

historians since. The Formula of Union was one of these, a christological document of 433 that Cyril, under imperial pressure, agreed to and it was the basis for a continuing study in the Person of Christ. Many scholars think Nestorius could have signed it as well...had he not been unrepentant and banned to Asia. The air remained charged with debate and only needed another spark for an conflagration. While the western empire was ruled by the vacillating Valentinian III, the eastern empire enjoyed a measure of continuity under Theodosius II who gave the area about 50 years of relatively calm rule.

The Ephesian council had been a victory for the Alexandrian See over the see in Constantinople. The events that followed (including the Formula of Union) had tarnished that success just a bit. The new bishop of Alexandria, Dioscurus, is anxious to correct that flaw and show that the Alexandrian theology is the key to spiritual triumph and success.

b. Eutychianism

Onto this scene will come Euthychus, a monk from Asia Minor, one serving under the see of Constantinople and its bishop, Flavian. Eutychus taught that there had been two distinct natures in Christ until the union of the Logos and the Corpus whereafter there was but one nature...neither true totally to the Logos or the Corpus. This is known as monophysitism. What it means is that Christ is neither God nor man as we know them. The attributes of God are limited by the weaknesses of man, the weaknesses of man are somewhat deified through the attributes of God. To say that Christ had but "one nature" at first sounds nice but when one realizes that the "one nature" is really a "no nature" so far as we are able to discern it then the error becomes apparent. In the crudest way possible Christ is not the god-man but a hybrid sort of person that epitomizes god and man ideals. How far any of these things were pressed by Eutychus, I am not sure. He may have been a victim of circumstance...and an innovative mind. But that is the heart of the matter and if pushed to a logical conclusion, it is destructive of the Person of Christ and the work He came to accomplish.

Flavian, Bishop of Constantinople, (d. 449) saw the problem and judged the matter of Eutychus to be heresy. Eutychus was ordered not to teach or propagate his ideas in any sense. As Eutychus served under Flavian, the Bishop had this technical right and the matter probably should have ended there. But Eutychus objected and obtained sufficient press that the bishop tried him and had him condemned as a heretic in 448.

At this point, Dioscurus of Alexandria entered the fray. He thought he saw an opportunity for another