the ground, and others he ordered to be shut up, so that none of the usual worshipers might gather, or offer to God the prayers and worship due to him.

For he did not suppose that these prayers were being offered for himself (how could this hater of God think of such a thing?), reasoning this from a bad conscience. He was convinced that we acted on behalf of Constantine, the God-beloved emperor, and that we were seeking to win God's favor for him. Stirred up by this, he turned his anger against us.

And a little later: Many of the bishops were led away and punished without any excuse, like murderers, though they had done no wrong. They suffered a strange new kind of death: their bodies were hacked by the sword into many pieces, and after this cruel and most horrible spectacle they were thrown into the depths of the sea as food for the fish.

There were also flights of all the godly together, men and women with even the youngest infants. Once again fields, once again deserts, glens and mountains received the servants of Christ, because the ungodly man had stirred up war against everyone.

And a little later: If God, who is supremely good to souls, had not foreseen what was coming and very quickly made a great light and savior shine out for all at once, as in deep darkness and the blackest night, by leading his servant Constantine by the hand with a lofty arm and a most valiant hand.

To Constantine, then, from above, from heaven, God granted victories over the ungodly as trophies, a fitting fruit of his godliness. But the God of Constantine and of us all cast down the accursed Licinius, together with all his counselors and friends, under Constantine's feet.

When Licinius's affairs were driving on to the extreme of madness, the emperor Constantine, friend of God, judged it intolerable. He gathered up his own sober and pious judgment and mixed the firm trophy of justice with kindness. He decided to come to the help of those suffering under the tyrant. He set out to rescue the greater part of mankind by removing a few destroyers.

Up to that time the most humane emperor Constantine had shown the ungodly man nothing but kindness. He had even pitied a man who did not deserve sympathy. But it gained nothing. Licinius did not turn from his wickedness, and he only increased his rage against [his subjects]. The sufferers had no hope of safety, crushed as they were by a dreadful beast.

So the giver of good things mixed hatred of evil with kindness. The emperor set out against the tyrant from the western parts, from the great city of Rome, together with his most humane son, the emperor Crispus. He held out a hand of salvation to all. Father and son made the all-ruling God and his Son Christ, the Savior, their guide and ally. The emperor Con-

stantine and the emperor Crispus both divided their forces and wheeled around the battle line against the God-haters, and they won an easy victory. Everything in the engagement went smoothly for them, according to the will of the all-ruling God. So says the truth-loving Eusebius, son of the much-praised Pamphilus.

Rufinus says the following. He did not mention any part of what happened under Licinius, but I will still pick out his very words and put them in my account. He says: Licinius, who reigned together with Constantine, the God-loved, held Greek beliefs and hated Christians. For fear of the emperor Constantine he held back from beginning an open persecution against them, but in secret he plotted against many.

As time went on he openly stirred up persecution against everyone in the regions of the east. As a result many martyrs of Christ appeared in various places. By this he stirred the emperor Constantine to the deepest hatred of him. The two were enemies of each other. So much for this writer.

The others, who defend the truthfulness of Eusebius Pamphili, say this. The father, the emperor Constantine, and the son, the emperor Crispus, divided their army between them and set out against the ungodly tyrant. The son Crispus marched with the army he had with him to the regions of Asia. The father Constantine went through Europe with the guards around him.

The God-hater, full of every impiety and murder, came from the east against them with a very large army, drawn up for battle and boasting loudly. He reached Nicomedia. He knew that the soul of the God-loved Constantine revered the priests of God and honored them in every way. So he paid Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, [a man who had long been attached to him and hostile] to the pious emperor Constantine. Licinius thought that through him and his circle he could destroy Constantine, who was fenced about with the unconquerable weapons of God.

So the admirable Eusebius came to terms with him, won over by the promises of Licinius, who shared his impiety. That this is how it was, one can be fully assured from the letter of the Christ-loving emperor himself, which he wrote to the people of Nicomedia. Near the end of the letter he says something like this:

"Who taught these things to so innocent a crowd? Eusebius, plainly, the fellow-initiate in the tyrant's cruelty. That he became the tyrant's guard can be seen from many things. The murders of bishops bear witness to it, and of bishops at that. And the very harsh persecution of Christians cries it out plainly.

I will not now speak of any of the things he did against me. At the very time when the conspiracies of the opposing side were being worked up against us, this man supplied the tyrant with spying eyes against me, and all but armed men, to serve his purposes.

Let no one think that I am unprepared to prove these things. The proof is exact: it is established that the [presbyters] and deacons who were being sent along with Eusebius

were arrested by me. But I bring these things forward now not out of anger but to put those men to shame. This alone I fear, this I keep turning over: that I see you being called into a share of the charge. For through [his] conduct and his twisting of the truth, [you have taken on] a conscience separated from [what is right; the Greek here is corrupt]."

But the cure is not slow in coming, if you will now at last take a faithful and sound bishop and look to God. This is [now present] among you, and it ought to have depended on your judgment long ago. It would have, if the aforementioned Eusebius, with a terrible purpose [shared by those who then wished it for him], had not come here and shamelessly [corrupted] the right order of [the church].

But since it is right for me to say a few things to your love about this same Eusebius, listen patiently. Your forbearance remembers that a council was held in the city of Nicaea. I myself was present at it, as my conscience required. I wanted nothing other than harmony for everyone, and above all I wanted to refute and shake off this affair. It had taken its beginning through Arius of Alexandria [ ], and it was strengthened at once through the absurd and [ ] zeal of Eusebius.

But consider, dearest and most honored brothers, this same Eusebius. Overcome by his own conscience, how much he bustles about! With what shame he is caught in his lying on every side! He secretly sends various people to me to plead for him. He begs me for help so that, convicted of so great a fault, he will not fall from the honor he now holds. God himself is my witness in these things. May he kindly stay with me and with you. This man led even me astray and improperly carried me off.

But divine providence brought me back to its own truest way. You also have recognized this, and you will go on to know it. For everything was done by him at that time, Eusebius the unholy I mean, just as he himself desired, while he hid every kind of evil in his mind.

But recently, to pass over the rest of his wickedness, listen, I beg you, to what he did with Theognis, whom he had as a partner in his unholy purpose. Certain Alexandrians who had withdrawn from our faith [I had ordered to be brought] here, because through their service a firebrand of discord was being raised up.

But these fine and good bishops, whom the truth of the council had once spared for repentance, not only received these men and kept them safe in their own houses. They also shared with them in their wickedness of character. For that reason I decided to deal with these ungrateful men as I did. I ordered them seized and [sent] into exile.

Now it is for you to look to God with that faith which you have always had and ought to have, and to act so that we may rejoice in having bishops who are pure, orthodox and kind to people. But if anyone, in remembrance of those corrupters or in praise of them, is carelessly fired up, his own boldness will immediately be checked through the work of the servant of God, that is, of me. [May] God [keep] you, beloved brothers.

This letter, and others like it, of the God-loving emperor Constantine showed most clearly what sort of man the impious Eusebius of Nicomedia was. He was not only a close attendant of the God-hated Licinius, but also a fellow initiate and servant of his tyranny and impiety. From here I will go on to the proper subject of this church history. Concerning the victory of the God-loving emperor Constantine over the impious Licinius.

Chapter 12

Licinius set out with the army that was with him from Nicomedia toward Byzantium, against the God-loving emperor Constantine, who was there at the time. But the other ranks of soldiers had the Christ-bearing emperor in a circle around them. When the wretch saw this, he also saw himself abandoned by his own armies, who had fled to the shield of the stronger side. At first he was eager to hide in Chrysopolis in Bithynia (this is the port of Chalcedon). When he could not, he saw himself already lying prone at the feet of the emperor Constantine, and he surrendered himself.

The most gentle and devout emperor took him alive and treated him kindly. He did not kill him at all, but ordered him to live quietly in Thessalonica.

For a short time Licinius seemed to keep quiet. But after this he summoned some barbarians, and plotting with them, he was eager to win back by war the defeat he had suffered.

When the most faithful emperor learned of this, he ordered the God-hated man put to death. And so he was killed, the [tyrant] of Christ and of Christ's servant.

Book 2

Chapter 1

So Constantine became master of everything through the help God gave him, and was proclaimed sole emperor. He was eager to advance the cause of the Christians more and more. He did this in various ways, for he had a burning faith and an inborn, wholly faithful devotion to the God of all. And the whole church under heaven was in deep peace.

Let us hear, then, what the finest sower in the field of the church, the lover of truth Eusebius, son of the famous Pamphilus, says on this point.

"Licinius," he says, "followed the same road of impiety as the godless tyrants, and so he was justly brought down to the same precipice as they."

"He, then, lay thrown down in this way. But the greatest of conquerors, Augustus Constantine, who shone with every virtue of godliness, together with his son Crispus, a emperor most beloved of God and in every way most like his father, recovered the East, which was their own. They gave the Roman realm its single united rule as in former times. They brought the whole circle of the world, from the rising sun, on both sides, north and south, to the furthest limits of the setting day, under one and the same peace."

"All fear of their oppressors was taken away from people. They celebrated bright festival days, and everything was full of light. Those who had been downcast before looked at one another with smiling faces and radiant eyes. Hymns were heard in city and countryside alike. First of all they honored God the King and his true Son, Christ, because this is what they had been taught. Then they praised the devout emperor together with his God-beloved sons."

"The old evils were forgotten, and every impiety was lost from memory. People enjoyed the good things present and looked forward to those to come. Edicts full of the victorious emperor's kindness were published in every place, and laws that showed generous giving and true godliness."

"So, with every tyranny cleared away, the rightful rule was kept secure and free from envy for Constantine and his sons alone."

So much, then, from Eusebius son of Pamphilus, the most trustworthy of the ancient church historians. He took great pains and searched thoroughly through [the text is corrupt here:

sources of the plainest kind], and he left us an accurate account of church history in ten whole volumes.

He began from the coming of the Lord and carried it down to these times. It was not without toil. How could it have been, when he took on so great a care to preserve the harmony of such a collection? But, as I said just now, he put in great zeal and an immense wealth of labor.

Let no one suppose, from what is rumored about him, that the man ever held any of the blasphemous wickedness of Arius. Rather, be persuaded that if he ever said or wrote anything slightly suggestive of Arius, it was not according to Arius's impious thought but out of unguarded simplicity. He himself assured us of this, bearing witness in his defense, which he sent to the body of the orthodox bishops.

Anyone of sound mind would take the man to be telling the truth, since it is also agreed from that source that the teachings of Arius had not yet at that time been heard. What he did at the council at Nicaea will show how he struggled against the impiety of Arius for the sake of the apostolic and orthodox faith.

But let us return to the sequence of the church's history. The church of Christ our Savior throughout the world was enjoying deep peace. This had been granted to it by God, the King of all, through his servant Constantine and his sons.

After the martyrdom of the divinely inspired Peter, who had been bishop of the church of Alexandria, he was perfected in that martyrdom and won the unfading crown of the contest. The church there was left without a bishop for one year.

After the year, Achillas was appointed to the throne of the same holy martyr Peter. He was a sturdy man of great natural gifts and holy mind, outstanding in reverence and in abundant wisdom, as the ancient writings, which are reliable, tell us. After much urging, he received Arius into the diaconate.

Achillas lived only five months more. Then Alexander took up the high-priestly office of the church of the Alexandrians there. He was a man honored by all the clergy and people of the church. He was small in stature, generous in giving, a good speaker, gentle, a lover of God, a lover of people, a lover of the poor, kind, and approachable to all, as much as anyone ever was. He himself also set Arius as a presbyter, very near to himself.

Under him the peace of the churches was growing brighter day by day, standing together in a single harmony, and it was honored everywhere on earth by the struggles of the holy martyrs. The devil could not bear such growth in the most faithful people of the church, in their heavenly worship of God. So again, out of some quarrelsomeness, he brought about trouble among them. Concerning the heresy invented by Arius, the fighter against God.

Chapter 2

That presbyter, whom we said Bishop Alexander of Alexandria had honored with such a position, was named Arius. He was a man pious in outward appearance, but for the rest a hot-blooded lover of glory and empty show. He began to put forward certain strange teachings about faith in Christ, things no one in earlier times had ever asked about or introduced.

He tried to divide our only-begotten Lord Jesus Christ from the ineffable and eternal Godhead of the Father, and so he became responsible for great disturbance in the church.

Alexander, with his gentle nature, wished to turn Arius to a better course by suitable exhortations, and for the time being did not decide to use a formal sentence. Because of this, many were drawn in to share the plague of the heresy, and then, like a great fire kindled from a small spark, it blazed up.

The evil began in the church of the Alexandrians and then spread through other cities and provinces.

At last, when Alexander saw the evil growing worse, he called together a synod of the bishops under him and deposed Arius. He then set the matter before his fellow ministers. He set out the case of Arius more fully and urged zeal for destroying the heresy. He told them to prepare themselves for a judgment on it, and wrote to them as follows. The letter of deposition against Arius and those with him, sent by Bishop Alexander to the bishops everywhere:

Chapter 3

"To his beloved and most honored fellow ministers everywhere in the catholic church, Alexander sends greetings in the Lord.

"Since the catholic church is one body, and the divine Scriptures command us to keep the bond of concord and peace, it follows that we should write and tell one another what is happening among each of us. Then, if one member suffers or rejoices, we may either suffer with one another or rejoice with one another.

"Now in our own region lawless men, enemies of Christ, have come forward and are teaching an apostasy which one might reasonably suspect to be the forerunner of the Antichrist, and might call it so.

"I wanted to pass over such a thing in silence, so that the evil might be used up among the apostates alone, and not cross into other places and defile the ears of some simple people.

"But Eusebius, who is now in Nicomedia, thinks that the affairs of the church lie in his hands, because he left Berytus and, having set his eye on the church of Nicomedia, has not been called to account for it. He has put himself at the head of these apostates and has tried to write everywhere on their behalf, to draw away some who are unaware into this heresy, so ruinous and hostile to Christ. So I was under compulsion. Knowing what is written in the law, I could no longer keep silent, and I must now report to you, so that you may know who the apostates are, and the wretched little phrases of their heresy, and so that, if Eusebius writes to you, you may pay no attention.

"For he wishes to renew through these men an old ill will of his own, which time had silenced. He puts on a show of writing on their behalf, but in fact he shows that he is zealous in this for himself. The apostates, then, are these: Arius, Achilles, Thales, Carpones, another Arius, Sarmates, Euzoius, Lucius, Julius, Menas, Helladius, Gaius, and with them Secundus and Theonas, who were once called bishops.

"The things they have invented against the Scriptures and now say are these: 'God was not always Father, but there was a time when God was not Father. The Word of God was not always, but came into being out of things that were not. For the God who is made the one who was not out of what was not. Therefore there was a time when he was not. For the Son

is a creature and a made thing. He is not like the Father in essence, nor is he the true and natural Word of the Father, nor his true wisdom. Rather he is one of the things made and created, and he is called Word and Wisdom only by misuse of the terms,

'having himself come into being through God's own Word and the Wisdom that is in God, by which God made all things and him as well. Therefore he is also changeable and alterable in nature, like all rational beings.

'The Word is a stranger to the essence of God, foreign to it and cut off from it, and the Father is ineffable to the Son. For the Word neither knows the Father perfectly and accurately, nor can he see him perfectly. Indeed the Son does not even know his own essence as it is.

'For he was made on our account, so that God might create us through him as through an instrument. He would not have come to exist if God had not wished to make us.' "

Someone once asked them whether the Word of God can change, as the devil changed. They were not afraid to answer, "He can. His nature is changeable, since he is begotten and created." Arius and his followers said these things and were not ashamed of them. So we gathered together, with the bishops of Egypt and the Libyas, a hundred in number, and laid an anathema on them and on those who followed them. But Eusebius and his party received them. They were eager to mix falsehood into the truth and ungodliness into godliness. They will not succeed, for the truth prevails. "There is no fellowship of light with darkness," and no "agreement of Christ with Belial." For who has ever heard such things?

Who hears such things now without being shocked, and without stopping his ears so that the filth of these words does not touch his hearing? When John says, "In the beginning was the Word," who does not condemn those who say, "There was once when he was not"? Who hears the words "only-begotten Son, and through him all things came to be" and does not condemn those who declare that "he is one of the created things"? How can he be one of the things that came into being through him? Or how can he be only-begotten if, by their account, he is counted together with everything else? And how can he be "from things that were not," when the Father says, "My heart has brought forth a good word," and "from the womb, before the morning star, I begat you"?

Or how can he be unlike the Father in essence, when he is the perfect image and radiance of the Father, and says, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father"?

And if the Son of God is Word and Wisdom, how can there have been "a time when he was not"? To say that is the same as saying that God was once without reason and without wisdom. And how can he be changeable and alterable, when he says of himself, "I am in the Father and the Father is in me," and "I and the Father are one," and says through the prophet, "See me, for I am, and I do not change"? Even if someone could apply that saying to the Father himself, it fits better with the Word, since even when he became man he was not altered. As the apostle said, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for the

ages." And what persuaded them to say that he was made for our sake, when Paul says, "through whom are all things and for whom are all things"?

As for their blasphemy that the Son does not know the Father perfectly, we should not be surprised. Having once set out to fight against God, they twist even his own words, when he says, "The Father knows me, and I know the Father." Now if the Father knows the Son only in part, then clearly the Son also knows the Father perfectly; but if it is not right to say this, and the Father knows the Son perfectly, then clearly, just as the Father knows his own Word, so also the Word knows his own Father, and he is the Word.

By saying these things and unfolding the divine Scriptures, we often confounded them. Then again, like chameleons, in their love of strife they tried to draw to themselves the saying, "When the ungodly comes into the depth of evils, he despises." Many before them have gone further than they should and fallen into folly. But these men, by attempting everything to destroy the divinity of the Word, have condemned themselves beyond those others, since they have come nearer to the antichrist.

And so they were proclaimed outcasts and anathematized by the church. We grieve over their destruction, especially because they once belonged to the church and have now leapt away from it. But we are not dismayed. For Hymenaeus and Philetus suffered this, and so did Judas, one of the Twelve, who followed the Savior and later became a traitor and apostate.

We have not been left untaught about these men either. The Lord warned beforehand: "Take care that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and 'The time has come near,' and they will lead many astray. Do not go after them." And the apostle, who learned this from the Savior, wrote that "in later times some will fall away from the sound faith, giving heed to spirits of error and to teachings of those who turn away from the truth."

So our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ commanded this himself and signified it through the apostle concerning such people. In keeping with that, when we heard their ungodliness, we anathematized them, as such people deserve, and declared them strangers to the church and to the faith.

So we have also made this known to your Godliness, beloved and most honored fellow ministers. If any of them should rashly come to you, do not receive them. And do not be persuaded by Eusebius, or by anyone else who writes on their behalf. We who are Christians ought to turn away from all who speak against Christ, and who think as they do, as fighters against God and destroyers of souls. We should not even say "Greetings" to such people, so that we do not share in their sins, as the blessed John commanded. Greet the brothers who are with you; those with me greet you. The presbyters of Alexandria.

I, Kollouthos, presbyter, agree with what has been written and with the deposition of Arius and of those who were extinguished with him. Alexander, presbyter, likewise. Dionys-

ios, presbyter, likewise. Alexander, presbyter, likewise. Harpokration, presbyter, likewise. Nemesios, presbyter, likewise. Silvanos, presbyter, likewise. Apis, presbyter, likewise. Paulos, presbyter, likewise. Dioskoros, presbyter, likewise. Eusebios, presbyter, likewise. Silas, presbyter, likewise. Agathon, presbyter, likewise. Longos, presbyter, likewise. Pirous, presbyter, likewise. Proterios, presbyter, likewise. Kyros, presbyter, likewise. Deacons: Ammonios, deacon, likewise. Pistos, deacon, likewise. Eumenes, deacon, likewise. Olympios, deacon, likewise. Athanasios, deacon, likewise. Pnaulos, Paulos, deacon, likewise. Amyntianos, deacon, likewise. Makarios, deacon, likewise. Athanasios, deacon, likewise. Apollonios, deacon. Aphthonios, deacon, likewise. Makarios, deacon, likewise. Petros, deacon, likewise. Gaios, deacon, likewise. The presbyters of Mareotis: Ammonas, presbyter, likewise. Sostras, presbyter, likewise. Tyrannos, presbyter, likewise. Ammonas, presbyter, likewise. Serenos, presbyter, likewise. Herakles, presbyter, likewise. Agathon, presbyter, likewise. Deacons: Sarapion, deacon, likewise. Didymos, deacon, likewise. Maurus, deacon, likewise. Komon, deacon, likewise. Tryphon, deacon, likewise. Didymos, deacon, likewise. Seras, deacon, likewise. Hierax, deacon, likewise. Dioskoros, presbyter, likewise. Theon, presbyter, likewise. Kopres, presbyter, likewise. Orion, presbyter, likewise. Didymos, presbyter, likewise. Bokkon, presbyter, likewise. Achillas, presbyter, likewise.Ioustos, deacon, likewise. Demetrios, deacon, likewise. Markos, deacon, likewise. Alexander, deacon, likewise. Ammonios, deacon, likewise. Ptolarion, deacon, likewise. Gaios, deacon, likewise. Markos, deacon, likewise.

While Alexander was writing this to people everywhere, city by city, the evil grew worse. When the emperor Constantine learned of it, he was deeply pained in his soul and counted the matter as a disaster of his own. He was eager to put out at once the evil that had been kindled, so he sent a letter to Alexander and Arius by a trustworthy man, the bishop of Cordoba, a city of Spain, since the emperor loved him and held him in honor. A letter of the emperor Constantine to Alexander and Arius, sent by Hosius, bishop of Cordoba.

Chapter 4

Constantine, Victor, Greatest, Augustus, to Alexander and Arius. I learn that the beginning of the present dispute arose like this. You yourself, father Alexander, were asking each of the presbyters what each of them thought about a certain passage written in the Law, or rather, about some idle part of it. And you, Arius, rashly put forward a position which you should never have thought of in the first place, or, having thought of it, should have kept to yourself in silence.

So when this disagreement arose among you, communion was refused, and the most holy people, split into two parts, were separated from the harmony of the common body. Let each of you, giving equal consideration, accept what your fellow servant rightly advises you. And what is that?

It was not right at the beginning either to ask about such matters or, when asked, to answer. For no necessity of any law demands such inquiries; rather, the quarrelsomeness of useless idleness puts them forward. Even if it is done for the sake of some natural exercise of the mind, we ought nevertheless to shut such questions up within our thoughts and not carelessly bring them out into public gatherings, nor thoughtlessly entrust them to everyone's ears. For how many people are able to grasp accurately, or to explain properly, matters so great and so difficult?

And a little later: So we must avoid long talk on such subjects. Otherwise, because of the weakness of our nature we may be unable to explain what has been set forth, or the slower understanding of those being taught may fail to grasp accurately what was said. Then the people may again be brought, because of one or the other of these, either to blasphemy or to schism. And after other remarks: For it is believed to be neither fitting nor at all permitted.

To remind your good sense with a small example: you surely know that even the philosophers all agree on one doctrine, yet often, when they differ on some part of it, they are divided by the excellence of their knowledge, but are united again in their agreement on the doctrine. If this is so, how much more just is it that you, who are servants of the great God, should be of one mind with each other in such a choice of religion?

Let us look at this with greater care and think over what has been said with more understanding. Is it really possible that, because of a few quarrels over empty words among you,

brothers should be set against brothers and children against fathers, and that the council should be split by this ungodly division because of you?

Let us willingly turn away from the devil's temptations. Our great God, the Savior of all, has stretched out his light to everyone. By his providence he has [given me, his servant, this task], so that I might bring you, his peoples, by my appeal and by the service of my exhortation and urging, into the holy fellowship of the council.

And after other things: Concerning the divine providence, let there be one faith among you, one understanding, one agreement about what is better. But as for the things you argue over so precisely among yourselves in these very small questions, even if you come together in one opinion, it is right that they stay within the mind's reasoning, kept as something unspoken. Yet what belongs to the common good, the faith of the truth, and the worship and honor owed to God and to the law, let these remain unshaken among you.

Return, then, to friendship and goodwill toward one another. Give back to the whole people their own embraces. Cleanse your own souls, as it were, and recognize one another again. Friendship is often sweet when it returns to reconciliation after enmity has been laid aside.

So give me back peaceful days and nights free of care, so that I too may keep some pleasure in pure light and, from then on, the joy of quiet.

Otherwise I must groan, be held in tears all the time, and [be unable to bear] the rest of my life. For when the peoples of God, my fellow servants I mean, are divided from one another in such an unjust and harmful way, how can my own mind be at peace any longer?

So that you may feel how great my grief is over this, listen. Not long ago I arrived at the city of Nicomedia, and at once my mind was hurrying toward [the East]. But while I was already hastening to you, and for the most part was with you, the report of this matter turned my thoughts back the other way, so that I would not be forced to see with my eyes what I could not bear to accept even with my ears.

Open to me, then, in your agreement, the road to the East, which you closed to me by your quarrels with one another. Allow me soon to see both you and all the other peoples rejoicing, and to give to the Better One, in words of good omen, the thanks owed for the common harmony and [healing] of all.

Such were the wonderful and wise-filled exhortations of the emperor's letter. But the evil was stronger than the emperor's zeal and than the trustworthiness of the one who served as bearer of the letters. Whereupon the most God-beloved emperor Constantine commanded that a council of bishops take place at Nicaea.

Chapter 5

So the emperor, seeing the church in turmoil, assembled an ecumenical council, urging the bishops from everywhere by letter to come together at Nicaea in Bithynia. It was the sixteenth year and six months of his reign when he was pursuing these efforts for the peace of the church.

Bishops came from many provinces and cities. Concerning them Eusebius, the son of Pamphilus, says the following word for word in the third book of his work on the Life of Constantine: "From all the churches that filled all of Europe, Libya and Asia, the choicest of God's ministers were gathered together in one place.

A single house of prayer, as though enlarged by God, held within it at once Syrians, Cilicians, Phoenicians, Arabs and Palestinians, and besides these Egyptians, Thebans, Libyans, and those from Mesopotamia. Already a Persian bishop was present at the council, and a Scythian was not missing from the company. Pontus, Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia provided their chosen men. Thracians and Macedonians, Achaeans and Epirotes, and those living even farther away also came. Even the famous Hosius of Spain was there, taking the place of Sylvester, bishop of the great city of Rome, and sitting with the Roman presbyters Vito and Vincentius.

The head of the now-reigning city, Metrophanes by name, was absent because of old age, but presbyters present there filled his place. One of them was Alexander, who later became bishop of that same city.

Constantine, the one emperor from all the ages to do so, joined this crown to Christ with the bond of peace. He offered it to his Savior as a thank-offering worthy of God for victory over his hostile enemies. In our own time he had set up this picture of the apostolic company.

For the account says that in the apostles' day too, devout men from every nation under heaven were gathered, as in the Acts of the Apostles, where there were "Parthians and Medes and Elamites." The difference is that those gatherings lacked this: not all of them were present as ministers of God. In the present company the bishops numbered more than three hundred. The presbyters, deacons, attendants and many others who followed them were too many to count.

Among these ministers of God, some stood out for their wisdom in speech. Others stood out for the firmness of their lives and their patient endurance. Others were adorned by a middle way. Some were honored for their many years. Others shone with youth and vigor of soul. Others had only just entered the course of ministry.

The emperor ordered that provisions be supplied lavishly to all of them every day. Such is the account Eusebius, the son of Pamphilus, gave of those who gathered there. Here the emperor sits in council with the bishops.

Chapter 6

After the emperor had celebrated the festival of victory over Licinius, he himself came to Nicaea. On the next day all the bishops gathered together in one place, and the emperor came in after them. When he entered he stood in the middle. He would not sit down until the bishops nodded their consent. Such reverence and respect for these men held the emperor.

The emperor, whom all praised, gave them a speech of exhortation and instruction. It was a speech of hymn-singing, glory and thanksgiving to the God of all, who had granted him so much. He spoke somewhat as follows. An address by Constantine Augustus to the holy council.

Chapter 7

"The righteousness that nurtures [us], the righteousness of almighty God, has laid out many most conspicuous roads for the human race to do good. Not least among them is that more distinguished and flashing road. In the crown of the most holy law of the [catholic] church it has gathered for us all something greater than any wonder: the Lord's dwelling-place of faith.

We see its summit reaching up to the light of the stars. Even while the work was only beginning, we know that its foundations were laid so deeply and so faithfully, by the nod of God, that the whole world perceived it.

From that summit, which stands above all the rest, a level and even way appears, lit with the brightness of light, running to the end of the exit. Its front is adorned with a seal like a star. Ten columns brighter than snow bear it up, unmoved in their setting of faith, and they bear it forever by the power of our Savior's divinity.

The craftsman of so great a work [took us up], and gave us also a righteous faith from the soul. He put into our minds the dignity of this same law. To its gates nothing else comes forward but a pure and pious desire pressing on, with a mind purely [fixed], in confidence. [The one who approaches does so in this way.]

To this same house a saving purpose added a wonderful splendor of adornment. I mean this: inside, the faith of men, honored with blooming crowns throughout the whole precinct of the Lord, gathers the fruit of immortality. It brings out into the open the pure strains of human life and makes them conspicuous. From there the heavenly glory outside, crowned, outlines the prizes of the age that always remains, or rather keeps growing. What has been nourished adorns the whole completion of the work with the praise that is fitting.

This same house of the Lord is guarded by only two guards. Divine fear comes to the mind of some as a corrective. For the sensible there is always present, as a prize, the divine praise of understanding. While each of these stays at the forecourts of the most holy place, the open gates receive righteousness. Once it has settled within, it remains undefiled. But injustice has no right even to approach the doors. It is banished and shut out of the place.

