

- 4 -

The Comma Calmly Considered
Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484
by
Mike Ferrando

July, 2026



« *Featuring* »
Refuting Critics & Skeptics

Πάτερ, Λόγε καὶ πνεῦμα· Τριάς, φύσις μία
Theodore the Studite (759-826 AD)

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Contents:

Introduction

- Brief Remarks : The Courage of the Martyrs
- Greek Manuscripts 60 AD to 800/850 AD : Containing I John 5:7-8
- Early Manuscripts are all from one Geographic Area : Egypt
- Primer : Allusions in the Church Fathers' Works
- Vandals Invade North Africa 429 AD (Council of Carthage 484)
- Hunric becomes King : The Edict
- Vandals were "Bible literalists" as disciples of Ulfila
- Confession of the 460 Bishops Read Aloud
- 460 Bishops "stood on the brink of death"
- Notitia Provinciarum et Civitatum Africae (List of the Provinces and Cities of Africa)
- Appendix: Historical Points : Ben David & Ambrosius Dorhout
- Appendix: Victor Vitensis : Invasion, Conquering North Africa, and Persecution
- Appendix: Prayer of Eugenius : 1st Miracle
- Appendix: African Confessors : 2nd Miracle
- **Addendum: Refuting Critics & Skeptics**
- Bibliography

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Introduction

This is the fourth paper of the series. This essay has selections from my paper “The Witness of God is Greater.” In this essay, my goal is to highlight some of the amazing evidence that I have discovered in collating sources for my paper. I give some comments in order to direct my readers through these points.

- For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. (Psalm 119:89)
- The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. (Psalm 12:6-7)
- Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. (Psalm 119:105)
- Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (Matt 24:35)

Brief Remarks : The Courage of the Martyrs

It is difficult to write a summary of this event concerning the Heavenly Witnesses. I can only reflect upon my faith and my soul in the sobering reality of the courage and sacrifice of these martyrs. If there can be any “evidence” that these verses were always Scripture, surely this is the event wherein the blood of the martyrs seals the question in the affirmative. I confess that I will say with complete confidence that these verses are part of Scripture. I have this affirmation from the witness of the Spirit through prayer and study. The historical fact that these men, women, and even children, were willing to walk into the valley of the shadow of death confessing their faith, should remove any and all semblance of this question being simply “academic” or a matter of “empirical evidence”. In the same way that the 500 witnessed Christ’s resurrection, so here too the 460 give witness to these verses as part of Scripture. I cannot but ask, what more is necessary? Moreso, I ask, what will you do when the call is made “Who is on the Lord’s side?”. Here we have half of the Roman world assembled, willingly entering into the Lion’s den to affirm a confession that will cost them everything and some even their lives. If only those who have the Spirit would consider this event sincerely and deeply, they would see how unique and incredible, God has arranged for such a test of this question by placing us in the midst of this brutal persecution.

I admit, that this question, of these verses, is not simply academic nor is it a matter of mere “evidence”. How could a handful of manuscripts of unknown provenance or papyri that were picked from a trash heap compare to the witness that was given by these bishops? Yes, there were 460. Yes, it was half of the Christian world present. What more would be needed? I do believe that faith is required to clearly see what God has done here and honestly in the Spirit recognize the divine providence that has brought an irrefutable and undeniable historical event to affirm these verses.

True, some have brought objections to the bar. I will only say this: Carthage is the city of pleaders, and the Roman Empire is full of men educated in both Greek and Latin. This is a fact that I have spent much time demonstrating from scholarly works in my original paper “The Witness of God is Greater.” Further to the point, all of Christendom knew of this event, tracked these men and their lives after the event, and even gave witness to those who could still speak though their tongues had been cut out. These men of the second miracle were living in Constantinople. It is true that this event was well known and the document with names and fates of these 460 demonstrates beyond the event the martyr’s honor these men were accorded in posterity.

I ask your pardon in bringing my feeble words to bear up the history of these martyrs, and I ask too that Jesus might increase my faith through the Spirit that I might be willing to endure persecution than to triumph in intellectual self glory in any discussion of these verses. I am called to simply present this information so that everyone filled with the Spirit can decide for themselves in their own measure of faith. I desire to stand on the Lord’s side on that day. May God grant me this prayer and be with you all in your spirit. Prayers.

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Greek Manuscripts 60 AD to 800/850 AD : Containing I John 5:7-8

- GA 01 : Sinaiticus : 4th century : *St Catherine's Monastery* (**Alexandrian text**)
- GA 03 : Vaticanus : 4th/5th century : Found in Vatican (**Alexandrian text**)
- GA 02 : Alexandrinus : 5th century : Unknown [Cyril Lucaris (d. 1638 AD)] (**Alexandrian text**)

Greek Manuscripts : Listed by Age

1st Century

- [None]

2nd Century

- [None]

3rd Century

- [None]

4th Century

- GA 01 London, the British Library, Add. 43725 (IV) : Sinaiticus
- GA 03 Vatican Library, Vat. gr. 1209 (IV) : Vaticanus

5th Century

- GA 02 London, British Library, Royal 1 D. VIII (V) : Alexandrinus
- GA 048 Vatican Library, Vat. gr. 2061, fol. 198, 199, 221, 222, 229, 230, 293-303, 305-308 (V) double palimpsest : f308v : **1 John 5:5-21 : 3 columns : Damaged : Unreadable**
<ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/liste/?ObjID=20048>

6th Century

- GA 296 Egypt, Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery, N.E Σπ. ΜΓ 48, 53, 55 (VI) : f001 : **Damaged : Unreadable** <ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/manuscript-workspace?docID=20296>

7th Century

- [None]

8th Century

- [None]

List of 500 by Century

8th to 9th Century = 1 (GA 044)

9th Century = 8

10th Century = 29

11th Century = 82

12th to 18th century = 430

>>Total Manuscripts: 550

===

78% of the 550 mss are 12th century and older

Further Examination of the List of 500 NT Greek I John 5

- *The Johanneum Comma An Inquiry - Part 1 - GA 048, GA 0269, and GA 025 (2025)*
- *The Comma Johanneum An Inquiry - Part 2 - 9th Century Greek Manuscripts - Commentaries (2025)*
- **Academia Page:** <https://independent.academia.edu/MidusItis>

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Early Manuscripts are all from one Geographic Area : Egypt

The Textual Critic Scholars Aland & Aland declared that the early manuscripts (papyri) have a number of problems. First they only represent one geographical area of Christendom which spread to all of the Roman Empire. The second is that these Greek texts are not textual examples for the New Testament Scriptures. These papyri manuscripts are considered "free text" and thus cannot be used to determine which "text type" is the earliest (there are a number of text types : the Textual Critics are convinced - despite these issues - that the Alexandrian text is the closest to the original). These issues are still present with us today.

• **[Aland & Aland : 8. Text of the Early Period]** To understand the textual history of the New Testament it is necessary to begin with the early manuscripts. By this we mean manuscripts no later than the third/fourth century, for in the fourth century a new era begins... (shown in Table 3 on p. 57). This makes a total of forty-three papyri and five uncials (or more strictly four uncials, because 0212 is a Diatessaron text and should not be counted; cf. p. 104). **...We should not forget that apart from 0212 (found at Dura Europus), all the early witnesses listed above on p. 57 are from Egypt, where the hot, dry sands preserved the papyri through the centuries (similar climatic conditions are found in the Judean desert where papyri have also been discovered). From other major centers of the early Christian church nothing has survived. This raises the question whether and to what extent we can generalize from the Egyptian situation.** Egypt was distinguished from other provinces of the Church, so far as we can judge, by the early dominance of Gnosticism; this was not broken until about A.D. 200, when Bishop Demetrius succeeded in reorganizing the diocese and establishing communications with the other churches. Not until then do we have documentary evidence of the church in Egypt, although undoubtedly not only the gnostic but also the broader Church was represented there throughout the whole period. At almost the same time the Catechetical School of Alexandria was instituted as the first "Christian university." Quite possibly Bishop Demetrius... but this hypothesis, however intrinsically possible, does not square with the evidence of the manuscripts up to the third/fourth century. **Thus P45, P46, P66, and a whole group of other manuscripts offer a "free" text, i.e., a text dealing with the original text in a relatively free manner with no suggestion of a program of standardization (or where these manuscripts also imported from elsewhere?). Some have gone so far as to interpret these "free" texts as typical of the early period. But this cannot be correct, as a fresh collation of all the manuscripts of the early period[10] by the Institute for New Testament Textual Research has shown. The "free" text represents only one of the varieties of the period...** The text of the early period prior to the third/fourth century was, then, in effect, a text not yet channeled into types, because until the beginning of the fourth century the church still lacked the institutional organization required to produce one. Its earliest representatives are Polycarp and Justin, about 130-150 (in earlier writings New Testament quotations are too sporadic or too elusive, especially for the Gospels). (Kurt Aland & Barbara Aland. The Text of the New Testament (1989) pp. 56-57, 59-64 [text interrupted by images])

