

Constantine to Athanasius (CPG 2123.15)

<i>Reference:</i>	Mel. 8, CPG 2123.15, Dok. 38
<i>Incipit:</i>	Ἔχων τοίνυν τῆς ἐμῆς βουλήσεως
<i>Date:</i>	330?
<i>Greek Text:</i>	Athanasius, Apol. Sec. 59.6
<i>Ancient Descriptions:</i>	Sozomen, <i>HE</i> 2.22.3-5; Socrates, <i>HE</i> 1.27.4-5
<i>English Translation:</i>	NPNF ² vol. 4, p. 132, adapted for FCC by SMT and JTS

Upon the death of Alexander in 328, Athanasius was elected as bishop of Alexandria. This gave Eusebius of Nicomedia and the supporters of Arius a chance to reset the situation in Egypt. They pressured Constantine, still eager to achieve complete unity in the church, to pressure the new bishop to give Arius a second chance. Therefore, he wrote this letter likely under the influence of Eusebius of Caesarea. Athanasius' refusal subsequently led to an alliance between the Arians and Melitians.

The Greek text below is that of Opitz as found in AW 2.4:59.6. The English translation has been adapted from NPNF² vol. 4, p. 137 by SMT and JTS for FCC.

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Μέρος ἐπιστολῆς τοῦ βασιλέως Κωνσταντίνου	Part of a letter from Emperor Constantine
... Ἔχων τοίνυν τῆς ἐμῆς βουλήσεως τὸ γνῶρισμα ἅπασιν τοῖς βουλομένοις εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν εἰσελθεῖν ἀκώλυτον παράσχου τὴν εἴσοδον. ἐὰν γὰρ γνῶ ὡς κεκώλυκας τινὰς αὐτῶν τῆς ἐκκλησίας μεταποιουμένους ἢ ἀπεῖρξας τῆς εἰσόδου, ἀποστελῶ παραχρῆμα τὸν καὶ καθαιρήσοντά σε ἐξ ἐμῆς κελεύσεως καὶ τῶν τόπων μεταστήσοντα ...	Having therefore knowledge of my will, grant free admission to all who wish to enter into the Church. For if I learn that you have hindered or excluded any who claim to be admitted into communion with the Church, I will immediately send someone who shall depose you by my command, and shall remove you from your place.

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