Most honored brothers, worthy of all praise, these things have brought matters so clearly into the brightness of the eternal and [undying] light. So I pray that no faith of the soul may perhaps make me unfit and far from the truth.

But what shall I affirm first? Shall it be the pattern of that blessedness which lies hidden, shut up inside my breast? Or the divine kindnesses that almighty God has shown me? Out of the great number of those works it would be enough to say this: our own God, the Father of all [things], has rightly made my lowly self his own servant.

Believe me, most honored brothers, and receive what I say with an undivided faith. My mind may seem to be blessed by the divine kindnesses, and from such a matter it may seem able to fill [outstanding minds]. Yet, as the faith of the truth plainly shows, neither voice nor tongue is able to carry out what the mind commands, and quite understandably.

The greatness of these kindnesses is beyond measure. The mind, being lofty, reaches places far above the body. But the [tongue's] course is shut up in a very narrow space, and being almost useless for speaking it falls completely silent. Which of us is so rash, with such confidence, as to throw away reason and say that he could easily and fully utter glorious and worthy praises to God, who can do all things, and who is the maker of all that is fairest?

If anyone considers only the majesty of the one who ordained that he should be born, he would see well enough that nothing can be set down that is able to be called worthy of God.

What then should I, in my lowliness, say about this devotion, except what the word of truth shows? Let the greatest act of worship look carefully at his greatness, to see whether it can attain it in the things said about him. Then no error will cause it to slip.

I wish that I, your fellow servant, had a rich supply of words, so that I could praise those things that deserve to be proclaimed. Our divine Saviour, the guardian of all things, [showed them] by the [signs] of his coming. For our benefit he deigned to take from a virgin a pure body as his dwelling. He made known to people a lesson of his compassion, and he showed it by the calm nod of his divinity. Where then shall I begin?

Shall I begin with his teaching and his dignity? Or with the divine teachings, in which, with no one teaching him, he alone appeared as teacher? Or with this: that by his providence so many crowds, as many as can be counted, drew breath again, with a little food, the smallest provisions, and only two fish, [...] by his divine providence?

And Lazarus: after his death, with a short rod, he made a resurrection and brought him back again into the brightness of the light.

How could I speak of his pure divinity? By it he saw a certain woman in a rather hidden way and counted her worthy of his conversation alone. He showed her healthy again and free from every disease.

Who could speak worthily of his deathless work? By it a certain man had been consumed by a continual, long wasting sickness, his limbs dissolved, and he lay [helpless]. Suddenly he was strengthened by divine healing. He put on his shoulders the very bed on which he had lain, and, pouring out praises of thanksgiving, he ran through his homeland and his district.

And what of his divine and steady walking? He trod on the wild sea as one who steps upon it, and walked over it. With his divine footsteps he made the water of the deepest sea firm. Through the middle of the open sea, which no measure of depth bounds, he made his journey as if over land.

And what of his gentle patience under wrong? By it he was victor in all things. He tamed the self-willed arrogance of the peoples, and when it was tamed he [separated] its wildness far from [...] and subjected it to the law.

And what of those most brilliant and greatest works of his divinity, by which we live? By them we not only look for the hope of the coming blessedness, but in some way already possess it.

What more do I dare to say, even with this small preparation of speech? It is not only this, [which concerns] the purity of my consecrated soul, but what kind of God the almighty is, who dwells in heaven. He is so toward the whole human race, and most of all and especially toward that righteousness which is most beautiful and greater than any praise. For he deigned that the most holy part of his own divine Spirit should dwell [in the body] and in this way be saving for our bodies.

So then, concerning this most holy and saving order of almighty God, the boundless madness of the enemies, as though confused in a mist of destructive perversity, hesitates to give an account of it. I will therefore try to tell it briefly, as far as my faith and the abundance of speech in my soul allow.

For the malice of these [nations] brings in such a kind of shamelessness that, with impious mouth, they are not afraid to say that God, who can do all things, has neither done nor wished to do all the things set out in the divine law.

What an impious thing to say! It deserves every extreme of punishment against itself. Truly, with madness and daring, it wants to hide the glory of this divine kindness, which no human being is able to comprehend.

For what is more worthy of God than holiness? It came forth from the most holy fellowship with the fountain of righteousness. It has overflowed through the whole circuit of the world, and it has shown people the powers of the most holy virtues. But they first counted these virtues as enemies to themselves, and [they suffered the fate] of the Assyrians. With their bad example leading the way, the remaining nations were persuaded to join them.

In these matters, as we judge from our own observation, we see the divine compassion of our God and Savior working with us. Day by day, and over many ages, he has commanded those who were driven by the goad of a fiery madness to turn back to the patience of saving healing. Even so, the greatness of such a kindness cannot come as a favor to the rest, [because] of human ignorance. They do not understand that the divine power can exalt every word, make it firm once it is raised on high, and again bring it down and dissolve it.

But the course of events would rather have gone against human affairs, if God, who can do all things, had not purposed to do everything by the silent nod of his own divinity. For human madness would rather have become widespread, and human [arrogance], with no limit, would have ravaged every soul. Nor could the many other things have appeared, which serve their own appointed order in the turning of the world.

But everything together, along with the ignorance of the divine, would quickly have perished. The injustice of envy and malice would not have stayed among a few; no one would have been found a stranger to this malice. Religions of every kind have spread so greatly and widely into the souls of human beings that, deservedly, by their own shamefulness, they are always [deprived] of the light of this our brightness, and deprive themselves of it.

No argument, then, will be able to drag my faith away from what has been said. For with my faith, with nothing evil standing in the way, goes perfect power: the living Word of truth, the one who can do all things, the guardian of all [...], the protector of our salvation. He seems, then, in the manner of his most holy word, to supply abundantly [the fellowship] of the one who sets free, to preserve it, and to provide us with the brightness of the light.

Why, then, even now do the crowds of all the [nations] not look at the heavenly light, or [understand] the most glorious and holy [...]? Why do they seek what is earthly, which has no real existence, no radiance of pure brightness, and no power of divinity?

What an unworthy drama! Even now they fall short of nothing in impiety, and they do not look to what is needed. They fall under wretched error and do not see. With these filthy works they do not stop defiling the brightness of the world. They set up wood and stone and bronze and silver and gold, these earthly [materials], to be worshiped, and from them they promise hope of life. They adorn temples for them with conspicuous decoration, and in this way they increase the [...] of their [...]. For the sheer size of the buildings they have made offers a marvel worthy of their own sight.

So when they seem to be doing these things, it is clearly understood, even if in their pride they neither perceive nor see it, that they are caught while thinking they are boasting in their own works. How great and mighty, then, is the ruler of all, who is not seen! He is the sovereign and judge of all. Some, in their very confidence in their own virtue, as they suppose, [insult themselves] and do not notice it.

By his design the form of our body received its proper shape. So that we might have the full vigor of harmony, the same God bound the joining of our limbs together with very strong

sinews, so that in every action of our effort we would have the untiring strength of that harmony. [Text lost here] by a saving design of these things, he also breathed a spirit into us, so that all these parts could move and live. He granted sight to our eyes, gave our head [its place] for understanding, and shut up reasoning inside the whole region of our mind.

So if anyone of sound mind were to consider the [purpose] of this design, and set aside the rest, which can be grasped neither by word nor by number, he would quickly come to see and understand the eternal and saving power of the immortal God. Without any error he would be able [to bind a human being to him], since he can plainly see that all things that have come into being exist by the power of God, as God himself willed them all to be.

I want it to be seen that some lawless way of life in the world produced ignorance of God among people. It began when a line of thinking, born from the deceit of the enemy, took root in the wretched souls of perverse men. Let us take clear proof of this from the divine law.

From the time when the divine holy command was not kept with fitting care by those two who were set in place at the beginning, the [flower] of this name was not born afterward. The evil became continual and grew more, from the time when the two I mentioned were driven out by a divine nod.

Matter itself, together with the wickedness of people, advanced so far that it condemned the [foundations] of the east and the west. The very excess of the opposing power seized people's minds and… [the text breaks off here].

In this command, however, lies the holy and immortal, untiring compassion of God, who can do all things. For through all the days and past ages, God has been setting free countless multitudes of peoples who were enslaved under this burden, and he did so through me, the same servant of his. He will lead them out into the full brightness of eternal light. Because of these things, my dearest brothers, I trust that from now on I will be more distinguished, through a more personal providence and glorious benefits from our immortal God, and through my most pure faith toward him.

So let the most pure synod of your holiness receive me, and do not allow the doors of the most prudent church, the common mother of us all, to be set against me. Even if my soul's reasoning, which seeks complete purity of the catholic faith, does not think itself worthy of this, it still urges and reminds me. [The text here is corrupt: something about the forehead of its own modesty, a seal of all the finest virtues, and knocking at the gates of…] and at these too, so that you also may deign at once to grant the goodwill of your brotherhood, [looking] toward one concord and toward the catholic faith.

For this is fitting for God, suited to the faith of the catholic church, and beneficial to the common good. Since this [stable] peace has been granted to us by God, let us all offer a worthy repayment to the one who [gave] it to us.

It would be truly terrible, exceedingly terrible, now that our enemies have been destroyed and no one dares to oppose us, for us to strike one another and give our adversaries the pleasure of a good laugh. This is all the worse because, on divine matters and on the all-holy Spirit, we have the teaching in writing. The books of the gospels and of the apostles, and the oracles of the prophets, clearly teach us what we ought to think about [God]. So let us drive out war-making strife and take the solution to our questions from the God-inspired words.

The all-wise emperor, like a child who loves his father, set these and similar words before the priests as before fathers, working to bring about agreement in the apostolic teachings. The synod of bishops who had come together numbered three hundred and eighteen. The three hundred were persuaded by what was said, and they welcomed both harmony with one another and soundness of doctrine.

The rest, as we said earlier, fought against the apostolic teachings. They were eager to give Arius's opinion a grand and forceful defense. There were seventeen of them: Eusebius of Nicomedia, as was said before; Theognis of Nicaea; Maris of Chalcedon; Theodore of Heraclea in Thrace; Menophantus of Ephesus; Patrophilus of Scythopolis; Narcissus of Neronias in the second Cilicia, which we now call Irenopolis; Theonas of Marmarica; Secundus of Ptolemais in Egypt; and with them eight others. These mingled themselves with the company of the three hundred holy men, as though they were orthodox, and worked against the apostolic teachings, speaking on behalf of Arius.

Against these, our fathers among the saints struggled nobly: Alexander, then a presbyter of Constantinople, and Athanasius, the archdeacon of the church of the Alexandrians. For this reason envy was armed against them, as we will tell later. Our holy bishops summoned Arius to the council, permitting him to defend his own teachings, at the bidding of the emperor, victorious in all things, since, as we have just said, he himself sat with the council. Here the emperor receives the petitions of the bishops.

Chapter 8

But what the emperor, victorious in all things, did at the council is marvelous and should not be passed over in silence. When all the bishops had been gathered, there were, as usual, inquiries and disputes. Some bishops, for the sake of quarrelling, had a grievance one against another. They handed in written petitions and brought charges before the pious emperor. He received the petitions, sealed them with his ring, and ordered them to be kept.

Seeing the contentiousness of such bishops toward one another, he said that they must all meet together on one day and settle these matters. When the appointed day came, the emperor sat down in the middle. When a quiet suited to the occasion had fallen, he ordered everyone's petitions to be brought in. He received them and put them in the fold of his robe, unwilling even to look into what was written in them. He said:

"God has set you apart as priests and rulers, to judge and decide among the multitudes, and has appointed you to be gods, as being above all men, according to what was said: 'I said, You are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High,' and: 'God stood in the assembly of gods.' So you ought to neglect common affairs and give all your zeal to divine matters."

Then he ordered fire to be brought, and commanded that the petitions be burned. For he was eager that none of those outside should learn of such uneven conduct on the part of these bishops. So great was the emperor's reverence toward the priests of God, which all right-minded people would admire.

Another act of his, similar to this, I think it unjust to pass over in silence. Certain lay people, fond of strife and of abuse, drew up written accusations against some of the bishops and gave them to the emperor. This was before the agreement had been reached.

He received these also, then tied them up, marked them with his ring, and ordered them to be kept. Then, when the agreement of concord had been made, he commanded them to be brought, and in the presence of all the bishops he burned these too in the fire. He swore that he had read nothing of what was written in them.

For he said that the offences of priests ought not to become known to the many, lest they take occasion for stumbling from this and sin without fear. They also say he added this: that if he had been an eyewitness of a bishop breaking into another man's marriage, he would

have covered up the lawless deed with his purple robe, so that the sight of what was done would not harm those who beheld it. Such was the emperor's God-loving and admirable understanding.

For many days, and indeed at successive times, the emperor met with the bishops. Together with them he discussed matters of the faith, and he went over their differing opinions. For, as we have often said, there were among them some who agreed with the unlawful teachings of Arius and who opposed the multitude of holy bishops who were fighting for the truth. But our excellent and altogether most holy fathers, secured by the weapon of truth, proclaimed the bright and blameless faith with boldness. With them was also a great number of confessors, standing against those who wished to secure the wretched teachings of Arius. Concerning holy Paphnutius.

Chapter 9

Among them was also the great and holy Paphnutius, an adornment of the company of confessors and bishops. He was an Egyptian, a man of God from that assembly. The emperor Maximian had gouged out his right eye and cut the sinews of his left knee, and had handed him over to be held in the mines.

In him the grace of God was so great that he worked signs no less than those done long ago by the apostles. By a word alone he drove out demons, and by prayer he healed all kinds of sick people. He asked God to give sight to the blind, and they received it. Those whose limbs were paralyzed he restored to their natural strength, so that their limbs worked soundly again.

The emperor held him in very high honor. He often summoned him to the palace and would kiss the eye that had been gouged out. So great was the faith that this pious emperor had toward the saints. Concerning the holy Spyridon.

Chapter 10

Spyridon, too, a Cypriot, was a man of distinction in the Lord. He had been trained in shepherding sheep and was consecrated to shepherd the flock of Christ. He lived a prophetic life and was well known for it. Even while he held the office of bishop, he did not stop tending his own sheep.

He was so kind and patient that when robbers came by stealth against his flock, they were held fast by invisible bonds and could not move until morning. The blessed man came upon them and by prayer freed them from their restraint. More than that, he gave them the strongest of the rams as they left, saying, “Take this, young men, for your need. Do not go away empty-handed tonight and blame me for your failure.”

We have heard many other wonders about this saint, but we will set down one out of many. Here he raises his dead daughter because of the merchant.

Chapter 11

This marvelous and celebrated man of God had a daughter named Irene. She served the old man faithfully, remained a virgin, and departed from human life.

After her death a man came back from a journey abroad and demanded from the old man a deposit, which he had entrusted to the virgin, his daughter.

But the blessed Spyridon knew nothing at all about the matter. Since the man pressed him hard, the old man searched the house high and low, and when he found nothing he was greatly distressed. He told the man that he neither knew of it nor was there anything in the house.

The merchant cried out, held in tears and lamenting, and demanded the deposit. He said that he would kill himself over the loss if he did not get back what he had deposited. He said he had kept this as a comfort for his old age, and had entrusted it to the virgin herself.

So that holy old man was compelled to go with the merchant to his daughter's tomb to inquire into the matter. When he came, he called his daughter by name and said to her, "My child Irene." She answered from the grave and said to him, "What do you want, father?" The old man said to her, "Where did you put this man's deposit, daughter?" She said to him, "It lies in this place, father," and she clearly pointed out the place to her father.

He said to her, "Go in peace, my child Irene." Then the old man returned home, found the deposit lying where the virgin had said, and gave it back to the man.

Many other miracles and marvels of this man are sung, and the local people still point them out to visitors even now, to give assurance of our true faith in Christ. Such were the holy men by whom the church shone down to those times, and many of them were present at the council in Nicaea.

Athanasius also, of whom we spoke earlier, was at that time a deacon, and everyone agreed that he was no stranger to the company of those saints. He was with Alexander, bishop of the church of the Alexandrians, and was an excellent helper to him.

Day after day, for a very long time, our holy bishops raised a great many questions about the faith. They thought that nothing should be done carelessly or rashly in so great an inquiry.

They often summoned Arius, and by repeated questioning they unfolded his propositions and refuted them. They took the greatest zeal and care over how they should vote and define a position against the overthrow he sought through his lawless teachings.

They handled these matters, then, with much deliberation and with supplication to God. So, very wisely and fittingly, they set out their refutations against the lawless teachings of Arius and those with him. They tore out by the roots their foul blasphemies against the Son of God and wiped them out.

Against their saying "not from God," our side set "God from God." Against their "not true God," our side stitched on "true God from true God." Against their calling him a "creature," our side defined him as "begotten, not made." Against the "of a different substance" which they put forward, our bishops set the statement that the Son is "of one substance with the Father," that is, begotten from the substance of the Father. They also proclaimed him Creator and Maker of things visible and invisible. They did this according to the apostolic faith handed down to his church from the beginning, and they gave their proofs from the testimonies of Scripture, as the account will show as it goes on.

With this antidote they overturned the deadly poisons, and from then on they set down the apostolic faith in agreement, now more clearly. On the need to understand and believe three hypostases, inseparably, in the ineffable one Godhead of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 12

The holy, great and ecumenical council of our holy fathers gathered at Nicaea spoke through the blessed and holy bishop Hosius, of the city of Cordoba in the province of the Spaniards. He also held the place of the bishop of the Romans, together with the presbyters of that same see mentioned earlier, and another man interpreted for him. He said: “The Godhead is not

one person, as the Jews suppose, but three persons in true subsistence, not in mere name. This is proclaimed by many testimonies from both the old and the new covenant.

The old covenant, speaking still in a more bodily manner, presented the Word as something spoken. The new covenant showed the Word to be God, in the words, ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ He is a perfect person from a perfect person. For the Son is not a part of God, but perfect as the Father is perfect, being of the same substance as the Father who begat him beyond all telling.

In the same way the Holy Spirit also exists together with the Father and the Son, being of the same substance and the same nature as the Father and the Son.

We must therefore confess one counsel, one kingdom, one authority, one lordship over all created natures, both seen and understood, and one Godhead and the same substance of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In proclaiming this we are not teaching any confusion or division of the persons of that ineffable and blessed Trinity.

Rather, we confess the Father, truly Father of a true Son, always existing and subsisting; the Son, truly Son of a true Father, always existing and subsisting; and the Holy Spirit, truly Holy Spirit, always existing and subsisting. This is an inseparable Trinity, ineffable, truly beyond understanding and beyond expression, and we believe that its Godhead is one and its substance the same.

We confess this as the true exactness of the teachings of that same faith, handed down to us from the beginning by the Lord through his holy apostles, and by our holy fathers of old who kept their holy faith without stain. And with the good pleasure of the Holy Spirit we are ready to show, through very many testimonies from the divine Scriptures, that these things are so.”

While these things were being declared by them, or rather through them by the Holy Spirit, those who held to the impiety of Arius muttered under their breath, greatly worn down. They were the party of Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea, whom we have already mentioned. Yet they looked above all to certain philosophers hired by Arius, exceedingly learned men. Arius had hired them as advocates for his own wickedness, and he came with them to that holy and ecumenical council.

For very many philosophers were present. As we have just said, the enemies of the truth had put their hope in them, and so they were rightly caught, together with the teacher of their blasphemy. Holy Scripture was fulfilled in him and in them when it says: “Cursed is every man who puts his hope in man, and whose heart has departed from the Lord.”

For truly the blasphemous heart of Arius, that fighter against God, departed from the Lord, as did the hearts of those who shared his impiety. They dared to call the Son of God a creature and a made thing, though he is the Creator and Maker of all things, of created natures both invisible and visible. At this point one of the philosophers spoke a great many words on behalf of Arius against that holy council of the apostolic priests of God.

Chapter 13

One of Arius's hired philosophers, who was admired far more than all the others, argued at great length on Arius's behalf against our bishops, for a great many days. Each day his exchanges of argument drew a large audience, and the crowd that gathered was in uproar. The philosopher set Arius's impious blasphemies against what the holy council was saying. Of the Son of God he said, "There was a time when he was not," and that "he is a creature and a made thing, from things that did not exist, and from another essence and substance."

For these defiled doctrines of Arius he fought hard, with snowflakes of words, raging against the Son of God and running down that chorus of holy priests. In him and through him the enemy of human salvation was speaking.

But the champions of the truth, our bishops, calmly offered the philosopher the fitting and proper answers on behalf of the apostolic teachings. They imitated the great prophet and king David, who said, "I was made ready, and I was not troubled." For with the divine word, as with fire, they consumed all the philosopher's tangled arguments as if they were tow.

Even so, the philosopher, trusting in the devilish skill of his words, set himself to shoot back against the truth proclaimed by the bishops. He handled, as he thought, all the points brought against him very easily, and he forced himself to untie whatever was raised, like an eel. Where he thought he was standing firm, he kept slipping away from the stronger arguments brought against him, and when he was caught by his own words he fell down along with them.

Even so, he rushed like a Corybant, boastfully, against the most peaceable council, hoping to conquer the unconquerable power of Christ's invincible Spirit within them.

But God "who catches the wise in their craftiness" wanted to show that "his kingdom does not consist in talk but in power." So through one of his servants who was there he not only forcefully silenced the evil demon speaking in the philosopher, but drove him out.

There was a man among the holy confessors present at the council, as simple by nature as any of the saints, who knew nothing else "except Jesus Christ, and him crucified" in the flesh, according to the Scriptures. He was with the bishops, and he saw the philosopher

exulting over our holy bishops and boasting in his wretched debating. He asked the bishops, the priests of God, to give him room to converse with the philosopher.

Then our holy bishops, seeing the man's simplicity and that he was unlearned, urged him not to put himself forward, in case he became a laughingstock among the wretched enemies of the truth.

But he would not be held back. He went up to the philosopher and said to him, "In the name of Jesus Christ, the God the Word who is always with the Father, listen to the teachings of the truth, philosopher." The philosopher said to him, "Speak, if you will." And the holy man said, "There is one God, who made the heaven and the sea and everything in them. He also formed man from the earth, and he established all things by his Word and his Holy Spirit.

"This Word, philosopher, we know as the Son of God and worship him. We believe that for our redemption he was made flesh from a virgin, was born, and became man. Through the suffering of his flesh on the cross and through his death he set us free from eternal condemnation, and through his resurrection he won eternal life for us. We hope that he, who went up into the heavens, will come again and will be judge of everything we have done. Do you believe this, philosopher?"

The philosopher, who had never had any experience of arguing against such words, was struck dumb. He fell silent like a deaf or mute man. He said to him only this, in a very pitiful voice: "To me too it seems that these things are so, and that there is nothing else but everything just as you have said."

The old man said to him, "If you believe that these things are so, philosopher, get up and follow me. Let us hurry to the church, where you will receive the sign of this faith."

The philosopher turned his whole self toward true reverence for the God of all. He got up and followed the old man. Then he turned and spoke to his own disciples and to all who had gathered to listen: "Hear me, men. Until now, while I gave my attention to words, I set words against words, and by skill in speaking I overturned whatever was brought against me.

But when, instead of words, a divine power came out of the mouth of the one questioning me, words could no longer stand against that power. For no man is able to stand against God. For this reason, if any of you can understand, as I have come to believe, let him believe in Christ and follow this old man, in whom God has spoken."

In this way the philosopher took up the faith. He was enlightened and became a Christian, gladly defeated by the old man. After the philosopher was baptized and joined to the church of God, and was resting and rejoicing in the great works of God, the council rejoiced. Another philosopher, named Phaedo, then raised an objection, and he too spoke on behalf of Arius, the fighter against God, and the blasphemy he had devised.

Chapter 14

The philosopher's proposition to the holy council, on the words "Let us make man": "And God said: 'Let us make man in our image and likeness.' Now if the sense is carried away with the sound of the words, as the wording shows, someone might say that God has a human form. But we know God to be simple and without shape. What, then, do these expressions mean? Tell us: surely the divine is not in human form?" The answer of the holy fathers through Eustathius, bishop of Antioch: Not

so, philosopher. Rather, when God said, "Let them rule over all the earth" and "Let them have dominion over it and over all that is in it," this is the meaning of making man in the image of God and of his ruling over all the earth.

For as God rules over all the earth and everything in it, so he set man up as a second ruler over all the earth and what is in it. This, I say, is what it means that man was made "in the image of God and in his likeness." There was also a further answer from the holy fathers through the same bishop Eustathius, on this text: "And God said:

'Let us make man in our image and likeness.'" But to whom did he say it? Let us ask, philosopher. For by saying "And God said: 'Let us make man in our image and likeness,'" he put before us the question of understanding to whom he was saying "Let us make." For after saying "And God said, 'Let us make man,'" he went on to say, "And God made man; in the image of God he made him; male and female he made them."

The meaning of "Let us make," then, indicates that there is a person who is a fellow-creator, and it brings in one who shares the same title. For just as God the Father is the one who said "Let us make man," so also the one to whom he said "Let us make" is God. The Godhead of both persons is one, both of the one who said "Let us make man in our image and likeness" and of the one who made man.

For the expression "Let us make" shows the all-holy and unchanging Godhead of the Father and the Son. For the image of God is simple and uncompounded, being fire in its nature.

The fathers answered in agreement: The nature of the holy Trinity, its very being, is a light that cannot be approached and cannot be endured. This is the meaning of "Let us make."

Chapter 15

The philosopher's objection on behalf of Arius: "I will say again that God is simple, without shape and uncompounded. So how is the phrase 'in our image and likeness' to be explained, and how is it that the speaker did not exist before the one to whom he said 'Let us make man,' and the rest? Give us a clear proof about these things, if you can." The holy bishops answered through Hosius, bishop of the city of Cordova, with another man interpreting for him:

"If the Father existed before the Son, as you say, and the Son came later, created by God after some span of time and only afterward proclaimed his Son by the Father himself, as you say in your impious blasphemy, having been created beforehand by him for the making of created natures, then according to your impiety the uncreated God would have said to the created god, as you have it: 'Make me a man in my image and [likeness].'"

Since God is always Father, as we showed earlier, the Son also exists with the Father always. He is not later in time, not lesser in power, not confined to a place. He exists with the Father always, in the same way, eternally. He has been begotten from him in a way beyond understanding and beyond expression, as we have said before. He is true God, always from the always-existing true God and Father. He is without beginning together with the Father, eternal together with the Father, always reigning together with the Father, of one substance with the Father, equal in power with the Father, and fellow-creator with the Father.

For although the divine voice of the Gospels says that all things came into being through the Son, and "apart from him not one thing came into being that has come into being," yet he did not create apart from the Father. For there is one Godhead and one will of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; the Father is always inseparably with the Son, and the Son with the Father. So you must understand, philosopher,

that the Father and the Son are one in the substance of the Godhead. So also in the Gospels the Son himself cries out, "I and the Father are one." It was to him that God was speaking when he said, "Let us make man in our image and according to our likeness."

The philosopher's reply: Already in our earlier questions we said that God is not in human form. So tell us what this saying means: "in our image and according to our likeness." For

this expression gives us no small difficulty. For now, this must be explained. The answer of the holy council, through the same bishop, Hosius of Cordova:

Philosopher, “in the image” must be understood not as referring to a composition of bodies, but, as the word of truth shows, as something stamped on the mind. So listen and understand. God, being good by nature, planted in the mind-endowed substance of man, “in his image and likeness,”

such qualities as goodness, simplicity, holiness, purity, generosity, kindness, blessedness and the like. The purpose was that what God is by nature, man, whom God created, might be able to have by God’s grace. This is what is rational in him.

Skilled painters, when they paint likenesses of images on panels, paint those images faithfully not from one color but from many. In the same way God has given to man, whom he created, in the inner storeroom of the soul, that is, in the mind, the ability to have, through the virtues, what is “in his image and likeness,”

since the image is found in man without fail through the divine qualities mentioned above, which God put in him when he said, “Let us make man in our image and according to our likeness.”

Chapter 16

The philosopher's reply: Let this be set aside for the present. I would rather ask about the one through whom God made man and all things, seen and unseen. For what you have said does not seem right to me: that the Father and the Son are one in the same respect, eternally together, and that the Son is God, always existing along with the Father.

I would say instead that God brought him into being as a servant among the created things. For God needed a servant for the making of man and the world. So when God the Creator was about to create created natures, he brought into being for himself a tool, through which he would create all natures.

Just as a carpenter first provides tools for making the things he is going to produce, so we can understand it of God: he brought the Son into being for himself as a tool, and through him created the world.

For when the apostles said, "All things came into being through him," they meant that the natures were created through him as through a tool. And when God said that man was created "in our image and according to our likeness," God meant that man was created through the tool, that is, through the Son, according to God's own image and likeness. The reply of the holy fathers, through Leontius bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia and Eupsychius bishop of Tyana:

If, as you say, the Son was created by the Father as a tool for making created natures, then you fall by your own words, philosopher. For the voice of the Gospel says, as you yourself just mentioned, "All things came into being through him," and it goes on to add, "and apart from him not one thing came into being that has come into being."

"If, then, everything created came to be through him, and nothing at all came to be without him, and the world is a created thing, and the Son too, as you say, is a created thing, then he created himself, and not the Father."

The philosopher's objection: "I have said it once already: God made all things through him as through an instrument. For this very purpose he made him before all creation, preparing him as an instrument for making the created natures." The holy fathers' answer, through the same bishops, Leontius and Euphychius:

"Tell us, most excellent man, where has anyone ever proclaimed to you that the Son of God, or his Holy Spirit, is an instrument? Give us the witnesses for your claims. Which Spirit-bearing writer do you have, whose writings declare the Son of God an instrument, when he is the Creator of all the ages, of all the heavenly hosts, and of all things on earth?"

"Listen, then, philosopher, to the testimonies from the divine Scriptures, which set forth his Son as God, co-eternal with the Father, and as Creator and Maker of all created natures."