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Overview : Allusions in the Church Father's Works

It is my opinion based on faith and a mountain of evidence that John's first letter contained the Heavenly and Earthly Witnesses (I John 5:7,8). I have presented many facts that demonstrate this to be true. When Scripture provides truths about God in inspired words, the Christian community uses these concepts and words in their discussions and controversies. The Heavenly Witnesses can be divided into three parts: i) Three witnesses being the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; ii) "Father, Word, Spirit" (Greek: πατήρ, λόγος, πνεῦμα) as a phrase to indicate the persons of the Godhead; iii) and "the three are one" (Greek: οἱ τρεῖς ἓν εἰσι).

The first part is alluded to by **Clement of Alexandria** (in Greek) found in this citation:

- Prophetic Extracts. 13.1: **"By two and three witnesses every word is established." By Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, by whose witness** and help the prescribed commandments ought to be kept. (Clement of Alexandria. Prophetic Extracts. 13.1; ANF, vol 8)

ο Greek: Πᾶν ῥῆμα ἵσταται ἐπὶ δύο καὶ τριῶν μαρτύρων, ἐπὶ πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος, ἐφ' ὧν μαρτύρων καὶ βοηθῶν αἱ ἐντολαὶ λεγόμεναι φυλάσσεσθαι ὀφείλουσιν.

(Clement of Alexandria. Eclogae ex Scripturis prophetis. 13.1; Migne Graeca PG 9.703-704)

The second part is alluded to by **John Chrysostom** (in Greek) found in this citation:

- [De Cognitione Dei et in Sancta Theophania] But, **O Father, and Word, and Spirit**, the triune being and might and will and power, deem us, who confess you as the unconfused and indivisible substance, also worthy to be the ones standing at your right hand when you come from heaven to judge the world in righteousness, for rightly yours is the glory, honor, and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for always, and for eternity." (Chrysostom, About the knowledge of God and the Holy Theophanies; Translation kjvtoday.com,

<www.kjvtoday.com/home/the-father-the-word-and-the-holy-ghost-in-1-john-57>)

ο Greek: Ἀλλ', ὦ Πάτερ, καὶ Λόγε, καὶ Πνεῦμα, ἡ τρισυπόστατος οὐσία, καὶ δύναμις, καὶ θέλησις, καὶ ἐνέργεια, ἡμᾶς τοὺς ὁμολογοῦντάς σου τὰς ἀσυγχύτους καὶ ἀδιαιρέτους ὑποστάσεις, ἀξιώσον καὶ τῆς ἐκ δεξιῶν σου στάσεως, ἡνίκα ἔρχῃ ἐξ οὐρανῶν κρῖναι τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ· ὅτι πρέπει σοι δόξα, τιμὴ καὶ προσκύνησις, τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ Υἱῷ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι, νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. (Chrysostom, De Cognitione Dei et in Sancta Theophania; Migne Graeca, PG 64.6A).

The third part alluded to by **Origen** (in Greek) is found in this citation:

- Scholia on Psalm 122:2 "Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress." The Spirit and the body are servants to their masters (the Father and the Son); the soul is the maiden to her mistress (the Holy Spirit); and the Lord our God is the three [persons], **for the three are one**. So, the eyes of servants look at the hands of their masters while they issue orders through gestures. It could also be that the hands of the masters, who are the Father and the Son, are the angels belonging to them both, while the hands of the mistress, who is the Holy Spirit, are the powers that are proper to the Holy Spirit. . (Origenis Selecta in Psalmos CXXII)

ο Greek: Ἴδου ὡς ὀφθαλμοὶ δούλων εἰς χεῖρας τῶν κυρίων αὐτῶν, ὡς ὀφθαλμοὶ παιδίσκης εἰς χεῖρας τῆς κυρίας αὐτῆς, οὕτως οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἡμῶν πρὸς Κύριον Θεὸν ἡμῶν, ἕως οὗ οἰκτιρήσῃ ἡμᾶς, κ. τ. ἐ. Δοῦλοι κυρίων Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ πνεῦμα καὶ σῶμα· παιδίσκη δὲ κυρίας τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἡ ψυχὴ. Τὰ δὲ τρία Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν ἐστίν· **οἱ γὰρ τρεῖς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν**. Ὀφθαλμοὶ γοῦν δούλων εἰς χεῖρας κυρίων ὁρῶντες, ὅτε διὰ χειρῶν νεύοντες κελεύουσιν. Ἡ χεῖρες κυρίων

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

μὲν Πατὴρ καὶ Υἱοῦ οἱ ἑκατέρου ἄγγελοι· κυρίας δὲ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος αἱ οἰκεῖται αὐτοῦ
δυνάμεις. (Origenis Selecta in Psalmos CXXII, Migne Graeca, PG 12.1633).

Sometimes we can find a combination of these unique parts:

- **Father, Word, Spirit, Trinity, one nature,**
 - Greek: Πάτερ, Λόγε καὶ πνεῦμα· Τριάς, φύσις μία
- **Theodore the Studite** (759-826 AD) : Epigrams
- <www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/18874>
- <www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/3088>
- 244 COD. 100 : A.D. 1111 : Plate 440 (K. Lake, 1936, VI, p. 14)

Acts of John (circa 150-200)

• [Attridge] To explore the phenomenon, I shall focus on the Acts of John, a work of Christian fiction written sometime in the second century, perhaps as early as the second quarter of that century. Eric Junod and Jean-Daniel Kaestli, *Acta Iohannis* (CChrSA 1-2; 2 vols.; Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1983), 2:694-700, date the work to the second half of the second century, arguing that it was used by Acts of Peter, Acts of Thomas and Acts of Paul. Lalleman, *Acts of John*, 208-212, 268-270, dates the work to the second quarter of the century, arguing that it influenced the final form of the Apocryphon of John and Apocalypse of Peter, that its Christology, with its intense focus on Christ and its portrait of him as polymorphic and polyonymous, is attested for the first half of the second century, but not later, and that the kind of Gnosticism it attests is pre-Valentinian. Hill, *Johannine Corpus*, 259, dates the work to around 150. ...Most scholars agree that what can be reconstructed is a composite work with strong affinities to some of the less "orthodox" varieties of second century Christianity. Exactly how the work was composed and what the precise affinities are has been a matter of continuing discussion. (Attridge, "The Acts Of John And The Fourth Gospel". in *From Judaism to Christianity: Tradition and Transition*, 2011, p. 256-257.)

HIT:

- Again with me say thou:
Glory be to thee, **Father**;
Glory to thee, **Word**;
Glory to thee, **Holy Ghost**.
- <gnosis.org/library/actjohn.htm>.
 - **Greek:**
96. πάλιν ἐμοὶ λέγε·
δόξα σοι **πάτερ**·
δόξα σοι **λόγε**·
δόξα σοι **πνεῦμα ἅγιον**.
 - *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha Post Constantinum* Tischendorf Deno Edidervnt Ricardvs Adelbertvs Lipsivs Et Maximilianvs Bonnet, 1891, p. 199.

