

7.3 – Events leading up to the Council of Ephesus (423-431)

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Last updated 7/24/19

Socrates	Sozomen	Theodoret
423 – John declares himself Emperor		
<p>7.23.3 In the meantime John, the superintendent of the emperor’s secretaries, not content with the dignity to which he had already attained, seized upon the sovereign authority and sent an embassy to the emperor Theodosius, requesting that he might be recognized as his colleague in the empire.</p> <p>7.23.4 But that prince [Theodosius] first arrested the ambassadors, then sent Ardaburius, the commander-in-chief of the army, who had greatly distinguished himself in the Persian war.</p> <p>7.23.5 On arriving at Salonae, he set sail from there for Aquileia. He was thought to be fortunate, but fortune opposed him, as it afterwards appeared.</p> <p>7.23.6 For a contrary wind arose and he was driven into the usurper’s hand. After seizing him, the latter became more optimistic in his hope that the emperor would be compelled to elect and proclaim him emperor by the urgency of the case, in order to preserve the life of his general-in-chief.</p> <p>7.23.7 And the emperor was in fact greatly distressed when he heard of it, as was the army which had been sent against the usurper; they feared that Ardaburius would be subjected to evil treatment by the usurper.</p> <p>7.23.8 Aspar, the son of Ardaburius, learned that his father was in the usurper’s power. He was aware at the same time that the rebels were strengthened by an immense number of barbarians and he did not know what course to pursue.</p> <p>7.23.9 Then again, at this crisis, the prayer of the pious emperor prevailed. For an angel of God, under the appearance of a shepherd, undertook the guidance of Aspar and the troops who were with him and led him through the lake near Ravenna—for in that city the</p>		

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<p>usurper was then residing and there detained the military chief. Now, no one had ever been known to ford that lake before.</p> <p>7.23.10 But God made it passable, which had till now been impassable. Having crossed the lake, as if going over dry ground, they found the gates of the city open and overpowered the usurper.</p> <p>7.23.11 This event afforded that most devout emperor an opportunity to give a fresh demonstration of his piety towards God. For the news of the usurper's being destroyed arrived while he was at the Hippodrome, and he immediately said to the people: "Come now, please, let us leave these distractions and go to the church to offer thanksgivings to God, whose hand has overthrown the usurper."</p> <p>7.23.12 Thus did he address them and the spectacles were immediately forsaken and neglected, the people all passing out of the circus singing praises together with him, as with one heart and one voice. Arriving at the church, the whole city again became one congregation and once in the church they passed the remainder of the day in these devotional exercises.</p>		
425 – Valentinian is declared emperor in the West		
<p>7.24.1 After the usurper's death, the emperor Theodosius worried about whom he should proclaim emperor of the West.</p> <p>7.24.2 He had a cousin who was very young at this time named Valentinian, the son of his aunt Placidia, daughter of Theodosius the Great and sister of the two Augusti Arcadius and Honorius and of that Constantius who had been proclaimed emperor by Honorius and had died after a short reign with him.</p> <p>7.24.3 This cousin he made Caesar and sent into the West, committing the administration of affairs to his mother Placidia.</p> <p>7.24.4 He himself also hastened towards Italy, so that he might both proclaim his cousin emperor in person and, being present among them, endeavor to influence the natives and residents by his counsels not to submit to</p>		

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<p>usurpers readily. But when he reached Thessalonica, he was prevented from proceeding further by sickness.</p> <p>7.24.5 He therefore sent the imperial crown to his cousin by Helion the patrician, and he himself returned to Constantinople. But concerning these matters I deem the narrative here given sufficient.</p>		
425 – The fate of the Huns		
<p>7.43.1 After the death of the usurper, the barbarians whom he had called to his assistance against the Romans made preparations for ravaging the Roman provinces.</p> <p>7.43.2 The emperor being informed of this, immediately, as his custom was, committed the management of the matter to God; and continuing in earnest prayer, he speedily obtained what he sought; for it is worthwhile to give attention to disasters which befell the barbarians.</p> <p>7.43.3 For their chief, whose name was Rougas [or Rugila], was struck dead with a thunderbolt. Then a plague followed which destroyed most of the men who were under him: and as if this was not sufficient, fire came down from heaven, and consumed many of the survivors.</p> <p>7.43.4 This filled the barbarians with the utmost terror; not so much because they had dared to take up arms against a nation of such valor as the Romans possessed, as that they perceived them to be assisted by a mighty God.</p> <p>7.43.5 On this occasion, Proclus the bishop preached a sermon in the church in which he applied a prophecy out of Ezekiel to the deliverance effected by God in the late emergency and was in consequence much admired.</p> <p>7.43.6 This is the language of the prophecy: “Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshek and Tubal; prophesy against him [Eze 38:2] ... I will execute judgment on him with plague and bloodshed; I will pour down torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur on him and on his troops and on the many nations with him. And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself</p>		