"In the book of Genesis you have the prophet Moses, who presented the Son as a fellow-creator with God the Father. As we have already told you, most excellent man, he says: 'God said: Let us make man in our image and according to our likeness.' It is natural to call a person to join in the work as fellow-creator, but not an instrument. And the words, 'And God made man; in the image of God he made him; male and female he made them,' point to the authority of persons."

"For in saying 'Let us make man,' he does away with the whole notion of instruments. Now receive a clearer and authoritative testimony, one given of the person of the Son alone, showing him to be the Maker of all created natures. It is written in the book of Baruch, from the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah, who says:"

"'He who established the earth for everlasting time filled it with four-footed beasts. He sends out the light, and it goes; he called it, and it obeyed him with trembling. The stars shone in their watches and rejoiced. He called them, and they said, "Here we are." They shone with gladness for the one who made them. This is our God; no other will be reckoned beside him. He found out every way of knowledge and gave it to Jacob his servant and to Israel his beloved. After this he appeared on the earth and lived among human beings.'"

"And Isaiah says to Israel: 'And now, do you not know, if you have not heard? The everlasting God, the God who established the ends of the earth.' Who, then, is this everlasting God, philosopher, who established the ends of the earth, who also appeared on earth and lived among human beings? Do you say it was the Son who lived among human beings, or the Father?" The philosopher's answer:

"It was the Son," he says, "who lived among them, as the divine Scriptures have said, and I have been convinced by them and have accepted it. But I still have a most powerful and irrefutable objection concerning him: that God created him before all creation, so that through him he might create all things. I will prove this too in the contests that lie ahead." The holy fathers' answer, through the same most devout bishops, Leontius and Euphychius: "Not so,

philosopher. You cannot show what you claim. He is begotten of God and not made, as we have shown at length. And which man rich in godliness and sharp understanding, philosopher, is not astonished at all the great works of the natures created by him, as made by God, that is, by him? For the Scripture cries out, 'God made man,' and 'God saw all that he had made, and behold, it was very good.'"

"John the evangelist shows most clearly that he always existed together with the Father, co-eternal and without beginning like the Father. For he says: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him not one thing came to be that has come to be.'"

"See, philosopher, it has been shown most clearly that the Son is the Maker of every created nature. If, then, he is the Maker of all created things, as he is, both seen and unseen, it is plain that he is truly God by nature, and not an instrument, as you say, nor a creature, nor a made thing, nor [later in time?] than the Father."

The word "was," said four times by the evangelist, has nothing before it that came earlier. So that you may know fully that he is not under another's authority but has authority of his own, as the Father does, receive another very clear testimony.

Listen, then, to the inspired Isaiah as he cries out. Speaking of the Jews, he says, "And they will wish that they had been burned with fire," and he proclaims, "For a child has been born, a son, and he was given to us. The government is upon his shoulder, and his name is called Angel of great counsel, Wonderful, Counselor, mighty God, one who has authority." Listen, philosopher: he is proclaimed as one who has authority, and not as one under authority, as you say.

But let us repeat the wording: "Mighty God, one who has authority, ruler of peace, father of the age to come." In one of his acts of kindness the same only-begotten Son of God shows himself to be self-governing and the creator of man, in the restoring of the man born blind, which the Son of God himself performed.

For he is the radiance of the Father, co-eternal with him, and the exact imprint of his whole being, as Paul the apostle says, the chosen vessel.

See, philosopher, how many witnesses have shown that the Son of God is without beginning, since he is also [uncreated together] with the Father, and the creator of all created natures, both seen and unseen, as we have said very often.

And where are the witnesses for "instruments"? Tell us, if you have any. Perhaps you were baptized into instruments as well, if, as you say, you are faithful to God.

Chapter 17

The philosopher's objection concerning "The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways for his works," from the Proverbs of Solomon. "Since you force the truth so hard," he says, "what shall we say about this plain saying, 'The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways for his works'?" The answer of the holy fathers, the bishops, through Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine:

Why do you pierce through the depths so persuasively and so easily, as you suppose? Do not heap up for yourself feeble pretexts, philosopher. Take care that you do not step carelessly onto steep cliffs that are hard to climb, and be thrown headlong.

But now let us speak about "The Lord created me." Those before us published many things about this saying, "The Lord created me," including how they understood it with reference to the fleshly dispensation of the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. You surely know those writings.

We, however, will now give our own account, with other narratives as well, with the Lord Jesus Christ working with us. And if you wish, philosopher, let us set out the whole passage itself, together with its beginning.

Its beginning says: "If I report to you the things that happen every day, I will remember to count the things from of old." Then he goes on: "The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways for his works. Before the age he founded me, in the beginning, before he made the earth, before the springs of the waters came forth, before the mountains were settled, and before all the hills, he begets me." So, building up the point that "the Lord created me," he joined on and said, "The Lord made regions and uninhabited places."

Let us then look for the Lord who created him, who also made regions and uninhabited places. Solomon was given a riddle by the words spoken to Job, "Where were you when I was laying the foundation of the earth?" and he said, "The Lord made regions and uninhabited places."

In the book of Baruch, from the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet, as we showed earlier, it says this about the one who made regions and uninhabited places: "The sons of Hagar, who

seek understanding on the earth, the merchants and the searchers for understanding, did not know the way of wisdom, nor did they remember its paths."

And a little later: "But he who knows all things knows her; he found her out by his understanding." Having spoken of the one who found out wisdom by his understanding, he adds his works, saying: "He who established the earth for everlasting time filled it with four-footed animals; he who sends out the light, and it goes."

For it must not be overlooked, philosopher, to repeat the same words again, as a clear proof of the matter before us. "He who sends out the light," it says, "and it goes, called it, and it obeyed him with trembling. The stars shone in their watches and rejoiced. He called them, and they said, 'Here we are.' They shone with gladness for the one who made them. This is our God; no other will be reckoned beside him. He found out every way of knowledge and gave it to Jacob his servant and to Israel his beloved. After this he appeared on the earth and lived among human beings."

Let us set side by side the two statements that Solomon and Baruch (that is, Jeremiah) made about the one who made the lands and the uninhabited places. After saying "he created me," he went on to speak of his works, saying, "the Lord made lands and uninhabited places." Now let us reason it out, my good man: who is this Lord who made lands and uninhabited places?

We will understand that he is no one else than the very one who prepared the earth for all time. For in preparing the earth, he is making "lands and uninhabited places." He is also the one who filled it with four-footed animals, and the one who called the light, and it obeyed him with trembling, and so on. Of him it says that "he was seen on the earth and lived among human beings."

We must understand, then, that this is the Lord who created rational wisdom as the beginning of his ways. He prepared it for the human being made in his image. He is the one who made lands and uninhabited places, who prepared the earth for all time.

But let us look again at the beginning of the passage: "If I declare to you the things that happen day by day." He did not say "the things to come." And again he says, "I will remember to number the things from of old"; he did not say, "the things before the ages."

It has been made known to us that he is the Son of God who also created rational wisdom, who prepared the earth for all time, who made lands and uninhabited places. He is also the one who said to Job, "When the stars came into being, all my angels praised me." And Moses says of the one who made the light, "And God said, 'Let there be light,'" and he continues, "And God made the two great lights and the stars," and so on.

What has been said seems to me sufficient, philosopher, since the proofs have shown that the Son of God is the one who created the rational wisdom in Solomon and all created things, and that he is not a tool.

But so that we may set before you a clearer, true demonstration of the matter, and come more quickly to the meaning of the subject and its contemplation, let us state what comes from Scripture.

When the prophet Moses was about to depart from life, as it is written in the Book of the Assumption of Moses, he called Joshua son of Nun and said to him in conversation: "And God foresaw me, before the foundation of the world, to be the mediator of his covenant." And in the book of the mystical words of Moses, Moses himself foretold things about David and Solomon.

Of Solomon he foretold this: "And God will make wisdom and righteousness and fullness succeed [to] him; he will build the house of God," and so on.

So that what I am saying may be clearer, let us examine the point this way: is the human being for the sake of the world, or the world for the sake of the human being? The philosopher: "Certainly the world is for the sake of the human being." Our holy bishops, through the same bishop Eusebius Pamphili, said:

"And if the world is for the sake of the human being, then the human being was certainly earlier, being in God's thought first, while the world came later than the human being and rational wisdom in God's thought. So the human being is earlier than the world, and so is wisdom. And what is earlier than the world also exists before the natures of the world, such as heaven, day, night, clouds, winds, depths, springs, mountains and hills.

Wisdom and the human being, for whose sake the world exists, are earlier than all these things in God's thought. So the human being and wisdom are older than the natures of the world, and already exist before the world in God's thought.

But this one, though he was created later, was brought forward in the passing course of creation; whereas the one who was later than the human being in God's thought was brought forward earlier in the passing course of creation.

And the wisdom too, which the Son of God found out by his understanding, which he gave to the human being made in his own image, existed before the world and its natures in God's thought —

So Solomon knew within himself, taught by the wisdom God had given him, that man and wisdom existed before the world and its natures, in God's thought. He examined what already existed before the world in God's thought, before the foundation of the world. What the Lord had devised by his understanding, that same Lord then created later, after the world and its natures.

So Solomon speaks, as if in the person of the wisdom in man that existed before the world in God's thought: "The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways, for his works." The

wisdom in man was suited to speak out in the reasoning faculty, which was prepared for man, who was made in the image of God. So the words "the Lord created" he applied to what existed before the world in God's thought. But the words "he begets me" he understood as referring to the later begetting of children by nature, and so he said it. Understand "he begets me" in this way, philosopher: it refers to the same nature growing old and being renewed until the end.

So the words "The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways, for his works" must be taken as referring to the reasoning wisdom given to man. But "he begets me" refers to God's foreknowledge of that nature itself, and to what comes from it: from images, like a wheel turning round to the turning-post, returning to the beginning, to the first-created man, who was created in the image of God. In him God placed the created reasoning wisdom, and in him God stamped his own pure love.

The Savior, making the renewal of this man in himself, said to the Father, in the manner of the economy: "Because you loved me," he says, "before the foundation of the world." As for "before the age he founded me in the beginning": Solomon observed that the ages in this world get their existence from the cycle of day and night, and that to exist before day and night is to exist before this age. Having considered these things, Solomon fitted the words suitably to man and to

wisdom. So he speaks in her person and says, "The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways, for his works; before the age he founded me in the beginning." He reasoned within himself again that when God was about to bring these worldly natures into being, they were to come after man and wisdom, and that those who came first needed to be present; and when the natures came into being, he was to record in order the natures that had come into being. Man and wisdom were appointed to lead the works.

So the reasoning and discerning wisdom given by God to man, which passed down by succession to Solomon, as the great Moses says, speaks in Solomon: "The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways, for his works," and so on.

In the person of this wisdom, which existed before the world together with man, the same writer describes the works of God as he brings the natures into being in the world, and says: "The Lord made even uninhabited places, the inhabited heights of what is under heaven. When he prepared the heaven, I was present with him; when he marked off his own throne upon the winds, when he made the clouds above strong, and when he set the springs of what is under heaven as secure, when he set a limit for the sea, and the waters will not pass beyond the word of his mouth, and when he made the foundations of the earth strong, I was beside him, fitting things together; I was the one in whom he delighted."

These words are spoken in the person of wisdom. They show with certainty that the one who existed before the world in God's thought, for whose sake the world was prepared, also existed before the natures of the world.

So wisdom, which existed before them, became an eyewitness of the coming-into-being of the natures and lists their order. This is the wisdom that he devised by his

understanding and prepared for man. Who, then, is the one who prepared this wisdom beforehand and gave it to man, or who guided its workings? It is none other than the one who established the earth for ever, who filled it with four-footed animals, who called the light, and it obeyed him with trembling.

He is the one who appeared on earth and lived among human beings. To him have been allotted the active courses of the natures. But the words "The Lord created me" were spoken with reference to the person of Wisdom, not of the Son of God. They refer to the reasoning wisdom that the Lord himself prepared and gave to man, for whose sake the world came into being.

It has been shown very clearly from all of this that these words were spoken with reference to the person of reasoning wisdom. The Lord confirms what has been said in the gospel, where he says, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." There he personifies the world as the person of the Sabbath, meaning: the world was made for man, not man for the world.

Chapter 18

The philosopher raises another objection. He says: “But the wisdom in Solomon is the Son of God, that is, the Wisdom of God, the one who says, ‘The Lord created me,’” and so on. The holy bishops answer the philosopher through Eusebius, bishop, son of Pamphilus.

“Tell me, philosopher: is the wisdom in Solomon, as you say, the Wisdom of God?” The philosopher: “Yes, that is so.” The bishop: “Tell me, does the Wisdom of God have foreknowledge or not?” The philosopher: “Yes, it does.” The bishop: “Is the Wisdom of God, which you say is in Solomon, the Son of God?” The philosopher: “Yes.” The bishop: “How does a judge judge: by foreknowledge or not?” The philosopher: “Yes, by foreknowledge. But how do you mean?” The bishop: “Then one who judges by foreknowledge also judges according to works, as one who foreknows?” The philosopher: “Yes, I said so.”

The bishop: “Then how does the wisdom in Solomon say, ‘Three things are impossible for me to understand, and the fourth I do not know’? Having named the three things she cannot understand, the wisdom in Solomon said that as to the fourth she does not know ‘the ways of a man in his youth.’”

“So if the wisdom in Solomon is the Wisdom of God, how does she judge the world when she does not know a man’s ways in his youth? And how can this be true: that the one who made man in the image of God, that is, the Son of God, as Moses the prophet says, and John the evangelist as well (‘All things came to be through him,’ he says), does not know the ways of a man in his youth?”

“He is the one who alone formed their hearts, who understands all their works, who tests hearts and kidneys,” according to the prophet who said: “You know my sitting down and my rising up. You understand all my thoughts from afar, he says. You have traced my path and my line, and you foresaw all my ways.”

And again in another place: “He who disciplines the nations, will he not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge? The Lord knows the thoughts of men, that they are vain.”

“Then does the one who knows and foreknows all things not know the ways of a man in his youth? Many passages can be found in the Scriptures that refute the folly of those who have wrongly understood this saying.”

"For how could the one who teaches man knowledge not know the ways of a man in his youth? So understand well, philosopher, that Solomon received a wisdom for judging, which the Son of God found out by his understanding, and which he prepared as a reasoning faculty for man, who is made in his image."

The Lord himself confirms what has been said in the gospels when he says, "Behold, something greater than Solomon is here." He overturned those who say that he is the wisdom in Solomon. For if he shares the name only in the sound of the word, "wisdom" (since the Wisdom of God is the Son of God), then he is God who foreknows, and he judges by foreknowledge and according to works, as creator and maker of all things. So Paul, "the chosen vessel," says when writing to the Hebrews.

He speaks of him in this way: "For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden before him, but all things are naked and laid bare to his eyes, to whom we must give account."

The same Paul also writes to the Romans, saying: "To them belong the fathers, and from them, according to the flesh, comes Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen."

Here he shows that the Wisdom of God the Father is truly God, from God himself: eternal from the Eternal, true from the True, by nature always the Son of the God and Father who always is.

Chapter 19

The philosopher objects: What then is the meaning of what you say: “They did not know the way of wisdom, nor did they remember her paths,” and so on? The holy bishops answered through the same bishop, Eusebius Pamphili:

Often, philosopher, when you have looked at the words of Wisdom, you have marveled at her power, because one can find in them the greatest truth of thought in the fewest words.

And perhaps one might fairly compare the words of Scripture to the gospel parable, which says that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed. It is smaller than all the seeds on the earth, yet when it has grown and reached full size, it gives ample shelter to the birds.

In the same way we see the power of the divine words sown in a few short phrases. As their meanings grow full and spread out like branches over the understanding of the birds, that is, of human beings, such great power is found in them that they give ample shelter not only to the farmers but also to the birds that come and stand by.

Where, then, was I moved to this thought, if not from the word of holy Scripture, from the sacred psalmist David? It is to demonstrate and establish not the wisdom of reasoning, as you yourself have supposed, but the incomprehensible wisdom, uncreated and without beginning, that made this wisdom and everything that has come into being. That is, Christ.

For Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, in the manner of his ineffable and inconceivable divinity: the true Word, God of God. “By the word of the Lord,” he says, “the heavens were made firm, and by the breath of his mouth all their power.”

You have heard “the word of the Lord”; you have heard “the breath of his mouth.” Now listen again about the establishing of the true faith, which is understood and proclaimed in godliness by the godly. For I think you have taken in none of what was said to you earlier from so great a spiritual company of holy high priests. So listen, listen with reverence,

and do not try to search out unspeakable things by human reasonings. The perfect is neither diminished nor increased. There is one unbegotten, God and Father. There is also one begotten from him, the only-begotten Son, God the Word.

Just as there is no other God begotten together with God the Father, so there is no other son of God begotten together with, before, or after his only-begotten Son, God the Word. There is truly one God, the Father. There is also truly one who has been begotten from him in a way beyond words: the Son, God the Word.

Therefore, just as God is Father not in word only, so the Son is not Son in word only, but truly Son. The Father is genuine, the Son is genuine. The Father is God, and the Son begotten from him is also God. The Father is perfect, and his Son is also perfect. The Father is [without body], and the Son is also without body, for [the image] of one without body is [likewise] without body.

Do you believe this, philosopher: that his only-begotten Son has been begotten from the substance of the Father, as we showed from the beginning of our discourse through very many testimonies of Scripture, or not? The philosopher asks in return: How, and in what manner? Tell me. The holy bishops, through the same Eusebius Pamphili, said: Do not ask how, philosopher.

Otherwise, as has already been said to you at greater length, and as we solemnly warned at the start of the discussion, you are hurrying to throw yourself over a cliff by trying to search out what cannot be searched out.

For if it is permissible to ask how the Unbegotten is, then it is permissible to ask how the Begotten is. But if the Unbegotten leaves no room to ask how he is unbegotten, then neither does the Begotten leave room to ask how he was begotten. Do not seek what cannot be searched out, for you will not find it. Seek what can be found, and you will find.

For if you do inquire, from whom can you learn? From the earth? It did not yet exist. From the sea? The water had not yet been created. From heaven? It had not been made. From the sun and moon and stars? They had not yet been created. From angels and archangels? They did not yet exist, since the Son is the maker of them also. From the ages? The Only-begotten is before the ages.

Do not examine things that did not always exist concerning the One who always is. The Father is unspeakable and unbegotten. The Son is unspeakable, begotten from him in a way beyond speech.

Be silent about the "how," and leave that to the one who begot and the one who was begotten. For only the Father knows who the Son is, and only the Son knows the Father, and so does anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. So says his Gospel.

But if you will not stop asking "how," and insist on probing what cannot be probed, we laugh at your boldness. More than that, we grieve for you. You refuse to understand by faith that God is always the Father of his Son, and that his only-begotten Son is always his Son, always existing together with the Father and not coming after him, as you impiously claim.

Understand it by faith instead, and confess that the Son is perfect from the perfect, as you have often heard: eternal light from eternal light, true God from true God and Father, uncreated from the uncreated, uncomposed from the uncomposed, always with the Father. For "in the beginning was the Word," as John the evangelist says, "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

The word "was," philosopher, has nothing before it. The word "was," philosopher, rules out "was not," as we showed earlier, and the word "God" rules out "not God." Believe what is written. Do not think about or inquire into what is not written.

Believe that the Son himself made everything that has come to be, by the Father's nod and not by a glance of the eyes. For God is uncomposed, as we said before. It was by a nod, in the way only he knows. We understand this by faith and proclaim it according to the teaching of the holy Scriptures: by the will of the Father and his own will, he created the whole creation, heavenly and earthly, visible and intelligible. He used no tools or devices, and no help from anyone else. It was by the Father's will, as we have just said, when he and the Holy Spirit said to him, "Let us make man in our image and likeness."

He did not say "make" (singular) or "make" (plural, to others), but "Let us make." This shows the sameness of substance and equal honor in that blessed and inexpressible Trinity.

Do not grumble under your breath, philosopher, and do not roll your eyes. Look with the eye of your mind at the precision of the apostolic teachings, and accept them in faith. Do not become more and more unbelieving; be a believer.

So listen and understand. The Word of God, his Son before the ages, the one to whom it was said "Let us make man" and so on, himself became man in the last days, by the will of the Father and his own will. He was made flesh from a virgin because of the fallen man, Adam.

The bodiless one, in a body, emptied himself, as the apostle Paul said, for the sake of the body. God the Word took the body as a cloud, so that he would not burn up the created natures in the world, for "no one has ever seen God."

He was held in flesh, so that the flesh, through its unchangeable union with him, might be set free from death. He was invisible in what is visible, so that he might undergo what is seen, as a man, in time. Yet in truth he is both, God and man, man and God, the same one. For Christ is one out of both, and the difference between the two substances, his divinity and the flesh, is understood and recognized. He was God and is God; he became man by the plan of salvation.

For his sake there are prophets, for his sake apostles, for his sake martyrs: prophets for the one prophesied, apostles for the one sent according to the plan, martyrs for the first martyr. God the Son came upon the earth. He hid in flesh, as he willed, the greatness of his divinity, without leaving the heavens empty, for even before he became flesh the world was not empty of him.

He was God and is God, and he also became man by the plan of salvation, made flesh and born of a virgin out of his own love for humanity.

The Father begot a Son worthy and equal, as God who begot him knows, and the Son begotten from him knows, philosopher.

Chapter 20

The philosopher's reply: Do not go on any longer forcing the truth, and do not try to overshadow, like a cloud, the bright light of Scripture with the cleverness of your words. Come to the plain text of Scripture set before you, and do not run from "The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways for his works," and "The Lord made regions and uninhabited lands, the ends of the inhabited world under heaven."

[These passages] have one and the same meaning about the one Lord. They belong to God, who created him as the first-created, "as the beginning of his ways for his works." God also called him his Son, and through him, as through an instrument, God made regions and uninhabited places.

For even if the created wisdom of God, that is, the Son, does work, it was still God who was creating through him the things that did not exist, as through an instrument. The reply of the holy bishops, given through the same bishop, Eusebius of Pamphilus:

You stand far from the king's highway, that is, from the apostolic faith, and you let yourself be carried somewhere outside it. You have chosen once for all to throw yourself over a cliff. You lifted your head only a little out of the depth of impiety that surrounds you when you heard from this holy council the prophecy of the great Jeremiah, who points with his finger, so to speak, and says, "This is our God; no other will be reckoned alongside him," and so on.

He adds to these words, "After this he appeared on earth and lived among people." And you know, philosopher, that when the holy bishops asked you who it was that appeared on earth and lived among people, the Father or the Son, you confessed that it was the Son. Did you not say this just as the divine Scriptures do?

How is it, then, that you again hurl yourself, or rather sink yourself, into the depth of Arius's wickedness? You did not break away and separate from him; you yoked yourself to him. You prefer Arius's blasphemous words to the apostolic teachings, wretched man, when you call the Son of God a creature and an instrument.

So listen to us, philosopher, if you really are a philosopher, and be persuaded of this. The created wisdom, the reasoning faculty given to man by the Son of God himself, is not the Son of God. The Son is the one who made regions and uninhabited places.

Fix your mind on this, looking not toward hostility but toward the truth, and the truth itself will guide you. You will know that the only-begotten Son of God is not a creature but is himself the maker and craftsman of all created natures. You yourself have understood this by looking a little more closely, and you will understand it [further], as I at least believe, if you truly long to be saved.

Chapter 21

The philosopher's objection against the Holy Spirit. "Granted," he says, "that what is said about the Son is trustworthy and beyond dispute, as you say: that he created, or created together with God the Father, as the testimonies [show]; and that he is not a product but an offspring of God, begotten from him by nature. See, we accept it. But do you have anything to say about the Spirit as well?

"For who would dare to call the Holy Spirit the creator of any created natures? Where do the testimonies say of him that he made any of the visible or invisible creatures? Who at all has written about him as about the Son? Which of you has anything, if you do?" The fathers' answer, through Protogenes, bishop of Sardica:

It is not hard, philosopher, to show you the testimonies of the works of the Holy Spirit, which our fathers set out concerning him, showing that he created. Let us again cite what was said about creation: "And God said, 'Let us make man in our image and likeness.'" He went on to say, "And God made man; in the image of God he made him; male and female he made them."

So the Father is God, who said to the Son, "Let us make." And the Son, being God, made man. If we call God both the one who spoke and the one who made Adam and Eve, then hear now about the Holy Spirit. Was the one who made Adam God, or not? The philosopher: Yes, he is God.

The bishop: In the book of Job, Elihu the Buzite says to Job, "A divine Spirit is the one who made me." So if the one who made Adam is God, what would you call the one who made Elihu? Or does Elihu seem to you to be of a different substance from Adam? [For] among makers of equal knowledge, the near-identical result naturally shows itself [in the person of man].

What then will you say, philosopher, of the one who made Elihu? Is he not God, and the maker of man? For just as you said of the one who made Adam, "And God made Adam," so it is right for us to say of the one who made Elihu that the Holy Spirit is God. For where the forming in creation is equal, the title of the creators is equal too, since the Godhead of the holy Trinity is one, understood in three perfect and equal persons.

In the book of the Assumption of Moses, the archangel Michael, speaking with the devil, says, "For by his Holy Spirit we were all created." And again he says, "From the face of God his Spirit went out, and the world came to be." This is equal to saying, "All things came to be through him."

For the divine and unspeakable Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, is always inseparable, and together created the whole creation, both intelligible and sensible.

For he says also in the thirty-second psalm, "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made firm, and by the Spirit of his mouth all their power." Now hear God speaking in Isaiah: "I am the Lord your God; I will hear you, God of Israel."

After speaking of his benefits toward the people, he adds: "So that they may see and understand and know together that the hand of the Lord has made all these things, and the Holy One of Israel has shown them." By "hand" he means the Holy Spirit of God, and by "Holy One of Israel" his Son.

And again he said to Jacob, "My hand laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand made the heaven firm." Ezekiel likewise says, "The hand of the Lord came upon me." This is the Scripture's habit.

O philosopher, Scripture is accustomed to call the Holy Spirit of God "hand" or "arm," and his Son "right hand." Further, the holy fathers spoke through Leontius, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia:

"What has been said about the works of the Holy Spirit is enough to persuade you, philosopher, that he is a fellow-creator with the Father and the Son of all created natures, and that he is of the same Godhead and being as the Father and the Son."

So now fix your mind on what has been said before, and hear clearer proofs about him from the holy Scriptures. The prophet David says in the seventh psalm, "Sing to the Lord a new song." Why? "Because the Lord has done marvelous things; his right hand saved him"—that is, his Son—"and his holy arm"—meaning the Holy Spirit.

In the Catholic Epistles also, John the evangelist cries out, speaking of the Holy Spirit in divine terms: "It is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the truth." And a little later he says, "The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony of God in himself"—that is, the Spirit of God—"but the one who does not believe the Son has made him a liar."

And Peter, the great leader of the apostles, says to Ananias, "Why has Satan filled your heart, so that you lied to the Holy Spirit?" And a little later, "You have not lied to men, but to God." And in the Old Testament long ago it says, "Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord." And Solomon, showing who it is that fills, says, "The Spirit of the Lord has filled the world."

So then, concerning the lordship of the Holy Spirit, accept also the testimonies about him. Believe that the Holy Spirit is of the same Godhead, being and substance as the Father and the Son, and that he exists always together with the Father and the Son. Do you hear, philosopher? The philosopher's answer to our holy fathers:

"Then, as you say, and as the testimonies of the Scriptures you have brought forward make clear, we must confess the Holy Spirit as God as well. And it seems to me that the idea would be forced, if the testimonies of the Scriptures had not been brought forward by you."

"However, the case of Elihu the Buzite is clearly proved. But about the Assumption of Moses that you just mentioned, I had never heard of it until now. So I ask you to give me a clearer account of what was said."

For what you have already said is not enough to give me complete assurance about the Spirit. The matter calls for a plainer and more forceful statement, since the inquiry is not about trivial things. The answer of our holy fathers, given through Leontius, their fifty-seventh bishop, to the philosopher:

The proofs brought before you were many, and the testimonies from the divine Scriptures were very clear and able to persuade you about the matter at hand. So, philosopher, we are amazed that you, who seem so full of understanding, still doubt.

But because we want you to look toward the truth, and pray that you will, we urge your intelligence to begin by understanding by faith that nature, uncreated and unchangeable. Do not presume, as we have often said, to pry with human reasonings into what is beyond the mind. Do not allow yourself to be tangled up any longer in the wrong-headed and impious notions of Arius, since you are a philosopher, as you say, philosopher. Instead receive in faith, as we have plainly told you, both what has now been said to you and what is still to be said.

Receive one Godhead: of the Father, who begot the Son in a way no words can express; of the Son, who was begotten from him; and of the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father himself, and who is the Son's own.

As the divine apostle Paul says, "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, this person is not his." And in another place the same apostle says, "The Lord is the Spirit." And again: "There are distinctions of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are distinctions of services, but the same Lord; and there are distinctions of workings, but the same God who works all things in all." And a little later: "All these things are worked by the one and the same Spirit,

distributing to each one individually just as he wills." See, philosopher, a very clear and plain proof that declares the Holy Spirit to be God and shows his freedom of will. Notice how it says here, "There are distinctions of workings, but the same God who works all things in all," and then, "All these things are worked by the one and the same Spirit, distributing to each one individually just as he wills."

And the Lord in the Gospels, as you know, speaking plainly to the Samaritan woman, what does he say? "God is spirit." If then God is spirit, the Spirit is surely God as well. Yet there is no one God and another God; there is one Godhead of the other persons, according to the understanding of their distinct subsistences.

But when we hear the word "person," let us not suppose that the divine is shaped like a human being. For it is uncompounded and without shape, as you yourself agreed, as we did, at the beginning of our discussion.

