

Emperor Constantine to Theodotus of Laodicea (*Dok.32*)

Reference	<i>Dok. 32; Urk. 28; CPG 2056</i>
Incipit	Ὅση τῆς θείας ὀργῆς
Date	Late 325-326
Ancient source	Athanasius, <i>De decretis Nicenae</i> 42
Modern edition	Opitz, AW 2:45

Theodotus of Laodicea had been one of the three bishops provisionally excommunicated for their support of Arius's positions already at the Antioch council a few months before Nicaea. He is not mentioned in any of the sources as being present at Nicaea. Instead a Theodore of Laodicea is listed among the bishops of Coele-Syria who subscribed to the council's creed. But this letter, seemingly written at about the same time as *Dok. 31*, seems to imply that he was still interfering on the side of Arius. Note he is not referred to as bishop of Laodicea any longer in this letter, although he does appear among the bishops at the Council of Antioch in 327 (Theodoret, *H.E.* 1.21).

The Greek text of this letter was preserved by Athanasius at the end of his *De decretis Nicaenae* 42. The text below is that of Opitz, AW 2:45 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1940). The English translation was made for FCC by Aaron West.

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1. Νικητῆς Κωνσταντῖνος Σεβαστὸς Θεοδότῳ.	Constantine Augustus the Victorious to Theodotus.
Ὅση τῆς θείας ὀργῆς ἡ ἰσχὺς πέφυκε, καὶ ἐξ ὧν Εὐσέβιος τε καὶ Θεόγνιος πεπόνθασιν εὐχέρως καὶ σὲ μαθεῖν, οἱ εἰς τὴν ἀγιοτάτην παροινούντες θρησκείαν τὸ τοῦ σωτῆρος θεοῦ ὄνομα τῷ συστήματι τοῦ οἰκείου ληστηρίου καὶ μετὰ τὸ τυχεῖν συγγνώμης ἐμίαναν. ὅτε γὰρ μάλιστα μετὰ τὴν τῆς συνόδου ὁμογνώμονα συμφωνίαν ἐχρῆν τὴν προτέραν ἐπανορθώσασθαι πλάνην, τότε τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἀτοπήμασιν ἐμμένοντες ἐάλωσαν.	1. How great is the power of divine wrath which has come forth recently! You can easily learn this from what has happened to Eusebius and Theognius. They treated the most holy religion with abusive, drunken violence, and when they were in the private company of their gang of robbers, they continued to defile the name of our Savior God even after they had been granted pardon. They ought to have corrected their former error, especially after complete agreement was reached at the council. But instead at this time they were discovered to be standing fast in their former absurdities.
2. διὰ τοῦτο γοῦν ἡ θεία πρόνοια αὐτοὺς τοῦ ἐαυτῆς ἀπάσαστο λαοῦ. ἐπειδὴ μὴδὲ ἔφερε τὰς ἀκάκους ψυχὰς ὀλίγων ἀπονοία φθειρομένης καθορᾶν, καὶ νῦν μὲν ἀξίαν παρ' αὐτῶν ἤτησε	2. And so for this reason Divine Providence cast them out from her people. For since she could not bear to watch as innocent souls were corrupted by the madness of a few, she now demands that they be

<p>δίκην, μείζονα δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸ ἐξῆς διὰ τοῦ παντὸς αἰῶνος λήψεται.</p>	<p>given fitting punishment, and will receive even greater punishment in the future throughout all ages.</p>
<p>3. Ὅπερ τῇ σῆ ἀγχινοία δηλωθῆναι δεῖν ἠγησάμην, ἵν' εἴ τις κακὴ παραίνεσις τῶν τοιούτων, ὡς ἔγωγε οὐκ οἶμαι, τῇ σῆ ἐνεκαθέσθῃ προαιρέσει, ταύτην τῆς ψυχῆς ἀφελόμενος καθαρὰν ὡς προσῆκε τὴν διάνοιαν εἰλικρινῆ τε καθοσίωσιν καὶ ἄχραντον πίστιν τῷ σωτῆρι θεῷ παρασχέσθαι προθυμηθῆς. καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο προσῆκόν ἐστιν ὑπὸ τούτου πράττεσθαι, ὃς δ' ἂν ἀκεραίων τῶν τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς ἐπάθλων ἀξιοῦσθαι βουλεύεται.</p>	<p>3. I thought I needed to make this known to you, to aid your discernment, so that if the wicked advice of such men as these were to influence your decisions — and I do not at all think this is the case — you would cleanse your mind by removing these thoughts, as would be appropriate, and be eager to submit your cleansed understanding, purified dedication, and undefiled faith to our Savior God. In fact, this would be the appropriate action for anyone who desires to be worthy of the incorruptible rewards of eternal life.</p>
<p>καὶ ἄλλῃ χειρί·</p>	<p>And in another hand</p>
<p>ὁ θεός σε διαφυλάξει, ἀδελφὲ ἀγαπητέ.</p>	<p>God will watch over you, beloved brother.</p>

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