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<p>known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord.” [Eze 38:22-23]</p> <p>7.43.7 This application of the prophecy was received with great applause, as I have said, and enhanced the estimation in which Proclus was held. Moreover, the providence of God rewarded the meekness of the emperor in various other ways, one of which was the following.</p>		
Discovery of the relics of Zechariah		
	<p>9.16.4 It seems as if God openly showed His favor towards the present emperor, not only by disposing of warlike affairs in an unexpected way, but also by revealing the sacred bodies of many persons who were of old most distinguished for piety; among other relics, those of Zechariah, the very ancient prophet, and of Stephen, who was ordained deacon by the apostles, were discovered; and it seems incumbent upon me to describe the mode, since the discovery of each was marvelous and divine.</p> <p>9.17.1 I shall first speak of the relics of the prophet. Caphar-Zechariah is a village of the territory of Eleutheropolis, a city of Palestine. The land of this district was cultivated by Calemerus, a serf; he was well disposed to the owner, but hard, unhappy, and unjust towards his neighboring peasants.</p> <p>9.17.2 Although he possessed these defects of character, the prophet stood by him in a dream and showed himself. Pointing out a particular garden, he said to him, “Go, dig in that garden at the distance of two cubits from the hedge of the garden by the road leading to the city of Bitheribis. You will there find two coffins, the inner one of wood, the other of lead. Beside the coffins you will see a glass vessel full of water and two serpents of moderate size, but tame and perfectly safe, as if they were be used to being handled.”</p> <p>9.17.3 Calemerus followed the directions of the prophet at the designated place and zealously applied himself to the task. When the sacred depository was found by the aforementioned signs, the divine prophet appeared to him, clad in a white stole, which makes me think that he was a priest. At his feet, outside of the coffin, was lain a child who had been</p>	

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	<p>honored with a royal burial; for on its head was a golden crown, its feet were encased in golden sandals, and it was arrayed in a costly robe.</p> <p>9.17.4 The wise men and priests of the time were greatly perplexed about this child, who he was and where he came from and for what reason he had been clothed in this way. It is said that Zechariah, the superior of a monastic community at Gerari, found an ancient document written in Hebrew, which had not been received among the canonical books. In this document it was stated that when Zechariah the prophet had been put to death by Joash, king of Judah, the family of the monarch was soon visited by a dire calamity.</p> <p>9.17.5 For on the seventh day after the death of the prophet, one of the sons of Joash, whom he tenderly loved, suddenly died. Deducing that this affliction was a special show of Divine wrath, the king ordered his son to be buried at the feet of the prophet, as a kind of atonement for the crime against him. Such are the particulars which I have found on the subject.</p> <p>9.17.6 Although the prophet had lain under the earth for so many generations, he appeared sound: his hair was closely shorn, his nose was straight, his beard moderately grown, his head quite short, his eyes rather sunken, and concealed by the eyebrows.</p>	
Atticus, Bishop of Constantinople (406-425)		
<p>7.25.1 Meanwhile, Atticus the bishop caused the affairs of the church to flourish in an extraordinary manner. He administered all things with prudence and incited the people to virtue by his instruction.</p> <p>7.25.2 Perceiving that the church was on the point of being divided, for the Johannites assembled apart, he ordered that mention of John should be made in the prayers, as was customary to be done of the other deceased bishops. By this means he thought that many would be led to return to the Church.</p> <p>7.25.3 He was so generous that he not only provided for the poor of his own parishes, but sent contributions to supply the wants and promote the comfort of the inhabitants of the neighboring cities also.</p>		

