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# FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES 1: THE EAST

Patristic Theology

## ARIANISM

- Arius and the divinity of the Son

## COUNCIL OF NICEA

- Condemnation of Arianism
  - The Son is from the being of the Father
  - The Son is one being with the Father
- Unresolved questions

## ATHANASIUS OF ALEXANDRIA

### LIFE

- c. 296 Born
- Educated by Alexander perhaps
- 325 Deacon at Nicea
- 17 Apr 328 Bishop of Alexandria
- 335-337 Exiled to Trier
- 337 Returned to Alexandria
- 328-239 Synod in Antioch
- 339-346 Exiled in Rome
- 346 Returned to Alexandria
- 356-362 Exiled
- 362 Returned to Alexandria
- 362-364 Exiled to the desert
- 364 Returned to Alexandria
- 365-366 Exiled to the desert
- 366 Returned to Alexandria
- 2 May 373 Died

### WORKS

- Contra Gentes (c. 330)
- On the Incarnation (c. 330)
- Orations against the Arians (339-343)
- De Decretis (352-353)
- Apologia de Fuga (357)
- Apologia ad Constantinum (357)
- Historia Arianorum ad Monachos (357)
- De Synodis (359)
- Life of Anthony (356) (?)
- Ad Serapionem (357-359)
- Ad Adelphum (c. 370)
- Ad Epictetum (c. 370)

# ON THE INCARNATION

Written in c. 330

## CHAPTER 1: CREATION AND THE FALL

- Paragraph 2 considers various origin possibilities: chance, pre-existing matter, lesser God
- Paragraph 3 speaks of the dignity of humans as created in the image of God but given a temporary paradise in Eden to see whether they would make proper use of their freedom.
- Paragraph 4 discusses how, had not God intervened, humanity would have returned to non-being  
*The presence and love of the Word had called them into being; inevitably, therefore when they lost the knowledge of God, they lost existence with it; for it is God alone who exists, evil is non-being, the negation and antithesis of good. By nature, of course, man is mortal, since he was made from nothing; but he bears also the likeness of him who is, and if he preserves that likeness through constant contemplation, then his nature is deprived of its power and he remains incorrupt.*

## CHAPTER 2: THE DIVINE DILEMMA AND ITS SOLUTION IN THE INCARNATION

- 6: God had to allow death to follow from sin, yet God could not allow his creation to be undone
- 7: Repentance alone is not sufficient to counteract death; sin not only went against God but entailed corruption, making humans incapable of God and without grace
- 8: The Word of God took a human body as his own, a real body, and a pure body “untainted by intercourse”. The incarnation is a surrendering to death because our bodies are subject to death.
- 9: Death removes corruption  
*For this reason, therefore, he assumed a body capable of death, in order that it, through belonging to the Word who is above all, and, itself remaining incorruptible through his indwelling, might thereafter put an end to corruption for all others as well, by the grace of the resurrection.*

His death fulfills the requirement of death for all. The unity of our nature means that the Son of God is joined to all of us.

- 10: We could be saved from corruption only by the one who made us and in whose likeness we were made

## CHAPTER 3: THE DIVINE DILEMMA AND ITS SOLUTION IN THE INCARNATION (CONT.)

- 11: God gave humans knowledge of him through the image of the Word implanted within them
- 12: Beyond this, he gave knowledge of himself through creation; he also spoke of himself through the prophets; he also gave them the law
- 13: To save humanity, he had to renew his image in them and to do this humanity had to be re-imprinted with the image, thus the Word had to become human in order to recreate humanity. The first step was to remove death and corruption.
- 14: The renewal of the image is like the repainting of a portrait. Humans could have learned of God through the works of creation, but their corruption prevented it. The Word himself had to teach humans; he could only do this by becoming human.
- 15: He teaches us on our level.
- 16: His earthly ministry serves to teach us.
- 17: The Word is not contained by his body, but he contains all things. He continues to hold the universe together even as he eats with us.  
*With the Word of God in his human nature, however, it was otherwise. His body was for him not a limitation, but an instrument, so that he was both in it and in all things, and outside all things, resting in the Father alone. At one and the same time—this is the wonder—as man he was living a human life, and as word he was sustaining the life of the universe, and as son he was in constant union with the Father. Not even his birth from a virgin, therefore, changed him in any way, nor was he defiled by being in the body.*
- 18: His acts declare him to be both human and God

## CHAPTER 4: THE DEATH OF CHRIST

- 19: At his death, creation revealed Christ to be God
- 20: The debt of death that we owed for sin had to be paid.
- 21: He could not die from natural causes, because that would suggest that he is weak in body and could not heal himself.