For even heaven and earth are testified to have a "face" (or "person"). The Lord himself in the Gospels, speaking to the scribes and Pharisees, said, "Hypocrites, you know how to judge the face of heaven and of the earth," and so on.

For everything that has real existence is said, so far as it exists, to have the "face," that is, the form, of its own nature. Yet heaven and earth are created, as is the whole nature of things that come to be. The divine and unspeakable essence, by contrast, is uncreated, since it is simple, uncompounded, without shape, eternal and immortal.

But let us return to the subject before us. From many testimonies of the divine Scriptures we have shown that the Holy Spirit is fellow-creator with the Father and the Son of all creation, seen and unseen, since he is always inseparable from the Father and the Son, just as the Son is from the Father and the Father from the Son.

Come now, if you like, and take some helpful guidance from illustrations, though they are weaker. Your word, like every person's, is spoken aloud, yet it is born without division from your mind. In the same way your breath too goes out from you. You would not call either your word or your breath foreign to you.

You would not refuse to understand this in the case of human beings. Yet in the case of that unspeakable, unfathomable and incomprehensible essence of God, would you call foreign to him his Word, not a spoken word but one that is always living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, and judge of all because he is also its creator? "No creature is hidden before him, but all things are naked and laid bare to his eyes."

Does anyone dare to say that his Holy Spirit, who searches even the depths of God, is a stranger to him? Does anyone dare to say that either the Word or the Spirit of God is foreign to him, or to welcome those who say such things? Yes, philosopher. The philosopher's reply to the whole company of the holy bishops:

Chapter 22

Since you have led me to a higher thought, saying that one Godhead of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit must be understood and believed, I remember what you said earlier: that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God.

Now you say there is one Godhead of three perfect subsistences, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Please explain these statements to me more clearly. The holy fathers' answer to the philosopher, through the same bishop Leontius:

That divine and unspeakable being is beyond expression, since it is also beyond understanding, beyond reckoning, and altogether beyond tracing out. It surpasses all things and contains all things.

But hear it from us. We have not told you of one God and another God, as the impious Arius blasphemed, saying that one is an uncreated God and another a created one, and proclaiming that the Spirit of God is likewise created — God forbid. Rather, we have said that one Godhead is to be understood and believed: one being, one lordship and one will of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We have said, too, that the subsistences of the holy Trinity are to be known as not separated and not located in place. By faith alone one Godhead is to be understood and believed, as we have often said, of the holy, consubstantial and adorable Trinity.

See, the true faith has shown in every way that no difference is to be conceived in the holy Trinity. Now be willing to give us your attention for a little while, and you will be more fully convinced, receiving through us from the Holy Spirit counsel that brings salvation. Then you will know that the one Godhead of the holy Trinity always exists and subsists, a Trinity truly a Trinity, with nothing in it ever existing before the rest, but always and in the same way an undivided and consubstantial Trinity. The philosopher's answer:

"Do not think that I am turning away from the teachings of truth. If I were, I would have rejected your words right at the start of the discussion. I am searching out the meaning of your thoughts so that what you are saying may become clearer and better defined for me." The holy fathers answered with an illustration, through the same bishop Leontius, about fire, radiance and light:

"Listen now, philosopher, listen. We have already set before your mind, from a great many passages of the divine Scriptures, that the Godhead is simple and uncompounded. You yourself agreed to this at the beginning of your propositions.

It is also immortal, eternal and uncreated fire by nature, and light that cannot be contained or grasped. It is not understood as a single person, as the Jews think. All Christians believe and proclaim that it exists always in a Trinity of inseparable Persons: the inseparable Trinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as has been shown.

Learn this now as well, philosopher. If we are being bold, may the divine majesty be kind to us, for our labor is carried through for the sake of your salvation and that of the others. Learn, then, from things perceived by the senses about things perceived by the mind, from things within the mind's reach about things beyond the mind, and from things that can be spoken about things beyond speech.

All things, both seen and understood, among creatures "in heaven and on earth and under the earth," are beyond comparison with that uncreated, incomprehensible and immortal being of God. Still, the illustration that has come to us is no small help to those who receive it in faith. It offers a sufficient picture of true devotion to those who wish to understand reverently. Let us speak.

This fire that we perceive with our senses is one nature, or one being, and at the same time a triad: fire, radiance, light. None of these is found to exist before another. The three exist inseparably from one another: the fire, the radiance that comes from it, and the light.

So separate the three, philosopher, if you can, and show us one of them existing before another. Show us the fire existing by itself before the radiance, and the radiance coming later, after some span of time. Or show us the light coming later than the fire and the radiance, or earlier in time."

Show us, if you can, by separating the three from one another, that they are not alike fire, radiance and light, while the nature of the fire remains one.

Take these things to heart. They are perceptible and created, and, as we said a moment ago, they cannot be compared with the eternal and uncreated being of the Son. Still, accept from them these starting points for salvation. Give wings to the eye of your mind by faith, and rise up to the lofty knowledge of God.

As we pray and believe, the grace of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will meet you, shining upon you. It will show you one Godhead: immortal fire, radiance and light. It is simple and uncompounded, inseparable and undivided, beyond comprehension and beyond words. It is truly a Trinity of one substance, the Trinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

[Where the philosopher believes in the holy Trinity.] When the philosopher heard this, he was as though in a trance. For a long while he was struck speechless, "his thoughts troubled him," and great fear fell upon him. Then he came to himself and cried out loudly:

Glory to you, O God, who inspired these your saints with the mystery, beyond all understanding, of the undefiled, inseparable and uncreated Godhead. But I beg you, Christ, all-good Son of an all-good Father: forgive what I did wrong when I was led astray against you by the impious opinions of Arius. Do not make me pay the penalty before you, the righteous judge, for those impious words which I, wretched man, declared against you.

Woe to Arius and his impious company! They blasphemed against the Son of God when they said, "There was a time when he was not," and that the Son of God is a creature and a thing made, and of a different substance; and that the Holy Spirit too is not of the same substance as the Father. So they spoke of the Son of God and the Holy Spirit.

I anathematize Arius now and always, and his impious opinions, and all who think as he does, and all who blaspheme against the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. For whoever does not have the Son does not have the Father either. And whoever blasphemes against the Son and the Holy Spirit has blasphemed against the Father.

I humbly beg your holy council of elders: help me by your prayers for me to Christ, the Son of God. I follow above all what has been set forth and defined through you by the Holy Spirit, and I confess that these things are true and sure.

For I believe this to be what the great teacher of sacred mysteries, Paul, spoke of: "the mystery hidden from the ages and from the generations, which has now been revealed, as it was told to his holy apostles and prophets" and to you. In the Spirit the Son and his Holy Spirit always exist, and exist together with God the Father and abide together with him. The holy fathers then added a further word to the philosopher, through Bishop Leontius, about a spring, a river and water:

Chapter 23

There is something else, my friend, that you must now understand about the truth, philosopher. Let us think of a spring that gives birth to a river of water. Every river, as you know, has a spring as its begetter. The river comes forth from the spring of water. Yet no one calls the river the spring, or the spring the river. The spring is called a spring and the river a river, and both are one water.

But when someone wants to draw water from the river or the spring, he changes the name. He will not say, “Go, draw and bring me the spring or the river,” but “water.” So the nature is one, but three persons are to be named: spring, river, water.

But the divine Scripture is shown to say these same things too. We are not saying anything foreign to it to you, who are now a true child of grace, even if we have introduced our argument by way of examples, types and images of the truth.

So the divine Scripture says about the Son: “He will incline toward them like a river of peace.” The river, clearly, flows out from the true fountain of life, the Godhead of the Father. The Lord himself cries out in the Gospels: “I came forth from the Father and have come.” He also said most plainly, “I and the Father are one,” and “I am in the Father and the Father is in me.” And the same is true of the Holy Spirit,

that all of us who believe receive from him. The Spirit is of the same essence as the Father and the Son. He proceeds from the Father, and is also proper to the Son, as we showed above. That he wells up for us out of the Son, the Lord himself taught most clearly in the Gospels when he said: “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. As the Scripture said, whoever believes in me, rivers of living water will flow from his belly.” The evangelist, inspired by God, explains what was said and adds: “He said this about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were about to receive.”

Now see what the prophet David cries out about this fountain of true life, the holy Trinity: “With you is the fountain of life; in your light we shall see light.” He calls God the Father the fountain of life, and speaks to him in the Son’s presence, since the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father. The Son he calls “light,” and he says that in this light we shall see light, the Holy Spirit. For he says, “In your light we shall see light.”

For the Father is truly the fountain of life and of light. The Son is light from the light of the Father. The Holy Spirit is also light, from that same light.

For, as we must say again and again, there is one Godhead of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. So he himself cries out through the words of the prophets: "I am God, and there is no other. I am God, the first, and after these things, and I am for ever." And again: "I am, and I have not changed, and I am for ever." And so on, in line with what has already been shown.

I think it necessary to take up these sayings again. I will not give them all, because there are so many, but at least the clearer ones, so that what has been said may stand on firmer ground.

So I will set out the words from the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah. He says: "He who made the earth for everlasting time filled it with four-footed beasts. He sends out the light, and it goes; he called it, and it obeyed him with trembling. The stars shone in their watches and rejoiced. He called them, and they said, 'Here we are.' They shone with gladness for the one who made them. This is our God; no other will be counted beside him." And so on.

So, most God-loving philosopher, it is necessary to fix your mind on this and unfold the meaning of the passage. For it has shown, as you yourself agreed, that these things were said beforehand about the Son. For it says: "After these things he was seen on the earth and lived among human beings."

Now suppose, following the impious wickedness of Arius, that the Son is some other, created essence, a god who came after the Father. Yet the Scripture says of him: "This is our God; no other will be counted beside him." Then, by Arius's impiety, the Father is not God, since of the Son it says, "No other will be counted beside him." So the impious Arius-maniacs are refuted, together with the author of their blasphemy. Before denying the Son they have cast out the Father himself from the Godhead, and these enemies of the truth are found to be altogether godless.

For whoever does not have the Son, as it says in the Catholic Epistles, "does not have the Father either." The catholic faith knows one Godhead and proclaims it as that of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, beside which no other will be counted. This mystery of the holy, worshipful and consubstantial Trinity is beyond understanding, beyond expression and altogether beyond grasp. It can be understood by faith alone.

Chapter 24

And the philosopher said: "What the Holy Spirit has spoken through you is truly divine and full of light. Your holy words of teaching are dear to me, so I ask you to lend me your pure ears and teach me about what I now ask. In this way you will receive from God the fullest reward for my salvation." The answer of the holy fathers, through the same bishop Leontius:

"Say what you wish. We are eager to give you full assurance. You are now especially able to receive the proofs of the sayings easily on every point, since you have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit." The philosopher's thanks and his question about the Lord's becoming man:

"Thanks be to your holy head. Tell me, most holy men, how should we understand that God the Word, the Son of God, appeared on earth and lived among men, when he cannot be seen by any created nature, whether seen or understood? And what was the reason for which he did these things? Teach me, I beg you." The answer of the holy fathers to the philosopher, through Bishop Leontius:

"The reason for his coming was arranged by him because of the fall of the first-created human beings, Adam and Eve, in paradise. That fall spread to their whole race.

So when they transgressed the commandment, they were stripped of the divine gift, and the Creator wished to give it back to the human race. We should understand here that just as God said, 'Let us make man according to our image and likeness,' and God made man, in line with the proofs already given, so the same God said again, 'Let us save lost man, whom we made according to our image and likeness.'

And just as God the Father said 'Let us make' and the Son carried out the creating, being God from God, so the same Son, by the Father's counsel, willed to restore man in himself."

The philosopher's question on the same subject: "And how was he seen on earth and how did he live among men as a man, when he is God and does not change?" The answer from the holy fathers, through Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem:

"In the words of the inspired Paul, 'Great is the mystery of godliness: God was revealed in flesh.' That is, the Son of God himself was then seen, even by angels. For the Only-begotten

was not visible even to angels or archangels or any of the heavenly powers, since no one has ever seen God.

So when you hear of his coming down from heaven, do not suspect that his divinity, which cannot be contained, moved from one place to another. Understand this whole thing, the truly great mystery of godliness in which we were made new, as an act of the divine plan.

For renewal is the taking up again of newness. For this reason the Word of God himself came down into our likeness, giving back to us the likeness to himself.

It was impossible for God to become like us without taking flesh. The form of an incorporeal being was not added to an incorporeal substance, for that was what he himself was; what was added was the bodily. And a bodily substance could not come to be without being taken on. For this reason he truly took a body, so that we, who fell from the original brotherhood through the change of our incorporeal form, that is, of the grace of the Spirit, which we lost through the first human beings, Adam and Eve, might be brought back into that brotherhood through his taking of a body, and might receive again what is incorporeal and divine.

He takes flesh from a woman. In this way he becomes of one kind with us, so that he may share his own glory with us as those of his kind, and so that he may also save the woman through birth.

For it says, 'The woman will be saved through childbearing.' And the flesh he took had the life-giving element that belongs to its nature. For there is no flesh without the life-giving principle, which Scripture also properly calls the soul."

The philosopher said: "Who would not be amazed at these great works of God, as you have described them? But how does he take flesh from a woman, as you said just now?" The answer of the holy fathers, through the same Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem:

"We have already told you, excellent friend, never to ask 'how' about the mysteries of God. They are unspeakable and beyond reckoning. But as we have been taught from the sacred writings, we will say as much as speech can set forth."

For the complete understanding of that mystery, the incarnate plan of the Lord and how it came about, no human being knows, and no angel either. Not even Gabriel, who served in that mystery, nor the all-pure, clean and holy virgin Mary, could set out a full grasp of how God the Word took flesh. For the only-begotten Son of God alone knows exactly how he became man for our sake.

For even though "those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word" handed down to us, as Luke says, the things about his incarnate plan, namely that he was "of the seed of David and Abraham according to the flesh"; and "of whom Jesus was born," that is, of the virgin, "who is called Christ"; and that "to them belong the fathers, and from them comes the Christ according to the flesh"; and that "he did not take hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham"; and that "in all things he was made like us, except for sin."

These things we know. But the manner in which they came about surpasses the understanding of every rational nature. For the prophet Jeremiah also says of this, "He is a man, and who will know him?" The philosopher and the whole crowd that had gathered to listen were amazed. The holy fathers, speaking through Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, added:

We have already shown at great length that the only-begotten Son of God, being God, became man out of love for humanity. He took flesh and was born of the virgin Mary in an unspeakable birth.

For, as our argument showed earlier, he wished to renew what had been ruined by the fall of the first-formed man. So he came to be in what is ours, in order to make us to be in what is his, stooping down to our weakness like an excellent physician.

Again we say: his stooping down, coming down and being sent must be understood according to the manner of his becoming man, as we showed before. For in his divinity he always fills all things together with the Father, in the senses already given.

So listen. We are born of a woman. For love of humanity he came to this as well. But we are born from the pleasure of sleep and a man's seed, while he alone was born of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary. We are nursed with milk. He came to this too, in the flesh, he who by his divinity gives food to all flesh. We grow in progress and in stature. He did not disdain to undergo this himself in the body, as it is written, "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men."

He completed thirty years, so that he might bless every age. Then he came to baptism, while John, the son of Zachariah, was proclaiming to the people a baptism of repentance. John was not giving forgiveness of sins or the gift of adoption. It was not for John to give these things, nor for any angel, but for God the Word himself, who was made flesh and became man.

And he submitted to baptism for our sake. Though God and sinless, he was baptized in the body as a man. He did not need baptism himself, but he did it to glorify our baptism, so that we might believe that just as the Holy Spirit came down upon him, so he comes also upon us who are baptized into him.

Then he lived among people. He handed down the declarations of his divine commandments and worked the wonders of signs. He did this for three years and had begun a fourth. Then he came to his voluntary bodily suffering on our behalf. For the penalty of the cross was owed by us. But if we had all been crucified, we still could not have snatched ourselves out of death.

"For death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned." There were many holy ones, many prophets, many righteous people, and none of them was able to free himself from the power of death. But the Savior of all came himself and took the penalties owed by us into his sinless flesh, taken from us, in our place and on our behalf.

After death we were carried down to Hades. He took this on as well, and went down into it willingly. He was not carried down as we are, but went down, for he was not subject to death but was master of death. And though he went down alone, he came back up with a multitude.

For he himself was the spiritual grain of wheat that fell into the earth for us and died in the flesh. By the power of his divinity he raised up his bodily temple, according to the Scriptures, and it bore fruit: the resurrection of the whole human race. After three days in the tomb and his return to life from the dead, he appeared to the disciples and showed them the sufferings his body had endured on the cross. He said, “Touch me and see that it is I myself, the one who works wonders, the one who also took upon himself in my flesh the sufferings that belonged to your race.”

Then for forty days he lived with them and gave them instructions for their salvation. He went up into the heavens while they watched, and the holy words of Scripture taught that he sat down at the right hand of the Father. We expect him to come at the end of the age to judge the living and the dead. He reigns forever with the Father, as he always has, for endless ages.

This is the apostolic and blameless faith of the church. It was handed down from above, from the Lord himself through the apostles, from ancestors to descendants. The church proclaims it to this day and will hold to it forever. For the Lord said to the disciples, “Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” On the agreement of all in the “of one substance.”

Chapter 25

When these things had been spoken in this way by the Holy Spirit through our holy fathers gathered in that holy council, the whole multitude that had come together to hear them praised God greatly.

The most God-beloved emperor himself was listening too, since he was present at most of the council's sessions. He was full of admiration and glorified God for hearing such divine teachings. He rejoiced at the agreement of our bishops and exulted in spirit, for he was eager that no one, great or small, should disagree with this saving confession.

So after this long and thorough, reverent examination was finished, it seemed good to all our bishops together to define "of one substance" as part of the church's faith. This was just how our holy fathers after the apostles had handed down this faith: that is, to confess that the Son and the Holy Spirit are of the same substance as the Father.

All the holy bishops gathered at Nicaea confirmed this faith. The multitude of priests and holy confessors, the highly praised and most God-beloved emperor himself, and the whole crowd of believers who had come together there gladly accepted the confession of faith. The exception was seventeen bishops, about whom we have spoken above. Arius, who thought he was pleasing them, was caught along with them, since they agreed with him. They said with him that the Son was made by God from outside, out of certain things that did not exist, and was not begotten from the Father's own divinity. At this point the impious Arius and those with him are publicly condemned by the common voice of the council.

Chapter 26

Therefore all our holy fathers, by unanimous vote, decreed that these men should again be cast out of the catholic church together with Arius. They anathematized them, along with their impious opinion and their blasphemous words and thoughts, which they had used against the only-begotten Son. For they said that he was from things that did not exist, and that there was a time when he was not, and that the Son of God, by his own free will, was capable of both vice and virtue. They called him a created thing and a product of making.

The holy council anathematized all these things and these men themselves. It could not bear even to hear their impious opinion, their arrogance, and their blasphemous words.

They even tore up on the spot the little document, full of their impiety, which they had dared to hand in. This was the outcome the holy council gave to their case.

As for the orthodox faith, all the bishops agreed. For the sake of the simplicity of the believing multitude of the people, they gathered the whole of it into a few words and set down in writing the creed of the catholic faith, in this way. Statement of the catholic and apostolic faith, set forth by the council at Nicaea in the presence of the most God-beloved emperor Constantine, in the consulship of the illustrious Paulinus and Julianus, in the year 636 from Alexander, in the month Desius, on the nineteenth, the thirteenth day before the Kalends of July, in the [fourth] indiction, at Nicaea, the metropolis of Bithynia.

Chapter 27

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things, seen and unseen.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father; God from God, light from light, true God from true God; begotten, not made; of one substance with the Father; through whom all things came into being, those in heaven and those on earth;

who for us human beings and for your salvation came down, was made flesh, and became man;

suffered, was buried, and rose again on the third day; went up into the heavens, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

And in his Spirit.

But those who say, "There was a time when he was not," and, "Before he was begotten he was not," and that "he came to be out of things that were not," or who claim that the Son of God is from a different hypostasis or substance, or is created, or changeable, or alterable: the catholic and apostolic Church anathematizes such people.

This is the faith which our holy fathers, the orthodox bishops at Nicaea, set forth. They set it forth first against Arius, who blasphemed

and said that the Son of God is a created thing. They set it forth also against Sabellius, Photinus, Paul of Samosata, Manichaeus, Valentinus and Marcion, and against every heresy that has risen up against the catholic and apostolic Church.

The council of holy and orthodox men gathered in the city of Nicaea condemned these. The names of the bishops and of their provinces are listed below.

So the council's decisions were reported to the devout and highly praised emperor: the judgment against those who fight against God, and the statement of the orthodox faith. He gladly received it, with the greatest reverence, as something brought forward from God. As for those who opposed it, since they were resisting God, he decreed that they should go into exile.

Six of the bishops with Arius, then, accepted being driven out together with Arius himself and those around him.

But the other eleven were afraid of the God-loving emperor's presence and of the great number of bishops in the council, and feared being banished. So they pretended, and signed in favor of "of one substance" with the hand, not with the intention.

The ringleader of this deceit was Eusebius of Nicomedia. He is shown to have held a double mind to the very end, as Eustathius of Antioch, Eusebius son of Pamphilus, the great Athanasius, and all who wrote accounts of the council relate. By pretense he appeared to be on our side, while in fact he vigorously defended the party of our opponents. The signatures of the bishops on the faith follow.

Chapter 28

Hosius, bishop of the city of Cordoba, for the holy churches of God in Rome, Spain and all Italy, and in the other nations beyond, as far as the ocean, as they are in my region, through the presbyters with him, Vito and Vincentius of Rome.

Alexander of Alexandria, with Athanasius, who was then archdeacon, for the churches throughout all Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis, and the neighboring regions as far as the provinces of India.

Eustathius of Antioch the Great, for the churches in Coele-Syria, all Mesopotamia, and both Cilicias.

John the Persian, for the churches in all Persia and in Greater India.

Leontius of Caesarea in Cappadocia, the adornment of the Lord's church, for the churches in Cappadocia itself, Galatia, Pontus, Diospontus, Paphlagonia, Pontus Polemoniacus, and Armenia, Lesser and Greater.

Theonas of Cyzicus, for the churches in Asia and the Hellespont, Lydia and Caria, through the bishops under him, Eutychius of Smyrna and Marinus of Troas.

Macarius of Jerusalem, with Eusebius son of Pamphilus, bishop of Caesarea, for the churches in Palestine, Arabia and Phoenicia.

Alexander of Thessalonica, through those serving under him, for the churches in Macedonia, First and Second, together with Greece, all of Europe, both Scythias, all the Illyrian regions, Thessaly and Achaia.

Nunechius of Laodicea, for the churches in Phrygia, First and Second.

Protogenes, the admirable bishop of the city of Sardica, for the churches in Dacia, Calabria, Dardania, and the regions bordering them.

Caecilian of Carthage, for the holy churches of God throughout all the provinces, in the Africas, the Numidias, and both Mauritanias.

Pistus of Marcianopolis, for the churches in Moesia, the nations of the Menes and the Galli, and the cities near them.

Alexander of Constantinople, at that time still a presbyter (he later received the bishop's office in the church there), together with Paul, who was then still a reader and his secretary, for all the churches in the islands of the Cyclades.

All these holy and apostolic men carried the decisions of the holy, great and ecumenical council of Nicaea across the sea and handed them on to all the holy churches of God under heaven, everywhere on earth. At that point the emperor rose from his throne and sent up words of thanksgiving to God.

Chapter 29

The emperor Constantine was delighted at the statement of the right and apostolic faith. It had been proclaimed through our three hundred holy fathers by the Holy Spirit, as if from a single mouth, and approved by all. So he rose from his throne in the presence of the whole crowd of holy bishops and of all who had gathered for that holy hearing of the faith, and

spread out his hands, lifted his eyes to heaven toward God, and with words of praise he hymned God, the Savior and benefactor of all of us, because God had granted him the harmony of the bishops that he longed for, and their agreement in voice about the right and saving faith.

So great was that best of emperors, beloved of God, in his care for the churches of God and for the entirely peaceful harmony of the shepherds.

I think it is not out of place to include in this writing also what Eusebius Pamphilus says about the business done in the council. He took it up well at the start of his account in his third book, the one on the life of Constantine, the emperor beloved of God.

It runs as follows. Very many proposals were put forward by each side, and at first there was much uncertainty on the part of some. The all-praised emperor listened to everyone, and with great patience and attention received the proposals of both parties.

In turn he took up what each side said. Quietly he brought together those who were stubbornly contentious, and he spoke gently with each one. He spoke in Greek, since he was not unskilled in that language either, and he was sweet and pleasant.

Some he persuaded, others he shamed with his words; those who spoke well he praised; and he urged all toward agreement. In the end he brought them to one mind and one belief, so that the godly confession of praise prevailed with one voice. The saving faith, which had truly been proclaimed by the Holy Spirit through all our holy fathers mentioned above, was confirmed.

At the same time he also made a law that one date be agreed on by all for the saving feast of the Pascha.

Then he also ordered that what had been decided in common be confirmed in writing, with each man adding his signature. And he urged the bishops to set down in writing the various church regulations and canons. Concerning Acesius, bishop of the Novatians, and those with him.

Chapter 30

The emperor's faith moves us to mention one more matter. He took such zeal and forethought for the peace of the church that he overlooked not even the smallest things. He had invited to the council Acesius, bishop of the Novatian sect, and those with him, as though they too held the homoousion and glorified the Trinity.

So after the definition of the faith had been set out and signed by the council and the emperor, the emperor Constantine asked Acesius whether he too agreed with the faith and with the ruling about the feast of Pascha.

Acesius said to him, "The council has decided nothing new, O emperor. For we have all received from of old, from apostolic times, both the definition of the faith and the date of the feast of Pascha."

The emperor said to him, "Then why are you separated from our communion?" Acesius told of what happened under Decius, during the persecution, about those who had been unable to struggle through martyrdom but had denied the faith. He put forward the strictness of a severe rule, saying that "those who have sinned after baptism ought not to be received when they repent, or be counted worthy of communion in the mystery from then on."

When Acesius had said this, the emperor said to him, "Acesius, set up a ladder for yourself alone, and climb up into heaven."

After this all the bishops set out various church regulations. A teaching discourse on the church regulations.

Chapter 31

Let us speak with the light, who is Christ, as those who stand near him. Let us conduct our lives as people who see him, through prayers that sanctify. Prayers do sanctify, if we pray with a divine word. And a divine word is present wherever the heart and the manner of life are kept pure in humility. Israel grew weary offering its sacrifices. The prophets cried out to God: “Send out your light and your truth.” They cried out, and we have received. “Others have labored,” as the Lord said, “and we have entered into their labor.” For he himself has come to us, the one who says, “I am the light, I am the truth.” We received grace without weariness, but we must guard that grace through toil.

Concerning those who say Christians must not work. Some people do not want to work but to meddle. They misunderstand the Lord’s holy words, “Do not be anxious for your life, what you will eat.” They claim that, following this saying, Christians ought not to work the land. We must show that the Lord did not mean it that way. It is possible both to work and not to be anxious, knowing and believing that the Lord himself gives the growth and the fruits of our works. He said: “So is the kingdom of God, as if a man casts his seed on the ground, and sleeps and rises night and day; and the seed sprouts and grows long, though he himself does not know how.”

Concerning the clergy. The clergy ought to be a type and image of the heavenly things. The bishop is the <throne> of the Lord himself, being after him the head of the church he has received. The presbyter holds the seraphic throne, and the deacon the cherubic. The attendant is fitting for serving these.

Concerning laypeople not going up onto the ambo. Laypeople must not go up onto the ambo, except those appointed to read or to sing from the parchment books.

Concerning holy baptism. Our baptism must be understood not with the eyes of the senses but with the eyes of the mind. You see water; understand the power of God hidden in the water. For the sacred words teach that we are baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire. Through faith of the one baptizing and faith of the one being baptized, by the holy invocation, understand the waters to be full of the sanctification of the Spirit and of divine fire. “For he himself,” it says, “will baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire.” The one being baptized goes down guilty of sins and held in slavery to corruption. He comes up set free from that slavery

and from sin, having become by his grace a son of God and an heir, and a joint heir with Christ, having put on Christ himself, as it is written: “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

Concerning the divine table and the mystery on it of the body and blood of Christ. At the divine table, here too, let us not give humble attention to the bread and the cup set before us. Instead, let us lift up our mind and believe by faith that the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, lies on that holy table, sacrificed by the priests without being slaughtered. And as we truly receive his precious body and blood, let us believe that these are the symbols of our resurrection. For this reason we take not much but a little, so that we may know that it is not for filling but for sanctification.

On the resurrection from the dead. The Lord did not hand over his own flesh to suffering and death for us for no reason. He did it to work out our salvation, even though he was free from death, as the argument above has shown. The prophet cries out as if in his person, announcing beforehand the mystery of his plan in the flesh: “I became like a man without help, free among the dead.” Who is free from death, if not God? But in accordance with what has already been shown, he took flesh out of love for humanity and became like a helpless man. He humbled his flesh even to death, death on a cross, and he is proclaimed to have been raised. By making us immortal he would provide for us, who had been given up as hopeless, the hope of our resurrection through that very firstfruits of ours. So we would no longer be slaves to eternal death but free, as Christ, our firstfruits, is free. The blessed apostle Paul says: “Christ the firstfruits, then those who belong to Christ at his coming.” Paul also bears witness that we are waiting for this same Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God the Father, as Savior from heaven, to raise our bodies from the tombs. He says: “Our citizenship is in heaven, and from there we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform the body of our humiliation to be like the body of his glory.” For our body must be glorified in this way, like the Master’s: incapable of evil and of all the sufferings we now have, free from death and sin, holy. Then we will be able to walk with him in newness of life, in heavenly light, reigning together with Christ himself forever. For it is in this hope that we received holy baptism, and we receive the saving communion of his holy members. These are the doctrines of the catholic church.