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Vandals Invade North Africa 429 AD (Council of Carthage 484)

• In 429, the Vandals, estimated to number 80,000 people, had crossed by boat from Spain to North Africa. They advanced eastward conquering the coastal regions of 21st century Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. In 435, the Roman Empire, then ruling in North Africa, allowed the Vandals to settle in the provinces of Numidia and Mauretania when it became clear that the Vandal army could not be defeated by Roman military forces. In 439 the Vandals renewed their advance eastward and captured Carthage, the most important city of North Africa. The fledgling kingdom then conquered the Roman-ruled islands of Mallorca, Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica in the western Mediterranean Sea. In the 460s the Romans launched two unsuccessful military expeditions by sea in an attempt to overthrow the Vandals and reclaim North Africa. The conquest of North Africa by the Vandals was a blow to the beleaguered Western Roman Empire as North Africa was a major source of revenue and a supplier of grain (mostly wheat) to the city of Rome. The Vandal Kingdom ended in 534 when it was conquered by Belisarius in the Vandalic War and incorporated into the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire. (Vandal Kingdom. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vandal_Kingdom>)

• The Vandal Synod of Carthage (484) was a largely unsuccessful church council meeting called by the Vandal King Huneric to persuade the Nicene bishops in his recently acquired North African territories to convert to Arian Christianity. The Nicene bishops refused and many, including Fulgentius of Ruspe and Tiberiumus, were exiled to Sardinia,[17][18] and some executed. The Notitia Provinciarum at Civitatum Africa says that nearly 500 went into exile. The bishops had requested that Nicene bishops from outside Huneric's dominions be allowed to attend but this was refused, the king saying "When you make me master of the whole world, then what you want shall be done". The synod appears to have been an exercise in royal browbeating more than a genuine debate, with bias toward Arian bishops. (Councils of Carthage. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Councils_of_Carthage>)

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Hunric becomes King : The Edict

• [Victor] Following the death of Geiseric, his eldest son, Huniric, succeeded his father. In accordance with the subtlety of the barbarians, at the beginning of his reign he began to act in quite a mild and moderate fashion. This was particularly so with respect to our religion, so that meetings of the people were held even where it had previously been decided under king Geiseric that spiritual assemblies were not to take place. And, to show that he was a man of religion, he decreed that the Manichaeian heretics were to be sought out with painstaking care. He had many of these people burned, and he sold more of them for ships across the seas. He found that nearly all the Manichaeians were adherents of his religion, the Arian heresy, especially its priests and deacons; so it was that, the greater his shame, the more he was kindled against them. ...The tyrant turned his mind to more violent actions against the church of God, so that having cut off some of the limbs he could destroy the whole body by tearing it in pieces. For on the day of the Ascension of the Lord, in the presence of Reginus, the legate of the emperor Zeno, he sent to bishop Eugenius an edict which was to be read out in the middle of the church. Its contents were as follows; he also forwarded it, by speeding post horses, to the whole of Africa.

• [Victor] "Hunirix, king of the Vandals and Alans, to all the homousian bishops. It is well known that not once but quite often your priests have been forbidden to celebrate any liturgies at all in the territory of the Vandals, in case they seduce Christian souls and destroy them. Many of them have despised this and, contrary to the prohibition, have been discovered to have said mass in the territories of the Vandals, claiming that they hold to the rule of the Christian faith in its fullness. And because we do not wish for scandal in the provinces granted us by God, therefore know that by the providence of God and with the consent of our holy bishops we have decreed this: that on the first of February next you are all to come to Carthage, making no excuse that you are frightened, so that you will be able to debate concerning the principles of faith with our venerable bishops and establish the propriety of the faith of the Homousians, which you defend, from the divine scriptures. From this it will be clear whether you hold the faith in its fullness. We have sent a copy of this edict to all your fellow bishops throughout Africa. Given on 20 May 483 in the seventh year of Hunirix."

• [Victor] As soon as those of us who were present came to know this as it was read out, 'our heart was forthwith broken and our eyes grew dim' (Lam 5:17), and in truth, 'the days of our festival were turned to sorrow and our songs to lamentation'(Amos 8:10), since the contents of the edict revealed that a raging persecution was to come, especially where it said 'we do not wish for scandal in the provinces granted us by God,' as if it were saying 'we do not wish there to be Catholics in our provinces.' We discussed what was to be done. No remedy for the calamity which threatened was to be found, except for the proposal, a reasonable one were it possible for a barbarian's heart to be softened, made by the holy Eugenius. ...That day of treachery which the king had appointed, 1 February, was now drawing near. There came together not only the bishops of the whole of Africa, but also those of many of the islands, worn out with suffering and grief.

• Victor Vitensis, Victor of Vita: history of the Vandal persecution, Book 2

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Vandals were “Bible literalists” as disciples of Ulfila

- [Sumruld] ...the Gothic Arians were addicted to a particularly unhealthy form of **biblical literalism** mixed with pulpit pyrotechnics aimed more at elevating the pulpiter than at educating the congregation. Ulfila's school "never produced a philosophic theologian." **These men claimed to base their views exclusively on the Scriptures and sought to fortify almost every assertion by citing prooftexts.** Sometimes their arguments are merely long chains of Scripture texts strung together. As Michel Meslin has demonstrated, they are much more scriptural in their approach than were the Arians in the Eastern portion of the empire. In a theological conflict, their favorite tactic was to inundate the opposition with a plethora of scriptural quotations. This may have been developed as a weapon for maintaining the authority of the teacher-pastor by overawing any questioner which might arise from the barbarians or proselytized Romans. The Scriptures were the "divine wisdom" and, therefore, a legitimate object for veneration. **Nothing was to be approved as true by Christians "except the divine Scripture," as properly interpreted by Ulfilans. The Ulfilan leaders, therefore, stressed a mechanical exactness in the translation of texts.** As Thompson notes, they found a "verbatim method of Biblical translation at the expense not only of idiomatic usage but even of grammar" that often resulted in "false and misleading renderings of an exegetical and misleading nature." This textual mishandling appears to have been quite common among the Ulfilans. It probably began shortly after the death of Ulfila and was well established when Alaric sacked Rome in 410.

- [Sumruld] ...the Ulfilans had a clear predilection for the Gospel of John. Their other favorites, in order of apparent popularity, were the epistles of Paul, the Old Testament, and the Synoptic [Gospels]. For the Ulfilans, tradition had an important role in the interpretation of Scripture. Its purpose was to transmit, in conformity to the "true meaning" of the Scriptures, the faith revealed in the Scriptures. **Any authority, ascribed to a universal council reuniting the bishops of all churches and the church leaders of the past had to flow from their confirmation of the truth of the Scriptures as understood by the Ulfilans.** ...Firmly convinced of the truth of their position, they seemed genuinely surprised when others failed to agree with them. They believed that the truth would be victorious in a general council and that only a general council had the competence to decide conflicts which arise in matters of faith.

- Sumruld, Augustine and the Arians, 1994, p. 59-60, 61.

- Ulfilas (Ancient Greek: Οὐλφίλας; c. 311 – 383),[a] known also as Wulfila(s) or Urphilas,[5] was a 4th-century Gothic preacher of Cappadocian Greek descent. He was the apostle to the Gothic people.[Germanic tribes] Ulfila served as a bishop and missionary, participated in the Arian controversy, and is credited with converting the Goths to Christianity [Arianism] as well as overseeing translation of the Bible into the Gothic language.[7] ...Ulfila would master both Greek and Latin during his life, and as bishop he wrote theological and exegetical treatises in both languages.[26] **In 341, he returned to Gothia, spending the following seven years working to explain and confirm the doctrine of Arianism among existing adherents and the unconverted.** ...For 33 years Ulfila continued to serve as bishop and attended church councils. ...He also engaged in theological debates and subscribed to Homoeanism, which became established at the 357 Council of Sirmium. (Ulfilas. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulfilas>)

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Confession of the 460 Bishops Read Aloud

- [Victor] Finally the debate took place, needless to say at a place their enemies had selected. Our people chose to avoid the disturbances which loud voices would have caused, in case the Arians were later to say that they had been overpowered by the weight of numbers... Our people turned round and said to Cyrila: "Say what you intend to do." Cyrila said: "I do not know Latin." Our bishops said: "We know very well that you have always spoken Latin; you should not excuse yourself now, especially since you have set this fire going."³⁵ And, seeing that the catholic bishops were better prepared for the debate, he flatly refused to give them a hearing, relying on various quibbles. But our people had foreseen this and wrote a short work concerning the faith, composed quite fittingly and with the necessary detail. They said: "If you wish to know our faith, this is the truth we hold."
- Victor Vitensis, Victor of Vita: history of the Vandal persecution, Book 2.