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<p>7.25.4 On one occasion he sent to Calliopius, a presbyter of the church at Nicaea, three hundred pieces of gold and he also sent the following letter.</p> <p>7.25.5 “Atticus to Calliopius—salutations in the Lord. I have been informed that there are ten thousand poor people whose condition demands the compassion of the pious in your city. I say ten thousand, emphasizing their great number rather than using the number precisely.</p> <p>7.25.6 Therefore, since I have received a sum of money from him, who with a bountiful hand is wont to supply faithful stewards, and since it happens that some are pressed by want, that those who have may be proved, who do not minister to the needy yet—take, my friend, these three hundred pieces of gold and dispose of them as you may think fit.</p> <p>7.25.7 It will be your care, I doubt not, to distribute to such as are ashamed to beg and not to those who have sought to feed themselves at others’ expense throughout life.</p> <p>7.25.8 In bestowing these alms, make no distinction on religious grounds, but feed the hungry whether they agree with us in sentiment, or not.”</p> <p>7.25.9 Thus did Atticus consider even the poor who were at a distance from him. He also labored to abolish the superstitions of certain persons.</p> <p>7.25.10 For, having learned that those who had separated themselves from the Novatians, on account of the Jewish Passover, had transported the body of Sabbatius from the island of Rhodes—for in that island he had died in exile—and after burying it, were accustomed to pray at his grave, he caused the body to be disinterred at night and deposited in a private sepulcher. In finding his tomb had been opened, those who had formerly paid their adorations at that place stopped honoring that tomb from then on.</p> <p>7.25.11 Moreover, he showed a great deal of taste in the application of names to places. To a port in the mouth of the Euxine sea, anciently called Pharmaceus, he gave the name Therapeia, because he would not have</p>		

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<p>a place where religious assemblies were held dishonored by an inauspicious name.</p> <p>7.25.12 Another place, a suburb of Constantinople, he termed Argyropolis, for this reason.</p> <p>7.25.13 Chrysopolis is an ancient port situated at the head of the Bosphorus, and is mentioned by several of the early writers, especially Strabo, Nicolaus Damascenus, and the illustrious Xenophon in the sixth book of his Anabasis of Cyrus. Again, in the first of his Hellenica he says about it, "Alcibiades, having walled it round, established a toll in it. For all who sailed out of Pontus were accustomed to pay tithes there."</p> <p>7.25.14 Atticus saw that the former place was directly opposite Chrysopolis, and very delightfully situated. Therefore, he declared that it was most fitting that it should be called Argyropolis. As soon as he said this, it firmly established the name.</p> <p>7.25.15 When some people said to him that the Novatians ought not to be permitted to hold their assemblies within the cities, he replied, "Do you not know that they were fellow-sufferers with us in the persecution under Constantius and Valens? Besides, they are witnesses to our creed, for although they separated from the church a long while ago, they have never introduced any innovations concerning the faith."</p> <p>7.25.16 Visiting Nicaea on account of the ordination of a bishop and seeing Asclepiades, bishop of the Novatians, who was very aged, he asked him, "How many years have you been a bishop?" When he answered that he had been a bishop for fifty years, [Sisinnius] said "You are a happy man, to have had charge of so 'good a work' for such a length of time."</p> <p>7.25.17 To the same Asclepiades he observed: "I commend Novatus, but I can by no means approve of the Novatians." And when Asclepiades, surprised at this strange remark, said, "What is the meaning of your remark, bishop?"</p> <p>7.25.18 Atticus gave him this reason for the distinction. "I approve of Novatus for refusing to commune with those who had sacrificed, for I myself</p>		