That the church of God is one. There is one church in heaven, and it is the same on earth. In it the Holy Spirit rests. The heresies outside it, which people hold, are not the teachings of our Savior or of the apostles. They are the teachings of Satan and of their father the devil. For they teach the things of the Jews and of the Greeks in another form, in order to rob people of the life that is truly life.

On God’s foreknowledge and on the world. According to the sacred writings, we wait in a lowly state for the appearing and kingdom of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ to be shown to us. “And then,” as Daniel says, “the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom.” The earth will be clean and holy, a land of the living and not of the dead. David foresaw it with the eye of faith and cries out: “I believe that I will see the goodness of the

Lord in the land of the living." It is the land of the meek and humble. "For blessed," he says, "are the meek, for they will inherit the earth." And the prophet says: "The feet of the meek and humble will tread on it."

These matters, a small selection from many, I have set down in this writing from the church's regulations that our holy fathers took pains over. They also issued twenty church canons in the council at Nicaea itself, and I thought it necessary to include these too in the work. Church rules: When the holy and great council had gathered at Nicaea, the following was decided.

Chapter 32

On eunuchs who have cut off their own members. If anyone was operated on by a physician because of illness, or was castrated by barbarians, let him remain among the clergy. But if anyone in good health castrated himself, then even if he is enrolled among the clergy it is right that he be removed from service, and from now on no such person is to be promoted. Just as it is clear that this applies to those who practice the deed and dare to castrate themselves, so also, if any were made eunuchs by barbarians or by their masters but are otherwise found worthy, the canon admits these to the clergy.

Concerning those brought to ordination from among the pagans. Many things have been done contrary to the rule of the Church, whether from necessity or because people were pressed in some other way. Men who had only just come to the faith from a pagan way of life, and had been instructed for a short time, were led at once to the spiritual washing, and as soon as they were baptized were promoted to be bishop or presbyter. It seemed good that from now on nothing of the kind should happen. For the catechumen needs time, and after baptism a longer testing. The apostolic writing is plain, which says, “Not a new convert, lest he become puffed up and fall into judgment and the snare of the devil.” If as time goes on some sin of the soul is found in the person, and he is convicted by two or three witnesses, such a man shall cease from the clergy. And whoever acts contrary to these things, acting rashly against the great synod, will himself put his own place in the clergy at risk.

Concerning those who have women living with them. The great synod forbade outright that any bishop, presbyter or deacon, or anyone at all in the clergy, may keep a woman living with him, unless she is a mother, a sister, an aunt, or such persons only as escape all suspicion. Whoever acts contrary to these things will endanger his own rank.

Concerning the appointment of bishops. It is most fitting that a bishop be appointed by all the bishops of the province. But if that is difficult, either because of some pressing necessity or because of the length of the journey, at least three must by all means gather together, and the absent bishops must also cast their votes and give their consent by letter. Then the ordination is to be carried out. The authority to confirm what is done is given, in each province, to the metropolitan bishop.

Concerning those who are excommunicated. Concerning those who are excommunicated by the bishops in each province, whether among the clergy or in the lay order, let the opinion prevail, in accordance with the rule, that those who have been expelled by some are not to be received by others. But let it be examined whether they were cast out of the assembly through the bishop's pettiness, quarrelsomeness, or some similar ill-feeling. So that this may receive a proper examination, it seemed good that in each province synods be held twice a year. All the bishops of the province, gathered together, can then jointly examine such questions. In this way, those who have plainly offended the bishop will reasonably be regarded by all as excommunicated, until it seems right to the assembly, or to the bishop, to pass a more merciful judgment on them. Let one synod be held before Lent, so that all pettiness may be removed and a pure gift offered to God, and the second around the autumn season.

Concerning the special honors that were established by the Church for those who govern the greater bishoprics. Let the ancient customs prevail, those in Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis, so that the bishop of Alexandria has authority over all of these, since this is also customary for the bishop of Rome. In the same way, in Antioch and in the other provinces, the privileges are to be preserved for the churches. This is plain in general: if anyone becomes a bishop without the consent of the metropolitan, the great synod decreed that such a man must not be a bishop. But if the common vote of all is reasonable and in accordance with the rule of the Church, and two or three object out of their own contentiousness, let the vote of the majority prevail.

Concerning the bishop of Aelia. Since a custom has prevailed, and an ancient tradition, that the bishop of Aelia be honored, let him have the sequence of honor, while the metropolis keeps its own proper dignity.

Concerning those who call themselves Cathars. Concerning those who once called themselves Cathars and now come to the most holy catholic and apostolic Church: the holy and great council decided that they are to receive the laying on of hands and so remain in the clergy. Before all this, it is right for them to confess in writing that they will agree to and follow the doctrines of the catholic and apostolic Church. That means they will have communion with those who have married a second time, and with those who fell away in the persecution, for whom a length of time has been set and a season appointed. In this way they are to follow the Church's doctrines in everything. Now where all of them, whether in villages or in cities, are found to be the only ones who have received the laying on of hands, they will remain in the clergy in the same rank in which they are found. But where they come in and there is already a bishop or presbyter of the catholic Church, it is plain that the bishop of the Church will hold the dignity of bishop. The man called a bishop among the Cathars will have the honor of a presbyter, unless the bishop decides to let him share the honor of the title. If that does not please the bishop, he will devise a place for him, either as a country bishop or as a presbyter, so that he may in some way be counted among the clergy, and so that there are not two bishops in the city.

Concerning the ordination of presbyters. If any were promoted to the presbyterate without examination, or, when questioned, confessed the sins they had committed, and men acting contrary to the rule nevertheless laid hands on them despite their confession, the rule does not admit such men. For the catholic Church will defend what is blameless.

Concerning those who have fallen and were appointed through ignorance. Where any of the fallen were appointed through ignorance, or even when those appointing them knew beforehand, this does not prejudice the rule of the Church. For once they are found out, they are deposed.

Concerning those who lapsed without compulsion. Concerning those who lapsed without compulsion, or loss of property, or danger, or anything of that kind, as happened under the tyranny of Licinius: the council decided that, although they did not deserve kindness, it should still be shown to them. So those who genuinely repent shall spend three years among the hearers and seven years in the position of penitents who prostrate themselves. For two years they shall share with the people in the prayers, but without the offering.

Concerning those who renounced the world and then ran back to it. Those who were called by grace and showed their first zeal and laid aside their military belts, but afterward ran back to their own vomit, so that some even paid money and by favors secured a return to military service, shall be penitents for ten years after the three-year period of hearing. In all these cases it is right to examine the intention and the kind of repentance. Those who show their turning back by deeds and not by appearance, with fear, tears, patient endurance and good works, shall, when they have completed the appointed time of hearing, share in the prayers; and the bishop may consider something more merciful for them. But those who took it lightly and thought that the outward form of entering the church was enough for their conversion must complete the whole time.

Concerning those who ask for communion as they are dying. Concerning those who are departing this life, the old and canonical law shall be kept now as well: if anyone is departing, he is not to be deprived of the Lord's provision for the journey. But if someone who was despaired of, and received communion and shared in the offering, is found again among the living, he shall be among those who share in the prayer only. In general, then, and concerning anyone at all who is departing and asks to share in the Eucharist, the bishop shall give him a share of the offering after examination.

Concerning catechumens who have fallen. Concerning catechumens who have fallen during their catechesis, the holy and great council decided that they shall be hearers only for three years, and after that pray with the catechumens.

That no one should be transferred from one city to another. Because of the great disturbance and the conflicts that arise, it was decided that the custom found in some places contrary to the rule must be removed entirely: no bishop, presbyter or deacon is to move from city to city. If anyone, after this decree of the holy council, attempts anything of the kind or gives

himself to such a course, the arrangement will be completely void, and he shall be restored to the church for which he was ordained bishop, presbyter or deacon.

Concerning those who do not remain in the churches to which they were appointed. Some act recklessly, with no fear of God before their eyes and no knowledge of the church's rule. They leave their church, whether they are presbyters or deacons or are in any way counted among the clergy. These men must not be received in any other church. Every pressure must be brought on them to return to their own congregations. If they persist in staying away, they are to be excluded from communion. And if anyone seizes a man who belongs to another and ordains him in his own church, without the consent of the bishop from whom the man withdrew, who was counted on the church's roll, let that ordination be void.

Concerning clergy who lend at interest. Many who are counted on the church's roll have pursued greed and shameful gain. They have forgotten the divine Scripture which says, "He did not give his money at interest." They lend money and demand a hundredth part each month. The holy and great council therefore decided this: if, after this decree, anyone is found taking interest on a loan, or carrying on the business in some other way, or demanding one and a half times the amount, or devising anything else for the sake of shameful gain, he shall be removed from the clergy and be a stranger to the church's roll.

Concerning presbyters receiving the Eucharist from deacons. It came to the attention of the holy and great council that in some places and cities the deacons give the Eucharist to the presbyters. Neither the rule nor custom has handed this down: that those who have no authority to offer should give the body of Christ to those who do offer. It was also made known that some deacons now touch the Eucharist even before the bishops. Let all this be removed. Let the deacons stay within their own limits. They should know that they are servants of the bishop and are lower than the presbyters. Let them receive the Eucharist in order, after the presbyters, with either the bishop or the presbyter giving it to them. Nor may deacons sit in the midst of the presbyters, for that is contrary to the rule and to proper order. If anyone is unwilling to obey, even after these decrees, let him be removed from the diaconate.

Concerning those who came over from Paul of Samosata, or who are coming, to the catholic church. Concerning the followers of Paul who then took refuge in the catholic church, a decree has been issued that they must be rebaptized without exception. If any of them were counted among the clergy in the past, then if they appear blameless and beyond reproach, let them be rebaptized and ordained by the bishop of the church. But if on examination they are found unfit, they must be removed from office. The same pattern is to be observed for deacons, and in general for all who are counted on the same roll. We also made mention of the deaconesses among them, those who have been counted in that dress. Since they have no laying on of hands, they are to be counted without exception among the laity.

Concerning those who kneel on the Lord's day. Some people kneel on the Lord's day and during the days of Pentecost. So that everything may be kept alike and in agreement in every diocese, the holy council decided that prayers should be offered to the Lord standing.

This holy assembly wrote these twenty laws concerning the order of the church, in the presence of the most God-loving and universally praised emperor Constantine.

Some of the bishops also planned to set out one further law, which Paphnutius prevented. I thought it necessary to relate an account of it, one worthy of the greatest wonder. Some of the bishops thought they should introduce a new law into the church at the council, and lay this down as they had the others concerning the church. Concerning the claim that clergy ought not each to put away his own wife.

Chapter 33

They were therefore writing that the consecrated, whether bishops, presbyters, deacons, subdeacons or anyone on the roll of the priesthood, must not sleep with the wives whom they had married while they were still laymen.

When this was being decreed, the divine Paphnutius stood up in the middle of the crowd of bishops and cried out in a loud voice: “Do not make the yoke of the consecrated heavier. For marriage is honorable among all, he says, and the marriage bed undefiled. Do not harm the church by an excess of strictness.” For he said that not everyone can bear the discipline of freedom from passion.

“I think no one will be kept in self-control if each man is deprived of his own wife. By self-control I mean the fine thing it is for each man to live with his lawful wife. Do not separate from her the woman whom God gave him, and whom he married once, when he was a reader or a psalmist or a layman.”

Pafnutius said this although he had no experience of marriage, because from childhood he had lived in ascetic communities. So the whole assembly of bishops was persuaded by the man’s advice and said no more about the question. They left it to the judgment of each man who wished, by mutual agreement, to abstain from his own wife.

These things were done at the holy, great and ecumenical council gathered at Nicaea in Bithynia. But Eusebius and Theognis and the Arians with them could not bear the confirmation of the true faith that had been firmly established. They would not even consent to anathematize Arius. They were exposed on this account and fell under sentence of exile, by the decision of the God-beloved emperor and the judgment of the holy synod of bishops. Others were set up in their places in their own dioceses, by the vote of the same synod and of the clergy and people of each diocese.

Amphion took over the leadership of the church of the Nicomedians, Chrestus that of Nicaea itself, and others took the sees of those who shared their mind. But Eusebius and Theognis again used their usual schemes. They found in the emperor’s kindness a means, gained by deceit, and tried to fight their way back and recover their former power.

Their wicked schemes were very many and full of every impiety. I would refer those who wish to learn about them to the ecclesiastical history of Theodoret and the other writers. From here I will go on in my account to what follows. It concerns what the synod of bishops wrote to the bishops who had been left behind and to their own dioceses. It also concerns what the victorious and most faithful emperor wrote, to establish the holy faith that had been set out and the holy feast of Easter, and to refute the champions of impiety.

When the synod had been convened on all these matters in so great-minded a way, and the faith had been proclaimed in a manner worthy of God, the holy fathers laid down everything that concerned good order in the church. They then made every effort to make all their decisions known by letter to all the holy churches of God under heaven. They also added the matters concerning Meletius. Concerning the unholy Meletius.

Chapter 34

A certain Meletius had been thought worthy of ordination to the episcopate, not long before the madness of Arius. He was convicted by the most godly Peter, bishop of the Alexandrians, who also won the crown of martyrdom, and was deposed. But Meletius did not accept the sentence of deposition. He filled the Thebaid and the neighboring parts of Egypt with disturbance and turmoil, and used tyranny against the bishop Alexander's position as head of the church. The synod wrote a common letter to the church of the Alexandrians, setting out what it decreed about his rebellion:

"A synodical letter written to those in Alexandria, Egypt, Pentapolis and Libya, and to the holy churches of God throughout the whole world, to clergy and peoples of right faith, from the holy synod at Nicaea. To the holy church of the Alexandrians, by the grace of God, and to the brothers in Egypt, Pentapolis and Libya, and to those under heaven, clergy and orthodox peoples: the bishops who gathered at Nicaea and formed the holy and great synod send greetings in the Lord.

By the grace of God and the God-beloved emperor Constantine, who gathered us from various provinces, the great and holy synod has been assembled at Nicaea and has determined the matters concerning the faith of the church. It was necessary for us to send these to you by letter, so that you may know what was raised and examined, and what was decided and confirmed. First of all, the matters concerning the impiety and lawlessness of Arius and those with him were examined, in the presence of our emperor Constantine.

It was decided by the unanimous vote of all that he should be anathematized, together with his impious opinion and his blasphemous words and thoughts, which he used in blaspheming the Son of God. He said that the Son is from things that did not exist, and that before he was begotten he did not exist. He said that there was a time when he was not, and that by his own free will he is capable of evil and of virtue. He called the Son of God a creature and a thing made.

The holy synod anathematized all this. It could not bear to listen even briefly to his impious opinion, his arrogance and his words. As for what has happened to him, you have either heard it already or will hear it, so that we do not seem to trample on a man who is receiving the fitting wages for his own sin.

So great was the power of his impiety that it also destroyed Theonas of Marmarica and Secundus of [Ptolemais], for they met the same end as the others. But the grace of God has delivered [Egypt] from that evil teaching, from that blasphemy, and from the persons who dared to cause division and splitting among a people who had been at peace from of old. What remained was the matter of Melitius's rashness and of those ordained by him. The synod has made a decision about this part also, and we make it known to you, beloved brothers.

The synod was moved to deal with Melitius more humanely, for by strict reckoning he deserved no pardon. It therefore decided that he should stay in his own city. He is to have no authority to appoint, to administer, or to lay on hands, and he is not to appear in any country district or city for this purpose. He is to keep only the bare name of honor.

Those who were set in office by him have been confirmed by a more mystical ordination. They are to be admitted to communion on these terms: they may keep their honor and serve, but they are to rank second to all who are in each parish and church [enrolled] under our most honored fellow-minister Alexander. These men are to have no authority to choose whom they please, to propose names, or to do anything at all without the consent of the bishop of the catholic and apostolic church, [among] those under Alexander, our most holy [brother].

But those who, by God's grace and your prayers, were found in no schism, and who are spotless in the catholic and apostolic church, have authority to choose and to name those worthy of the clergy, and in general to do everything according to the law and rule of the church.

If any of those in the church should happen to die, then those who have only just been received may advance to the honor of the deceased, provided they prove worthy and the people choose them, with the bishop of Alexandria also voting with them and sealing the choice.

This was granted to all the others. In the case of Melitius, however, the same did not seem right, because of his disorderliness from the beginning and his hasty and rash disposition. So no authority [or privilege] was to be given to him, since he is a man who could commit the same disorders again.

These are the special matters that concern Egypt and the most holy church of the Alexandrians. If anything else was laid down or decreed with our lord and most honored brother Alexander present, he will report it to you more exactly when he arrives, since he is both a leading figure and a partner in what took place.

We also bring you good news about the agreement concerning the most holy Pascha. By your prayers this part also has been set right. All the brothers in the East who formerly kept it with the Jews will from now on celebrate the same most holy feast of Pascha in agreement with the Romans, with you, and with all of us who have kept Pascha with you from ancient times.

Rejoice, then, in these successes, in the common peace, and in the cutting off of every heresy. Receive with greater honor and more love our fellow-minister Alexander, your bishop. He gladdened us by his presence, and at his age he endured so great a labor so that peace might come among you and all. Pray also for us, that what seemed good may remain firm. This has been done, as we believe, through almighty God and his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and through the Holy Spirit, to whom be glory forever. A circular letter written by Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine.

Chapter 35

It is likely, beloved, that you have already learned from other sources what was done about the faith of the church at the great council gathered at Nicaea, since rumor tends to run ahead of the true account of events. But lest the truth be reported to you differently through such hearsay, we have of necessity sent you two documents. The first is the statement of faith that we put forward. The second is the one that was issued after additions were made to our words.

Our document was read in the presence of our most God-beloved emperor, and was declared good and approved. It runs as follows. The faith set out by us is as we received it from the bishops before us, both in the

first instruction and when we received the washing. It is as we have learned from the divine Scriptures, and as we believed and taught when we served as presbyter and in the episcopate itself. So now too, believing as we do, we set our faith before you. It is this:

We believe in one God, the Father, [Almighty], the maker of all things, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God: God from God, light from light, life from life, the only-begotten Son, firstborn of all creation, begotten from the Father before all ages, through whom all things came to be. For our salvation he was made flesh, lived among human beings, suffered, rose on the third day, went up to the Father, and will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. We believe also in one Holy Spirit, truly a Holy Spirit,

just as our Lord also said when he sent out his own disciples to preach: “Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” We affirm that this is how things stand with these truths, that this is what we think, that this is what we have always held, and that we will stand firm for this faith even to death. We anathematize every godless heresy.

We testify before God the Almighty and our Lord Jesus Christ that we have always thought these things from the heart and soul, from the time we have known ourselves. We think and say them now in truth. We are able to show you by proofs, and to persuade you, that in times past also this is what we believed and preached.

When we had set out this faith, there was no room for objection. Our most God-beloved emperor was himself the first to testify that it was entirely sound in what it contained. He agreed that this was also his own conviction, and he urged everyone to give their assent, to sign the doctrines, and to agree with them, with only one word added: "of one substance" (homoousios). He also explained this word himself. He said that "of one substance" was not meant in the way of bodily experiences. It did not mean that the Son came into being from the Father by division or by any cutting off. For a nature that is immaterial, intelligent and without body cannot undergo any bodily experience; such things must be understood in divine and unspeakable terms. So our [most wise] and most devout emperor reasoned in this way. But the others, using the addition of "of one substance" as their pretext, drew up the following document. The faith dictated in the council:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father as only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father: God from God, light from light, God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with [the Father,] through whom all things came to be, both in heaven and on earth. For us human beings and for our salvation he [came down and] was made flesh, became man, suffered, was buried, and on the third day [rose again], went up into the heavens, and [will come to judge] the living and the dead. We believe also in the Holy Spirit. As for those who say, "There was a time when he was not," and "Before he was begotten he was not," and that "he came to be from things that were not," or who claim that the Son of God is from a different hypostasis or substance, or that he is created, or changeable, or subject to alteration, the apostolic and catholic Church anathematizes them.

Now when this document had been dictated by them, we did not leave unexamined how they used the phrases "from the substance of the Father" and "of one substance." So we put questions to them, and answers were drawn out from this. The [discussion] tested the meaning of what was said. It was admitted by them that "from the substance of the Father" shows that the Son is from the Father, yet not as being a part of the Father.

It seemed good to us also to agree with this meaning, since godly teaching declares that the Son is from the Father and is not a part of his substance. So we agreed to the meaning, and did not refuse even the wording, since the aim of peace lay before our eyes and we did not want to [fall away] from the right meaning.

In the same way we also accepted "begotten, not made." For they said that "made" is a term shared with the rest of the created things that came to be through the Son, and the Son has nothing [in common] with any of them. So he is not a product like the things made through him. He is of a [nature] better than any product, which the divine oracles teach was begotten from the Father, since the manner of his begetting is inexpressible and beyond the reckoning of everything that has come to be.

In this way the statement that the Son is of the same substance as the Father was also examined and established. It is not meant in the way of bodies, as with mortal creatures.

It does not mean a division of the substance, or a cutting off of part of it, or any suffering, change or alteration of the Father's power. The Father's unbegotten nature is foreign to all of these.

"Of the same substance with the Father" shows that the Son of God bears no resemblance to the created things. He is made like in every way only to the Father who begot him, and he is not from another hypostasis and substance, but from the Father. Once the term was explained in this way, it seemed right to agree with it. We also knew that some learned and distinguished bishops and writers of old had used the word "of the same substance" in their teaching about the Father and the Son.

So much, then, for the creed that was set out. We all agreed to it, and not without examination. We agreed according to the meanings that were given, which were examined in the presence of the [most wise (?)] emperor himself and confirmed by the reasonings already stated.

We also considered the anathema that they added after the creed to be harmless, because it forbids words that are not in Scripture. Almost all the confusion and disturbance of the church has come about through such words. No divinely inspired Scripture has "from things that did not exist," or "there was a time when he was not," or the other things added after these. So it did not seem reasonable to say and teach them.

We agreed to this as well, since it seemed right. For in the time before this we were not accustomed to use these expressions. Moreover, it was not thought out of place to anathematize the saying "before he was begotten he was not," since everyone agrees that he was Son of God before his birth according to the flesh.

Our most God-loving emperor himself was already arguing the same point by reasoning. He held that the Son's divine begetting was before all ages. Even before he was begotten in actuality, he was in the Father in potentiality [unbegotten (?)], since the Father is always Father, just as he is always King, and always all things in potentiality, and always the same in the same way.

We have sent you these things of necessity, beloved, to make clear the outcome of our examination and agreement. We wanted to show how reasonably we held out until the last moment, while the things written in a different way offended us. Then we accepted without contentiousness what did not grieve us, when, on examining the sense of the words, it seemed to agree with what they had set out in the creed already given. We greet you together with the brotherhood with you. We pray that you may be well in the Lord, most honored brothers. Constantine, Victor, Maximus, Augustus, to the bishops and the peoples.

Chapter 36

Arius has imitated the wicked and the impious, and it is right that he suffer the same dishonor as they. Porphyry, an enemy of godliness, composed certain lawless treatises against true religion and found a fitting reward. He became a reproach for all later time and was filled with ill repute, and his impious writings were destroyed. In the same way it now seems right that Arius and [those who share his opinion] be called Porphyrians, so that they may bear the name of those whose ways they imitate. In addition, if any writing composed by Arius is found, it is to be given to the fire. Then not only the worthless parts of his teaching, but no memorial of him at all, will be left.

I declare this beforehand: if anyone is found to have hidden a writing composed by Arius, and does not immediately bring it forward and burn it, the penalty will be death. For the one caught in this will at once undergo punishment. May God keep you, beloved brothers.

The emperor also wrote other letters against Arius and those of his opinion, in a more elaborate style, and had them posted everywhere in every city. Letter of the Emperor Constantine to the Alexandrians, against Arius and to all the orthodox.

Chapter 37

Constantine Augustus, to the catholic church of the Alexandrians and of all the orthodox. Greetings, beloved brothers. We have received complete grace from divine providence, so that, set free from all error, we may acknowledge one and the same faith.

From now on the devil is permitted nothing against us. Whatever he attempted by his evil craft has been torn up from its foundations. By God's command, the brightness of the truth has conquered the schisms, those disturbances, and, so to speak, the deadly poisons of disagreements.

So let all of us be called by one name, and let us believe that he is one. To bring this about, by the will of God I called together to the city of Nicaea most of the bishops. I myself was among them, as one of you, and being exceedingly glad to be your fellow servant, I too took up the examination of the truth.

Everything that seemed to give grounds for doubt and division was therefore tested and carefully examined. May the divine majesty forgive us, for some blasphemed in terrible and unworthy ways about the Savior, about our hope and our life. They spoke things contrary to the God-inspired Scriptures and the holy faith, and yet they confessed that they believed.

There were more than three hundred bishops, admired for their self-control and sharpness of mind, and they held one and the same faith, which by its nature is the exact faith of the divine law. Only Arius was found to have been overcome by the devil's working. He first spread this evil among you, and then among others also, with a corrupt purpose.

Let us therefore accept the faith which almighty God has given. Let us return to our beloved brothers, from whom a shameless servant of the devil separated us. Let us go to our common body and our own true members, with all [eagerness].

For this befits your sharpness of mind, your faith and your holiness: that once the error of that man, who has been shown to be an enemy of the truth, has been exposed, you return to the divine grace.

For what pleased the holy bishops is nothing other than the mind of the Son of God alone, especially since the Spirit, dwelling in the thoughts of such men and of such great stature, made God's will shine out.

So let no one doubt, let no one delay. Let all of you eagerly return to the truest [faith]. Then, when I come to you, as soon as I possibly can, I will join you in giving the thanks owed to God who sustains all things, because he has shown us the pure faith and given us what we prayed for. May God keep you, beloved brothers. A letter of the Emperor Constantine, which he sent from Nicaea to the bishops who were absent from the council.

Constantine Augustus, to the churches and to the bishops who were absent from the holy and great council at Nicaea: greetings. I have learned by experience, from the good success of public affairs, how great the grace of the divine power is. Above all else, then, I judged that this ought to be my aim: that among the most blessed congregations of the catholic church one faith, a sincere love, and a godliness of one mind toward almighty God should be preserved.

But this could not be firmly and steadily established in any other way than by all the bishops, or at least the majority, coming together and each point of our most holy religion being decided. For this reason very many beloved bishops were gathered in this city of Nicaea. I myself was present, as one of you. I would not deny that I most rejoice to be your fellow servant. Everything was examined thoroughly, until the judgment that pleases God, who sustains all things, was brought to light, in agreement and unity, so that nothing was left that could cause division or dispute about the faith.

There a question also arose about the most holy day of Easter, and it seemed good, by common judgment, that Christians everywhere should celebrate the saving feast of the most holy Easter on one day. For what could be finer for us, or more fitting, than that this feast, from which we have received the hope of truth, should be kept by everyone without fail, in one order and by a plain rule? First of all, it seemed unworthy to celebrate that most holy feast following the custom of the Jews, who have stained their hands with a lawless crime, and so, as one would expect, the impure are blind in their souls. With their custom set aside, it is possible to keep to a truer order, which we have kept from the first day of the Passion until now, and to carry out the observance of it for ages to come.

Let us therefore have nothing in common with the hateful crowd of the Jews. We have received another way from the Savior. A course is set before our most sacred religion, and a fitting law. Holding to it with one accord, let us tear ourselves away from that shameful conscience, most honored brothers.

It is truly absurd for them to boast against us, as though we were not able to keep these things without their practice. What can they think rightly, when after that murder of the Lord they have gone out of their [minds]? They are led not by any reasoning but by impulse, wherever their inborn madness drags them. So here too they fail to see the truth. They are always in error, and instead of correcting it as they should, they celebrate the Passover twice in the same year.

Why then should we follow people who admittedly hold a terrible error? We will never put up with keeping the Passover twice in one year. And even if these reasons were not before

us, your sharp minds ought always to take care that the purity of your souls does not seem, in the judgment of men, to share in any likeness with them [and their evils].

Besides this, you can also see that in so great a matter, and in a feast of such a faith, disagreement is not permitted.

Our Savior handed down to us one day of our freedom, that is, the day of his most holy Passion, and he willed that his catholic church be one. Even though its members are gathered in many different places, it is still kept warm by one Spirit, that is, by the divine will.

Let the sharp minds of your holiness consider how terrible and unseemly it is that on the same days some fast while others hold banquets. And after the days of Passover, some spend their time in feasting and relaxation while others give themselves to fasts that have been set for them. For this reason divine providence wills that this be corrected and brought to one rule, as I think everyone can see.

So this had to be corrected, in order that we have nothing in common with those murderers of their fathers and of the Lord. There is a proper order which all the churches of the western, southern and northern parts of the world keep, and which some in the eastern regions do not accept. For these reasons all judged it good for the present, and I myself promised to please your sharp minds. What is kept in the city [of Rome], and in all Italy, Africa, Spain, Britain, Egypt, Libya, all Greece, the diocese of Asia, Pontus and Cilicia, with one and the same harmonious judgment, let your own mind also gladly accept. Consider not only that the churches in the places I have named are greater in number, but also that this is what all should most devoutly desire, and what exact reckoning seems to demand: that we have no fellowship with the perjury of the Jews.

To state the main point briefly: it pleased all by common judgment that the most holy feast of Passover be celebrated on one and the same day. For it is not fitting that there be any difference in such a holy matter. It is better to follow this decision [than a day on which] there is a mixture of error and sin.