• [Victor] We are enjoined by a royal command to provide an account of the catholic faith which we hold. So we are setting out to briefly indicate the things which we believe and proclaim, aware of our lack of ability but supported by divine assistance. We recognize, then, that the first thing we must do is give an explanation of the unity of the substance of the Father and the Son, which the Greeks call homousion. Therefore: we acknowledge the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the unity of the divine nature in such a way that we can say with a faithful confession that the Father subsists as a distinct person, and the Son equally exists in his own person, and that the Holy Spirit retains the distinctiveness of his own person, not asserting that the Father is the same as the Son, nor confessing that the Son is the same as the Father or the Holy Spirit, nor understanding the Holy Spirit in such a way that he is the Father or the Son; but we believe the unbegotten Father and the Son begotten of the Father and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father¹⁷ to be of one substance and essence, because the unbegotten Father and the begotten Son and the Holy Spirit who proceeds have one divine nature in common; nevertheless, there are three distinct persons.

• [Victor] And so, no occasion for uncertainty is left. It is clear that the Holy Spirit is also God and the author of his own will, he who is most clearly shown to be at work in all things and to bestow the gifts of the divine dispensation according to the judgment of his own will, because where it is proclaimed that he distributes graces where he wills, servile condition cannot exist, for servitude is to be understood in what is created, but power and freedom in the Trinity. **And so that we may teach the Holy Spirit to be of one divinity with the Father and the Son still more clearly than the light, here is proof from the testimony of John the evangelist. For he says: 'There are three who bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.'**⁴⁷ Surely he does he not say 'three separated by a difference in quality' or 'divided by grades which differentiate, so that there is a great distance between them?' No, he says that the 'three are one.'

• Latin: Unde nullus ambiguitati relinquitur locus, quin clareat Spiritum sanctum et Deum esse, et suae voluntatis auctorem, qui cuncta operari, et secundum propriae voluntatis arbitrium divinae dispensationis dona largiri apertissime demonstratur. Quia ubi voluntaria gratiarum distributio praedicatur, non potest videri conditio servitutis: in creatura enim servitus intelligenda est, in Trinitate vero dominatio ac libertas. **Et ut adhuc luce clarius unius divinitatis esse cum Patre et Filio Spiritum sanctum doceamus, Ioannis evangelistae testimonio comprobatur. (0228A) Ait namque: Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in coelo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus sanctus, et hi tres unum sunt (I Ioan. V, 7). Nunquid, ait, tres in differenti aequalitate seiuncti, aut quibuslibet diversitatum gradibus longo separationis intervallo divisi? sed tres, inquit, unum sunt.** (Victor Vitensis, Historia persecutionis Africae provinciae; Migne Latina, PL 58.227C)

- Victor Vitensis, Victor of Vita: history of the Vandal persecution, Book 2.

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

- [Victor] When our little book had been presented to them and read out, their blind eyes found it impossible to endure the light of the truth. They raved with intolerable shouts, taking it amiss that in the title of the book we had called ourselves 'Catholics'. Straightaway those liars declared to the king that we had created an uproar while rushing away from the hearing. He was immediately inflamed and, believing the falsehood, lost no time in doing what he wanted to do. He had already drawn up a decree and secretly sent his men with it throughout the different provinces. So, while the bishops were in Carthage, in one day he closed the churches throughout Mrica and he presented all the property of the bishops and churches to his own bishops as a gift.
- Victor Vitensis, Victor of Vita: history of the Vandal persecution, Book 3.

460 Bishops “stood on the brink of death”

• [Brownlee] There is no trace of evidence that any of the different sectaries brought an accusation against the Christian fathers of having interpolated this verse. — It is a fact on record that our verse was received by the western churches in Europe, in general, at a very early period. Now on the supposition that this verse had not existed in the ancient genuine MSS. and that the Christian fathers had brought it forward, and quoted it publicly, without effective evidence of its authenticity, how is it to be accounted for, I pray you, that all the sectaries kept silence? The Sabellians, and the Arians, had both the disposition, and the power, and the means in their hands to expose the audacity, and to punish the sacrilegious deed of these fathers, who had committed the interpolation. If they could not discover the first who dared to add to God’s word, they could easily discover the first who dared to make use of the fraud. How can it be accounted for that they never brought any charges of this kind? It cannot be affirmed that our verse never was quoted against them. This was done. It was done publicly by those brave Christian bishops, who, in Africa, “bearded the lion in his den.” I allude to the famous assembly of bishops in Africa, who laid in their solemn testimony before the king of the Vandals, and the Arian bishops. In the year, 484, Hunneric, by an edict did summon all the orthodox bishops of Africa, and the isles dependent on his power, to appear before him in February of the following year, and to defend and establish out of the Scriptures, their doctrine of the unity of the three divine persons; their doctrine of the homoousian. They had nine months allowed them and their antagonists to prepare themselves; to confer, and to collect MSS. and to draw up their confessions of faith respectively. At the time fixed by the royal edict, there appeared, says Gibbon in his Roman History, four hundred and sixty bishops from the orthodox African churches. They presented their confession of faith to the king. They had known their danger from that man of blood. [PAGE 547] They stood on the brink of death. The bar of their God seemed as it were, almost immediately before them. They had made their preparations of proof for nine months. They knew that the eyes of all the churches of the east and west were on them. Would men ready to offer their lives on the altar of martyrdom—men who actually, after this, braved banishment and death—would these men interpolate, or bring forward a quotation, which by one word could be refuted and exposed by their learned and shrewd and powerful enemies? Would they do a deed which would expose their memory to infamy, before the eyes of all the churches? It is surely not supposable. They knew that their enemies had every facility to expose them by the possession of MSS. of the Scriptures.

• [Brownlee] Hence they must have come conscious that what they were going to quote, they could sustain by ancient and authentic MSS. and by the testimony of the fathers. If they did not all this, then their act of quoting what was not scripture, and their offering what was interpolated, and not found in their enemies copies, was little else than a wanton and a gratuitous act of throwing themselves into the fangs and the jaws of the lion—an act of self destruction—when they had abundance of other texts to sustain them in the dispute. Now, the following is the clause of their confession, to which I have alluded. It is from Victor Vitensis. “And further that we may teach it to be clearer than the light, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost have one divinity; it is proved from the testimony of the evangelist John: for he says, there are three that bear testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.”— The Quarterly Review, Mr. Editor, to get rid of this testimony, tried to impeach the authority of Victor Vitensis. But the able refutation by bishop Burgess has shown that Victor is sustained by the most unexceptionable authority—from that of the Emperor Justinian, even unto Gregory the Great. (Bp. Burgess’s Vindication of 1 Jo. v. 7. p. 52. And Horne, vol. iv. p. 448.) Dr. Marsh supposes that the Arians did not stay to reply—or to reason the point. They resorted instantly to violence. But the Arians did reply—not at first by blows—not immediately by cutting out their tongues, but “with the most tumultuous clamours.” They insisted that these words did not prove the point in debate. They insisted that they could not find, in as many words, in the scriptures, the very word — the homoousian — which was the word used by both antagonists in the Arian controversy. (See Kettneri, vol 1, 1719, p. 105.) Hence they did not

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

deny our text — but they denied that the homoousian was contained in the Verse. Others of our opponents suppose that the Arians must have objected to this text brought against them: but that this has not been recorded by the orthodox, from whom we have the account. To this it has been justly replied, that if they had objected, we should most assuredly have found on the pages of the orthodox some reply to the objection. For it is evident that these fathers could say enough for it, when permitted — and did persuade the whole western churches to receive it as a genuine portion of the word of God! We feel ourselves fairly entitled to say, that the Arians were silent on this point. They brought no such accusations. And this silence seems to us a proof that they had it in their MS. copies of the Bible.

- Brownlee, [Letter to the Editor], No. IV, in the Christian Advocate, vol 2, 1824, p. 546-547.

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Hefele : Religious Conference at Carthage, A.D. 484.

