Shorter writings

Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) (AD 451)

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Session 1 Extracts

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 93.) Paschasinus, the most reverend bishop and legate of the Apostolic See, stood up in the midst with his most reverend colleagues and said: We received directions at the hands of the most blessed and apostolic bishop of the Roman city, which is the head of all the churches, which directions say that Dioscorus is not to be allowed a seat in this assembly, but that if he should attempt to take his seat he is to be cast out.This instruction we must carry out; if now your holiness so commands let him be expelled or else we leave. The most glorious judges and the full senate said: What special charge do you prefer against the most reverend bishop Dioscorus? Paschasinus, the most reverend bishop and legate of the Apostolic See, said: Sincehe has come, it is necessary that objection be made to him.

The most glorious judges and the whole senate said: In accordance with what has been said, let the charge under which he lies, be specifically made. Lucentius, the most reverend bishop having the place of the Apostolic See, said: Let him give a reason for his judgment. For he undertook to give sentence against one over whom he had no jurisdiction. And he dared to hold a synod without the authority of the Apostolic See, a thing which had never taken place nor can take place. Paschasinus the most reverend bishop, holding the place of the Apostolic See, said: We cannot go counter to the decrees of the most blessed and apostolic bishop [”Pope” for ”bishop” in the Latin], who governs the Apostolic See, nor against the ecclesiastical canons nor the patristic traditions. The most glorious judges and the full senate, said: It is proper that you shouldset forth specifically in what he hath goneastray. Lucentius, the venerable bishop and holding the place of the Apostolic See, said: We will not suffer so great a wrong to be done us and you, as that he who is come to be judged should sit down [as one to give judgment].The glorious judges and the whole senate said: If you hold the office of judge, you ought not to defend yourself as if you were to be judged.

And when Dioscorus the most religious bishop of Alexandria at the bidding of the most glorious judges and of the sacred assembly (th=j i9era=j sugklh/tou) had sat down in the midst, and the most reverend Roman bishops also had sat down in their proper places, and kept silence, Eusebius, the most reverend bishop of the city of Dorylaeum, stepping into the midst, said: He then presented a petition, and the Acts of the Latrocinium were read. Also the Acts of the council of Constantinople under Flavian against Eutyches (col. 175).] And when

they were read, the most glorious judges and immense assembly (u9perfuh\j su/gklhtoj) said: What do the most reverend bishops of the present holy synod say? When he thus expounded the faith did Flavian, of holy memory, preserve, the orthodox and catholic religion, or did he in any respect err concerning it? Paschasinus the most reverend bishop, representing the Apostolic See, said; Flavian of blessed memory hath most holily and perfectly expounded the faith. His faith and exposition agrees with the epistle of the most blessed and apostolic man, the bishop of Rome.

Anatolius the most reverend archbishop of Constantinople said; The blessed Fla- vian hath beautifully and orthodoxly set forth the faith of our fathers. Lucentius, the most reverend bishop, and legate of the Apostolic See, said; Since the faith of Flavian of blessed memory agreeswith the Apostolic See and the tradition of the fathers it is just that the sentence by which he was condemned by the heretics should be turned back upon them by this most holy synod. Maximus the most reverend bishop of Antioch in Syria, said: Archbishop Flavian of blessed memory hath set forth the faith orthodoxly and in accordance with the most beloved-of-God and most holy Archbishop Leo. And this we all receive with zeal. Thalassius, the most reverend bishop ofCaesarea in Cappadocia said; Flavian of blessed memory hath spoken in accordance with Cyril of blessed memory. [And so, one after another, the bishops expressed their opinions. The reading of the acts of the Council of Constantinople was then continued.]