These things have been laid down by divine judgment through so many and such great holy bishops. So receive this grace gladly, as a truly divine commandment. For whatever is done in the holy councils of the bishops has its reference to the divine will. Therefore make known to all our beloved brothers what has been written above, together with the statement of the catholic faith mentioned earlier, and the observance of the most holy day of Passover. You ought to receive them and put them in order, [so that] I may come to the sight of you and of your love, which I have long desired, and on one and the same

day I may be able to celebrate the holy feast with you. In every way I will be glad with you, seeing the devil's cruelty removed by divine power through these proceedings. And while [faith], peace and harmony flourish everywhere, I will send up hymns of thanksgiving with you to God, the benefactor of all and our Savior. May God keep you, beloved brothers.

This is what he wrote to those who had been absent from the council. But those who had come together he treated kindly, with words and with gifts. He ordered many couches to be prepared and feasted them all together. The more distinguished he took as his own table companions,

and the others he divided among the other tables. He saw that some had no right eyes, because they had been gouged out, and he learned that their steadfast devotion to Christ had been the cause of their suffering. He put his lips to their wounds, believing that by the kiss he would draw a blessing from them. When the banquet ended, he gave them still other gifts.

He also gave letters to the governors who ruled the provinces. In them he ordered that in every city an annual allowance of grain be supplied to consecrated virgins, to widows, and to those dedicated to the divine service. He fixed these amounts out of generosity rather than need.

Eusebius, the son of Pamphilus, speaks of these matters and says something like this: "So the all-praised and most faithful emperor Constantine gave the holy bishops every honor and refreshed them. He gave them his final instructions to go back home, and he let them all go. They went back with great joy. From then on one mind prevailed among them all, the one agreed upon with the emperor himself, and those who had long been divided were joined together like one body."

The emperor rejoiced at this success. To the bishops who had not been present at the council he sent, with letters, a rich gift of fruit. He also commanded that money be distributed generously to all the people, both those in the countryside and those living around the cities. In this way he honored the feast of the twentieth year of his reign.

He had gathered the holy council of bishops in the sixteenth year and six months of his reign, as the account above has shown from the old narratives. In the twentieth year the bishops dissolved the council's assembly, and each went back to his own diocese, as was set out earlier. I have arranged in this church history, as far as I was able, what was judged and decided in the holy council itself. It concerned the catholic and orthodox faith, the venerable feast of the holy Pascha, the ordinances for the divine liturgy of the church, and the canons for good order in it. For the fullest assurance of those who will read this work, I will end my account here. I have decided to set out the rest of the pious zeal of the all-praised and most faithful emperor on behalf of the faith in a third book. This is for the glory of Christ, the Savior of us all, and for the clearest demonstration of the faithful emperor's piety. I thought I must add one thing here, and I did not consider it a side issue but very fitting. It is the names of the bishops who were sent by the whole body of bishops to the provinces in every land. Through them the council sent what it had decided, by synodal letters and the letters of the all-praised emperor, to all the holy churches of God under heaven. This was for the glory of God the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. List of the holy bishops through whom the holy, great and ecumenical council

at Nicaea, together with them, sent to the churches of God throughout the world what had been decided in it through them by the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 38

Hosius, bishop of Cordoba, to the holy churches of God in Rome, Spain and all Italy, and in the other nations beyond, in my region, as far as the Ocean. He went through the presbyters of Rome who were with him, Vitus and Vincentius.

Alexander of Alexandria, with Athanasius, who was then archdeacon, to the churches throughout all Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis, and the neighboring regions as far as the provinces of India.

Macarius of Jerusalem, with Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, bishop of Caesarea, to the churches in Palestine, Arabia and Phoenicia.

Eustathius of great Antioch, to the churches in Coele-Syria, all of Mesopotamia, and both Cilicias.

John the Persian, to the churches in all Persia and in Greater India.

Leontius of Caesarea in Cappadocia, the adornment of the Lord's church, to the churches in Cappadocia itself, Galatia, Pontus, Diospontus, Paphlagonia, Pontus Polemoniacus, and Lesser and Greater Armenia.

Theonas of Cyzicus, to the churches in Asia and the Hellespont, and in Lydia and Caria. He went through the bishops under him, Eutychius of Smyrna and Marinus of Troas.

Alexander of Thessalonica, through those who served under him, to the churches in First and Second Macedonia, together with all of Greece, all of Europe, both Scythias, all the churches in Illyricum, and Thessaly and Achaea.

Nunechius of Laodicea, to the churches in First and Second Phrygia.

Protogenes, the admirable bishop of the city of Sardica, to the churches in Dacia, [Calabria], Dardania, and their neighbors.

Caecilian of the city of Carthage, to the holy churches of God in all the provinces: the Africas, the Numidias, and both Mauritanias.

Pistus of Marcianopolis, to the churches in Moesia and the nations of the Athenians and the Gauls, and to the neighboring cities.

Alexander of Constantinople, who was then still a presbyter but later received the bishop's office of the church there, together with Paul, who was then still his reader and secretary, wrote to all the churches in the islands of the Cyclades.

All these holy and apostolic men carried across the decisions of the holy, great and ecumenical council of the Nicaeans to all the holy churches of God under heaven, and handed them on everywhere on earth, just as the account has now shown.

Book 3

Chapter 1

The account has set out for us in order the first and second books of the church history. It began from the first years of the reign of the Christ-bearing and victorious emperor Constantine. It passed through everything in between, down to the full conclusion of the business of the holy council of the Nicaeans, and presented it as a picture of what happened. It also described the siege that the God-hating tyrants stirred up against the churches of the Lord, and the utterly shameful end of those same impious tyrants.

It told how Christ, the bridegroom of the church, armed his worthy servant Constantine with the weapons of his precious cross and raised him up against these impious men.

It told how Christ granted him trophies of victory over those very tyrants, striking them all down, whole families together, under the feet of the most God-beloved Constantine. Through them he gave deep peace from above to his churches throughout the whole world.

It also told of the scheme that afterward was stirred up again against the church by the enemy demon, who hates what is good, through the thoroughly polluted Arius.

It told how, on account of him and the impious blasphemies he uttered against the Son of God, the holy, great and ecumenical council in Nicaea took place, by God's command, through his servant, the most God-beloved emperor Constantine. And it told what was done in that council

by the Holy Spirit, through the holy bishops gathered there, three hundred in number and orthodox, on behalf of the apostolic and orthodox faith. By the grace of Christ our God, and as far as his power allowed, the account has handed this on to us plainly.

From here I will go on to the narrative of the emperor's devotion, and how he never ceased his concern for the churches of God.

Chapter 2

On the emperor's unrelenting zeal for the churches. His zeal for Christianity was great and beyond words: he wanted to bring everyone, even those outside, to the true knowledge of the living God. He wrote to all the peoples under Roman rule, urging them to leave their former deception and exhorting them to turn themselves to the teaching of our God and Savior. He called on them all to come to this truth, acting with a purpose more apostolic than royal.

He also stirred up the bishops in each city to build churches. He did not urge them by letters alone; he also gave money generously and supplied all the costs of the building. The letter he wrote shows this, and it runs as follows. Letter of the emperor Constantine to Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, about the building of churches.

Chapter 3

Constantine, victor, greatest, Augustus, to Eusebius. Until the present time, while that unholy purpose was persecuting the servants of God our Savior, I have been fully persuaded, dearest brother, that the buildings of all the churches had either been ruined through neglect, or, out of fear of [the injustice that prevailed], had been made smaller than they deserved to be.

But now that freedom has been given back, and that dragon has been driven out from the administration of public affairs by the providence of God, who works all things, and by our service, I believe the power of God has become clear to all. I believe also that those who fell into fear, unbelief, or some sins will recognize the God who truly is, and will come to the true and right faith and to an ordered way of life.

So, for all the churches that you yourself lead, or that you know other bishops, presbyters or deacons to be leading in their own places, remind them to be diligent about the work of building the churches. Let them either repair the existing ones, or enlarge them, or, wherever the need requires, build new ones.

You yourself, and through you the others, shall ask for what is needed from the governors and the provincial officials. For they have been instructed to serve with all diligence whatever your holiness says. May God keep you, beloved brother.

These things, then, he wrote about the building of churches, both to Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, and to the bishops presiding in each province.

It is easy to learn from the letter itself what he wrote to the same Eusebius of Palestine about the making of the sacred books. Letter of the Emperor Constantine concerning the making of the sacred books.

Chapter 4

"Constantine, Victor, Maximus, Augustus, to Eusebius the bishop. In the city that bears our name, with the help of God's providence, a very great number of people have given themselves to the most holy church of Christ. Everything there is growing greatly, so it seems to us very fitting that more churches also be built in it.

So receive most eagerly what has seemed good to our purpose. It seemed right to make this known to your wisdom: that you order fifty volumes on parchment to be written. They are to be easy to read and convenient to carry for use, and they are to be written by skilled copyists who know their craft precisely. They should be copies of the divine Scriptures especially, whose preparation and use you know to be necessary for the reason and order of the church.

Letters have been sent from our Clemency to the diocesan treasury official, that he take care to supply everything needed for their preparation.

So that the volumes may be made as quickly as possible, this will be a task for your diligence. By the authority of our letter you are also entitled to take the use of two public carriages for transporting them.

In this way the finely written volumes can most easily be brought to our sight. One of the deacons of your church is to carry this out, and when he comes to us he will experience our kindness. God keep you, brother."

These things are enough to prove, or rather to teach plainly, how the all-praised emperor, as we have said above, turned all his zeal toward divine matters.

I will add to what has been said what he accomplished concerning the Saviour's tomb. He learned that those frenzied people, revelling in the worship of idols, had buried the Lord's own tomb. They were determined to hand the memory of human salvation over to oblivion, and on top of the tomb they built a house for the licentious demon Aphrodite. The most faithful emperor ordered that abominable building to be torn down as quickly as possible. He ordered that the soil, defiled by unclean sacrifices, be carried out and thrown far away from the city. Then he commanded that a temple of our Saviour God be built, very great and very beautiful. The letter of the most God-beloved emperor, which he sent to the head

of that church (I mean the church in Jerusalem), makes this clearer. The bishop then was Macarius, whom we mentioned before. He had taken part in the great council at Nicaea, and together with the others he put out the flame of Arius's blasphemy. Letter of Constantine the pious emperor to the <bishop> of Jerusalem concerning the Saviour's tomb.

Chapter 5

"Constantine, Victor, Maximus, Augustus, to Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem. So great is the grace of our Saviour that no [eloquence] seems to me worthy of the present wonder. That the [sign] of that most holy tomb, hidden under the earth long ago for so many cycles of years, could not stay hidden, until the [tyranny] of the common enemy of us all was removed by the grace of our God. Christ gave his servants freedom from that tyranny, and he made the [sign] of that most holy place shine out, so that it truly surpasses all astonishment.

For if all who are thought to be wise throughout the whole world were to gather into one place and wished to say something worthy of this matter, they would not be able to compete even in the smallest degree. The faith in this [event] surpasses every human nature that is capable of reasoning, as far as heavenly things are established as higher than human things.

For this reason this is always my first and only aim: that just as the faith of the truth shows itself daily by wonders, so the [minds] of all of us may become more earnest, in self-control and eagerness, concerning the holy law.

Therefore, since I think this is plain to all, I especially want you to be persuaded of this: that I care more than for anything else to adorn with beautiful buildings that sacred place. By God's command I ordered it to be [freed] from the error of the idol, which lay on it like a heavy burden. It was holy from the beginning by God's judgment, and it has been shown [still more holy], since it brought to light the faith in the saving Passion."

It is therefore fitting that your good judgment arrange everything and make provision for each need, so that not only the basilica of this most holy place becomes better than any elsewhere, but also that the other buildings are made so fine that all the most beautiful buildings in every city are surpassed by the splendor of this one.

As for raising the walls and finishing them with fine workmanship, know that we have entrusted the care of it to our friend Dracilianus, who administers parts of the most illustrious provinces, and to the governor of the province. For my piety has commanded that craftsmen, laborers, and everything else connected with the building, as soon as they learn from your good judgment what is needed, be sent at once by their care.

As for the columns or the marbles, write to us as soon as possible about whichever you judge most useful, once you have looked the matter over. Then, when we learn from your letter how many are needed and of what kind, they can be brought from everywhere to adorn that house. For it is right that the most wonderful place in the world be adorned as it deserves.

I also want to learn from you whether you think the vaulted ceiling of the basilica of that house should be coffered [or "lacunar" work] or made with some other, more brilliant workmanship. For if it is to be coffered, the rest can be adorned with gold. Let your good judgment make known to the judges mentioned above, as quickly as possible, how many workmen, craftsmen and what expenses are needed. Hasten to report these to me at once, not only about the marbles and columns, but also about the coffered ceilings, if you decide on that. May God keep you, beloved brother. On the journey of the blessed Helena to Jerusalem.

Chapter 6

No one else served this letter's purpose but the emperor's own mother. She was the mother of a noble son, praised by all the pious, and she bore this great light for the world. From his childhood she gave him the food of godliness. For she raised him in the divine laws of piety toward Christ no less than his father did, her own husband Constantius.

She endured the labors of the journey and gave no thought to the troubles of old age. For she undertook this journey abroad shortly before her death; she reached the end of this life at about eighty years of age. On the finding of the holy cross of Christ.

Chapter 7

So, longing for it and burning in her heart like fire to reach the holy places, to see where the Savior suffered and to search for the precious wood of the cross of Christ, she came to Jerusalem.

When she saw the place that had received the sufferings for the salvation of all, she at once ordered that foul temple to be torn down to its foundations and the defiled rubble to be thrown far away. When the hidden place was made plain, three buried crosses were seen beside the Lord's tomb.

All believed without doubt that one of these was the cross of our Lord and Savior, and that the other two were those of the robbers nailed up with him. But they did not know which one had touched that holy body of the Lord and received the stream of his precious blood.

But that very wise and truly godly Macarius, the head of that church, solved the difficulty in this way. There was a very prominent woman of that city who was held by a long illness and was close to death. Macarius considered bringing the wooden crosses to her, and he understood the power of the saving cross, after he prayed to God in this way:

He knelt by the woman's bed and cried out in a loud voice, with the most God-loving Helena and many people with him: "You, Lord God Almighty, who through your child Jesus Christ worked salvation for the human race on the wood of the cross, who even now, at the end of the times, inspired your servant [Helena] together with her son, your servant, to seek the blessed wood on which Christ, the Savior of all people, especially believers, was nailed in the flesh — show us, Lord, which of these three pieces of wood is the cross of Christ. By being touched through our hands to this sick and half-dead woman, let it lead her by the hand to health and to rising up." And when he had finished praying,

He brought the first piece of wood and laid it on the sick woman, but it did her no good. Then he brought the second, and it too proved useless. But when he stretched out his hand to the third and again brought the wood close to the sick woman, a very great miracle happened. All at once the half-dead woman opened her eyes. Then, when the precious cross of the Lord was laid upon her, she leaped up at once and stood on her feet. She gave glory to God, made far stronger than she had ever been. She went all around the house, and in her joy, together

with her whole household, she announced the good news of the power of the divine cross in a loud voice.

In this way the most devout queen, the mother of the renowned and God-beloved emperor Constantine, gave sincere attention to the matter and was fully convinced about the Savior's tomb and the precious cross of Christ. At once, in that very place, she built a house of prayer, following the commands of her most devout son Constantine. She named it a martyrion, and she kept advancing more and more in faith.

So, having obtained what she longed for, she then gave herself without hesitation to the search for the nails with which the Lord's body had been fastened to the wood of the cross. When she found them, she had some of them worked into a royal helmet, taking thought for her son's head, so that it might turn aside the missiles of his enemies. She sent this helmet to her son as a divine gift. The rest of the nails she had forged and mixed into the bridle of the emperor's horse. She did this to secure the emperor's safety, and so she brought an old prophecy to its fulfillment. For long before, the prophet Zechariah had cried out: "And what is on the bridle shall be holy to the Lord Almighty."

A portion of the saving cross she set aside for the royal palace. The rest she placed in a case made of silver and gave to the bishop of that city, the divine Macarius, whom we mentioned above. She charged him to guard these memorials of salvation for later generations.

She gathered craftsmen in every kind of material from all quarters. Together with Macarius, the head of the church there, and following the orders of her son the emperor Constantine, she built those very great and splendid churches in a marvelous way. I judged it superfluous to include their beauty and size in this writing, since practically all lovers of Christ from everywhere under heaven flock there and see for themselves the costliness of the works.

That famous and admirable queen, the mother of the most faithful emperor, also did something else worth remembering. She gathered all the women who practiced virginity throughout their lives and had them recline on many couches. Then she herself fulfilled the task of a maidservant. She waited on them, set dishes before them, handed them cups, poured the wine, carried the pitcher over the basin, and poured water over their hands.

After doing these and similar things, she returned to her son rejoicing. Not long afterward, in perfect cheerfulness, she passed over to the life that knows no destruction. She had given her son many instructions about a godly manner of life and crowned him with parting blessings. After her death she received such honor as was fitting for one who had served the God of all so carefully and so warmly.

She left behind a daughter named Constantia, who had become the wife of the impious Licinius.

This much, then, I have set down in this historical writing about the most blessed, most devout and God-beloved Helena, a few things out of her many great virtues, done in God our Savior. Concerning the forum of the emperor Constantine.

Chapter 8

But I will turn my account again to the divine zeal of her son Constantine, the Christ-bearing emperor. He so far surpassed the zeal for Christ's salvation shown by his father and mother that he took the symbol of the saving cross, the cross of the Lord Christ's suffering in the flesh, which his mother had brought him. He believed that the city named after him would always be preserved if that symbol were kept in it. So he hid it, placing it inside his own statue in the place called the Agora, or forum of Constantine, which stands on the great porphyry column. Concerning Frumentius and Aedesius and those in inner India.

Chapter 9

So the emperor, most beloved of God, was bound to God by such devotion and faith, and he brought very many other barbarian nations into peace with himself. God subdued to him these peoples, who had long been in conflict with the Romans. For the more he humbled himself before God in reverence, the more, indeed far more, God set everything right for him.

At that time many additions were being made to the apostolic preaching. Matthew had preached to the Parthians, Bartholomew to the Ethiopians, and Thomas to the Indians of Greater India. But the message about Christ was not yet known to the Indians farther away than the Parthians, nor to some of the nations bordering on them.

In imitation of a certain philosopher, Metrodorus, who had travelled through almost all the nations for the sake of learning, a man of Tyre named Meropius, a distinguished philosopher, undertook the same kind of journey, also for the sake of learning. He took with him two boys who were related by blood. They were thoroughly trained in every kind of learning and eager for knowledge of every kind, and they had urged the philosopher Meropius to take them along with him. One was named Frumentius and the other Edesius.

Now it was the custom and law among the barbarians there to kill any Romans from our side who were found among them whenever the Romans did not keep to the treaty of peace with them. It happened that the treaties between the two sides had been completely broken at the very time when Meropius was exploring inner India with Frumentius and Edesius.

They were hard pressed to get necessary supplies, above all water. So they left the country and sailed by sea, and put in at harbors in those innermost regions, since they could not go farther, being held back by contrary winds. They remained there unnoticed for some days, supplying their bodily needs from the land there.

One day, while the boys were sitting in a shady spot busily studying their readings, the barbarians came upon them and slaughtered everyone along with Meropius, except the two boys, Frumentius and Edesius. When the barbarians saw them they took pity on them because they were boys, and brought them as a gift to their own king. The king soon perceived Frumentius' natural ability and made him steward over the household expenses; Edesius he appointed as his cupbearer.

While they were in this position and advancing day by day, it happened that the king departed from human life. By the will of the great king of the Indians he left behind a very young son as successor to his kingdom.

So Frumentius and his companion became, in turn, guardians of the whole kingdom for the child. The boy's mother had put them in charge of everything because of their honest character and their experience of the affairs of life. For besides natural ability they had knowledge, having been well trained especially through education and life abroad, which above all gives even the young the steadiness of older men.

Since they were also devout, outstanding in faith toward God, and surpassing most people in every kindness, they traveled over land and sea managing the affairs of the child's kingdom. They gave orders to the neighboring peoples to bring to them any Romans who were staying as strangers among them, and they took care to sow among the Indians the knowledge of God.

For they found the times favorable to this. They searched out some of these Romans and urged them to follow Roman customs: to build places of prayer and houses of the church for the gathering of those who were receiving the knowledge of God, even though they could not set up altars, since they did not have the authority of the priesthood.

From this, then, an occasion for the knowledge of God arose among the Indians farther inland, as Frumentius earnestly approached them with kind deeds and with persuasive, gentle encouragement.

When the royal child whose guardianship of the kingdom they held had grown to manhood and had advanced to great maturity, they asked him as a favor to grant them a return to their own homes. The king and his mother pleaded with them with many entreaties, kept hold of them, and would not let them go. Frumentius said that they were deeply grieved at this, and so they forced the king and his mother to agree to release them. They consented with the greatest distress, since they did not wish to oppose Frumentius, whom they regarded as their lord.

Having handed over to the boy and his mother all the affairs of the kingdom that had been entrusted to them, they left India with great honor and made their journey home.

Then Edesius went to Tyre, but Frumentius came to Alexandria. He reasoned that it would be fitting not to overlook the divine work that had been done among the barbarians. He went to Athanasius, bishop of the church of the Alexandrians (for Athanasius then held the helm of the high priesthood there). Frumentius explained to him each thing that had happened and reminded him that bishops should be sent to them.

Then the great Athanasius listened very wisely and carefully to what was said, and he told Frumentius, "Where shall we find another man like you, brother, in whom is the Spirit of God, who can give these instructions rightly and guide the churches there as well as

possible?" He ordained him bishop and ordered him to go back to the Indians. There he was to consecrate the churches and care for the people.

After his ordination, abundant grace from God was added to the man, and he sent out apostolic rays. He reached the innermost India mentioned above and confirmed the gospel of Christ with signs and powers. He drew great crowds of Indians to the true faith of Christ, and they received the divine word through him in complete sincerity. As a result, churches and ordinations increased greatly among those nations.

Aedesius told us these things when he was living in Tyre. He became a presbyter of the church there and stayed in it until the end of his life. Concerning the Iberians and the Lazi, and the holy captive woman among them.

Chapter 10

At about the same time the Iberians and the Lazi, who live next to the land of Pontus, received the word of God. They had not believed in it before. The cause of this very great good was a woman who was a captive among them. She lived a life of the highest standard, through self-control and other good works, and she amazed them all.

They asked her the reason for such strict discipline. That holy woman answered in simplicity, “Because of Christ, the Son of God.” Even so, this did not bring anyone to faith in the true worship. They only marveled at the woman, and as they watched her unfamiliar way of life they speculated about it in many ways.

It was their custom, when they had an infant who had fallen sick, to carry the child around to all the local people, one after another, to get help. So it happened that a woman going about in this way came also to the captive.

The captive spoke to the woman standing at the door with her child. She said, “I cannot help the child at all. But I know that Christ, of whom I have often told you, is able both to raise the dead and to give healing to those who have been given up on.” The child’s mother begged the captive. Then the captive was moved by pity for the woman in need. She wrapped the infant in her own sackcloth, prayed to God, and gave the child back to its mother healthy.

What happened spread to many people and reached the queen, who was lying in bed in the grip of a most severe illness. She had been ill for a long time, and her condition from the terrible disease that had struck her was now beyond cure. So she sent members of her household and asked the captive to come to her. But the captive, out of fear and reverence, refused to go to the queen, because she knew the slippery danger that creeps in with human praise.

The queen understood that she was holding firmly to her refusal to come, so she ordered that she herself be carried to her on her little bed. The blessed captive was moved to shame by the queen’s humility. In the same way she wrapped the queen in the sackcloth, knelt, and offered prayers to God with her usual [devotion] to Christ. Then she sent the queen home healthy, rejoicing and walking on her own feet. This was a new and strange wonder to the people of that place. The queen confessed the grace of Christ, as she had been taught by the captive woman, and as she went she cried out plainly, “Glory to you, Christ, Lord of

the captive. To you be thanks and all honor, to you, [Savior] of us who have been counted worthy to believe in you."

The queen also told her husband everything. She urged him to be willing to repay the captive with money, as a fitting return for the kindness shown to his wife.

But the queen said to him, "This captive, O king, does not crave silver, and she does not pursue gold. The worthy gift she asks of us is only this: that we believe that Christ is the Son of God the Most High. For a woman whose whole life is fasting and self-control, treasures of gold and silver are superfluous. I have tested this pious woman myself. I am telling you the truth, O king. But if you care at all about my salvation, let us repay the woman in a new way, by receiving her Christ as the one we worship."

The king, for the time being, was rather reluctant. Though his wife reminded him many times, he kept putting it off, wearing down her request with good news of other things, and he said he was hoping for a suitable moment that would serve his purpose in this matter. And this did happen, by the providence of God, who wants "all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

For it happened that the king was occupied with hunting in a thick, very deep forest, on a clear day, when an unexpected night overtook him. Suddenly, at midday, a very deep darkness poured over the whole forest where the king was. His companions, who had been scattered here and there in the hunt, were found to be in the same state. A great fear gripped the king, and he could think of no way to escape the danger.

All his companions were suffering the same helplessness. Each of those trying to reach him was brought to a standstill, as if fixed like a pillar, in the place where the darkness found him; it did not let them go forward to encourage one another. Then the king remembered his wife and the captive woman who had healed her of an incurable illness, and he cried out: "Christ, Lord of the captive woman, stand by me now, so that I may escape the trouble that lies on me. For in my wife I have the clearest proof of your divine power." As soon as he finished his prayer, the darkness was removed at once, and the light of day poured over the whole forest, brighter than before, where they had been held fast.

When they came home safe, they found the king immediately ordering the captive woman to be brought to him, promising that he would worship no other god but Jesus Christ, whom the woman revered.

So the captive woman came and became the king's teacher, setting before him the whole pattern of the faith. He rejoiced, and was not ashamed to learn godliness from a humble woman. On the contrary, he took pride in her, and ordered her to be brought into the midst of the crowd, and he spoke openly about her: "My wife escaped death through this woman's prayer, by the grace of Christ, the King of all." He urged his subjects, if they wanted to be saved, to share his mind and to choose the worship of Christ, despising the idols.

When he learned from the holy woman that churches must be founded for the worship of Christ, he at once set about the work with zeal. They built up the outer walls of the house, and what remained was to set up the columns in the middle of the house, to divide the men and women who would gather there. God wished to set firm conviction in the king and in all his subjects concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ his Son, preached by the captive woman. So he made the third column, which had been raised into the middle but was still slanting, fail to stand upright to the end as the other two had. The craftsmen labored long. They broke the ropes and tore apart all their machinery, and then retreated and fled, afraid that if they were left behind they would be killed under the column on the ground. For the column stood hanging in the air, slanting, since none of the craftsmen could think of any of the usual means of help.

The captive woman heard this. Gripped by great fear that the crowd might turn back again to the idols, she went to the place as the sun was setting, knelt before God, and until morning raised the column by prayer. It was not standing on its base, but hung upright above the base by about one cubit. God was arranging that the captive woman should not go home until the crowd arrived, so that they might know her faith in the true God whom she proclaimed.

So at dawn they came with the king, and when they saw so great a column hanging upright, they were astonished. Then, as the captive woman was made plain to all because of what had happened, she rose from her prayer, and immediately the column was set down on its own base, as if craftsmen had fitted it there as well as could be, and it had a firmness far more fitting than the columns before it and after it.

From this it came about that the rest of the crowd also gathered and agreed with the king's faith, marveling at Christ. For that holy captive woman had testified this to them. She had feared the simplicity of the crowd, that, pricked by the superstition of their fathers, they might transfer the reverence due to Christ onto her, or form some opinion of her that did not lead toward true godliness.

For this reason she had urged them to share in the prayer when she caused the raised column to be fitted into its place. In this way she hid her own reputation, and she told them that the working of Christ the Savior passes to all people who reverence him, in deeds that are beyond human power.

After the church was finished, the captive woman advised the king and the queen to send to the most God-beloved emperor Constantine, who had been brought up in godliness, and to ask him to send someone to consecrate the church. Then the ambassadors sent by the king and by the whole people of the Iberians reached Constantinople. They reported to the emperor Constantine that the faith of Christ had been firmly established in their land, and they asked him to give them a bishop, both to consecrate and to set in order the churches among them.

The pious and Christ-loving emperor Constantine received them kindly and, rejoicing in the Lord, granted their request. He urged Alexander, bishop of Constantinople, to ordain a bishop for the Iberians. At the same time he saw that it was the will of God, who was bringing foreign peoples under his rule in this way.

Our guide for these matters was the most trustworthy Bakkourios, a most devout man and a most distinguished member of the royal family of the Iberians. He became a military governor, and when he led a campaign in the highlands of Palestine against the barbarian Saracens, he won a most complete victory over them.

But let us return to the history we have in hand regarding the emperor. Constantine was very careful about Christianity and burned with an apostolic longing for Christ. He built still other churches in various cities. One he built at the place called the oak of Mamre, under which the sacred writings tell us that angels were entertained by Abraham.

For the emperor Constantine, excellent in everything and most beloved of God, learned that an altar had been set up under that oak and that Greek sacrifices were being offered on it. He blamed Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, in a letter, because he had overlooked such an abomination. He ordered the altar overturned and a church of the living God built beside the oak.

Again, in Heliopolis in Phoenicia, he learned that the people lived impiously and followed a shameful way of life. By a solemn law he put an end to their shameful living. He built a church in that city, had a bishop ordained, and ordered a sacred clergy to be consecrated with him in that church. In this way he made the evils of the people of Heliopolis more moderate. Moreover, he selected Christian civil officials, well attested for their upright life, and set them over the city and all its surrounding region. He threatened them with death unless they changed as quickly as possible from the shameful conduct they had formerly practiced and from their superstitious devotion to abominable idols.

