

Fragment of a letter from Athanasius of Anazarbus to Alexander of Alexandria (*Dok.* 11)

Reference	<i>Dok.</i> 11; <i>Urk.</i> 11; CPG 2060
Incipit	Τί μέμψη τοῖς περὶ Ἄρειον
Date	c. 322-323
Ancient source	Athanasius, <i>De synodis</i> 17.4
Modern editions	<i>AW</i> 2.244-245 <i>AW</i> 3.1:18

This short extract (and *Dok.* 12) comes from the pen of Athanasius, bishop of Anazarbus, an important Cilician city about 60 miles northeast of Tarsus. He is grouped by Arius with other eastern bishops who say that “God pre-exists the Son without a beginning” (*Dok.* 15, §2), and Hanson (*Search*, 43) calls him a “consistent expounder of the theology of Arius.” The fragmentary nature of this excerpt makes its dating difficult, but Heil (*AW* 3.3:33) suggests it may belong to the letters that circulated after the council held in Palestine.

Athanasius of Alexandria preserved the fragment in his *De synodis*. The Greek text below is from the edition of Opitz in *AW* 2:244-245. The English translation is that of Aaron West.

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[καὶ Ἀθανάσιος δὲ ὁ ἀπὸ Ναζαρθῶν ... γράφων γὰρ πρὸς Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀπετόλμησεν οὕτως εἰπεῖν:]	[Alexander of Anazarbus ... writing to Alexander the Bishop, had the extreme audacity to say:]
τί μέμψη τοῖς περὶ Ἄρειον, εἰ λέγουσιν· ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων κτίσμα πεποιήται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐν τῶν πάντων ἐστίν; ἐν ἑκατὸν γὰρ προβάτοις παραβαλλομένων πάντων τῶν πεποιημένων εἷς ἐστὶ καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ἐξ αὐτῶν. εἴ μὲν οὖν τὰ ἑκατὸν οὐκ ἔστι κτίσματα καὶ γενητὰ ἢ ἐνὶ πλείον τι τῶν ἑκατὸν, δηλονότι μηδὲ ὁ υἱὸς ἔστω κτίσμα καὶ εἷς τῶν πάντων. εἰ δὲ τὰ ἑκατὸν πάντα γενητὰ καὶ οὐδέν ἐστιν ἐκτὸς τῶν ἑκατὸν πλὴν μόνου τοῦ θεοῦ, τί ἄτοπον λέγουσιν οἱ περὶ Ἄρειον, εἰ ἐν ἐν τοῖς ἑκατὸν περιλαμβάνοντες καὶ ἀριθμοῦντες τὸν Χριστὸν ἓνα τῶν πάντων αὐτὸν εἰρήκασι;	Why do you find fault with the supporters of Arius when they say, “The Son of God has been made, a creation out of nothing, and is one among all other things?” For in the parable in which all created things are represented by a hundred sheep, the Son is one of them. If then the hundred are not created or begotten things, or if there are more beings beyond that hundred, then the Son would not be a creation or one of these other things. But if those hundred are all begotten things, and there are none beyond the hundred except God alone, what absurdity do Arius’s supporters utter by saying that Christ is one among others when they include and reckon him among the hundred?

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