And at this point of the reading, Dioscorus, the most reverend Archbishop of Alexandria said, I receive "the of two;" "the two" I do not receive (to\ e0k du/o de/xomai : to\ du/o, ou9 de/xomai). I am forced to be impudent, but the matter is one which touches my soul. [After a few remarks the reading was continued and the rest of the acts of the Latrocinium of Ephesus completed. The judgesthen postponed to the morrow the setting forth a decree on the faith but intimated that Dioscorus and his associates should suffer the punishment to which they unjustly sentenced Flavian. This met with the approval of all the bishops except those of Illyrica who said: "We all have erred, let us all be pardoned." (col. 323.)] The most glorious judges and the whole senate said; Let each one of the most reverend bishops of the present synod, hasten to set forth how he believes, writing without any fear, but placing the fear of God before his eyes; knowing that our most divine and pious lord believes according to the ecthesis of the three hundred and eighteen holy fathers at Nice, and according to the ecthesis of the one hundred and fifty after them, and according to the Canonical epistles and ectheses of the holy fathers Gregory, Basil, Athanasius, Hilary, Ambrose, and according to the two canonical epistles of Cyril, which were confirmed and published in the first Council of Ephesus, nor does he in any point depart from the faith of the same. For the most reverend archbishop of Old Rome, Leo, appears to have sent a letter to Flavian of blessed memory, with reference to Eutyches's unbelieving doubt which was springing up against the Catholic Church.End of the first Actio.

Session 2 Extracts Part 1

(L. and C., Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 338.) When all were seated before the rails of the most holy altar, the most superb and glorious judges and the great (u9perfuh\j) senate said; At a former meeting the question was examined of the condemnation of the most reverend bishop Flavian of blessed memory and Eusebius, and it was patent to you all with what justice and accuracy the examination was conducted: and it was proved that they had been cruelly and improperly condemned. What course we should pursue in this matter became clear after your deliberations. Now however the question to be enquired into, studied, anddecided, is how the true faith is to be established, which is the chief end for which this Council has been assembled. As we know that ye are to render to God a strict account not only for your own souls in particular, but as well for the souls of all of us who desire rightly to be taught all things that pertain to religion, and that all ambiguity be taken away, by the agreement and consent of all the holy fathers, and by their united exposition and doctrine; hasten therefore without any fear of pleasing or displeasing, to set forth (e0kqe/sqai) the pure faith, so that they who do not seem to believe with all the rest, may be brought to unity through the acknowledging of the truth. For we wish you to know that the most divine and pious lord of the whole world and ourselves hold the orthodox faith set forth by the 318 and by the 150 holy fathers, and what also has been taught by the rest of the most holy and glorious fathers, and in accordance with this is our belief.

The most reverend bishops cried; Any other setting forth (e!kqesin a!llhn) no one makes, neither will we attempt it, neither will we dare to set forth [anything new] (e0kqesqai). For the fathers taught, and in their writings are preserved, what things were set forth by them, and further than this we can say nothing. Cecropius, the most reverend bishop of Sebastopol said: The matters concerning Eutyches have been examined, and the most holy archbishop of Rome has given a form (tu/pon) which we follow and to his letter we all [i. e. those in his neighbourhood] have subscribed. The most reverend bishops cried: These are the opinions of all of us. The expositions (e0kteqe/nta) already made are quite sufficient: it is not lawful to make any other. The most glorious judges and great senate said, If it pleases your reverence, let the most holy patriarch of each province, choosing one or two of his own province and going into the midst, and together considering the faith, make known to all what is agreed upon. So that if, as we desire, all be of one mind, all ambiguity may be

removed: But if some entertain contrary opinions (which we do not believe to be the case) we may know what their opinions are.

The most reverend bishops cried out, we make no new exposition in writing. This is the law, [i. e. of the Third Synod] which teaches that what has been set forth is sufficient. The law wills that no other exposition should be made. Let the sayings of the Fathers remain fast. Florentius, the most reverend bishop of Sardis, said, since it is not possible for those who follow the teaching of the holy Synod of Nice, which was confirmed rightly and piously at Ephesus, to draw up suddenly a declaration of faith in accordance with the faith of the holy fathers Cyril and Celestine, and of the letter of the most holy Leo, we therefore pray your magnificence to give us thee, so that we may be able to arrive at the truth of the matter with a fitting document, although so far as we are concerned, who have subscribed the letter of the most holy Leo, nothing further is needed.

