

THE CHALCEDONIAN CREED - AD 451

HISTORICAL & THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

BEFORE CONSTANTINE

CHRISTIANITY IS NOT STATE RELIGION; THEREFORE, THERE ARE NO IMPERIAL COUNCILS ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES.

EACH CONTROVERSY IN THE CHURCH IS ADDRESSED BY MEN WRITING AND CONVINCING, BUT WITHOUT GOVERNMENTAL OR ECCLESIASTICAL ENFORCEMENT.

BEFORE CONSTANTINE: AGAINST GNOSTICISM

GNOSTICISM SAYS THAT JESUS IS GOD, AND THEREFORE IS NOT MAN. THE HUMAN IS ONLY A SEMBLANCE. JESUS ONLY APPEARS TO BE HUMAN.

NOTE: THE ROLE OF HUMAN REASON

BEFORE CONSTANTINE: AGAINST GNOSTICISM

CLEMENT OF ROME (AD95): "JESUS CHRIST WAS SENT FORTH FROM GOD..." HE REFERS TO HIM AS "THE SCEPTER OF GOD WHO CAME." HE SHOWS THAT JESUS RECEIVED DIVINE HONORS AFTER HIS RESURRECTION AND EXALTATION. CLEMENT EMPHASIZES A PHYSICAL RESURRECTION OF A HUMAN BODY, UNITED TO THE DIVINE ETERNALLY IN HEAVEN.

BEFORE CONSTANTINE: AGAINST GNOSTICISM

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH (MARTYRED AD 115): "THERE IS ONLY ONE PHYSICIAN: OF FLESH AND SPIRIT; GENERATE AND INGENERATE; GOD AND MAN; SON OF MARY AND SON OF GOD."

WHILE IGNATIUS DOES NOT USE THE TERM "NATURES", HE SHOWS HOW CHRIST IS BOTH.

BEFORE CONSTANTINE: AGAINST GNOSTICISM

IRENÆUS OF LYONS (AD 140 - 202): "THERE IS ONE CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD WHO GATHERED ALL THINGS IN HIMSELF. HE IS IN EVERY RESPECT MAN, FORMED BY GOD; AND THUS TOOK UP HUMANITY TO HIMSELF... THE WORD BECAME MAN, THUS SUMMING UP ALL THINGS IN HIMSELF...."

NOTE THAT IRENÆUS IS USING COL. 1:18-20 TO REFUTE THE REASONING OF THE GNOSTICS.

BEFORE CONSTANTINE: ALEXANDRIAN THEOLOGY

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA (AD 150 - 211)

ORIGEN OF ALEXANDRIA (AD 185 - 253)

BOTH ARE HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY PLATONIC THOUGHT. THEREFORE, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING CHRIST'S HUMANITY, THEY DE-EMPHASIZE IT, AND TEACH THAT IT IS SUBORDINATED OR SUBSUMED BY THE LOGOS.

BEFORE CONSTANTINE: ALEXANDRIAN THEOLOGY

ALEXANDER, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA *VERSUS* ARIUS, PRESBYTER IN ALEXANDRIA.
DEBATE IS NOT JUST ABOUT THE ETERNALITY OF THE SON. IT IS ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE UNION OF THE LOGOS AND THE HUMAN.
TO ARIUS, JESUS HAD TO BE LESS THAN DIVINE, BECAUSE HE SUFFERS - AND GOD CANNOT SUFFER.

AFTER NICEA

ATHANASIUS (AD 298 - 373; BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA AFTER ALEXANDER), FOCUSING ON THE DEITY OF THE LOGOS, DOESN'T EXPOUND ON THE UNION OF CHRIST'S TWO NATURES. TO HIM, THE LOGOS TOOK A HUMAN BODY. HE IS FOLLOWED BY APOLLINARIUS (AD 310 - 390), WHO CONCEIVES OF THE LOGOS AS REPLACING THE SPIRIT OF THE HUMAN NATURE.

AFTER NICEA

APOLLINARIUS IS REFUTED BY THE CAPPADOCIANS: GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS (CONSTANTINOPLE); GREGORY OF NYSSA; AND BASIL OF CAESAREA. APOLLINARIUS IS OFFICIALLY CONDEMNED AT THE FIRST COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE, AD381. THIS COUNCIL EMPHASIZES MARY AS THE BEGETTER OF THE INCARNATE CHRIST.

AFTER CONSTANTINOPLE

ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA (AD376 - 444) TEACHES THAT MARY IS THE *THEOTOKOS* - "THE BEARER OF GOD" OR "THE BEGETTER OF GOD" OR "THE MOTHER OF GOD."
CYRIL TEACHES THAT CHRIST IS A DIVINE NATURE AND A HUMAN NATURE *UNITED* INTO ONE.
THUS, THE MIAPHYSITE SLOGAN, "ONE NATURE, UNITED OUT OF TWO."
NOTE: CYRIL'S THEOLOGY CONTINUES ALEXANDRIAN THOUGHT, UNDERMINING A DISTINCT

AFTER CONSTANTINOPLE

NESTORIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE REFUTES CYRIL'S UNDERSTANDING OF *THEOTOKOS*. HE PREFERS THE TERM *CHRISTOTOKOS*.

NESTORIUS IS ACCUSED OF TEACHING THERE ARE TWO PERSONS IN CHRIST. HE IS CONDEMNED AT THE COUNCIL OF EPHESUS, AD 431.

THE CHURCHES OF PERSIA BREAK OFF, IN REJECTION OF EPHESUS AND SUPPORT OF

AFTER CONSTANTINOPLE

EUTYCHES TOOK CYRIL'S IDEAS, AND THE EPHESIAN COUNCIL, AND TAUGHT THAT CHRIST WAS THE LOGOS MIXED WITH A UNIQUE HUMAN NATURE - NOT "CONSUBSTANTIAL" WITH HUMANITY.

CYRIL IS MIAPHYSITE; EUTYCHES IS MONOPHYSITE. CHURCHES OF SYRIA AND ARABIA FOLLOW.

LESSONS

THE ECUMENICAL COUNCILS WERE NOT
INVENTING THEOLOGY; BUT USING SCRIPTURE
AND HANDED-DOWN DOGMA TO DEFEND TRUTH.

LESSONS

PEOPLE TEND TO FOLLOW PEOPLE.

LESSONS

PEOPLE TEND TO GO TO LOGICAL
EXTREMES.

LESSONS

OUR HOPE IS THAT GOD ORCHESTRATES
THE HISTORY OF DOCTRINE.