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<p>would have done the same. But I cannot praise the Novatians, for they exclude laymen from communion for very trivial offenses.”</p> <p>7.25.19 Asclepiades answered, “There are many other ‘sins unto death,’ as the Scriptures term them, besides sacrificing to idols. On account of these you only excommunicate ecclesiastics, but we [excommunicate] laymen also, reserving to God alone the power of pardoning them.”</p> <p>7.25.20 Atticus had a presentiment of his own death, for at his departure from Nicaea, he said to Calliopius, a presbyter of that place, “Hasten to Constantinople before autumn if you wish to see me again alive, for if you delay beyond that time, you will not find me surviving.”</p> <p>7.25.21 Nor did he err in this prediction, for he died on the 10th of October, in the 21st year of his episcopate, under the eleventh consulate of Theodosius, and the first of Valentinian Caesar.</p> <p>7.25.22 The Emperor Theodosius, on his way from Thessalonica, did not reach Constantinople in time for his funeral, for Atticus had been placed in the grave one day before the emperor’s arrival.</p> <p>7.25.23 Not long afterwards, on the 23rd of the same month, October, the young Valentinian was proclaimed Augustus.</p>		
426 – Sisinnius becomes bishop of Constantinople		
<p>7.26.1 After the death of Atticus, there arose a strong contest about the election of a successor, some proposing one person, and some another. One party, they say, was urgent in favor of a presbyter named Philip. Another wished to promote Proclus who was also a presbyter.</p> <p>7.26.2 But the general desire of the people was that the bishopric should be conferred on Sisinnius. This person was also a presbyter but held no ecclesiastical office within the city, having been appointed to the sacred ministry in a church at Elaea, a village in the suburbs of Constantinople. This village is situated across the harbor from the city, and on account of an ancient custom the</p>		

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<p>whole population annually assembled for the celebration of our Saviour's ascension in it.</p> <p>7.26.3 All of the laity were warmly attached to the man because he was famous for his piety and especially because he was diligent in the care of the poor, even 'beyond his power.'</p> <p>7.26.4 The earnestness of the laity prevailed, and Sisinnius was ordained on the twenty-eighth day of February, under the following consulate, which was the twelfth of Theodosius, and the second of Valentinian.</p> <p>7.26.5 The presbyter Philip was so chagrined that they preferred another to himself, that he even introduced the subject into his Christian History, making some very censorious remarks, both about the person ordained and those who had ordained him and much more severely on the laity. But he said such things as I cannot by any means commit to writing, since I do not approve of his unadvised action in writing them. I do not deem it unseasonable, however, to give some notice here of him and of his works.</p>		
The historian, Philip of Side		
<p>7.27.1 Philip was a native of Side. Side is a city of Pamphylia. From this place also Troilus the sophist came, to whom Philip boasted himself to be nearly related.</p> <p>7.27.2 He was a deacon and was thus admitted to the privilege of familiar discourse with John Chrysostom, the bishop. He labored thoroughly in literature and besides making very considerable literary attainments, he formed an extensive collection of books in every branch of knowledge. Copying the Asiatic style, he became the author of many treatises, attempting among other things a refutation of the Emperor Julian's treatises against the Christians and compiled a Christian History, which he divided into thirty-six books.</p> <p>7.27.3 Each of these books occupied several volumes, so that they amounted altogether to nearly one thousand, and the mere argument of each volume equaled the size of the volume itself.</p>		

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<p>7.27.4 This composition he entitled a Christian History, not an Ecclesiastical History, and he has grouped together an abundance of very heterogeneous materials in it, wishing to show that he was not ignorant of philosophical and scientific learning. It contains a miscellaneous group of geometrical theorems, astronomical speculations, mathematical calculations, and musical principles, with geographical sketches of islands, mountains, forests, and various other unimportant matters.</p> <p>7.27.5 By forcing such irrelevant details into connection with his subject, he has rendered his work a very loose production. It is useless, in my opinion, to both the ignorant and the learned. For the illiterate are incapable of appreciating the loftiness of his diction and those who are really competent to form a just estimate condemn his wearisome repetition.</p> <p>7.27.6 But let everyone exercise his own judgment concerning these books according to his taste. All I have to add is that he has confounded the chronological order of the events he describes.</p> <p>7.27.7 For, after relating what took place in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius, he immediately goes back to the times of the bishop Athanasius. He does this sort of thing frequently.</p> <p>7.27.8 But enough has been said of Philip. We must now mention what happened under the episcopate of Sisinnius.</p>		
Sisinnius and Proclus		
<p>7.28.1 When the bishop of Cyzicus died, Sisinnius ordained Proclus to the bishopric of that city. But while he was preparing to depart there, the inhabitants acted against him, by electing an ascetic named Dalmatius.</p> <p>7.28.2 They did this in disregard of a law which forbade them from ordaining of a bishop without the sanction of the bishop of Constantinople. But they pretended that this was a special privilege granted by Atticus personally.</p> <p>7.28.3 Proclus therefore continued without his own church, but he acquired notoriety for his sermons in the</p>		