Cecropius, the most reverend bishop of Sebastopol, said, The faith has been well defined by the 318 holy fathers and confirmed by the holy fathers Athanasius, Cyril, Celestine, Hilary, Basil, Gregory, and now once again by the most holy Leo: and we pray that those things which were decreed by the 318 holy fathers, and by the most holy Leo be read. The most glorious judges and great Senate said: Let there be read the expositions (e0kteqe/nta) of the 318 fathers gathered together at Nice. Eunomius, the most reverend bishop of Nicomedia read from a book [the Exposition of faith of the 318 fathers.] The Exposition of faith of the Council held at Nice. "In the consulate of Paul and Julian"etc."We believe in one God," etc. "But those who say," etc. The most reverend bishops cried out; This is the orthodox faith; this we all believe: into this we were baptized; into this we baptize: Blessed Cyril so taught: tiffs is the true faith: this is the holy faith: this is the everlasting faith: into this we were baptized: into this we baptize: we all so believe: so believes Leo, the Pope (o9 pa/paj): Cyril thus believed: Pope Leo so interpreted it.

The most glorious judges and great senate said, Let there be read what was set forth by the 150 holy fathers. Aetius, the reverend deacon of Constantinople read from a book [the creed of the 150 fathers.] The holy faith which the 150 fathers set forth as consonant to the holy and great Synod of Nice."We believe in one God," etc. All the most reverend bishops cried out: This is the faith of all of us: we all so believe. The reverend archdeacon Aetius said, There remains the letter of Cyril of holy and blessed memory, sometime bishop of the great city Alexandria, which he wrote to Nestorius, which was approved by all the most holy bishops assembled in the first Council at Ephesus, called to condemn the same Nestorius, and which was confirmed by the subscription of all. There is also another letter of the same Cyril, of blessed memory, which he wrote to John, of blessed memory, sometime bishop of the great city of Antioch, which likewise was confirmed. If it be so ordered, I shall read these.

The most glorious judges and great senate said, Let the letters of Cyril of blessed memory be read.Aetius, the Archdeacon of the imperial city Constantinople read. To the most reverend and most religious fellow-priest Nestorius, Cyril sends greeting in the Lord. [Katafluarou=si

mh\n k.t.l. Lat. Obloquuntur quidem, etc. This letter is found among the acts of the Council of Ephesus.] Likewise the same Archdeacon Aetius read [the letter of the same holy Cyril of blessed memory to John of Antioch, on the peace]. [This letter begins, Eu0fraine/qwsan oi9 ou0ranoi\ k.t.l.; and in the Latin Laetentur caeli.]

Session 2 Extracts Part 2

(L. and C., Conc., Tom. IV., col. 343.) And when these letters [i.e. Cyril's letter to Nestorius Katafluarou=si and his letter to John of Antioch Eu0fraine/oqwsan] had been read, the most reverend bishops cried out: We all so believe: Pope Leo thus believes: anathema to him who divides and to him who confounds: this is the faith of Archbishop Leo: Leo thus believes: Leo and Anatolius so believe: we all thus believe. As Cyril so believe we, all of us: eternal be the memory of Cyril: as the epistles of Cyril teach such is our mind, such has been our faith: such is our faith: thisis the mind of Archbishop Leo, so he believes, so he has written. The most glorious judges and the great senate said: Let there be read also the epistle of the most worthy Leo, Archbishop of Old Rome, the Imperial City. Beronician, the most devout clerk of the sacred consistory, read from a book handed him by Aetius, Archdeacon of the holy Church of Constantinople, the encyclical or synodical letter of the most holy Leo, the Archbishop, written to Flavian, Archbishop of Constantinople.

Session 2 Extracts Part 3

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 368.) After the reading of the foregoing epistle, the most reverend bishops cried out: This is the faith of the fathers, this is the faith of the Apostles. So we all believe, thus the orthodox believe. Anathema to him who does not thus believe. Peter has spoken thus through Leo. So taught the Apostles. Piously and truly did Leo teach, so taught Cyril. Everlasting be thememory of Cyril. Leo and Cyril taught the same thing, anathema to him who doesnot so believe. This is the true faith. Thoseof us who are orthodox thus believe. Thisis the faith of the fathers. Why were not these things read at Ephesus [i.e. at the heretical synod held there]? These are the things Dioscorus hid away. [Some explanations were asked by the Illyrian bishops and the answers were found satisfactory, but yet a delay of a few days was asked for, and some bishops petitioned for a general pardon of all who had been kept out. This proposition made great confusion, in the midst of which the session was dissolved by the judges. (Col. 371.)]