• [Hefele] In the meantime there was held in Africa, if not a Synod proper, yet an unusually numerous and important assembly of bishops. Huneric, king of the Vandals, son of the successor of Geiseric, since his entrance on the government, A.D. 477, had not ceased to persecute the Catholics, and had endeavored by all means of craft and violence to obtain a victory for Arianism, which he and his people professed. To this end he sent out, in May 483, a circular letter to Eugenius of Carthage, and all Homoousion bishops, in which he gave orders that, on the first of February in the next year, they should be present at Carthage, in order to have a disputation with his "venerable" bishops on the Homoousion faith, and to examine whether it were scriptural or not.² [2. Mansi, t. vii. p. 1141; Hardouin, t. ii. p. 857.] Eugenius declared that he was willing to attend, on condition that the Catholic bishops from the other side of the Mediterranean, particularly the Church of Rome, should be [PAGE 36] allowed to take part in the disputation, as the controversy would have reference to the Catholic creed, and not to the special creed of the African Church.¹ [1. Mansi, t. vii. p. 1142; Hardouin, l.c.; Victor Vitensis (Victor of Vita), *De persecutione Afric.* lib. ii. in the *Biblioth. Max. PP.*, Lugd. t. viii. p. 682; also in *Baron. ad ann. 483, n. 93 sqq.*] He made this stipulation particularly, because the bishops who were not under Vandal rule could express themselves with much greater freedom than he and his colleagues who were living under that heavy oppression. King Huneric made the scornful reply: "When you make me master of the whole world, then what you want shall be done," that is to say, then shall the bishops be summoned from the whole world. To this Eugenius returned a befitting answer; but instead of complying, Huneric did the reverse, and drove into exile those Orthodox bishops of Africa who were pointed out to him as peculiarly learned and eloquent.² [2. Victor Vitensis, l.c.]

• [Hefele] At last the first of February arrived, and no fewer than 461 Catholic bishops had appeared at Carthage, as is shown by the list of them which is still extant.³ [fn. 3. In Mansi, t. vii. 1156; Hardouin, t. ii. p. 869. Sixteen sees were then made empty, or the bishops sent into exile, so that the Vandal kingdom counted 447 Catholic bishops.] Most of them were from Africa itself; some were from the islands of Sardinia, Majorica, and Minorca, which belonged to the Vandal kingdom. Huneric had some of the ablest of the Catholic bishops separated from the others and arrested, and Bishop Laetus of Neptis even killed, in order to strike terror into the others. The place of meeting was fixed by their opponents; but the Catholics immediately selected from their number ten speakers, so that the Arians should not be able to say that they were clamored down by the Catholic bishops by reason of their majority. There were, however, no real debates. At the very beginning the Arian Court Bishop Cyrila placed himself in the president's chair, and the Catholic bishops in vain appealed against this, and demanded an impartial president. When the royal notary gave to Cyrila the title of patriarch, the Orthodox asked "by whose authority Cyrila had assumed the title of patriarch"; and when the Catholic spectators made a noise at this, they were driven by blows from the place of [PAGE 37] assembly. Eugenius complained of violence; but, in order to get at the chief matter in dispute, the Catholic speakers requested Cyrila to open the proceedings, and to lay before them the points which were to be discussed. Cyrila replied, "Nescio latine," and persisted in his objection to the speaking of Latin, although he answered that he had elsewhere made copious use of this language. Victor Vitensis maintains (p. 683) that Cyrila had met the Catholic bishops with better preparation and more boldly than he had expected; but that they had taken the precaution of drawing up a confession of faith in writing of which he gives a copy (lib. iii.), and which is also given in Mansi and Hardouin. 1 [fn. 1. Mansi, t. vii. p. 1143; Hardouin, t. ii. p. 857.] Tillemont shows (p. 797) that, in the subscription of this formula, xii. Kal. Mart. instead of Mai. must be read. Huneric now put forth an edict, on February 24, in which he blamed the assembled Orthodox bishops that they had not either at the first or second day of sitting (so that the assembly lasted two days) proved the Homoousion from Holy Scripture, although they had been challenged to do so; but, on the contrary, had occasioned a rising and an uproar

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

among the people. He therefore gave orders that their churches should remain closed until they should come and take part in the disputation.

- [Hefele] Further, the laws which the Roman Emperors, misled by the bishops, had promulgated against heretics, should now be directed against the maintainers of the Homoousion. They were therefore forbidden to hold meetings anywhere; they were not to have a church in any city or village; they must not take part in any baptism, ordination, or the like; and in case they continued in their perverseness, they should be punished with exile. Moreover, the laws of the Roman Emperors against heretical layman should now be in force, and they should be deprived of the right to sell, to leave by will, and to succeed to legacies, inheritances, trusts, etc.; and, moreover, those who occupied dignities and offices should be stripped of them, and should be declared infamous. All books in which they defended their error (the Nicene doctrine) were to be burnt. Anyone, however, who should return from his error by the 1st of June, was [PAGE 38] to be free from all punishments. Finally, all the churches, together with church property, in the whole kingdom, were to be made over to the truth, that is, the Arian bishops and priests.¹ [fn. 1. Victor Vit. lib. iv. l.c. p. 687 sqq.; Mansi, t. vii. p. 1153 sqq.; Hardouin, t. ii. p. 867 sqq.; Baron. ad ann. 484, n. 54; Tillemont, t. xvi. p. 562.] Besides this, King Huneric had the Catholic bishops present in Carthage sought for in their lodgings, deprived of their property, their servants, and horses, and driven out of the city. Whoever should receive them was to have his house burnt. Later on they were all excommunicated; the majority (302) being sent to different parts of Africa, where they had to live as country people without any spiritual functions, whilst forty-six were sent to the island of Corsica, where they had to hew wood for the royal ships. Victor adds that twenty eight had escaped, one had become a martyr, one a confessor, and eighty eight had died earlier.² [2. Victor Vit. l.c. p. 693; Mansi, t. vii. p. 1164; Hardouin, t. ii. p. 875. Cf. Tillemont, t. xvi. p. 565 sqq.]

- Hefele, A History of the Councils of the Church, From the Original Documents, 1895, vol 4, p. 35-38.

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Notitia Provinciarum et Civitatum Africae (List of the Provinces and Cities of Africa)

• The Notice of the Provinces and Cities of Africa (Latin: Notitia Provinciarum et Civitatum Africae) is a Byzantine-era document listing the bishops and sees in the Roman provinces of North Africa.[1] The cause of its preparation was the summoning of the episcopate to Carthage on 1 February 484 by the Arian king of the Vandals, Huneric (477–84). The Notitia Provinciarum and Civitatum Africae [Migne Latin, PL 58.267] is the conventional title long, in Latin but it is also known as the Notitia or Notitia Africae which is in turn, abbreviated in NA.[6] it is a record of the Bishops of North Africa[7] and represents a register of the provinces and cities of Africa, and the Organization of the Catholic Church (?) in North Africa at the end of the 5th century, an important time in the development of Catholic dogma. It also by inference describes the extent of the Vandal Kingdom at that time. **The Notitia lists the Catholic Bishops (nomina episcoporum catholicorum) who participated in the conference held at Carthage, February 1 484,[8] convened by Huneric. It summarizes the total number of bishops, in North Africa, the number of those who died in the Vandal Persecution, those who remained alive and, among these those who were relegated [exiled] (exiled), and those who fled (fugerunt).** It lists four hundred and eighty-three dioceses in seven provinces, five of which follow the secular Roman provinces. The order of the provinces seems to follow the chronological order of the creation of the primaties. Arranged according to provinces in this order: Proconsularis, Numidia, Byzacena, Mauretania Caesariensis, Mauretania Sitifensis, Tripolitana, Sardinia. **It also names the exiled bishops and vacant sees, and is an important authority for the history of the African Church and the geography of these provinces. It is incorporated in the only extant manuscript to the history of the Vandal persecution by Bishop Victor Vitensis.** (Notitia Provinciarum et Civitatum Africae. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Notitia_Provinciarum_et_Civitatum_Africae>)

qui deprehenditur eisdem episcopos seorsim enumerando. Qua in re etiam manuscripti lectionem servavimus, cum fieri potuerit ut aliquot nomina e Notitia exciderint. Ne tamen hoc aliquibus incommodum videatur, quod alius numerus in singulorum enumeratione habeatur, et alius in iis simul collectis, retenta manuscripti lectione, Sirmondi restitutiones inter ansulas apponi curavimus. Sic et titulum ab eodem viro docto huic monumento impositum, *Notitia scilicet provinciarum*, etc., ei qui in manuscripto habetur, *Incipiunt nomina*, etc., præmisimus.

NOTITIA

PROVINCiarUM ET CIVITATUM AFRICÆ.

55 INCIPIENT NOMINA EPISCOPORUM CATHOLICORUM DIVERSARUM PROVINCiarUM QUI CARTHAGINE EX PRÆCEPTO REGALI VENERUNT PRO REDDENDA RATIONE FIDEI, DIE CALEND. FEBRUARIAS, ANNO SEXTO REGIS HUNERICI.