He also overturned the [rite] of unspeakable [practices] of Aphrodite at Aphaca, and he drove out the Pythonic demon in Cilicia, ordering the temple in which it lurked to be torn down from its foundations. Such good deeds the most faithful emperor Constantine did everywhere on earth.

I will set beside this another proof, in this church history, of the same most God-beloved emperor Constantine's faith in the God of all. So great was his devotion and zeal for Christ that, thinking of the Christians in Persia, he planned to cross over to them. He ordered a tent of embroidered linen to be made, in the form of a church, as Moses also did in the wilderness, and to be carried with him on the road. In this way he would have a fitting place of prayer in the desert places, where he could send up his prayers to God.

But the journey to Persia did not turn out for him then as he intended, since he was providing for the peace of the churches of God. Yet the king of that country, that is, of the Persians, was taking thought for those under him who were nurtured in godliness. He learned that

they were being harassed by the impious there, and that this very king of theirs, enslaved by error, was devising all kinds of plots against them. His name was Sabor. Constantine wrote to him, urging him to worship God rightly and asking that the godly, the Christians, receive honor. The letter itself will show the zeal of the Christ-loving emperor. A letter of the emperor Constantine to Sabor, king of the Persians, about care for the people of God.

Chapter 11

Because I hold to the one faith, I share in the light of truth. Guided by the light of truth, I come to know the divine faith. And so, as the facts confirm, I recognize the most holy [religion] as the teacher of the knowledge of the most holy [God], and I confess that I hold to this worship. With the power of this my God as my ally, [I have set out] from the ends of the ocean and [brought] the whole inhabited world, step by step, [toward] salvation. The nations had been enslaved under so many tyrants and worn down by daily misfortunes, and had faded away. Now they receive vindication for the wrongs done to all, and as if kindled afresh by some great [experience], they boast and exult and keep festal celebrations to God.

This is the God whom I honor. My army, dedicated to him, carries his sign on its shoulders, and goes wherever [the word of the cause?] calls it. From those very campaigns, with splendid trophies, I at once [give thanks for] his favor, and with a pure and unmixed mind I make this God shine forth [in praise] in [all that befalls me].

I call upon this God on bended knee. I shun all abominable blood and foul, loathsome odors, and I turn away from every [allurement] by which the utterly defiled and unlawful error has polluted many of the nations and whole peoples, and cast them down, handing them over to the lowest places.

For God, taking thought for human beings out of his own love for humanity, brought into the open the things we need. But these things turn out badly when each person follows his own desire. God asks only for a pure mind and a spotless soul in human beings, weighing in the balance the deeds of virtue and piety. For he is pleased with works of gentleness and mildness, and he loves them. He hates the troublemakers, and he loves faith.

He punishes unbelief. Every power joined with arrogance he condemns and throws down. He punishes the proud, and those puffed up with conceit he removes from their foundations. He also values just kingship highly, and strengthens it with his help, and he preserves the royal understanding in peace.

Therefore, brother, I rejoice greatly and exult, confessing this God as the source and savior of all. Many of those [who ruled] here were led astray by mad errors and attempted [to attack him]. But such an avenger destroyed them all in the end, so that the whole human

race after them regards their misfortunes as no other example than these, for those who [do] the same things.

I count that man as one of these. Divine justice, like a thunderbolt, drove him out from here and handed him over to your regions, and so made the trophy among you, set up for his shame, much talked about. But it seems to have turned out for good that, even in our own age, the punishment of such men has been shown so openly.

For I myself saw the ends of those who recently threw into confusion, with unlawful orders, the people dedicated to God. Great thanks are due to God, because by his perfect providence the whole human race that keeps his divine law has had peace restored to it, and rejoices and exults.

From this we ourselves are also persuaded that all things are in the best and safest state for us when [all] are gathered through the pure, approved worship of these people, I mean the people of God, out of agreement about the divine. [This text is unclear.]

[As for] this list of my fellow servants, I mean the Christians (for on their behalf all my [concern lies]), how glad do you think I am to hear [of them], when even the strongest of Persia [flourish] to the greatest extent, just as I wish? So may you also, as is fitting, agree to grant the best to them, and likewise the best, whatever [is best] for you and for them.

For in this way you will have the master and God of all gentle, gracious and kindly. Therefore, since you are so great, I entrust to you, because you are distinguished, the governing of these people, I mean of those among them who [practice] the pious worship of God. Love them, as befits your own kindness to humanity. For through faith you will give boundless favor both to yourself and to us.

Such was the care that Constantine, best of men in all things, took for those adorned with piety toward Christ. He looked after not only his own subjects, but also, as far as he could, those who lived under other scepters. For this reason he himself also enjoyed the divine care from above. He held the reins of everyone in the Roman world, and even of the barbarians, and he had them well disposed toward him, obeying gladly. For the barbarians too, [having come ...], obeyed with pleasure.

In fact the barbarians too, whether willingly or held down by fear of war, now served him, since they feared the God who stood with him. Everywhere trophies were set up, and the emperor was shown to be victorious over all. Many others have written about these things with greater precision, praising them to the glory of the God of all. Let us return to the sequence of the history before us. Concerning Constantia, the sister of the all-praised Emperor Constantine, and the Arian presbyter whom she introduced into the palace.

Chapter 12

The most faithful Emperor Constantine, then, was providing for the peace of the churches, and, as we have often said, he carried the concerns of these churches in his soul, in keeping with the apostle. But those who were called priests in appearance only, all who had accepted the plague of Arius, could not bear to keep quiet. They had taken up an implacable war against the truth, and they were devising all kinds of schemes against the right faith.

[The Greek of this section is badly damaged. It speaks of one who shared in the blasphemy of Arius, a flattering "choice offering," named Eutocius.]

At first he corrupted some of Constantia's attendants, and soon he came into the sight of Constantia herself. He enjoyed great freedom of speech with her and great care from her, through their frequent meetings. So his conversation with her about Arius made progress.

Then, having gained confidence, he swept her away with his deceitful words. He said that envy alone had brought about what was done against Arius. By these and similar deceitful words he persuaded her that Arius thought and taught the very same things as Alexander and the bishops throughout the world.

Constantia believed what he told her. She was especially swayed when she heard from him that Arius was of one mind with Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, and that Pope Alexander was opposing him for nothing, out of jealousy over his good fortune with the many. So, having received the words of the deceit of this Arian presbyter, Constantia was pleased with what he said. She judged that presbyter worthy of greater honor and kept him among her closest associates.

Not long afterward she fell into a most severe illness, and in it she died. The most devout Emperor Constantine learned of it and came eagerly to visit her. After the death of her impious husband, and after the departure of their mother, the God-beloved and celebrated Helena, to the life without grief, this all-praised and most faithful emperor had thought her worthy of every care. He had not allowed her to experience the pains of widowhood or of being orphaned. For this reason, even at her death, whether absent or present, he gave her the attention that suited her.

After a long conversation between the emperor and Constantia, she spoke to him, confident as with a true brother: "Grant me one favor, all-praised emperor, as I depart to God." The emperor said to her, "What is it?" Constantia said to him, "I beg you, emperor, to command that Arius be released from exile, and to quell the misfortune that has risen against him from a faction. Do not, even in a small way, put a stain of innocent blood on your pious reign."

Emperor Constantine accepted his sister's request. He supposed that she spoke to him out of sisterly affection and had not been led astray by the Arian presbyter. He thought his sister a safe adviser.

For the time being he forbade Arius to set foot in Alexandria and Egypt. But because of the appeal of his sister Constantia, he ordered that Arius be released from exile at once. Constantia also entrusted to him that presbyter who was on Arius's side. She urged the emperor to trust him and to take pleasure in what he said: "Since I have proven his soundness, most devout emperor, I entrust him to you."

So Constantia departed from human life. That presbyter, however, slipped into the palace. The gentle and God-beloved emperor had promised Constantia to do this, and afterward he fulfilled his promise. He ordered the presbyter to come to him often, and gave him a great deal of freedom of speech. The man became one of the closest associates of Constantine, the Christ-bearing emperor.

When Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea, who were still living in exile, heard this, they took courage. They wrote a document of supposed repentance and sent it to the most prominent of the bishops, asking to be recalled from exile. They declared, in word and not in manner, as before, that they accepted and held the faith of Nicaea.

The bishops who had received the book of their feigned repentance showed them kindness. At their request, [they] were recalled from exile by royal command. They took back the churches from which they had been driven out, and pushed aside the bishops who had been ordained in their place: Eusebius pushed out Amphion, and Theognius pushed out Chrestus.

It would be good to include in this account a copy of the book of their counterfeit repentance itself. It reads as follows. The book of feigned repentance of Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognius of Nicaea:

Chapter 13

"We were already condemned by your holiness, [and were willing] to bear in silence what your holy judgment had decided. But since by our silence we give ground against ourselves, we therefore report to your holiness that we too joined your council. We examined the meaning of the word 'of one substance' and gave ourselves wholly to peace, in no way [text lost] ...

... [text lost] ... Having reminded you, for the safety of the churches, of whatever ran through our reasoning, and having given assurance and [text lost] to those who were to be persuaded through us, we signed [the creed]. But we did not sign the anathema. We did not refuse it because we found fault with [the creed], God forbid. We refused because we did not believe that the man who was accused was such a man. We were fully convinced of this by what he had already told us, both in his letters and in face-to-face conversations, that he was not such a man.

But if your holy [council] was persuaded, we do not oppose it. We agree with what you have decided, and we give assurance of that. By this letter we give our consent. It is not the exile that we bear heavily, but we lament the suspicion of [heresy].

For if you would now deign to take us back into your presence, you would find us of one mind with you in everything, following what you have decided. After all, it seemed good to your holiness that the very man who was charged with the heresy should be treated kindly by our [most pious] emperor and be counted worthy of his humane mercy. You pleaded for him to be freed from exile. How much more is it right that those who are blameless should be counted worthy of [release] from exile and of returning to your holiness.

For it would be out of place, now that the man who seems guilty has been set free, for us to go on giving evidence against ourselves by our silence, as we said before. So we beg you, as befits your Christ-loving holiness, to deign to remind our [most pious] emperor about this. Place our petitions in his hands, and decide about us what is fitting for you to decide, most holy ones."

This is the book of recantation of the aforesaid Eusebius and Theognius. From their own words it is clear that they signed the creed laid down at Nicaea by the holy council there with

the hand only and not by intention, as has already been shown. But they were unwilling to vote with the holy council for the deposition of Arius and the anathema against him.

Nevertheless, through the zeal of the bishops who had received their petitions, they were released from exile. They went back to their former dioceses, as I said above, and, so to speak, only looked at them. Then with the greatest haste they hurried to the imperial camp. They got ahead to Constantinople and took courage to rush into the palace. They trusted in the patronage of that presbyter whom Constantia, as his own sister, had entrusted to the most God-loving Constantine, and whom the emperor honored with great attention and respect.

But even this man did not dare, as I said before, to reveal the Arian heresy that lay hidden inside him. He saw how fervent the emperor's soul was toward the things of God, and how strict his care for the true faith.

He did, however, bring Eusebius and Theognius in to the emperor. He urged them to hide for the present the sickness of the impious heresy of Arius. He pleaded with the emperor at length on their behalf, that they might be granted freedom of speech, especially Eusebius. He testified that they held what had been said in the council.

So the man who was truly an enemy of the truth spoke "the truth." For the very things they had muttered against there with slander, these the flatterer said they believed. The emperor was good and noble by nature. He had great reverence for the clergy, and the heart that bore no grudges, like that of the great king and prophet David. He could not bear even to take into his mind the plots that Eusebius had dared to make against him under the impious Licinius. So he received them kindly and respectfully, as priests of God. He honored them greatly, welcomed them warmly, and commanded them to come to him more often.

As they advanced day by day in boldness before Constantine, the emperor who was best in everything, they pressed that presbyter, the one on Arius's side, to begin appealing to the emperor on Arius's behalf. They wanted him to ask the emperor to grant Arius [his sight; the text reads "his serpents"], since Arius was able to stand beside him and show that he held the views of the saints at Nicaea.

The presbyter gave way to the entreaties of Eusebius and Theognius and began to speak to the emperor on Arius's behalf. Most of what he said was in the name of the men just mentioned. He said that Arius claimed to agree with everything decided at the council and to be satisfied with the faith proclaimed there. But the presbyter's mild words about Arius seemed strange to the emperor.

He did this for very many days, sometimes in private and sometimes with Eusebius of Nicomedia present. The emperor sent for him quite often. The most faithful emperor did not remember the plots which this impious Eusebius had once staged against him.

So by the skill of his deceitful words Eusebius persuaded the most kindly and gentle emperor, through the presbyter and through his own efforts, to order Arius to be summoned to him. Eusebius assured him that once Arius came into the presence of the pious emperor, he would agree with all the things by which, he said, the council and we ourselves are bound.

This seemed unbelievable to the emperor. But he was held by his God-loving gentleness and his zeal for harmony among the churches, and as if he believed it he said to them, "If Arius agrees with the council and truly chooses to hold its views, I will [seek him out] in person and send him back to Alexandria with honor." He said this, and he ordered by letter that Arius be summoned to the court.

Arius, honored with the emperor's letter, hurried to reach Constantinople again. Euzoius was with him, the man whom the divine Alexander, bishop of the church of Alexandria, had deposed along with him. Through the presbyter, and at the urging of Eusebius of Nicomedia and his party, it was reported to the pious emperor that Arius had arrived.

So the emperor received him together with Euzoius, and asked them whether they agreed with the faith set out at Nicaea by the three hundred holy fathers. Arius said under oath that he had always believed and still believed just as our holy fathers at Nicaea did, and that all who were with him believed the same. By this he meant Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognius of Nicaea itself. He spoke as though keeping his oath, in order to deceive and persuade the simplicity of the Christ-loving emperor.

When Arius had said this under oath, he so astonished the most God-loving and gentle emperor that the emperor at once sent Arius off to Alexandria with honor.

But when Arius reached Alexandria, [Athanasius] would not receive him. He turned away from him as from something loathsome.

Then Eusebius and his party wrote on Arius's behalf themselves, and also prepared the emperor to write in sharper terms to Alexander and Athanasius.

Athanasius, however, utterly refused to receive Arius and those with him. He also wrote to the emperor, together with the bishop, and instructed him. He said it was impossible for men who had once rejected the faith, and who had been anathematized and condemned by so great and holy a council and by your God-loving piety, to be taken back again on the ground of a change of heart.

Then the emperor took this badly, and, stirred to anger by Eusebius of Nicomedia and his party, he threatened Athanasius in writing as follows. Part of the emperor's letter to Athanasius.

Chapter 14

"Now that you know my intention, give free entry into the church to all who wish to enter. For if I learn that you have hindered any who wished to share in the faith of the church [text uncertain], or have barred such people from entering, I will immediately send someone to depose you by my order and remove you from your place." In the same way he wrote the same things to Alexander the bishop concerning Arius. Letter of the most God-loving emperor Constantine to Alexander, bishop of Alexandria.

Chapter 15

"Constantine, Victor, Maximus, Augustus, to father Alexander the bishop. And now, it seems, utterly loathsome envy will bark back with unholy sophistries of [delay]. What then shall we do about the present matter? Shall we decree things other than what was judged through you by the Holy Spirit, most honored brother?"

Arius, that very Arius, I say, came to me, the Augustus, at the urging of a great many people. He promised to hold, about our catholic faith, the very things that were defined and confirmed through you at the council at Nicaea. I was present there and joined in the definition, as your fellow servant.

So he came to us at once, together with Euzoïus, because they clearly knew what the royal command intended. I spoke with them, with many others present, about the word of life. I am the man who has given his own mind to God in sincere faith. I am your fellow servant, who have taken on all the care for [text missing] and for concord.

And after other things: I have therefore sent, not only to remind you but also to ask you to receive these men who are pleading with you. If, then, you find that they hold to the apostolic faith set out rightly at Nicaea, which lives always (for they assured us that they hold this), then take thought for them all, I urge you. For if you take care of these matters, you will overcome hatred with concord.

Help concord, then, I urge you. Bring the good things of friendship to those who are divided over matters of the faith. Let me hear what I wish and desire from the heart: peace and concord among you all. May God keep you, most honored father.

The emperor wrote these things. He was aiming at what was beneficial, and he did not want the church to be torn apart, for he was eager to bring everyone to concord.

The divine Alexander received the emperor's letter. He lived only a short time longer and departed this life with a blessed end. He had been bishop of God's church in Alexandria for sixteen years in all: nine years and one month before the council at Nicaea, three years and six months during the council, and three years and five months after the council, sixteen years in all.

Athanasius then took up the service of the priesthood. What sort of man he was in understanding, in godliness, and in the ordering of the church, the following account will show us.

When the heretics learned that the divine Athanasius was leading the church, at first they were thrown into confusion [?]. Then they joined together against him with one mind, so as, if one may say so, to wipe out his memory from the earth, just as the Jews planned against Christ. For they immediately set about persuading the most God-beloved emperor to use royal decrees against him.

First we must briefly tell of the man's upbringing from childhood. The blessed Alexander had been entrusted with the leadership of the priesthood after the blessed Achillas. After the gathering to commemorate the contest of the holy Peter, bishop and martyr, he had invited his clergy to a meal. While they were assembling, he stood at a distance and saw some children who had begun a game [modeled on the church's order?].

The house faced the sea, and the holy children were playing along its shore. Among them Athanasius was the bishop, and there were other companions as presbyters and deacons. They also brought to him children who were catechumens, to be [baptized] by him. Athanasius, as bishop, baptized them all in the church's form, and then wished to give them a teaching discourse.

The divine Alexander was astonished at what was going on and ordered the children to be brought to him. When he had learned everything just as it had happened, he acted with the agreement of the clergy with him. He sealed the baptized children with the seal in Christ, anointed them with the symbols of holy saving baptism, and completed what was lacking. He called Athanasius's parents together and entrusted Athanasius to them. He told them to have him taught letters and to advance him in the Lord as far as possible, and when he had grown, to give him back to himself, or rather to the church, just as Hannah, it is said, brought Samuel.

When the time had come, the parents presented Athanasius to Bishop Alexander. The bishop at once put the priestly ephod on him, bringing him forward for the church as a new Samuel, to defend it against the truly foreign enemies. For Athanasius endured many struggles on account of the heretics. They made a conspiracy, and there were not just forty men, as in the holy apostle Paul, but the whole multitude of heretics throughout the whole world, above all the Arius-maniacs. And Athanasius, with David, sang and said:

"If an army is drawn up against me, my heart will not fear. If war rises up against me, in this I hope to put on the crown of victory." He clearly longed to receive it from the Lord, who also said to him: "Take courage and do not be afraid, for I am with you, and no one will attempt to harm you."

We avoid describing most of what happened to him, so that we do not tire those who will read this book by stretching out the account. What he endured when the most ungodly heretics

persecuted him is beyond counting. We will be content with his more notable deeds, which are sung among all who knew the man.

As soon as he took charge of the church, as we said, Eusebius of Nicomedia and his party, who hated Athanasius bitterly, thought they had found a good opportunity for their own purpose in the emperor's displeasure against the great Athanasius. They dared everything against him and stirred up trouble, eager to remove him from his bishopric, and they voted against the man on the ground that he had entered the priesthood unworthily. For they hoped that the Arian doctrine would prevail only if they got Athanasius out of the way.

So those mentioned above, of the impious Arian heresy, joined with Hosius, Euhaimon and Kallinikos in a plot against him, and openly brought various accusations against the divine Athanasius. First, they said that Athanasius, after slipping into the bishopric, ordered the Egyptians to pay a tax of linen garments to the church of the Alexandrians. Then they stitched on a second slander, worse than the first: that Athanasius, against the emperor's orders, had sent a certain Philoumenos a money-chest full of gold to support resistance against the emperor Constantine.

Third, a certain man called Ischyras had undertaken an act deserving many deaths. Though he had never received ordination, he gave himself the title of presbyter and dared to perform the duties of priests in the villages of the district called Mareotes. At this point the holy bishop Athanasius came to the Mareotes and was visiting the churches there. When he learned about Ischyras, he sent the presbyter Macarius to investigate whether the reports were true. Ischyras was found out, ran away from there in headlong flight, reached Nicomedia, and took refuge with Eusebius and his party.

Out of their hatred for Athanasius they received him as a presbyter, and they promised to honor him with the rank of bishop, if he would agree to bring an accusation against Athanasius. So he patched together this story: that Macarius, a presbyter sent by Athanasius, he said, had made an assault on our church in the Mareotes, leaped into the sanctuary, overturned the holy table, smashed the mystical cup, and burned the sacred books.

These and similar things the accusers mentioned above told the emperor through Eusebius of Nicomedia and his party, stirring him up to anger against Athanasius. They also said that Athanasius had received the divine letter but had not accepted it, and that he had not received Arius or the faith of your Piety. When the emperor heard what was said against Athanasius he was astonished, so that he immediately ordered that Athanasius the bishop be brought to him at once in Constantinople.

Athanasius came and saw the emperor. He exposed the falsehood of the slanderers and fully convinced the emperor.

Fortified with royal letters and with the greatest honor from the most faithful emperor, he was sent back to Alexandria, and he returned to the church that God had entrusted to him.

The letters of the pious emperor, which he wrote to the church of the Alexandrians, make this clear. I will set the end of them in this writing.

But let none of those who read this work blame me for not joining the whole letter to the account of this history. I searched through all the writers on these matters and did not find the whole letter written down by any of them. Indeed, they also wrote many other letters in the same way, in abridged form, giving only some visible part of them in the histories they labored over. So I am more grieved about this than any of you.

But let us return to our subject, and inscribe the end of the letter mentioned above in this history, as the account promised. It was written as follows: The end of the letter written by the emperor Constantine on behalf of Athanasius to the church of the Alexandrians.

Chapter 16

"The wicked have had no power against your bishop. Believe me, brothers: they have worked at nothing else except to wear down our times, so that they might be able to get no place in this life for plunder."

So help yourselves, my beloved, you who are so dear to me. Love one another with your whole heart, and receive your bishop Athanasius with unbounded joy, beloved. I know very well that his absence did not cause you as much grief as you now have joy in his coming back to you.

Drive out those who want to destroy the grace of our harmony. Look to God, and love one another, I urge you. For I gladly welcomed Athanasius, your bishop, and I spoke to him as one convinced that he is a man of God. God will keep you safe, beloved brothers.

The great Athanasius received this letter from the emperor and arrived at Alexandria. The whole clergy and people welcomed him gladly and rejoiced, seeing their shepherd come back to his flock with the greatest possible honor. They all glorified God, and with words of praise they honored Constantine, the best of emperors in every way.

But while this brought our people unspeakable joy, it brought pain and endless shame to the hostile, who had trained themselves to make war on the Son of God.

Even so, Eusebius of Nicomedia and his party above all stripped off every trace of shame from their own faces. They shaped for themselves a form of godliness while denying its power. They ought to have sunk into the earth, but they put on the most brazen shamelessness, and turned their cruel and wicked skill at evil schemes toward another tower of piety [that is, another pretext of piety].

The originator and chief leader of all these wicked plans was Eusebius of Nicomedia. He was extremely clever at doing harm, like his father the devil. He held the reins not of God's church but of the impious party of the Arians. He spent a long time in Constantinople and often saw the emperor through the presbyter who sided with Arius. As his boldness with the emperor grew, he found the emperor's simplicity a resource for his own wicked craft, and he easily set up plots against the champions of the truth.

Then, disappointed in his hope from his wicked zeal against the great Athanasius, he devised a plausible way of attacking the godly Eustathius, head of the church of the Antiochenes. He approached the good-loving emperor Constantine, pretending to be most devoted and to rejoice in what the emperor was doing. He asked permission to travel to Jerusalem, saying he longed to see the holy houses of God that the emperor had built there. With these deceitful words he charmed the emperor's soul, which was like David's, and left Constantinople with great honor, the emperor providing him with carriages and every other attendance.

Theognis of Nicaea went with him, since he was, as we said before, his partner in his wicked and impious plans.

When they arrived, they came to Antioch and put on a show of friendship. So says Theodoret, though he passed over very many events and wrote his history with very brief attention. But we have read the earlier writers, who recorded everything accurately in order and sequence, and I arrange the narrative accordingly. For, as I said before, we gather their works from both sides and arrange them here.

But let us return to our subject. When these sinners reached the city of Antioch, the head of the church there, the great Eustathius, received them spiritually with great joy. For he had heard of their feigned repentance, taking it, so it says, as genuine, and he rejoiced over them. The great Eustathius welcomed them kindly for the sake of piety toward Christ and thought them worthy of the fullest hospitality.

After this they left Antioch and arrived at the holy places of Jerusalem. There they found some of those who shared their views, and they were greatly encouraged by them because of the plot that had been stitched together against the champion of the truth. This was not Eusebius of Caesarea in Palestine,

as Theodoret seems to slander the man, writing falsehoods about him. All our holy fathers mention him as one who shone in the orthodox faith, and they sing of the man's labors and struggles at the Council of Nicaea on behalf of the holy and consubstantial Trinity.

So too the divine Macarius, bishop in Jerusalem, and the great Eustathius, and Alexander of Alexandria, and Leontius of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and Euphrasius [Eupsychius] of Tyana, and the bishop of Sardica, and before all of them Hosius of Cordova, Athanasius of Alexandria, Alexander of Constantinople, and all the rest who struggled in that holy and sacred council for the apostolic teachings, all of these likewise make mention of the admirable Eusebius, son of Pamphilus, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. But this man was not

found by Eusebius of Nicomedia and his party. Instead they found those who shared their mind: Patrophilus of Scythopolis, Aetius of Lydda, Theodotus of Laodicea, and all the others they found to be partners in the impiety of Arius. They joined these men and made known

to them what had been contrived against holy Eustathius. Then they left Jerusalem with them and arrived together at Antioch.

The pretext for the visit of the others was supposedly an honor of escorting him on his way. But what they were really eager for was war against the true faith in Christ. They hired a prostitute with gold and persuaded her to give them her tongue for one hour. They convened a council with the great Eustathius and the holy bishops with him. Then they ordered everyone else to go outside, and these men who had composed the plot against the chief bishop commanded that the thrice-wretched woman be brought into the council as quickly as possible.

The servants of their lawlessness led the woman into the middle of them. She stood there showing a nursing infant and saying that she had conceived and borne it from intercourse with Eustathius, and she kept on shouting this shamelessly. The great Eustathius saw plainly that this was slander, and he ordered her to bring forward anyone who could testify to it.

When she said she had no one, the men who had woven the slander put her under an oath, this prostitute, even though the divine apostolic rule says that no accusation against an elder is to be received except on two or three witnesses.

But they despised the divine laws in this way, and counted as nothing the sentence God has pronounced against slanderers. They wove an accusation without a witness against so great a man by means of the prostitute, and received it, themselves as judges already condemned. Then, since the woman also added the oath they had laid on her, crying out that the child was Eustathius's, these men, full of every shamefulness, pronounced the verdict as against an adulterer. But the other bishops

(for there were many of the apostolic party who were defending the doctrines together with the great Eustathius, and who knew nothing of all that had been plotted) openly spoke against the lawless men and tried to stop that unjust verdict from being counted against Bishop Eustathius. But the authors of the plot ran quickly to the emperor to persuade him that what had been investigated was found true and the sentence of deposition was just. So the man was to be driven out of the sacred precincts as an adulterer and a tyrant, and the champion of piety and self-control was to be carried off by way of Thrace into distant exile, to a city of Illyria.

Eusebius of Nicomedia, an enemy of the apostolic teachings and skilled at staging slanders against the heralds of the true faith, stayed in Constantinople with Theognis. But they had left behind in Antioch the partners in their own wickedness, who ordained Eulalius in place of the divine Eustathius.

When he had lived only a very short time afterward, they put forward a certain Euphrasius. He too died very quickly (he lived one year and a few months after his ordination), and the

leadership of that church was given to Flacitus. All of these alike kept the impiety of Arius hidden.

So all who held to the right and godly faith, both clergy and people, left the church assemblies and gathered by themselves. Everyone called them Eustathians, because they formed their group after his departure.

Not long afterward that thrice-wretched woman fell into a most severe and very long illness. She exposed the plot and laid the slander bare. She called in not two or three but many of the priests and told them what had been contrived by that admirable band of the impious. She said that she had dared that slander for money. As for the oath, she said it was not very false: she had cried out that the child belonged to a certain Eustathius, a coppersmith.

These things, then, were what the impious Eusebius and his party dared to do at Antioch at that time. But even so the ungodly felt no shame, and they could not get enough of slandering the champions of the truth. They saw that the matter of the great Eustathius had turned out as they wished, so they stitched together another drama, this time against the divine Athanasius. No one had ever dared anything like it.

Once again they hired some accusers from the same party of Meletius and brought them to the emperor. These men cried out that Athanasius, the athlete of virtue, had committed many shameful and unholy acts. Eusebius, Theognius, and Theodore of Heraclea in Thrace led them, saying that these things were intolerable and could not even be borne by the ears.

So they persuaded the emperor to order a council to be gathered at Antioch in Syria, where their enemies were more numerous, and for Athanasius to be tried there. The emperor trusted them as priests (for he was completely ignorant of what was being schemed behind the scenes), and he gave the order.

But the great Athanasius, champion of the truth, knew the hostility of the men mentioned above, and he did not come to the assembly. From this they took a greater pretext for slander. Having once taken up the war against the truth, they wrote to the emperor and condemned him for tyranny and arrogance.

The emperor, though a very gentle man, was inflamed with anger against Athanasius over this. He wrote to him, showing his anger and instructing him to go to Tyre; for he ordered the council to be moved and gathered there. [He suspected] that Athanasius was wary of the Antiochenes, because there were many in the East who had accepted the plague of Arius. He also wrote to the council what a man of piety ought to write. It is this: Letter of the Emperor Constantine to the Council at Tyre.