Session 3

[The imperial representatives do not seem to have been present, and after Aetius the Archdeacon of Constantinoplehad opened the Session,] Paschasinus the bishop of Lilybaeum, in the province of Silicia, and holding the place of the most holy Leo, archbishop of the Apostolic see of old Rome, said in Latin what being interpreted is as follows: It is well known to this beloved of God synod, that divine letters were sent to the blessed and apostolic pope Leo, inviting him to deign to be present at the holy synod. But since ancient custom did not sanction this, nor the general necessity of the time seemed to permit it, our littleness in the place of himself he [ta\ th=j a9gi/aj suno/dou, and therefore it is necessary that whatever things are brought into discussion should be examined by our interference (dialalia=j). [The Latin reads where I haveplaced the Greek of the ordinary text, thus,"commanded our littleness to preside inhis place over this holy council."] Therefore let the book presented by our most beloved-of-God brother, and fellow-bishop Eusebius be received, and read by the beloved of God archdeacon and primicerius of the notaries, Aetius.

And Aetius, the archdeacon and primicerius of the notaries, took the book and read as follows. [Next follows the petition of Eusebius et post nonnulla four petitions each addressed to "The most holy and beloved-of-God ecumenical archbishop and patriarch of great Rome Leo, and to the holy and ecumenical Synod assembled at Chalcedon, etc., etc. ;" The first two by deacons of Alexandria, the third by a quondam presbyter of the diocese, and the fourth by a layman also of Alexandria. After this Dioscorus was again summoned and, as he did not come, sentence was given against him, which was communicated to him in a letter contained in the acts. (L. and C., Conc., Tom IV., col. 418.) The Bishops expressed their opinions for the most part one by one, but the Roman Legates spoke together, and in their speech occurs the following (Col. 426:)] Wherefore the most holy and blessed Leo, archbishop of the great and elder Rome, through us, and through this present most holy synod together with the thrice blessed and all-glorious Peter the Apostle, who is the rock and foundation of the Catholic Church, and the foundation of the orthodox faith, hath stripped him of the episcopate, and hath alienated from him all hieratic worthiness. Therefore let this most holy and great synod sentence the before mentioned Dioscorus to the canonical penalties.[The bishops then, one by one, spoke in favour of the deposition of Dioscorus, but usually on the ground of his refusal to appear when thrice summoned.]

And when all the most holy bishops had spoken on the subject, they signed this which follows.

Session 4 Extracts

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 469.) The most magnificent and glorious judges and the great Senate said: Let the reverend council now declare what seems good concerning the faith, since those things which have already been disposed of have been made manifest. Paschasinus and Lucentius, the most reverend bishops, and Boniface the most reverend presbyter, legates of the Apostolic See through that most reverend man, bishop Paschasinus said: As the holy and blessed and Ecumenical Synod holds fast and follows the rule of faith (fidei regulam in the Latin Acts) which was set forth by the fathers at Nice, it also confirms the faith set forth by the Synod of 150 fathers gathered at Constantinople at the bidding of the great Theodosius of blessed memory. Moreover the exposition of their faith, of the illustrious Cyril of blessed memory set forth at the Council of Ephesus (in which Nestorius was condemned) is received. And in the third place the writings of that blessed man, Leo, Archbishop of all the churches, who condemned the heresy of Nestorius and Eutyches, shew what the true faith is. Likewise the holy Synod holds this faith, this it follows-nothing further can it add nor can it take aught away.

When this had been translated into Greek by Beronician, the devout secretary of the divine consistory, the most reverend bishops tried out: So we all believe, so we were baptized, so we baptize, so we have believed, so we now believe. The most glorious judges and the great senate said: Since we see that the Holy Gospels have been placed alongside of your holiness, let each one of the bishops here assembled declare whether the epistle of most blessed archbishop Leo is in accordance with the exposition of the 318 fathers assembled at Nice and with the decrees of the 150 fathers afterwards assembled in the royal city. [To this question the bishops answered one by one, until 161 separate opinions had been given, when the rest of the bishops were asked by the imperial judges to give their votes in a body (col. 508).] All the most reverend bishops cried out: We all acquiesce, we all believe thus; we are all of the same mind. So are we minded, so we believe, etc., etc.