Nomina episcoporum provincie proconsularis, vel qui in exsilium missi sunt.

Eugenius Carthaginiensis, Tamalleni.
Felix Abaritanus, exsilium.
Paulus Sinnarensis, exsilium.
Felix Pienis, Corsica exsilium.
Marianus Hippzaritensis, ut supra.
Pascasius Guelensis, ut supra.
Sacconius Uzialensis, ut supra.
Bonifacius Membrositanus, fung.
Gulosus Beneventanus, Corsica.
Reparatus Utimirensis, ut supra.
Pastinatus Puppitanus, ut supra.
Reparatus Puppianensis.
Fortunatianus Araditanus, Corsica.
Deumhabet Thelensis, Corsica.
Liberatus Mullitanus, ut supra.
Mannucius Duasedemai.
Hirundinus Missuensis, Corsica.
Jona Lapidensis, ut supra.
Peregrinus Assuritanus, in exsilium hic.
Quintianus Urcitanus.
Cresconius Tennonensis, prbt.
Florentinus Uticensis, Corsica.
Pascasius Migirpensis, ut supra.
Carissimus Gispensis, in exsilium.
Gaius Uzitensis, prbt.
Exitiosus Verensis, Corsica.
Cresces Cicisitanus, in exsilium.
Bonifacius Bolitanus, Corsica.
Felix Carpitanus, ut supra.
Carcadius Maxulitanus, ut supra.
Cyprianus Bonustensis.
Dalmatius Tinnisensis, Corsica.
Emilianus Culsitanus, Corsica.
Felix Bullensis, prbt.
Clementinus Neapolitanus, Corsica.
Felix Curbitanus, ut supra.
Deuterius Simminensis, ut supra.
Aurelius Clapiensis, ut supra.
Coronius Meglapolitanus, ut supra.
Benenatus Timidensis, ut supra.
Vincentius Ziggensis, in exsilium.
56 Florentius Seminensis, Corsica.
Honoratus Tagaratensis, prbt.
Vindemius Attuburitanus, in exsilium.
Cyprianus Cellensis, in exsilium.
Augustinus Uzipparitanus, in exsilium.
Cassosus Ausanensis, hic.
Maximinus Mar-ggaritanus hic.
Felix Muzuensis.
Joannes Bullensium regio.
Cresciturus Titulianus.
Benenatus Tuburbitenensis.
Victor Eudalensis.
Pascasius Tulanensis.
Sunt numero 54.

Nomina episcoporum provincie Numidie.

Felix Berceritanus.
Augustinus Gazafulensis, prbt.
Quodvultdeus Calamensis.
Honoratus Castellanus.
Leontius Burcensis.
Firmianus Centurionensis, prbt.
Rufinianus Vadensis.
Paulus Nibensis, prbt.
Martialis Girensis.
Victor Caiculitanus.
Cresconius Amporensis.
Adeodatus Fesseitanus, prbt.
Vitalianus Bocconensis.
Dumvirialis Damatcorensis, prbt.
Donatus Ausuccurensis.
Palladius Idicrensis prbt.
Gaudentius Putiensis.
Victor Suggitanus.
Benenatus Lamviritanus.
Timotheus Tagurensis.
Melior Fossalensis, Nam.
Frumentius Tubusicensis.
Felix Lamsortensis.
Abundius Tididitanus prbt.
Valentianus Montensis, prbt.
Adeodatus Nobabarbarensis.
Adeodatus Idassensis.
Florentius Nobagermaniensis.
Villatius de Casis Medianensis.
Eusebius Susicaziensis.
Victorinus de Noba Caesaris.
Vitalianus Vazaritanus.
Junior Tigillabensis.
Vigilius Hissanensis, prbt.
Leporius Augurensis.
Pascentius Octabensis.
Petrus Madensis.
Felix Matharensis, prbt.
Florentius Centenariensis.
Felix Gibbensis, prbt.
Florentianus Midilensis.
Fluminus Tabudensis.
Optantius Casensicalanensis.
Peregrinus Punentianensis, prbt.
Felix Nobasparsensis, prbt.
Felicianus Metensis.
Domnicus Caesariensis, prbt.
Candidus Nobasinensis, prbt.
Quodvultdeus Cælianensis, Nam.
Jannarius Jacterensis.
Victorinus de Castello Tituliano.
Fructuosus de Giru Marcelli.
Cresconius Tharasensis.
Maximus Sillitanus, prbt.
Vigilius Hizirzadensis, prbt.
Victor Municipensis.
Servus Arsicaritanus.
Felix Casennigrensensis.
Donatianus Vaseitanus.
Pudentius Madaurensis.

Donatus Rusciensis.
 Donatus Villadegensis.
 Cresces Buffadensis, prbt.
 Adeodatus Sistrionianensis, prbt.
 Rusticus Tipasensis.
 Simplicius Vibilitanus.
 Stephanus Sinitensis.
 Pascentius Cethaquensisca.
 Donatus Teglatensis.
 Cresconius Zabensis.
 Antonianus Mustitanus.
 Reparatus Tubuniensis.
 Anastasius Aquenobensis.
 Victorinus Brabrensis, prbt.
 Felix Tebestinus.
 Dominus Moxoritanus, metallo.
 Secundus Tamogaziensis, prbt.
 Victorinus Legiensis.
 Quodvultdeus Respectensis.
57 Januarius Velesitanus.
 Benenatus Mazacensis, prbt.
 Donatus Lugurensis, prbt.
 Victor Circensis, prbt.
 Pardalius Macomadiensis.
 Januarius Legensis, prbt.
 Quodvultdeus ad Turres Concordi.
 Maximus Lamfuensis, prbt.
 Marcellinus Vagrautensis.
 Domnicus Tgisitanus.
 Donatus Gibensis.
 Fortunius Regianensis, prbt.
 Donatus Silensis.
 Victor Gaudiabensis.
 Januarianus Marculitanus.
 Januarius Centuriensis.
 Felix Suabensis.
 Crescentianus Germaniensis.
 Annibonius Vadesitanus.
 Januarius Gaurianensis, prbt.
 Fortunatianus Naratcatensis.
 Maximus Lamiggigensis.
 Felix Garbensis, prbt.
 Julius Vagarmelitanus.
 Ponticanus Formensis, prbt.
 Victor de Turres Ammeniarum.
 Servus Belesasensis.
 Honoratus Fatensis.
 Menor Formensis.
 Peregrinus Muliensis.
 Gedalius Ospitensis.
 Fulgentius Vagadensis, prbt.
 Secundinus Lamasuensis.
 Crescentius Tacaretensis.
 Benenatus Milevitanus.
 Quodvultdeus Ullitanus.
 Proficius Seleucianensis, prbt.
 Proficius Vadensis, prbt.
 Januarius Tagastensis, prbt.
 Donatus Maximianensis.
 Adeodatus Zaradtensis, prbt.
 Felicianus de Giru-Tarasi.
 Cardelus Lamiggigensis.
 Flavianus Vicojacensis.
 Sunt numero 125*.

Nomina episcoporum provinciae Byzacenae.

Vassinensis*.
 Et Aquis.
 Liberatus prbt. Amudarsensis.
 Mansuetus Afulenensis.
 Pascasius Septimuniensis.
 Hortulanus Benefensis.
 Victorinus Ancusensis.
 Eubodius Mudititanus.
 Terentianus Tubulbacensis.
 Rogatianus Vagentinianensis.

A

Bonifacius Masclianensis.
 Victorinus Sclerianensis.
 Victor Narensis.
 Leontius Decorianensis.
 Servusdei Tambetanus.
 Lartus Neptitanus.
 Felix Custrensis, prbt.
 Flavianus Bulelianensis.
 Decimus Theuzitanus.
 Serbandus Putiensis.
 Restitutus Thagamutensis.
 Præsidius Sufetulensis, in exilium.
 Eustratius Sufetanus.
 Secundinus Garrianensis, prbt.
 Præfectianus Abaradirensis, prbt.
 Sabinius Octabiensis.
 Adelfius Mactaritanus.
 Restitutus Aquiabensis.
 Antacius Medianensis.
 Mensius Turrensis.
 Filiosus Aggaritanus.
 Fastidiosus Egnatiensis.
 Germanus Peradamien-is.
 Donatus Ermianensis.
 Pascasius Tenitanus.
 Dominus Tarazensis.
 Hilarinus Trohuanensis.
 Fortunatianus Leptiminensis.
 Honoratus Tagariatanus.
 Albinus Octabensis.
 Aurelius Feradimaiensis.
 Felix Crepedulensis.
 Cyprianus Unuzibirensis.
 Innocentius Muzucensis.
 Possidius Massimanensis, non occurrit.
 Victor Vitensis, non occurrit.