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<p>churches of Constantinople. We shall however speak of him more in an appropriate place.</p> <p>7.28.4 Sisinnius survived his appointment to the bishopric by barely two entire years and was removed by death on the 24th of December, in the consulate of Hierius and Ardaburius.</p> <p>7.28.5 For his temperance, integrity of life, and benevolence to the poor, he was deservedly famous. Moreover, he was singularly friendly and honest in disposition and this made him rather averse to business, so that he was considered lazy by men of active habits.</p>		
428 – Nestorius becomes bishop of Constantinople		
<p>7.29.1 After the death of Sisinnius, on account of the spirit of ambitious rivalry displayed by the clergy of Constantinople, the emperors resolved that no one from that church should fill the vacant bishopric, even though many eagerly desired to have Philip ordained. Just as many were in favor of the election of Proclus. They therefore sent for a stranger from Antioch.</p> <p>7.29.2 His name was Nestorius, a native of Germanicia, known for his excellent voice and fluency of speech, qualifications which they judged important for the instruction of the people.</p> <p>7.29.3 After three months had elapsed Nestorius was brought from Antioch. He was greatly praised by some for his temperance. But what sort of a disposition he was in other respects, those who possessed any discernment were able to perceive from his first sermon.</p> <p>7.29.4 He was ordained on the 10th of April, under the consulate of Felix and Taurus, and he immediately uttered these famous words before all the people in addressing the emperor:</p> <p>7.29.5 “My prince, give me the earth purged of heretics and I will give you heaven as a recompense. Assist me in destroying heretics and I will assist you in vanquishing the Persians.”</p> <p>7.29.6 Now although these utterances were extremely gratifying to some of the multitude, who cherished a senseless disgust for the very name of heretic. Yet those, as I have said, who were skillful in predicting a man’s</p>		

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<p>character from his expressions, did not fail to detect his foolish mind and his violent, proud temperament.</p> <p>7.29.7 Because he had burst forth into such zeal without being able to contain himself for even the shortest space of time and to use the proverbial phrase, “before he had tasted the water of the city,” he showed himself to be a furious persecutor.</p> <p>7.29.8 Accordingly, on the fifth day after his ordination, he decided to demolish a chapel in which the Arians were accustomed to perform their devotion privately. He drove these people to desperation.</p> <p>7.29.9 When they saw their chapel being destroyed, they threw fire into it and the fire spread on all sides, reducing many of the adjacent buildings to ashes. A tumult arose on account of this throughout the city and the Arians, zealous to avenge themselves, prepared for that purpose. But God, the guardian of the city, did not allow the mischief to gather to a climax.</p> <p>7.29.10 From then on, however, they branded Nestorius as an “arsonist.” Not only the heretics said this, but also those also of his own faith. For he could not rest but sought every means of harassing those who embraced other confession and constantly disturbed the public tranquility.</p> <p>7.29.11 He frustrated the Novatians as well, because he was jealous of Paul, their bishop, who was respected everywhere for his piety. But the emperor checked his fury with a reprimand.</p> <p>7.29.12 I think it is proper to pass by in silence the misfortunes he brought upon the Quartodecimans throughout Asia, Lydia, and Caria and the multitudes who perished in a popular tumult which he caused at Miletus and Sardis.</p> <p>7.29.13 The punishment he suffered for all these atrocities and for that unbridled freedom of speech which he indulged in, I will mention somewhat later.</p>		
428 – Death of Theodore of Mopsuestia		
		5.40.1 When the divine Theodore was ruling the church of Antioch, Theodore, bishop of Mopsuestia, a doctor of the whole church and successful combatant