Session 5

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 555.) Paschasinus and Lucentius the most reverend bishops and Boniface a presbyter, vicars of the Apostolic See of Rome, said: If they do not agree to the letter of that apostolic and blessed man, Pope Leo, give directions that we be given our letters of dismission, and let a synod be held there [i. e. in the West]. [A long debate then followed as to whether the decree drawn up and presented should be accepted. This seems to have been the mind of most of the bishops. At last the commissioners proposed a committee of twenty-two to meet with them and report to the council, and the Emperor imposed this with the threat that otherwise they all should be sent home and a new council called in the West. Even this did not make them yield (col. 560.)] The most reverend bishops cried out: Many years to the Emperor! Either let the definition [i.e. the one presented at this session] stand or we go. Many years to the Emperor!

Cecropius, the most reverend bishop of Sebastopol, said: We ask that the definition be read again and that those who dissent from it, and will not sign, may go about their business; for we give our consent to these things which have been so beautifully drafted, and make no criticisms. The most blessed bishops of Illyria said: Let those who contradict be made manifest. Those who contradict are Nestorians. Those who contradict, let them go to Rome. The most magnificent and most glorious judges said: Dioscorus acknowledged that he accepted the expression "of two natures," but not that there were two natures. But the most holy archbishop Leo says that there are two natures in Christ unchangeably, inseparably, unconfusedly united in the one only-begotten Son our Saviour. Which would you follow, the most holy Leo or Dioscorus? The most reverend bishops cried out: We believe as Leo. Those who contradict are Eutychians. Leo hath rightly expounded the faith.

The most magnificent and glorious judges said: Add then to the definition, according to the judgment of our most holy father Leo, that there are two natures in Christ united unchangeably, inseparably, unconfusedly. [The Committee then sat in the oratory of the most holy martyr Euphemis and afterward,s reported a definition of faith which while teaching the same doctrine was not the Tome of Leo (col. 562).]

Session 6 Extracts

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 611.) [The Emperor was present in person and addressed the Council and afterwards suggested legislation under three heads, the drafts for which were read.] After this reading, the capitulas were handed by our most sacred and pious prince to the most beloved of God Anatolius, archbishop of royal Constantinople, which is New Rome, and all the most God-beloved bishops cried out: Many years to our Emperor and Empress, the pious, the Christian. May Christ whom thou servest keep thee. These things are worthy of the faith. To the Priest, the Emperor. Thou hast straightened out the churches, victor of thine enemies, teacher of the faith. Manyyears to the pious Empress, the lover of Christ. Many years to her that is orthodox. May God save your kingdom. Ye have put down the heretics, ye have kept the faith. May hatred be far removed from your empire, and may your kingdom endure for ever!

Our most sacred and pious prince said to the holy synod: To the honour of the holy martyr Euphemia, and of your holiness, we decree that the city of Chalcedon, in which the synod of the holy faith has been held, shall have the honours of a metropolis, in name only giving it this honour, the proper dignity of the city of Nicomedia being preserved.All cried out, etc., etc.

Session 7 Decree on the Jurisdiction of Jerusalem and Antioch

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 618.) The most magnificent and glorious judges said: . . . The arrangement arrived at through the agreement of the most holy Maximus, the bishop of the city of Antioch, and of the most holy Juvenal, the bishop of Jerusalem, as the attestation of each of them declares, shall remain firm for ever, through our decree and the sentence of the holy synod; to wit, that the most holy bishop Maximus, or rather the most holy church of Antioch, shall have under its own jurisdiction the two Phoenicias and Arabia; but the most holy Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem, or rather the most holy Church which is under him, shall have under his own power the three Palestines, all imperial pragmatics and letters and penalties being done away according to the bidding of our most sacred and pious prince.