B

C

Victorinus Scebatianensis.
 Adeodatus Pederodianeus.
 Athenius Circinitanus.
 Florentinus Tuziritanus.
 Vindicianus Marazianensis.
 Adelfius Mattaritanus.
 Adeodatus Præcausensis.
 Restitutus Aquis Albensium.
 Felix Irpinianensis.
 Victorinus Usulensis.
 Habetdeus Tamaullimensis.
 Concordius Cululitanus.
 Servus Menes-sitanus.
 Quintianus Casulis Carlanensis.
 Restitutus Acolitanus.
58 Vindemialis Capsensis.
 Quodvultdeus Durensis, prbt.
 Helioborus Cufutensis.
 Marcellinus Tasbalten-is.
 Fortunatianus Gilitanus.
 Honoratus Tiziensis.
 Bonifacius Foratianeus.
 Servus Arsuritanus.
 Felix Forontonianensis.
 Succesianus Febianensis.
 Julianus Vararitanus.
 Bonifacius Frontonianensis.
 Secundianus Mimianensis, in exilium.
 Donatus Boanensis.
 Bonifacius Maraguiensis.
 Pirasus Nationensis.
 Fausus Præsidienis.
 Rusticus Tetcitanus.
 Primianus Gurgaitensis.
 Bonifacius Filacensis.
 Honoratus Macrianensis, prbt.
 Frumentius Teleptensis.
 Honorius Oppenensis.
 Fortunatianus Tagarbalensis.
 Simplicius Carcabianensis.
 Donatus Rulinianensis.

D

Digitized by Google

Liberatus Aquarum Regiarum, prbt.
Victorinus Quæstorianensis.
Rufinianus Victorianensis.
Maximus Gummitanus.
Peregrinus Materianensis.
Fortunatus Mozatcolitanus.
Pacatus Vicoateriensis.
Proficius Sublectinus.
Saturis Irensis.
Mangentius Ticualtensis.
Villaticus Ausegerensis.
Cresconius Temoniarenensis, prbt.
Paulus Turreblandinus, prbt.
Restitutus Segermitanus, in exsilium.
Victor Gauvaritanus.
Donatianus Eliensis.
Stephanus Rusfensis.
Vinitor Talaptulensis.
Hortensius Autentesis.
Tertullus Juncensis.
Eusebius Jubaltianensis, prbt.
Servitius Unuricopolitanus.
Donatus Aggaritanus.
Vigilius Tapsitanus.

Sunt numero 117*.

Et cathedræ quæ episcopos non habuerunt.

Madassuma.

Dionysiana.

Sulianis.

Orroea Coelia.

Cunculiana.

Ticibus.

Sunt numero 6*.

Nomina episcoporum Mauritaniz Cæsariensis.

Glorius Juncensis.
Teberianus Quidianus.
Victor Sufaritanus.
Syrus Cornulianensis.
Lucius Irens.
Honoratus Timicitanus.
Donatus Nobicensis, prbt.
Patera Milianensis.
Reparatus Girumontensis.
Avus Altabensis.
Donatus Panatoriensis.
Martialis Columpnatensis.
Subdatus Sucardensis.
Subitanus Idensis, prbt.
Donatus Tiflensis.
Felicianus Idensis.
Onesimus Fidolomensis.
Victor Taborentensis.
Verecundus Nobensis.
Stephanus Zucabiaritanus.
Apocorius Cæsariensis.
Felix Rusubritanus.
Donatus Subbaritanus.
Januarius Aquensis.
Martialus Murntagensis, prbt.
Claudius Vagalitanus.
Passitanus Tigisitanus.
Sato Fallabensis.
Donatus Usinadensis.
Paulus Flumenzeritanus.
Nicetius Castellominoritanus.
Restitutus Florianensis.
Mensius Alamiliarenensis.
Maxentius Tigamibenensis, prbt.
Urbanus Amaurensis, prbt.
Cresces Sestensis, prbt.
Donatus Ternamunensis.
Fortis Caputicillensis.
Januarius Nasbincensis, prbt.
Palladius Bacauriensis.
Balens Villenobensis.

A

Passinatus Masuccabensis, prbt.
Longinus Pamariensis.
59 Honorius Benepotensis.
Bureo Vardinissensis, prbt.
Felix Ambiensis.
Æmilius Mediensis.
Arator Catulensis.
Cæcilius Minnensis.
Lucidus Cartennitanus.
Victor Regiensis.
Rogatianus Vannidensis, prbt.
Primus Caprensis.
Metun Rusuccuritanus.
Rufus Sfasferiensis.
Eusebius Obbitanus.
Securus Timidanensis.
Donatus Frontensis.
Victor Icositanus.
Quodvultdeus Tablensis, prbt.
Restutus Lapidensis, prbt.
Donatus Vancariensis.
Bonifacius Ruguniensis.
Benantius Oppidonebensis, prbt.
Mattasius Castellijabaritanus.
Felix Aquisirensis.
Victor Caltadiensis, prbt.
Cresces Tigabitanus.
Idonius Rusaditanus.

B

C

D

*Celianus Reperitanus.
Ingenus Ubabensis.
Petrus Oboritanus.
Faustus Castraseberianensis.
Vitalis Castranobensis.
Petrus Castelanus, prbt.
Quintus Mutecitanus.
Paulinus Rubicariensis.
Pascasius Mammillensis.
Tacanus Albulensis.
Emptacius Siccesitanus.
Talasius Gratinopolitanus.
Victor Manaccenseritanus, prbt.
Pannonius Bitensis.
Felix Flenuclensis, prbt.
Campanus Bidensis.
Valentinus Castelli Mediani.
Romanus Sufaritanus.
Secundus Maurianensis.
Reparatus Bulturiensis.
Lucius Maturbensis, prbt.
Cæcilius Balianensis.
Rogatus Sereddelitanus.
Mingin Nobensis, prbt.
Reparatus Castelli Tatroportensis.
Philo Arsinnaritanus.
Vassius Elfantariensis, prbt.
Patera Catalitanus.
Vincemalus Baparensis.
Reparatus Tipasitanus, prbt.
Romanus Tamadensis, prbt.
Victor Vancariensis.
Maddaninus Murcomensis.
Crispinus Tabadcarensis.
Quodvultdeus Summulensis, prbt.
David Tadmatensis.
Candidianus Catrens, prbt.
Reparatus Cissitanus.
Pæquarius Tasaccurensis, prbt.
Quintus Tabuniensis, prbt.
Maximus Tuscamiensis.
Auxilius Gunugitanus, prbt.
Reparatus Sitenis.
Saturninus Vissalsensis, prbt.
Felix Maxitensis, prbt.
Gaius Adsinnadensis, prbt.
Cresces Satafensis, prbt.
Saturninus Sertensis, prbt.
Victor Numidensis, prbt.

Cerealis Castelloripensis.
Lucius Tamazucensis.
Sunt numero 120.

Et cathedræ quæ episcopos non habuerunt :

Majucensis.
Nabalensis.
Tubunensis.
Maurensis.
Tingariensis.
Uboritanus.
Sunt numero 6 *.

Nomina episcoporum provincie Mauritanie Sitifensis.

Rufinus Tamallumensis.
Donatus Sitifensis.
Maximus Coviensis.
Domitianus Igilgitanus.
Honorius Aquæ Albensis.
Festus Satafensis.
Victor Horrens.
Maximus Thugusubditanus.
Victor Jerahtanus.
Vadius Lesuitanus.
Pacatus Equizotensis.
Felix Castellanus, prbt.
Constantius Cogitanus.
Victor Eminentianensis.
Saturnius Sociensis, prbt.
Jacobus Lemelefensis.
Cresciturus Cellensis, prbt.
Emeritus Macrensensis, prbt.
60 * Redux Nobalicianensis.
Argentius Zallatensis.
Vindemius Lemfoctensis.
Abus Ficensis.
Restutus Macrianensis, prbt.
Vitalis Assafensis.
Victor Flumeupiscensis.
Inventinus Maronanensis.
Romanus Molicunzensis.
Victorinus Serteitanus, prbt.
Montanus Cedamusensis.
Clemens Thamagristensis.
Adeodatus Pribatensis.
Rogatus Partienensis.