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		<p>against every heretical phalanx, ended this life. He had enjoyed the teaching of the great Diodorus, and was the friend and fellow-worker of the holy John, for they both together benefited by the spiritual draughts given by Diodorus.</p> <p>5.40.2 Six-and-thirty years he had spent in his bishopric, fighting against the forces of Arius and Eunomius, struggling against the piratical band of Apollinarius, and finding the best pasture for God's sheep. His brother Polychronius was the excellent bishop of Apamea, a man gifted with great eloquence and of illustrious character.</p>
430 – The Burgundians embrace Christianity		
<p>7.30.1 I must now relate an event well worthy of being recorded, which happened about this time. There is a barbarous nation dwelling beyond the Rhine, called Burgundians. They lead a peaceful life, for being almost all artisans, they support themselves by the doing of their trades.</p> <p>7.30.2 By making constant attacks on these people, the Huns devastated their country and often destroyed great numbers of them. Therefore, in desperation, the Burgundians resolved not to resort to any human being but to commit themselves to the protection of some god.</p> <p>7.30.3 Having seriously considered that the God of the Romans mightily defended those who feared him, they all embraced the faith of Christ with common consent. Going therefore to one of the cities of Gaul, they requested the bishop to grant them Christian baptism.</p> <p>7.30.4 He ordered them to fast seven days, instructed them in the elementary principles of the faith, and baptized on the eighth day. Then he dismissed them.</p> <p>7.30.5 Accordingly, becoming confident, they marched against their invaders. Nor were they disappointed in their hope.</p> <p>7.30.6 The king of the Huns, Uptar by name, had died in the night from glutting himself. The Burgundians attacked the people without a commander-in-chief and although they were few in numbers and their opponents very many, they obtained a complete victory. The</p>		

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<p>Burgundians were altogether only three thousand men and they destroyed no less than ten thousand of the enemy. From then on this nation became zealously attached to the Christian religion.</p> <p>7.30.7 About the same time Barbas bishop of the Arians died, on the 24th of June, under the thirteenth consulate of Theodosius, and the third of Valentinian, and Sabbatius was constituted his successor. Enough has been said of these matters.</p>		
Nestorius harasses the sect of the Macedonians		
<p>7.31.1 Nestorius indeed acted contrary to the custom of the Church and caused himself to be hated in other ways also, as is evident from what happened during his episcopate.</p> <p>7.31.2 For Anthony, bishop of Germa, a city of the Hellespont, emboldened by the example of Nestorius in his intolerance of heretics, began to persecute the Macedonians, under the pretext of carrying out the intentions of the patriarch.</p> <p>7.31.3 The Macedonians for some time endured his annoyance. But when Anthony proceeded to greater persecutions, unable to bear his harsh treatment any longer, they were led to a sad desperation and, hiring two men who valued profit the most and violence second, they assassinated their tormenter.</p> <p>7.31.4 When the Macedonians had carried this crime out, Nestorius took advantage of the situation to increase his violence against them and prevailed on the emperor to take away their churches.</p> <p>7.31.5 They were therefore deprived not only of the churches which they possessed at Constantinople, before the old walls of the imperial city, but also of those which they had at Cyzicus and many others that belonged to them in the rural districts of the Hellespont. Many of them therefore at that time came over to the Catholic church and professed the “homoousian” faith.</p> <p>7.31.6 But as the axiom says, “drunkards never want wine, nor the contentious strife,” and this was true of Nestorius, who after having exerted himself to expel</p>		