*If he had died quietly in his bed like other men it would have looked as if he did so in accordance with his nature, and as though he was indeed no more than other men.*

- 22: The moment of his victory over death is the resurrection of the body.
- 23: A public death shows the reality of the resurrection.
- 24: The horror of his death shows his victory over all death.
- 25: His outstretched arms also speaks of what happens in his death; also death in the air as combating the powers of the air and bringing heaven and earth together.

## CHAPTER 5: THE RESURRECTION

- 26: Three days is a fitting interval to show the reality of death, the reality of incorruption, and the reality of resurrection.
- 27: Christians mock death now.
- 28: The proof of the resurrection is found by putting on Christ.
- 29: Martyrs show its truth.
- 30: The resurrection is proved by Christ's continued effectiveness in the Church.

## EUSEBIUS OF CESAREA

- c. 285-c. 340
- Eusebius Pamphili
- Historian
- Opponent of Athanasius

## OTHER THEOLOGIAN OF THE EARLY FOURTH CENTURY EAST

- Eusebius of Nicomedia (mid 3c—341)
- Marcellus of Ancyra (mid 3c—c. 374)
- Aetius of Antioch (late 3c—c. 370)
- Eunomius (early 4c—c. 393)
- Basil of Ancyra (mid 3c—362)
- Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 315-c. 386)

## MARCELLUS OF ANCYRA

## BASIL OF CESAREA

- Life
  - Large family
  - 345: Meets Gregory Nazianzen
  - 364: Ordained priest in Caesarea
  - 370: Elected bishop of Caesarea
  - Died 1 Jan 379
- Major Works
  - *On the Holy Spirit*
  - *Against Eunomius*
  - *Letters*
  - *Hexaemeron*
- Doctrine
  - The Holy Spirit
  - Monastic Life
  - The Church
  - Liturgy

## GREGORY NAZIANZEN

- Life
  - Born in Nazianzus c. 330, died in 390.
  - Second of three children. Father is a convert to Christianity; mother is Christian.
  - Meets Basil in 345
  - 349-58: Studies at Athens
  - 359: Baptized by his father and decides to pursue an ascetic life in the midst of the world
  - 362: Gregory is ordained against his will by his father
  - 372: Consecrated bishop of Sasima against his will by Basil and his own father.
  - 380: Bishop of Constantinople
- Works
  - *Theological Orations*
  - *Poems*
- Doctrine
  - Transcendence of God
  - Divine Ecstasy and Human Ecstasy
  - Trinity
  - Theology
    - Theology “is not for all people, but only for those who have been tested and have found a sound footing in study, and, more importantly, have undergone, or at the very least are undergoing, purification of body and soul. For one who is not pure to lay hold of pure things is dangerous, just as it is for weak eyes to look at the sun’s brightness.” (Or 27.3, trans. Williams)

## GREGORY OF NYSSA

- Life
  - Born around 335
  - Third son of ten children
  - His sister Macrina was a noted ascetic and his brother Basil was to become Bishop of Caesarea
  - He was a teacher of rhetoric like his father and perhaps married
  - He later gave this up to enter monastic life at Basil’s monastery
  - In 371 Basil convinced him to become bishop of Nyssa
  - Basil dies in 379 and Gregory becomes one of the main advocates of pro-Nicean theology
  - Died around 395
- Major works
  - *Against Eunomius*
  - *On Why there are Not Three gods*
  - *Life of Moses*
  - *On Virginity*
  - *Great Catechism*
  - *Commentaries*
- Doctrine
  - God is beyond thought
  - The experience of God excites our desire
  - There are three dimensions of our coming to God: the calming of the passions, the purification of the senses where God is known through the world, and the contemplation of the intelligible things
- Mystical Ascent
  - Steps in the development of the human person
    - Kátharsis
    - Theoria
    - Metousía
  - Epektasis

## OTHER THEOLOGIANS OF THE LATE FOURTH CENTURY EAST

- John Chrysostom (347-407)
- Didymus the Blind (c. 313-398)

- Epiphanius of Salamis (c. 310-403)
- Evagrius Ponticus (345-399)
- Diadore of Tarsus (c. early 4c—c. 392)
- Apollinaris of Laodicea (early 4c—390)

## COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

- 381
- Reaffirmation of Nicea
- Additional reflection on the Holy Spirit
- Creed

## THEOLOGIANS OF THE FIFTH CENTURY EAST

- Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350-428)
- Nestorius (c. 386-450)
- Cyril of Alexandria (c. 378-444)
- Theodoret of Cyrus (c. 393-c. 457)
- Socrates Scholasticus (c. 379-c 450)
- Sozomen (c. 375-c. 447)

## COUNCIL OF EPHESUS

- 431
- Condemnation of Nestorius
- Theotokos

## COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON

- 451
- Two-nature Christology