Note.
The Ballerini, in their notes to the Works of St. Leo (Migne, Pat. Lat., LV., col. 733 et seqq.), cite fragments of the Acts of this council, which if they can be trusted, shew that this matter of the rights of Antioch and Jerusalem was treated of again at a subsequent session (on Oct. 31) and determined in the same fashion. These fragments have generally been received as genuine, and have been inserted by Mansi (Toni. vii., 722 C.) in his Concilia. The notes of the Ballerini may also be read with profit, in the same volume of Migne's Latin Patrology, col. 737 et seq.

Session 12 The Decree with Regard to the Bishop of Ephesus

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 706.) The most glorious judges said: Since the proposition of the God-beloved archbishop of royal Constantinople, Anatolius, and of the most reverend bishop Paschasinus, holding the place of Leo, the most God-beloved archbishop of old Rome, which orders that because both of them [i.e., Bassianus and Stephen] acted uncanonically, neither of them should rule, nor be called bishop of the most holy church off Ephesus, and since the whole holy synod taught that uncanonically they had performed these ordinations, and had agreed with the speeches of the most reverend bishops; the most reverend Bassianus and the most reverend Stephen will be removed from the holy church of Ephesus; but they shall enjoy the episcopal dignity, and from the revenues of the before-mentioned most holy church, for theirnourishment and consolation, they shall receive each year two hundred gold pieces; and another bishop shall be ordained according to the canons for the most holy church.

And the whole holy synod cried out: This is a just sentence. This is a pious scheme. These things are fair to look upon. The most reverend bishop Bassianus said: Pray give order that what was stolen from me be restored. The most glorious judges said: If anytiring belonging to the most reverend bishop Bassianus personally has been taken from him, either by the most reverend bishop Stephen, or by any other persons whatsoever, this shall be restored, after judicial proof, by them who took it away or caused it to be taken.

Session 13 Decree with Regard to Nicomedia

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 715.) The most glorious judges said [after the reading of the imperial letters was finished]: These divine letters say nothing whatever with regard to the episcopate, but both refer to honour belonging to metropolitan cities. But the sacred letters of Valentinian and Valens of divine memory, which then bestowed metropolitan rights upon the city of Nice, carefully provided that nothing should be taken away from other cities. And the canon of the holy fathers decreed that there should be one metropolis in each province. What therefore is the pleasure of the holy synod in this matter? The holy synod cried out: Let the canons be kept. Let the canons be sufficient. Atticus the most reverend bishop of old Nicepolis in Epirus said: The canon thus defines, that a metropolitan should have jurisdiction in each province, and he should constitute all the bishops who are in that province. And this is the meaning of the canon. Now the bishop of Nicomedia, since from the beginning this was a metropolis, ought to ordain all the bishops who are in that province.

The holy synod said: This is what we all wish, this we all pray for, let this everywhere be observed, this is pleasing to all ofus. John, Constantine, Patrick [Peter] and the rest of the most reverend bishops of the Pentic diocese [through John who was one of them] said: The canons recognize the one more ancient as the metropolitan. And it is manifest that the most religious bishop of Nicemedia has the right of the ordination, and since the laws (as your magnificence has seen) have honoured Nice with the name only of metropolis, and so made its bishop superior to the rest of the bishops of the province in honour only. The holy synod said: They have taught in accordance with the canons, beautifully have they taught. We all say the same things.[Aetius, Archdeacon of Constantinople, thenput in a plea to save the rights of the throne of the royal city.]

The most glorious judges said: The most reverend the bishop of Nicomedia shall have the authority of metropolitan over the churches of the province of Bithynia, and Nice shall have the honour only of Metropolitical rank, submitting itself according to the example of the other bishops of the province of Nicomedia. For such is thepleasure of the Holy Synod.

The Condemnation Sent by the Holy and Ecumenical Synod to Dioscorus

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 459.) The holy and great and ecumenical Synod, which by the grace of God according to the constitution of our most pious and beloved of God emperors assembled together at Chalcedon the city of Bithynia, in the martyry of the most holy and victorious Martyr Euphemia to Dioscorus. We do you to wit that on the thirteenth day of the month of October you were deposed from the episcopate and made astranger to all ecclesiastical order (qesmou=) by the holy and ecumenical synod, on account of your disregard of the divine canons, and of your disobedience to this holy and ecumenical synod and on account of the other crimes of which you have been found guilty, for even when called to answer your accusers three times by this holy and great synod according to the divine canons you did not come.

