

## Constantine to the Bishops at Tyre (CPG 2123.34)

<i>Reference:</i>	Mel. 35, CPG 2123.34, CPG 8549, FNS 79
<i>Incipit:</i>	Ἐγὼ μὲν ἀγνοῶ
<i>Date:</i>	6 November 335
<i>Greek Text:</i>	Athanasius, Apol. Sec. 86; Anonymous Church History 3.18; Sozomen, <i>HE</i> 2.28.2-12; Socrates, <i>HE</i> 1.34
<i>English Translation:</i>	NPNF <sup>2</sup> vol. 4, pp. 145-146, adapted for FCC by SMT

Although the bishops of Egypt requested that Constantine be involved in this trial in [Mel. 32](#), that did not happen. So Athanasius took it upon himself to approach Constantine in person to request that this trial be held before him. His pleas did not go unheard, as Constantine requested the entire Council to go to his court that he may hold a hearing. However, the Eusebians would prevent other bishops from meeting with Constantine, and there they would only lay before the emperor the charge that Athanasius would withhold corn shipments from Egypt to the rest of the empire. This angered Constantine so much so that he exiled Athanasius to Gaul.

The Greek text below is that of Opitz as found in AW 2.4:86. The English translation has been adapted from NPNF<sup>2</sup> vol. 4, pp. 145-146 by SMT for FCC.

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Νικητῆς Κωνσταντῖνος Μέγιστος Σεβαστὸς τοῖς ἐν Τύρῳ συνελθοῦσιν ἐπισκόποις.	Constantine, Victor, Maximus, Augustus, to the Bishops assembled at Tyre.
Ἐγὼ μὲν ἀγνοῶ, τίνα ἐστὶ τὰ ὑπὸ τῆς ὑμετέρας συνόδου μετὰ θορύβου καὶ χειμῶνος κριθέντα, δοκεῖ δέ πως ὑπό τινος ἀταξίας παραχῶδους ἢ ἀλήθειας διεστράφθαι, ὑμῶν δηλαδὴ διὰ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς πλησίον ἐρεσχελίαν, ἣν ἀήττητον εἶναι βούλεσθε, τὰ τῷ θεῷ ἀρέσκοντα μὴ συνορώντων.	I know not what the decisions are which you have arrived at in your council amidst noise and tumult; but somehow the truth seems to have been perverted in the consequence of certain confusions and disorder, in that you, through your mutual contentiousness which you are resolved should prevail, have failed to perceive what is pleasing to God.
ἀλλ' ἔσται τῆς θείας προνοίας ἔργον καὶ τὰ τῆς φιλονεικίας ταύτης κατὰ φανερώς ἀλόντα διασκεδάσαι καὶ ἡμῖν διαρρήδην ἐπιδείξαι εἴ τινα τῆς ἀληθείας αὐτόθι συνελθόντες ἐποιήσασθε φροντίδα καὶ εἴ τὰ κεκριμένα χωρὶς τινος χάριτος καὶ ἀπεχθείας ἐκρίνατε.	However, it will rest with Divine Providence to disperse the mischief which manifestly is found to arise from this contentious spirit, and to show plainly to us, whether you, while assembled in that place, have had any regard for the truth, and whether you have made you decisions uninfluenced by either favor or enmity.
τοιγαροῦν ἠπειγμένως πάντας ὑμᾶς πρὸς τὴν ἐμὴν συνελθεῖν εὐσέβειαν βούλομαι, ἵνα τὴν τῶν πεπραγμένων ὑμῖν ἀκρίβειαν δι' ὑμῶν αὐτῶν παραστήσητε.	Therefore I wish you all to assemble with all speed before my piety, in order that you may render in person a true account of your proceedings.