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others from the church, was himself ejected as described in the account that follows.		
Anastasius preaches against “Theotokos”		
<p>7.32.1 Nestorius had an associate whom he had brought from Antioch, a presbyter named Anastasius. He had the highest esteem for this man and consulted him in the management of his most important affairs.</p> <p>7.32.2 This Anastasius, preaching one day in the church, said, “Let no one call Mary ‘Theotokos,’ for Mary was but a woman, and it is impossible for God to be born of a woman.”</p> <p>7.32.3 These words created a great sensation and troubled many of the clergy and laity. Up to this point, they had been taught to acknowledge Christ as God and by no means to separate his humanity from his divinity on account of the arrangement of the incarnation. They listened to the voice of the apostle when he said, “Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.” [2 Cor 5:16b] And again, “Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity.” [Heb 6:1a]</p> <p>7.32.4 Great offense was taken in the church, as we have said, at what was proposed. But Nestorius was eager to establish Anastasius’ proposition—for he did not wish to have the man who was esteemed by himself found guilty of blasphemy—and so he delivered several public discourses on the subject, in which he embraced a controversial attitude and rejected the epithet Theotokos.</p> <p>7.32.5 Therefore the controversy on the subject was taken in one spirit by some and in another by others and the resulting discussion divided the church. It resembled the struggle of combatants in the dark, as all parties uttered the most confusing and contradictory assertions.</p> <p>7.32.6 Therefore Nestorius acquired the reputation among the masses of asserting the blasphemous dogma that the Lord is a mere man and attempting to force the dogmas of Paul of Samosata and Photinus on the Church.</p>		

Socrates	Sozomen	Theodoret
<p>7.32.7 So great a clamor was raised by the argument that it was necessary to convene a general council to consider of the matter in dispute.</p> <p>7.32.8 I have perused the writings of Nestorius and I have found him to be an unlearned man. I shall express the conviction of my own mind about him bluntly. I have already alluded to his faults without expressing my personal disgust, and in the same way I shall be unbiassed by the accusations of his adversaries in discrediting his merits.</p> <p>7.32.9 I cannot concede that he was either a follower of Paul of Samosata or of Photinus, or that he denied the Divinity of Christ. But he seemed scared of the term Theotokos, as though it were some terrible phantom.</p> <p>7.32.10 The fact is, the causeless alarm he showed on this subject just exposed his extreme ignorance. Being a man of natural fluency as a speaker, he was considered well educated, but, in reality, he was disgracefully illiterate. In fact, he condemned the tedious work of accurately examining the ancient expositors. Puffed up with his skill of expression, he did not pay attention to the ancients, but considered himself the greatest of all.</p> <p>7.32.11 Now he was evidently unacquainted with the fact that it was written in the ancient copies of the First Catholic epistle of John, “every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God.” [1 John 4:3]</p> <p>7.32.12 The mutilation of this passage can be attributed to those who desired to separate the Divine nature from the human economy.</p> <p>7.32.13 Or, to use the language of the early interpreters, some people have corrupted this epistle, aiming at “separating the manhood of Christ from his Deity.” But the humanity is united to the Divinity in the Savior, forming one person, not two.</p> <p>7.32.14 Because of this, the ancients, emboldened by this testimony, did not hesitate to call Mary “Theotokos.” For Eusebius Pamphili in his third book of the “Life of Constantine” writes in these terms:</p>		

Socrates	Sozomen	Theodoret
<p>7.32.15 “And in fact ‘God with us’ submitted to be born for our sake; and the place of his nativity is by the Hebrews called Bethlehem.</p> <p>7.32.16 Therefore the devout empress Helena adorned the place of the God-bearing virgin’s birth with the most splendid monuments, decorating that sacred spot with the richest ornaments.”</p> <p>7.32.17 Also Origen, in the first volume of his Commentaries on the apostle’s epistle to the Romans, gives an ample exposition of the sense in which the term Theotokos is used.</p> <p>7.32.18 It is therefore obvious that Nestorius had very little acquaintance with the treatises of the ancients.</p> <p>7.32.19 For that reason, as I observed, he objected to the word only. He does not assert Christ to be a mere man, as Photinus did or Paul of Samosata. His own published homilies fully demonstrate this. In these sermons he never discredits the proper personality of the Word of God. On the contrary, he invariably maintains that he has an essential and distinct personality and existence.</p> <p>7.32.20 Nor does he ever deny his subsistence as Photinus and the Samosatan did, and as the Manichaeans and followers of Montanus have also dared to do.</p> <p>7.32.21 Such in fact I find Nestorius, both from having myself read his own works and from the assurances of his admirers.</p> <p>7.32.22 But this idle contention of his has produced no slight unrest in the religious world.</p>		
The altar is desecrated		
<p>7.33.1 While matters were in this state an outrage happened in the church.</p> <p>7.33.2 For the foreign servants of a man of quality, having experienced harsh treatment from their master, fled from him to the church. They ran right up to the altar with their swords drawn and they could not be convinced to leave by any entreaties. They impeded the performance of the sacred services.</p>		