The Letter of Cyril to John of Antioch

(Found in Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. IV., col. 343 and col. 164; and in Migne, Pat. Graece., Tom. LXXVII. [Cyrilli Opera, Tom. X.], col. 173. This is the letter which is often styled ”the Ephesine Creed.”) Cyril to my lord, beloved brother, and fellow minister John, greeting in the Lord. ”Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad” for the middle wall of partition has been taken away, and grief has been silenced, and all kind of difference of opinion has been removed; Christ the Saviour of us all having awarded peace tohis churches, through our being called to this by our most devout and beloved of God kings, who are the best imitators of the piety of their ancestors in keeping the right faith in their souls firm and immovable, for they chiefly give their mind to the affairs of the holy Churches, in order that they may have the noted glory forever and show forth their most renowned kingdom, to whom also Christ himself the Lord of powers distributes good things with plenteous hand and gives to prevail over their enemies and grants them victory. For he does not liein saying: ”As I live saith the Lord, them that honour me, I will honour.” For when my lord, my most-beloved-of-God, fellow-minister and brother Paul, had arrived in Alexandria, we were filled with gladness, and most naturally at the coming of such a man as a mediator, who was ready to work beyond measure that he might overcome the envy of the devil and heal our divisions, and who by removing the offences scattered between us, would crown your Church and ours with harmony and peace.

Of the reason of the disagreement it issuperfluous to speak. I deem it more useful both to think and speak of things suitable to the time of peace. We were therefore delighted at meeting with that distinguished and most pious man, who expected perhaps to have no small struggle, persuading us that it is necessary to form a an alliance for the peace of the Church, andto drive away the laughter of the heterodox, and for this end to blunt the goads of the stubbornness of the devil. He found us ready for this, so as absolutely to need no labour to be bestowed upon us. For we remembered the Saviour’s saying; ”Mypeace I give unto you, my peace I leave with you. We have been taught also to say in prayers: ”O Lord our God give us peace, for thou hast given us all things. So that if anyone should be in the participation of the peace furnished from God, he is not lacking in any good. That as a matter of fact, the disagreement of the Churches happened altogether unnecessarily and

in-opportunely, we now have been fully satisfied by the document brought by my lord, the most pious bishop Paul, which contains an unimpeachable confession of faith, and this he asserted to have been prepared, by your holiness and by the God-beloved Bishops there. The document is as follows, and is set down verbatim in this our epistle.Concerning the Virgin Mother of God, we thus think and speak;

and of the man-net of the Incarnation of the Only Begotten Son of God, necessarily, not by way of addition but for the sake of certainty, as we have received from the beginning from the divine Scriptures and from the tradition of the holy fathers, we will speak briefly, adding nothing whatever to the Faith set forth by the holy Fathers in Nice. For, as we said before, it suffices for all knowledge of piety and the refutation of all false doctrine of heretics. But we speak, not presuming on the impossible; but with the confession of our own weakness, excluding those who wish us to cling to those things which transcend human consideration.

We confess, therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, perfect God, and perfect Man of a reasonable soul and flesh consisting; begotten before the ages of the Father according to his Divinity, and in the last days, for us and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin according to his humanity, of the same substance with his Father according to his Divinity, and of the same substance with us according to his humanity; for there became a union of two natures. Wherefore we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord.According to this understanding of this unmixed union, we confess the holy Virgin to be Mother of God; because God the Word was incarnate and became Man, and from this conception he united the temple taken from her with himself. For we know the theologians make some things of the Evangelical and Apostolic teaching about the Lord common as per-raining to the one person, and other flyings they divide as to the two natures, and attribute the worthy ones to God on account of the Divinity of Christ, and the lowly ones on account of his humanity [to his humanity].