<p>τίνος δὲ ἔνεκεν ταῦτα γράψαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐδικαίωσα καὶ ὑμᾶς πρὸς ἑμαυτὸν διὰ τοῦ γράμματος καλῶ, ἐκ τῶν ἐπομένων γνώσεσθε.</p>	<p>The reason why I have thought good to write thus to you and why I summon you before me by letter, you will learn from what I am going to say.</p>
<p>ἐπιβαίνοντί μοι λοιπὸν τῆς ἐπωνύμου ἡμῶν καὶ πανευδαίμονος πατρίδος τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως (συνέβαινε δὲ τῆνικαῦτα ἐφ' ἵππου ὀχεῖσθαι) ἐξαίφνης Ἀθανάσιος ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἐν μέσῃ τῇ λεωφόρῳ μετὰ ἑτέρων τινῶν, οὓς περὶ αὐτὸν εἶχεν, ἀπροσδόκητος οὕτως προσῆλθεν, ὡς καὶ παρέχειν ἐκπλήξεως ἀφορμὴν.</p>	<p>As I was entering on a late occasion our all-happy home to Constantinople, which bears our name (I chanced at the time to be on horseback), all of a sudden the Bishop Athanasius, with certain others whom he had with him, approached me in the middle of the road, so unexpectedly as to occasion me much amazement.</p>
<p>μαρτυρεῖ μοι γὰρ ὁ πάντων ἔφορος θεὸς ὡς οὐδὲ ἐπιγινῶναι αὐτὸν ὅστις ἦν, παρὰ τὴν πρώτην ὄψιν ἠδυνήθην, εἰ μὴ τῶν ἡμετέρων τινές, καὶ ὅστις ἦν καὶ τὴν ἀδικίαν ἣν πέπονθε, διηγῆσασθαι πυνθανομένοις, ὡσπερ εἰκόσ, ἀπήγγειλαν ἡμῖν.</p>	<p>God, who knows all things, is my witness, that I should have been unable at first sight even to recognize him had not some of my attendants, on my naturally inquiring of them, informed me both who it was, and under what injustice he was suffering.</p>
<p>ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὔτε διηλέχθην αὐτῷ κατ' ἐκεῖνο καιροῦ οὔτε ὀμιλίας ἐκοινώνησα. ὡς δὲ ἐκεῖνος μὲν ἀκουσθῆναι ἠξίου, ἐγὼ δὲ παρητούμην καὶ μικροῦ δεῖν ἀπελαύνεσθαι αὐτὸν ἐκέλευον, μετὰ πλείονος παρρησίας οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἑαυτῷ παρ' ἡμῶν ἢ τὴν ὑμετέραν ἄφιξιν ἠξίωσεν ὑπάρξαι, ἵνα ὑμῶν παρόντων ἂ πέπονθεν ἀναγκαιῶς ἀποδύρασθαι δυναθῆ.</p>	<p>I did not however enter into any conversation with him at that time, nor grant him an interview; but when he requested to be heard I was refusing, and all but gave orders for his removal; when with increasing boldness he claimed only this favor, that you should be summoned to appear, that he might have an opportunity of complaining before me in your presence of the ill-treatment he has met with.</p>
<p>ὅπερ ἐπειδὴ εὐλόγον εἶναι μοι καὶ τοῖς καιροῖς πρέπον κατεφαίνετο, ἀσμένως ταῦτα γραφῆναι πρὸς ὑμᾶς προσέταξα, ἵνα πάντες, ὅσοι τὴν σύνοδον τὴν ἐν Τύρῳ γενομένην ἀνεπληρώσατε, ἀνυπερθέτως εἰς τὸ στρατόπεδον τῆς ἐμῆς ἡμερότητος ἐπειχθῆτε τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῖς ἐπιδείξοντες τὸ τῆς ὑμετέρας κρίσεως καθαρὸν τε καὶ ἀδιάστροφον ἐπ' ἐμοῦ δηλαδὴ, ὃν τοῦ θεοῦ εἶναι γνήσιον θεράποντα οὐδ' ἂν ὑμεῖς ἀρνηθῆτε.</p>	<p>As this appeared to me to be a reasonable request and suitable to the times, I willingly ordered this letter to be written to you, in order that all of you who constituted the council which was held at Tyre, might hasten without delay to the court of my clemency, so as to prove by facts that you had passed an impartial and uncorrupt judgment. This, I say, you must do before me, whom not even you will deny to be a true servant of God.</p>
<p>τοιγαροῦν διὰ τῆς ἐμῆς πρὸς θεὸν λατρείας τὰ πανταχοῦ εἰρηνεύεται καὶ τῶν βαρβάρων αὐτῶν τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὄνομα γνησίως εὐλογούντων, οἱ μέχρι νῦν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἠγνόουν· δῆλον δὲ ὅτι ὁ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀγνοῶν οὐδὲ τὸν θεὸν ἐπιγινώσκει.</p>	<p>For indeed through my devotion to God, peace is preserved everywhere, and the name of God is truly worshiped even by the barbarians, who have hitherto been ignorant of the truth. And it is manifest, that he who is ignorant of the truth, does not know God either.</p>
<p>πλὴν ὅμως, καθὰ προεῖρηται, καὶ οἱ βάρβαροι νῦν δι' ἐμὲ τὸν θεοῦ θεράποντα γνήσιον ἐπέγνωσαν τὸν θεὸν καὶ εὐλαβεῖσθαι μεμάθησαν, ὃν ὑπερασπίζειν μου πανταχοῦ καὶ προνοεῖσθαι τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῖς ἤσθοντο· ὅθεν μάλιστα καὶ ἴσασι τὸν θεόν, ὃν ἐκεῖνοι μὲν διὰ τὸν πρὸς ἡμᾶς φόβον εὐλαβοῦνται, ἡμεῖς δὲ οἱ τὰ ἅγια μυστήρια τῆς εὐμενείας αὐτοῦ δοκοῦντες</p>	<p>Nevertheless, as I said before, even the barbarians have now come to the knowledge of God, by means of me, His true servant, and have learned to fear Him whom they perceive from actual facts to be my shield and protector everywhere. And from this chiefly they have come to know God, whom they fear through the</p>