Socrates	Sozomen	Theodoret
<p>7.33.3 But because they obstinately maintained their position for several days, brandishing their weapons in defiance of anyone who dared to approach them—and in fact killed one of the clergy and wounded another—they were finally compelled to slay themselves.</p> <p>7.33.4 A person who was present at this desecration of the sanctuary remarked that such sacrilege was an ominous sign and, in support of his view of the matter, quoted the two following iambs of an ancient poet, “For such prognostics happen at a time / When temples are defiled by impious crime.”</p> <p>7.33.5 Nor was he who made the prediction disappointed in these inauspicious forebodings: for they signified as it seems a division among the people, and the removal of its author.</p>		
431 – The Council of Ephesus¹		
<p>7.34.1 Little time elapsed before a mandate from the emperor directed the bishops in all places to assemble at Ephesus.</p> <p>7.34.2 Therefore, immediately after the festival of Easter, Nestorius went to Ephesus escorted by a large crowd of his adherents, and found many of the bishops already there.</p> <p>7.34.3 Cyril bishop of Alexandria was delayed and did not arrive till near Pentecost. Five days after Pentecost, Juvenal bishop of Jerusalem arrived. While John of Antioch was still absent, those who were now congregated entered into the consideration of the question;</p> <p>7.34.4 Cyril of Alexandria began a sharp skirmish of words to terrify Nestorius, for he strongly disliked him.</p> <p>7.34.5 When many had declared that Christ was God, Nestorius said: “I cannot call him, who was two or three months old, God. I am clear of your blood and shall not come among you in the future.” Having uttered these words, he left the assembly and afterwards held meetings with the other bishops who had sentiments similar to his own.</p>		

¹ For more information on this council, cf. <https://www.fourthcentury.com/council-of-ephesus-iii-ad-431/>

Socrates	Sozomen	Theodoret
<p>7.34.6 Accordingly, those who were present were divided into two factions. The section which supported Cyril formed a council and summoned Nestorius. But he refused to meet them and ignored them until the arrival of John of Antioch.</p> <p>7.34.7 Therefore the supporters of Cyril proceeded to examine the public discourses of Nestorius which he had preached on the subject in dispute. After deciding that they contained distinct blasphemy against the Son of God from a repeated inspection, they deposed him.</p> <p>7.34.8 When this happened, the followers of Nestorius formed another council apart and deposed Cyril along with Memnon bishop of Ephesus.</p> <p>7.34.9 Not long after these events, John bishop of Antioch made his appearance. After being informed of what had taken place, he pronounced unqualified censure on Cyril as the author of all this confusion, in having so swiftly proceeded to the removal of Nestorius. At this, Cyril and Juvenal avenged themselves on John and they deposed him as well.</p> <p>7.34.10 When affairs reached this confusing condition, Nestorius saw that the conflict which had arisen was destroying communion. Therefore, in bitter regret, he called Mary Theotokos and cried out: "Let Mary be called Theotokos, if you will, and let all arguing cease."</p> <p>7.34.11 But although he recanted, no notice was taken of it. His removal was not revoked and he was banished to the Oasis, where he still remains.</p> <p>7.34.12 Such was the conclusion of this Synod. These things were done on the 28th of June, under the consulate of Bassus and Antiochus.</p> <p>7.34.13 When he had returned to his bishopric and had convened several bishops, he deposed Cyril, who had also returned to his see. But soon afterwards they set aside their enmity and accepted each other as friends and they mutually reinstated each other in their episcopal chairs.</p> <p>7.34.14 After the removal of Nestorius, a mighty turmoil prevailed through the churches of Constantinople. For the people was divided on account</p>		

Socrates	Sozomen	Theodoret
<p>of what we have already called his unfortunate utterances.</p> <p>7.34.15 The clergy unanimously anathematized him. Such is the sentence which we Christians are accustomed to pronounce on those who have advanced any blasphemous doctrines. Thus we set up their impiety that it may be publicly exposed, as if it were on a pillar, to universal hatred.</p>		