These being your holy voices, and finding ourselves thinking the same with them (”One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism,”) we glorified God the Saviour of all, congratulating one another that our churches and yours have the Faith which agrees with the God-inspired Scriptures and the traditions of our holy Fathers. Since I learned that certain of those accustomed to find fault were humming around like vicious wasps, and vomiting out wretched words against me, as that I say the holy Body of Christ was brought from heaven, and not of the holy Virgin, I thought it necessary to say a few words concerning this to them: O fools, and only knowing how to misrepresent, how have ye been led to such a judgment, how have ye fallen into so foolish a sickness? For it is necessary, it is undoubtedly necessary, to understand that almost all the opposition to us concerningthe faith, arose from our affirming that the holy Virgin is Mother of God. But if from heaven and not from her the holy Body of the Saviour of all was born, how then is she understood to be Mother of God? What then did she bring forth except it be true that she brought forth the Emmanuel according to the flesh? They are to be laughed at who babble such things about me. For the blessed prophet Isaiah does not lie in saying ”Behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his

name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us." Truly also the holy Gabriel said to the Blessed Virgin:"Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shall conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shall call his name Jesus. He shall save his people from their sins."

For when we say our Lord Jesus Christ descended from heaven, and from above, we do not so say this as if from above and from heaven was his Holy Flesh taken, but rather by way of following the divine Paul, who distinctly declares: "the first man is of the earth, earthy; the Second Man is the Lord from heaven." We remember too, the Saviour himself saying, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man." Although he was born according to his flesh, as just said, of the holy Virgin, yet God the Word came down from above and from heaven. He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," and was called the Son of Man, yet remaining what he was, that is to say God. For he is unchanging and unchangeable according to nature; considered already as one with his own Flesh, he is said to have come down from heaven.

He is also called the Man from heaven, being perfect in his Divinity and perfect in his Humanity, and considered as in one Person. For one is the Lord Jesus Christ, although the difference of his natures is not unknown, from which we say the ineffable union was made. Will your holiness vouchsafe to silence those who say that a crasis, or mingling or mixture took place between the Word of God and flesh. For it is likely that certain also gossip about me as having thought or said such things. But I am far from any such thought as that, and I also consider them wholly to rave who think a shadow of change could occur concerning the Nature of the Word of God. For he remains that which he always was, and has not been changed, nor can he ever be changed, nor is he capable of change. For we all confess in addition to this, that the Word of God is impassible, even though when he dispenses most wisely this mystery, he appears to ascribe to himself the sufferings endured in his own flesh. To the same purpose the all-wise Peter also said when he wrote of Christ as having "suffered in the flesh," and not in the nature of his ineffable godhead. In order that he should be believed to be the Saviour of all, by an economic appropriation to himself, as just said, he assumed the sufferings of his own Flesh.

Like to this is the prophecy through the voice of the prophet, as from him, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." Let your holiness be convinced nor let anyone else be doubtful that we altogether follow the teachings of the holy fathers, especially of our blessed and celebrated Father Athanasius, deprecating the least departure from it. I might have added many quotations from them also establishing my words, but that it would have added to the length of my letter and it might become wearisome. And we will allow the defined Faith, the symbol of the Faith set forth by our holy Fathers who assembled some time ago at Nice, to be shaken by no one. Nor would we permit ourselves or others, to alter a single word of those set forth, or to add one syllable, remembering the saying: "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set," for it was not they who spoke but the Spirit himself of God and the Fa-

ther, who proceedeth also from him, and is not alien from the Son, according to his essence. And this the words of the holy initiators into mysteries confirm to us. For in the Acts of the Apostles it is written: "And after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." And the divine Paul wrote: "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

When some of those who are accustomed to turn from the right, twist my speech to their views, I pray your holiness not to wonder; but be well assured that the followers of every heresy gather the occasions of their error from the God-inspired Scriptures, corrupting in their evil minds the things rightly said through the Holy Spirit, and drawing down upon their own heads the unquenchable flame. Since we have leaned that certain, after having corrupted it, have set forth the orthodox epistle of our most distinguished Father Athanasius to the Blessed Epictetus, so as thereby to injure many; therefore it appeared to the brethren to be useful and necessary that we should send to your holiness a copy of it from some correct ancient transcripts which exist among us. Farewell.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.