<p>προβάλλεσθαι (οὐ γὰρ ἂν εἶποιμι φυλάττειν), ἡμεῖς, φημί, οὐδὲν πράττομεν ἢ τὰ πρὸς διχόνοιαν καὶ μῖσος συντείνοντα καὶ ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν τὰ πρὸς ὄλεθρον τοῦ ἀνθρώπινου γένους ἔχοντα τὴν ἀναφορὰν.</p>	<p>dread which they have of me. Be we, who are supposed to set forth (for I will not say to guard) the holy mysteries of His Goodness, we, I say, engage hatred, and, in short, whatever contributes to the destruction of mankind.</p>
<p>ἀλλ' ἐπείχθητε, καθὰ προείρηται, πρὸς ἡμᾶς, σπουδάσατε πάντες ἢ τάχος πεπεισμένοι ὡς παντὶ σθένει κατορθῶσαι πειράσομαι, ὅπως ἐν τῷ νόμῳ θεοῦ ταῦτα ἐξαιρέτως ἀδιάπτωτα φυλάττηται, οἷς οὔτε ψόγος οὔτε κακοδοξία τις δυνήσεται προσπλακῆναι, διασκεδασθέντων δηλαδὴ καὶ συντριβέντων ἄρδην καὶ παντελῶς ἀφανισθέντων τῶν ἐχθρῶν τοῦ νόμου, οἵτινες ἐπὶ προσχῆματι τοῦ ἁγίου ὀνόματος ποικίλας καὶ διαφόρους βλασφημίας παρέχουσι.</p>	<p>But hasten, as I said before, and all of you with all speed come to us, being persuaded that I shall endeavor with all my might to amend what is amiss, so that those things especially may be preserved and firmly established in the law of God, to which no blame nor dishonor may attach; while the enemies of His holy name bring in manifold and numerous blasphemies, shall be scattered abroad, and entirely crushed, and utterly destroyed.</p>

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