

Fragments of a letter from Narcissus of Neronias to Chrestus, Euphronius and Eusebius (Dok. 21)

Reference	Dok. 21; Urk. 19
Incipit	[εἰ, ὡσπερ Εὐσέβιος]
Date	early 325
Ancient source	Eusebius, <i>Contra Marcellum</i> 1.4.39, 53-54 (TLG)
Modern edition	G.C. Hansen and E. Klostermann, <i>Eusebius Werke, Band 4: Gegen Marcell. Über die kirchliche Theologie. Die Fragmente Marcellis</i> (GCS 14, 2nd edition (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1972)

In Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Against Marcellus* (1.4.39) are preserved several short excerpts from a letter of Narcissus of Neronias (in Cilicia) that were cited by Marcellus of Ancyra in his *Against Asterius*. They come from a letter addressed by Narcissus to three other men—a “certain” Chrestus, Euphronius and Eusebius “of Palestine”, i.e of Caesarea. The excerpts preserve part of an exchange between Narcissus and Hosius of Cordoba that probably took place at the council in Antioch (see *Dok.* 20). Narcissus was one of the three men excommunicated at the council, and these quotations illustrate his “Arian” Christology. Among the collection of Marcellus’s fragments, the first citation is numbered 116 by Vincent and 71 by Klostermann; the second 124 by Vincent and 70 by Klostermann.

The text below is taken from the Hansen and Klostermann edition of Eusebius’s *Against Marcellus* (GCS 14, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), 26, 28-29; The translation is by Aaron West and Glen Thompson. See also the recent translation of K. Spoerl and M. Vinzent, *Eusebius. Against Marcellus and On Ecclesiastical History* (Washington D.C., 2018; FC135: 108, 113).

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1. [39] [Ἐντυχὼν γὰρ Ναρκίσσου τοῦ Νερωνιαῶδος προεστῶτος ἐπιστολῆ, ἣν γέγραφεν πρὸς Χρηστὸν τινα καὶ Εὐφρόνιον καὶ Εὐσέβιον, ὡς Ὁσίου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου ἐρωτήσαντος αὐτόν,] εἰ, ὡσπερ Εὐσέβιος ὁ τῆς Παλαιστίνης δύο οὐσίας εἶναι φησιν, οὕτως καὶ αὐτὸς λέγει, ἔγνω αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῶν γραφέντων τρεῖς εἶναι πιστεύειν οὐσίας ἀποκρινόμενον.	1. For I [Marcellus] came across a letter from Narcissus of Neronias, which he had written to certain men named Chrestus, Euphronius and Eusebius, relating how bishop Hosius had asked him [Narcissus] if he taught (as Eusebius of Palestine did) that there were two essences; and that from his writings Narcissus replied that he believed that there were three essences.
2. [53] ... μεταβαίνει ἐπὶ τὸν Νάρκισσον καὶ φησιν ὥστε κἂν ἐκεῖνό τις λέγη, κατασκευάζων πρῶτον εἶναι θεὸν καὶ δεύτερον, ὡς Νάρκισσος αὐταῖς λέξεσιν γέγραφεν [54] (οὐδὲ γὰρ συγχωρεῖ ὁ λέγων <ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν>), ὅτι μὲν αὐτὸς καὶ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ	2. [Marcellus] goes on against Narcissus and says, for even if someone should say this, maintaining that “there is a first God as well as a second,” as Narcissus has written with these very words and that “indeed he [the Son] and his Father are two,” nevertheless, we listen to

<p>δύο εἰσὶν, αὐτοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μαρτυροῦντος καὶ τῶν ἁγίων γραφῶν ἐκ μέρους ἠκούσαμεν. εἰ τοίνυν Νάρκισσος διὰ τοῦτο διαιρεῖν δυνάμει τὸν λόγον τοῦ πατρὸς ἐθέλοι, γνῶτω ὅτι ὁ γράψας προφήτης ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ εἰρηκότος <b>“ποιήσωμεν ἄνθρωπον κατ’ εἰκόνα ἡμετέραν καὶ καθ’ ὁμοίωσιν,”</b> αὐτὸς γέγραφεν <b>“καὶ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον.”</b></p>	<p>the testimony of the Lord himself and the holy scriptures. Now if Narcissus wanted for this reason to divide the Word from the Father with respect to his power, let him know that the prophet wrote that God said “Let us make man according to our image and according to our likeness,” himself wrote, “And God made man” [Gen. 1:26,27].</p>
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