Chapter 17

“Constantine, Victor, Greatest, Augustus, to the holy council gathered at Tyre. Perhaps it would have been fitting, and suited to the good fortune of our times, for the catholic church to be free of faction, and for the servants of Christ now to be rid of all abuse.

But some people, driven by a sick goad of contentiousness (I can call it nothing else) and living in a way unworthy of themselves, are trying to throw everything into confusion. This seems to me to surpass every calamity. For this reason I urge you to hurry, as the saying goes, and to run together without delay and complete the spiritual assembly, to defend those in need, to heal brothers who are in danger and bring them back to harmony, to set right the members that have been separated, and to correct what has gone wrong, while the time allows. It is the time to give so many provinces the harmony which, alas for the absurdity, the contempt of a very few people has destroyed.

That this is pleasing to God the Master, and beyond all our prayers, and for you yourselves also, if you call peace back, it is worthy of no ordinary glory.

[text damaged] I think all people agree. So delay no longer, but from now on stretch your zeal to the utmost, and make it your aim to set the fitting limit [text damaged], coming together with complete sincerity and faith. See to it that this peace is made to prevail among all, for you and for everyone.

I have sent to those of the bishops whom you wished, so that they may come and share your concerns. I have also sent Dionysius, the former consular, who will remind those who ought to come to the council with you, and who will be an overseer of what is done, especially of good order.

For if anyone, as I do not think will happen, tries even now to evade our command and does not wish to come to the council, he will be sent from here by us. He will remove him by royal order and teach him that it is not right ever to resist decisions made for the sake of the truth.

What remains is the work of your holiness: with a unanimous judgment, [neither out of hatred] nor out of favor, but rather in accordance with the ecclesiastical and apostolic rule, to devise the fitting remedy for those who have offended or have gone astray by error. In

this way you will free the church from blasphemy, relieve my concerns, and give the grace of peace to those now living, and so win for yourselves the greatest good fortune. May God keep you, beloved brothers."

So, in ordering the council to be held at Tyre, he wrote these things. He trusted the slanderers because they were priests; and although his zeal for piety was unbridled, he thought the opposing side had been wronged, and so, as a just judge, he put up with this ruling too. He did order, however, that once the council had completed its work and carefully examined each matter, the whole council should go on to Jerusalem for the dedication of the church that he had built there.

The emperor also wrote a second letter to the council. He urged that Athanasius should not be the only one to appear before the council, but Arius as well, and that what each side had done should be examined honestly. If Arius was right in saying that he had caused the division out of envy, while he himself stood within the right faith, then he should first condemn himself for what he had dared to do against the truth, and fall silent.

The only alternative was that he had cleverly refused correction in order to take revenge on his own bishop Athanasius, weaving suspicions and slanders against him. If envy was found to be the cause, the bishops in the council were to make it their concern to bring both men together in peace. But if Arius was using some feigned repentance, he was to go back to Alexandria and be judged there about these matters.

The most praiseworthy emperor wrote these things out of concern for harmony among all, so that with every quarrel removed from the scene, they might celebrate the dedication of the church in Jerusalem in greater peace,

and consecrate it to God. But the impious Arius would not bring himself to appear before the council at Tyre. The great Athanasius, however, reached Tyre very eagerly, with Timothy and Macarius, his presbyters, and a great many other distinguished and respected men who accompanied him.

So the bishops came together at Tyre. When all of them had assembled with the consular Dionysius, with the eminent men honored along with him, and with the governor of the province, Dionysius, the former consular, handed the emperor's letters over to the council of bishops.

Some other bishops also arrived who were accused of corrupting doctrine, and one of them was Asclepas of Gaza. But I want first to set out in this account the tragic charges brought against holy Athanasius, and then to describe what happened in that much-talked-about court.

A certain Arsenius had at first been a reader under Athanasius. He was charged with certain offenses and was about to be destroyed by the crowd. The great Athanasius learned of this. [The Greek is damaged here.] In this way Arsenius was saved: Athanasius learned

that Arsenius was being falsely accused, came to him by night, and rescued him, arranging for him to escape the killing by flight.

Afterward the followers of Meletius found him in Egypt and arranged for the title of bishop to be given to him. Some time later, at the instigation of Eusebius of Nicomedia (for he was the man who everywhere devised intricate slanders against the godly), the party of Meletius hid this same Arsenius and kept him out of sight for a long time.

Then they cut off the right hand from some corpse, preserved it in salt in a wooden box, and carried it around everywhere. They said that Arsenius had been murdered and dismembered by Athanasius, and they called Athanasius a murderer.

But the eye of God, which sees all things, did not allow Arsenius to stay hidden for very long. First it became known in Egypt and the Thebaid that he was alive. Then God put it into his mind, as he himself told later, to reflect on the rescue that Athanasius had granted him beyond all hope. He saw that he would be wronging Athanasius and committing a very great lawless act if he overlooked his benefactor being put to death on his account, instead of dying himself on that man's behalf. So the ruler of all things brought him to Tyre, where the hand, made the stuff of tragedy by the slanderers, was being produced before the judges.

Athanasius' companions saw him, brought him to their lodging, and learned from him both about God's ordering of events and about his own readiness. They urged him to remain hidden for the time being.

At dawn the great Athanasius arrived at the council, together with Timothy and Macarius, his presbyters, and the others who had come there with him from Alexandria.

First they brought in a woman who had lived in licentiousness. She cried out without restraint that she professed virginity, but that Athanasius, when he was a guest in her lodging, had forced her and violated her against her will. While she was saying these things, the accused came in, and with him, among the others, was Timothy the presbyter, a man worthy of admiration.

The judges ordered Athanasius to answer the accusation. Athanasius stayed silent, as though he were not the man accused. Timothy then said to the woman, "Madam, have I ever met you? Have I ever come into your house?" But she shouted back more shamelessly, arguing with Timothy. She stretched out her hand toward him and caught hold of him, and said to Timothy himself, "You took my virginity. You stripped me of my chastity. You ruined the honor of my soul." And she said everything else that women say who, in the extreme of their immorality, have no shame.

What was happening was truly astonishing, greater than any wonder: Athanasius was the one accused, yet it was Timothy who was being charged. So those who had put this play together were put to shame, and those of the judges who were in on it blushed. They ordered the woman to be thrown out.

Then the godly Athanasius said that the woman should not be let go, but should be examined so that the truth could be learned. But the false accusers shouted that there were other, more serious charges, which could not possibly be dissolved by any skill or cleverness: "For sight, not hearsay, will judge what is shown." With these words they brought out that much-talked-of chest and uncovered the embalmed hand.

When each member of the council saw it, they cried out. Those who were party to the accusers' scheme said that the horror was real. Others knew the charge was false, and laughed, saying that Arsenius was still alive and was being kept in hiding.

The council was filled with great uproar, and when at last there was a little quiet, Athanasius, the accused, asked the judges whether anyone among them knew Arsenius. Many said they knew the man well, and Athanasius ordered him to be brought in.

When he had come in and stood in the middle of the council, Athanasius asked again, "Is this Arsenius, the man I am said to have killed, whom these men, after his murder, abused and deprived of his right hand?" Very many of those in the council agreed that this was Arsenius himself. Then the godly Athanasius uncovered him by taking off his cloak, and showed both of Arsenius's hands, the right and the left. "Let no one look for a third," he said, "for each of us has received from the Maker of all things two hands."

Even after these things were shown in this way, by the judgment of God who watches over all things, the accusers ought to have sunk out of sight. So should those of the judges who were in the secret, and they should have prayed for the earth itself to open over them and swallow them whole. They did the opposite. They filled the council with uproar and faction, calling Athanasius a sorcerer and saying that by some trickery he deceived people's eyes.

They rose up against him and tried to tear him apart and cut down this champion of true religion. They stirred up, as it were, the very earth and threw dust into the air, like those who once shouted against the divine apostle Paul and said:

"Away with him, quickly! It is not fitting that he should live." But the men entrusted by the emperor with keeping good order prevented the killing. They snatched the victor out of the crowd, made him board a boat, and so secured his safety. The godly Athanasius got into the boat and hurried to the emperor's camp, having escaped the hands of those murderers.

As for the others, just as they were, they sent some bishops of their own party to the Mareotis: Theognius of Nicaea, Marius of Chalcedon, Theodore of Heraclea in Thrace, Narcissus the Cilician, Ursacius, and some others who shared their views. Their purpose was to draw up records there against Athanasius, in a one-sided proceeding. (The Mareotis is in Alexandria, taking its name from Lake Maria, which is close by.) They instructed these men

to send as quickly as possible to them at Aelia, that is Jerusalem, Arius also, the author of these evils. They themselves were to set out there from Tyre together with the bishops in the synod. For the emperor had again commanded the whole synod, together with all the

bishops from everywhere, to go from Tyre to Jerusalem, as I said before, in order to dedicate the churches he had built there.

He also sent along some of the more loyal officials, men distinguished for piety and faith. He commanded that everything be supplied generously to all through them: not only to the bishops, the priests and their attendants, but also to all the needy who were streaming in from every direction. An indescribable crowd was pouring in from practically the whole land of the East to the dedication of the new Jerusalem. The holy altar was also adorned with royal hangings and with gold treasures set with precious stones.

The impious Arius arrived at Aelia on the day of the dedication, very eagerly, having heard above all that Athanasius was absent from that festival. He was gladly received by those who shared his views, that is, the circle of Eusebius of Nicomedia and Patrophilus of Scythopolis.

But those who held to the right faith, when they saw Arius, turned away from him as from something loathsome. They drove him out of the church and ordered that he be expelled from the assembly. They decided that his case would be heard at the synod at Alexandria, where he had in fact been convicted, as they say our Christ-loving emperor Constantine had also commanded.

So the corrupter was out of the way, and the festival was most peaceful and splendid. The emperor, who was widely praised and most faithful, learned of the splendor and lavishness of the celebration. He was filled with the greatest joy, and he sang great praise to the Giver of good things, because He had granted him this request as well.

So when the festival of the dedication had been completed in this way, most of the bishops returned to their own homelands, especially those who had not sat in the synod held at Tyre.

But those of the brotherhood of Eusebius of Nicomedia, all who with him had accepted the plague of Arius, went with Eusebius himself and the other bishops back to Tyre, waiting there for their like-minded colleagues to return from the Mareotis.

In the meantime the great Athanasius, who had arrived first, went to the most pious and God-beloved emperor Constantine and told him the whole tragic story of what had been dared against him. The emperor Constantine, who was deeply sympathetic and kind, was grieved to the soul at what had been done against Athanasius, and was moved by the

unjust judgment passed against him. Athanasius begged with tears that both the accusers and the judges be summoned and that the case be heard again before the pious emperor himself. So the emperor, who had departed from Aelia, sent a letter to those at Tyre. It stated that Athanasius was with him, and that they should come to Constantinople as quickly as possible. What was written is this: Letter of the God-beloved emperor Constantine to the bishops who had left Aelia and were at Tyre.

Chapter 18

"Constantine, Victor, Greatest, Augustus, to the bishops who have again gathered at Tyre. I do not know what has been decided by your synod amid so much uproar and storm. But it seems that the truth has somehow been distorted by some disorderly rivalry. You, evidently out of quarrelsomeness toward your neighbors, which you want to be unbeaten, have failed to see what pleases God.

But let it be the work of divine providence that the evils of your contentiousness, or rather of your ill-treatment of others, have been openly caught and scattered, and that it be plainly shown to us whether you gathered there and took any care for the truth, and whether you judged what you decided without any favor or hatred.

Therefore I want all of you to come in haste to my Reverence, so that you may explain to me in person the exact truth of what was done. Why I thought it right to write this to you and summoned you to myself by letter, you will learn from what follows.

Athanasius, bishop of the church at Alexandria, a student of the divine law, is with me. As I was entering our namesake and most blessed city of Constantinople, from the suburb of Proconnesus, he approached me in the middle of the main road with some others he had with him, mourning and lamenting. His approach was so sudden that it gave me a cause for alarm."

God, who watches over all, is my witness: at first sight I could not even recognize who he was, until some of our people, when I asked, told me who he was and the wrong he had suffered at your hands. We saw the man so humbled and downcast that we were moved to inexpressible pity for him, once we learned that this was Athanasius. His holy appearance alone is enough to draw even pagans to reverence for the God of all. Some wicked men, strangers to peace and harmony, had long ago wrapped him in slanders of no ordinary kind.

I myself was carried away by their many-sided deceit, and I was about to sin against the man, had I not been moved by divine judgment. I then ordered him to come with all speed from Alexandria to the camp of our Clemency.

So he was examined by my Piety about the things falsely staged against him. When he stood before us, he himself exposed the falseness of the charges. He was declared innocent of all of them, and was sent back to his homeland with the greatest honor from us, restored in peace to the orthodox people whom he guides.

But now he cries out, with even greater boldness, that worse things than the first have been dared against him a second time. He asks for nothing else from them than your coming to us, which he begged for himself, so that with you present he might lay out the sufferings he has endured.

Since this seemed to us reasonable and fitting for the times, I ordered this letter to be written to you. All of you who made up the council that was held should hurry to us without delay. By your very deeds you should show that your judgment was pure and not twisted, before me, who am a true servant of God. Nor could you [defend] what has been decided by you in any other way.

Through my service to God, peace is established everywhere. Even most of the barbarian nations, who until now did not know the truth, now truly revere the name of God. (It is clear that whoever does not know the truth does not know God either.) Nevertheless, as was said before, even the barbarians, because of me, the true servant of God, have come to know God and have learned to revere him. They have perceived that he shields and cares for me everywhere, in the very outcome of events. So they know God, whom they revere out of fear of us.

But we, who seem to put forward the holy mysteries of his kindness (I would not say "to guard" them), do nothing else than what leads to discord and hatred, and, to put it simply, what has its end in the destruction of the human race.

But hurry to us, as I said before, with all speed. Be assured that I will try with all my strength to see that these matters are kept in the law of God, in an especially unshaken way, so that no blame and no false teaching can attach itself to them. For the enemies of the law of God will be scattered, crushed utterly, and wholly wiped out.

Under cover of the holy name they bring forward all kinds of varied blasphemies to deceive the simple. They long, as far as they can, for the purity of the catholic church, which our Savior cleansed with his saving and precious blood, to make it spotless, holy and without blemish, just as his divine and unbreakable [words] declare.

This letter threw the members of the council into anguish, especially Eusebius of Nicomedia and his party. Those, however, who had been sent by them, and who had written down falsehoods as truth, had drawn up a record of proceedings against the great Athanasius, from one side only, before this imperial letter arrived. They reached Tyre, where the council of those admirable bishops was meeting.

But not everyone accepted that forged record against Athanasius, which was full of the slanders of those loathsome men. So most of them, having learned from the reading what the imperial letter contained, were afraid and went back to their own places.

But Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognius and those with them stayed on in Tyre, deliberately dragging out the time. They wrote to the pious emperor that they had been kept there against their will, and that they were hurrying to set out to him with the record of the forged proceedings. The most faithful emperor had thrown that record away as something abominable, and would not bear to accept it at all. He had commanded these wretches to come to him at once.

Meanwhile, while Eusebius and his party were delaying, the emperor sent Athanasius back to Alexandria with the greatest honor. He wrote again to the church of the Alexandrians, saying that their bishop Athanasius had been falsely slandered, and that his purity had shone out brilliantly before everyone.

While Athanasius was in Alexandria, the council was being gathered at the emperor's command and on the instructions of the orthodox bishops who had come together in Jerusalem for the dedication. Then the matter of Arius came up. A great crowd gathered, and their hope swung back and forth on an uncertain outcome. Above all, everyone saw that what so many great bishops had agreed on and judged was being torn apart again.

When divine Athanasius saw Alexandria and all Egypt thrown into turmoil, he did not keep silent. He made the matter plain by letter to the pious ears of the emperor, the best of men in every way.

When the emperor learned that Arius had been turned aside from the truth, he ordered him to be brought again to Constantinople. There he was to give an account of what he had dared to stir up anew. The emperor wrote to him, and sent with him a letter full of indignation against them. What he wrote is as follows: Letter of Constantine, the most God-beloved emperor, to Arius and the Arians.

Chapter 19

Constantine Augustus to Arius and the Arians. [The text here is corrupt.] A bad interpreter is truly an image and a statue of [the one who...]. Clever sculptors, to make a bait for deceit, contrive a kind of seemly beauty for a figure that is utterly ugly by nature, so that by holding out error they may destroy the wretched. In the same way, I think, this man would act, who considers only this to be worthy [text corrupt]: to put forward without restraint the [...] of his own [...].

So both now, and ever since human beings came to be, it brings in a faith that comes from unbelief, one that has never been seen before. Then the saying spoken long ago in plain words does not seem out of tune with the truth: that they are faithful toward evil.

What should one say of the man who has lost the grace of deliberating, yet still wants to find some help of relief? So then: Christ, Christ, Lord, Lord! Why ever does this band of robbers wound us? A terrible, violent audacity stands against us. It roars and grinds its teeth, misshapen with dishonor and wounded by charges of every kind.

This audacity, in the law and in the preaching about you, as in storms and great waves of evils, belches out ruinous words, and by writing them it shows them openly. [You, who exist together with the Father, the eternal source of yourself, never separated yourself by the knowledge concerning yourself.] It gathers up and agrees together on dreadful and lawless impieties. At one moment it wags its tongues; at another it is lifted up again by the eagerness of the wretched, who are present, and whom it deceives and corrupts with impunity.

Now I want to examine the nature of its leader. For what does he say? “Either let us keep what we have already gained, or let it be as we ourselves wish.” He has fallen, and fallen to his own destruction. “By trickery,” he says, “or by cleverness of villainy”; it makes no difference. He considers honorable only what has flowed [into the pipe] through a wicked scheme.

“We have crowds,” he says. I will myself advance a little to the front, to become a spectator of the wars of madness. I myself, I said, will advance, I who am accustomed to put a stop to the wars of fools. Come then, Arius, Ares that you are, you need shields. Please do not do this, we beg you. Let the company of Aphrodite at least hold you back. But would that,

just as you seem to be so well organized among the crowds, you also flourished so in piety toward Christ.

See, again I come as a suppliant. Though I am strong enough with arms to fight any multitude, I do not wish to fight. Fenced in by faith in Christ, I wish to heal you and to cure the others.

So what do you say you are doing, when it does not suit your character? But with what calm, tell me, or clothed in what abundance, or rather to what rashness have you driven yourself? O audacity, worthy to be struck down by thunderbolts! Hear what he recently declared to me, writing with a pen dripping poison: "Thus," he says, "we believe." Then, I think, he added I know not what, haughtily and very carefully worked up. Going further, he kept silent about nothing dreadful, but opened, one might say, the whole treasure of his madness.

"We are being driven away," he says, "and he has taken from us the freedom to be received." But this has nothing to do with the matter yet. Pay attention to what follows, for I will use his own words. "We ask," he says, "that if the bishop of Alexandria stays in the same opinion, we be given freedom from now on to carry out our service to God, lawful and not to be refused, according to the ordinance of the law."

What terrible shamelessness! The truth ought to be eager to expose it. For what suited his own pleasure he set down in a brief phrase. What are you saying, you wretch? Are you scheming to build up, against me, a plausible-looking division out of the rottenness of your savage mind? Are you hurrying to destroy those who have joined themselves to you for their harm? "What then," you say, "shall I do, if no one thinks me worthy to receive me?"

You often cry this out from your unholy throat. But I ask you the opposite: where have you shown any clear mark or witness of your own mind? You ought to have unfolded it and made it plain, in things divine and human alike. This is the more needful because venomous snakes by nature grow fiercer when they feel themselves settled in the recesses of their dens.

But this is very charming of him: he is eager, quite carefully, to put on a silence as though under a mask of modesty. By the art of appearance you make yourself seem tame and gentle, but you are full inside of countless evils and plots, and most people do not notice. Oh, the wretchedness of it! Just as the evil one wanted, so he has made Arius for us a workshop of lawlessness.

Come forward now and tell me the mark of your own faith, and do not keep silent about it, you whose mouth is twisted and whose nature is quick to incline to wickedness. "You say there is one God"? Then you have me agreeing with you. "You say that his Word is without beginning and without end"? I welcome that.

Believe it so. If you weave in anything beyond this, take it away. If you are patching together anything toward an impious separation, I confess I neither see it nor understand it. If you

take up "the lodging in a body for the ordering of the divine works," I do not reject it. If you say "the Spirit of eternity came to be in the Word who is above all," I accept it. Who has known the Father, except the one who came from the Father? Whom has the Father known, except the one whom he has begotten from himself eternally and without beginning? You think you must put beneath him a foreign substance, believing wrongly, of course. But I know that the fullness of the power that is above all and extends through all things is one substance of the Father and the Son.

So then, if you take away something from him from whom not even in thought could the quibblers ever separate anything, and if you fashion marks of addition and set up distinguishing signs for inquiries concerning him to whom the Father gave a whole eternity from himself and an incorruptible mind, and through whom he gave out the faith of immortality and of the church, then cast down, cast down this foolish lawlessness. You clever fellow with the fine voice, you have set out evils to bring the senseless to unbelief.

It is no wonder, then, that the evil one has overthrown you by his own wickedness. To some, perhaps, being like this seems pleasant, since you have persuaded yourself of it. But the evil is altogether deadly.

Come now, leave off your lingering in absurdities and listen, you demon-driven Arius, for I am speaking to you. Have you been cast out of God's church and do not perceive it? You are lost, know well, unless you look at yourself and condemn the folly that is now in you. But you will say that crowds work with you and lighten your cares.

So listen, then, lending your ears a little, you unholy Arius, and understand your own folly. And you, God, caretaker of all, be gracious to what is said, if it holds to faith. For I, having your forethought kindly toward me, will show clearly, from Greek writing and from very ancient [Sibylline?] writing, what was foretold about three thousand years ago by the [Sibyl] of the Red Sea.

For she said: "Woe to you, Libya, lying in coastal lands. A time will come for you when, with your twin [cities?] and your own daughters, you will be forced to undergo a terrible struggle, cruel and most harsh. From it a judgment of faith and piety will be handed out to all, but you will turn toward final ruin. For you seized the receiving-place of the heavenly flowers, and tore it with a bite, and defiled it with iron teeth." What then, you scoundrel?

Where on earth do you now admit you are? There, obviously. For I hold your letters, which you scratched out to me with [the reed pen of …]. In them you say that every Libyan agrees with you, presumably on the matter of salvation. But if that is not so, I call God to witness that I will send [to …] a very ancient book of [the Sibyl(?)], composed in the Greek language, so that you may perish all the sooner.

So are you without sin, you pitchfork-bearer? Have you not plainly perished, wretch, hemmed in on every side? We know, we know what you are attempting. What anxiety and fear trouble you has not escaped us, you miserable, suffering man. How dull your mind is!

You do not even check the sickness and [the gaping wound(?)] of your own soul. Unholy man, you dig it deeper with your intricate arguments. Being such a man, are you not ashamed [of …] us? Sometimes you think you are refuting us, and sometimes you think you are surpassing us in faith and argument. Yet it is from such a man that these wretched people are eager to get [salvation(?)] for themselves.

And yet one should not even associate with such a man, or speak to him at all, unless one thinks that the hope of living rightly lies stored up in his deceitful words, modest as they are.

But this is not so. Far from it! The truth is this, you who share his folly, all you who [follow] him: what frenzy forced you to put up with his cruel tongue and [his …]?

Very well. Now I will come at you directly with my argument. Your soul is senseless, your tongue is glib, and you are faithless in [your …]. Give me, then, room for the argument. I do not ask for something spacious, a field for horsemen, but at least a well-marked circle. It must not be rotten only, but [also …] and firm by nature. You are unholy and utterly wicked! I am carried away in saying these things. Better still, I will throw a noose around you and bind your feet with my argument. Then I will set you in the middle, so that every [listener] may learn how worthless you are.

Now I will go straight to the matter itself. Our hands are washed, I suppose, so let us approach. Call on God! Or rather, wait a moment and tell me, you hothead: which God will you call on to help you? But I cannot [hold back].

O Master, who hold authority over all things, O Father of the one and only power, because of this unholy man your [Church] bears insults, griefs, and also wounds and pains. Arius now fits out a place for you, and fits it very neatly. Sitting on it, I suppose, he makes for himself a [council]. Or rather, he makes your Christ, the originator of our help, into a child from you, by the rule of placement, and holds him as such. Listen, I beg you, to this marvelous faith!

He supposes that you, Master, move with a movement tied to place. He dares to draw a circle around you with a fixed seat. For where is your presence not found? Or where do all people not perceive your working from your laws, which extend through all things? For you contain all things, and it is not right to imagine any place or anything else outside you. So great is your power, together with its working, and it has no limit. You, God, listen. And all you people, pay attention.

For this shameless and useless man has reached the height of wickedness and [lawlessness(?)] alike, and he pretends to be reverent. “Away with it,” he says. “I do not want God to seem subject to the suffering of insults.

“And for this reason I suppose and invent, with marvelous faith, that God made a newly born and newly created substance, Christ, and so provided himself with help. That is how it seems to me. For whatever you take away from him, he says, you have made less.”

Then, you destroyer and ruin, is this what you call faith? You take by hypothesis and invention the one who condemned the inventions of the nations! You call him an imported outsider, a kind of servant of what is fitting. Yet he accomplished all things without deliberation or reasoning, by existing together with the Father's eternity. Now apply to God, if you dare. Yes, I say, apply to God the fearing and the hoping for what will result. Apply also the deliberating, the reasoning, the weighing a decision, the declaring and working out an opinion. Apply, in short, the being pleased, the laughing, the grieving.

What then do you say, you most wretched of the wretched, you real contriver of evil? Understand, if you can, that in your very cunning you are wasting yourself away, wicked as you are.

"Christ," he says, "suffered for us." But I have already said that a form of a body was sent. "Yes," he says, "but we fear that we might seem to diminish him in some way." Then, you go-between of wild beasts, when you say this, are you not raving and plainly in a frenzy? Look: the world itself is a form, or a shape. The stars have been set out as distinct marks. And the very air of this spherical circle is the outward appearance of the things that exist, a kind of moulded figure. Yet God is present everywhere. Where, then, are the insults in God? Or in what way is God diminished?

You who murder your own father's gentleness, reason it out from yourself and consider whether it seems a sin for God to be present in Christ. He saw the dishonor done to the Word, and he did not delay in bringing punishment. Apart from this, sins happen in the world every single day, and yet God is present and justice does not fall behind. So how is the greatness of his power diminished by this, if he perceives what happens everywhere? In nothing, I think.

For the mind of the world is through God: through him comes all continuance, through him all justice. But the faith of Christ comes from him without beginning. In short, Christ is the law of God, and through him it has what is boundless and also without end.

But you, it seems, are thinking this over by yourself. What utter madness! Turn the devil's sword now against your own destruction. Look, all of you, look how he already cries out in wailing tones, caught by the viper's bite. His veins and flesh are overrun with the poison and stir up terrible pains. His whole body has wasted away and dissolved. It is full of squalor and filth, lamentation, pallor, shuddering and countless other evils, and it has dried up terribly. His thick hair is ugly and hangs down. He is half dead, and his gaze is already failing. His face is bloodless and melted away with anxiety. Frenzy, madness and futility have all run together into him, and by the long duration of his sickness they have made him wild and beastlike.

At once, without even perceiving what evil he is in, he says, "I am lifted up with pleasure, and I leap and skip for joy, and I grow wings." Then again, very boldly, he says, "Well then, we are lost."

This last is indeed true. For to you alone wickedness has lavishly granted its own zealous efforts, and what had been bought at a great price, it has given you most easily as a gift. Come now, tell me, where are your solemn commands? Wash yourself in the Nile, if that is possible, you man full of absurd insensibility. Yet you have been eager to throw the whole inhabited world into confusion with your impieties.

Do you understand that I, the man of God, already know everything? But I am at a loss whether I should stay or go. I can no longer even look at him, and I am ashamed of the sin, Arius. You brought us into light, but you, wretched man, cast yourself down into darkness. This is the end of your labors that has appeared.

But I return to that point again. You say there is a multitude of those taken captive around you. That is likely, I think, and take them in, I say, take them in. For they have given themselves up to be eaten by wolves and lions. Yet each of them, pressed by the addition of ten chapters and by their payments, will very soon be sweating, unless he runs as quickly as possible to the saving church and recovers the peace of love through the charm of concord.

For they will no longer be deceived by you, a man condemned by an evil conscience. Nor will they bear to be utterly destroyed, entangled in your foul inquiries. For the time to come, your sophistries are clear and known to all. You yourself will not be able to accomplish anything, but you put on a false show in vain, pretending to gentleness and mildness of words and putting on the outside, so to speak, a mask of simplicity. Your whole contrivance is futile. For soon the truth will stand around you, and soon the rain, as it were, of divine power will put out your flames.

And indeed your companions and those who share your opinion, who have already become guilty by their counsel, will be overtaken by the burdens of public service, unless they flee as quickly as possible from association with you and exchange [your] corrupting faith for another.

But you, man of iron mind, give me, give me a sample of your purpose, if you trust yourself, if you are strong in the firmness of your faith, and if your conscience is wholly clean. Come to me, I say, come to a man of God. Believe me: by my questions I will search out the hidden secrets of your heart. If madness seems to be in you, I will call on divine grace and [leave you in a better state]. But if you prove to be sound in these matters, and have come to know the light of truth within you, then I will rejoice with you. I will thank God [for the godliness that is in me].

And in another hand: “God will keep you safe, beloved.” These things were also delivered by Syncletius and Gaudentius, the magistriani, when Paterius was prefect of Egypt, and they were read in the palace.

Sources. Greek text: Margret Heinemann’s edition (Gelasius Kirchengeschichte, Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1918), digitised by Open Greek and Latin and the First Thousand Years

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