* Columnæ sequentes usque ad 90 inter notas textui *Historiæ* subjectas referendæ sunt, a nostræ editionis columnæ 179 ad col. 259. Novem autem quæ supersunt ut ad 99 perveniatur, indicem *Scripturæ*

A

Villaticus Mozotensis.
Honoratus Tamascaniensis, prbt.
Justus Acufidensis, prbt.
Emilius Asvorenianensis.
Uzulus Thuccensis.
Aulidius Suristensis.
Victorinus Perdicensis.
Possessor Zabensis.
Pascasius Salditanus.
Flavianus Vamallensis.
Sunt numero 44 *.

Nomina episcoporum provincie Tripolitanae.

Calipides Leptimagnensis.
Leo Sabratensis.
Faustius Kirbitanus.
Cresconius Oensis.
Servilius Tacaptianus.
Sunt numero 5 *.

B

Nomina episcoporum insulae Sardiniae.

Lucifer Calaritanus.
Martinianus de Foru Trojani.
Bonifacius de Sanafer.
Macarius de Minorica.
Vitalis Sulcitans.
Felix de Turrilus.
Hilias de Majorica.
Opilio de Euuso.
Sunt numero 8 *.

Ac sic sunt omnes episcopi diversarum provinciarum numero 466 *.

Ex quibus perierunt numero 83, id est :

De proconsulari numero 3 [4].
De provincia Numidia numero 33 [31].
[De provincia Byzacena numero 10.]
De provincia Mauritanie Cæsariensis numero 32.
[De provincia Mauritanie Sitifensis numero 8.]

C

Permanserunt numero 478 [378].
Corsica relegati numero 46.
Hic relegati numero 302.
Fugerunt numero 28.
Passus numero 1.
Confessor numero 1.

sacra continent, quem de more præmittimus, Indicem Scripturæ generalem in universam Patrologiam postea edituri. Confer observationem nostram, col. supra citata 179 ante prologum positam. Edit.

NOTÆ ET OBSERVATIONES IN NOTITIAM ECCLESIAE AFRICANÆ.

99 Notitiam Africanæ Ecclesiæ, superius a nobis editam, ad manuscriptorum codices conferre non satis esse visum est, nisi ea quoque notæ et observationibus illustraretur, ne nuda urbium oppidorumve nomina lectoribus exhiberemus. Quapropter rem nemini ingratam me facturum esse existimavi, si quæcunque ex antiquis monumentis tam sacris quam profanis colligere licuit huc proferrem, ad illustrandam Africanæ geographiam sacram. Hunc vero laborem eo libentiori animo suscepi, quo nemo hactenus id operis aggressus est; tametsi non modo semel et iterum, sed sæpius recusa fuerit Notitia Africana, ex quo, ab eruditissimo viro Jacobo Sirmundo e tenebris eruta, primam lucem aspexit. Id quidem sperare ferebat libri titulus, quem sub *Ecclesiæ Africanæ* nomine ab aliquot annis divulgavit vir clarissimus Emmanuel Scholestratus; sed alio cogitationem vertit, nec de episcopalis Africæ urbibus illustrandis quidquam curasse visus est.

Rem porro arduam, viribusque imparem meis a me susceptam fuisse, etsi ante opus tentatum viri non satis fuisset persuasum, sane in ipso operis decursu omnino expertus sum, adeoque incunctanter incœptum laborem abiecissem, nisi hunc virorum erudi-

torum qui de Africanis urbibus egere, commentarii relevassent. Et quidem cum ex hominum doctorum dissidiis semper aliquod reipublicæ literariæ commodum accedat; id mihi contigisse non diffiteor ex controversia quæ orta est inter eruditos viros Joannem Garnerium et societate Jesu presbyterum, et Henricum de Noris Augustinianæ familiæ, bibliothecæ Vaticanæ nuper a beatissimo pontifice Innocentio XII præfectum. Hac enim occasione dum Norisius Garnerii notas in inscriptiones epistolarum synodaliū, quæ inter Augustinianas tunc erant 90 et 91 jam vero in nova editione Benedictina num. 175 et 176 habentur, severius vexat, multa non minus eruditio quam subtili calamo de Africanis urbibus, abstrusa prius et multis ambagibus involuta, explicuit et detexit. Haud minus utiles mihi fuere eruditæ observationes et notæ, quibus vir clarissimus Stephanus Baluzius collationem Carthaginensem, in tomo primo novæ Collectionis Conciliorum a se editam, illustravit. Alios viros eruditos qui mihi subsidio fuere, cum sese opportuna obtulerit occasio, suo loco absque grati animi testificatione abire non permittam.

Cæterum hic lectorem monitum velim me, si quando plus æquo conjecturis indulgere videar, id semper in

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Appendix: Historical Points : Ben David & Ambrosius Dorhout

• [Ben David] The verse is quoted by above four hundred orthodox bishops, in a confession of faith presented to Hunneric, King of the Vandals, in Africa. This was in the year 484, and the confession has these words, which they ascribe to John the Evangelist: "Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in coelo. Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus." Observe, this is not a quotation of one writer, but of all the heads of the churches in Africa, [PAGE 280] in the Mediterranean islands, in Greece, in Rome, and in other places. The quotation, therefore, virtually presents the united testimony of all the learned throughout the whole Christian world to the genuineness of the text of the three Heavenly Witnesses. The king, who summoned them to appear at Carthage, was a furious Arian, bent on exterminating the orthodox. They produced the verse, they said, as placing the divinity of Christ in a point clearer than light. Could they hope by forging it, to impose upon a powerful enemy, surrounded by all the Arian bishops, who were ready to refute or expose any unfair dealings in their opponents? The thing is impossible: they all knew that, though their interpretation of the verse was opposed, the authenticity of it could not be called in question. ('Ben David' [John Jones], 'Letters to the Editor', The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature, vol 21, 1826, 279-280.)

• [Dorhout] Thus Victor: The book is said to be the one on the Catholic Faith by the Bishop of Carthage Eugenius, but it is not [written by Eugenius]. Victor, who composed the history of the Vandal persecution and was an eye- and ear-witness to the events, clearly relates that the members of this whole African Catholic council, all the bishops of Africa and of many islands, used this weapon against the Arians. That means that they recognized the authenticity of John's passage [1 John 5:7] and were aware that the Arians could bring up nothing against it; otherwise they would have been foolishly charging at the enemy with a leaden sword. We may therefore state as extremely likely that all the Scripture codices of the time, at least those in use in the whole of Africa and among the islanders, contained these words of 1 John 5:7, since not even the Arians were able to deny it. This one passage in Victor's work that we are citing is tantamount to hundreds of reputable 5th-century codices. So one wonders how those who hold the opposite view can argue that the oldest codices for the most part do not recognize those words. (Dorhout, Ambrosius. Ambrosii Dorhout V.D.M. Dokkumani, Animadversiones in loca selecta V.T. ... Annexæ sunt III Dissertationes, 1765. vol. 1, 275-276; Translated by Sarah Van der Pas, correspondence, June 2021)

Appendix: Invasion, Conquering North Africa, and Persecution

• [Victor] It is evident that this is now the sixtieth year since the cruel and savage people of the Vandal race set foot on the territory of wretched Africa [429 AD]. They made an easy passage across the straits, because the vast and broad sea becomes narrow between Spain and Africa, which are separated by only twelve miles. A large number made the crossing, and in his cunning duke [King] Geiseric, intending to make the reputation of his people a source of dread, ordered then and there that the entire crowd was to be counted, even those who had come from the womb into the light that very day. Including old men, young men and children, slaves and masters, there was found to be a total of 80,000. News of this has spread widely, until today those ignorant of the matter think that this is the number of their armed men, although now their number is small and feeble. Finding a province which was at peace and enjoying quiet, the whole land beautiful and flowering on all sides, they set to work on it with their wicked forces, laying it waste by devastation and bringing everything to ruin with fire and murders. They did not even spare the fruit-bearing orchards, in case people who had hidden in the caves of mountains or steep places or any remote areas would be able to eat the foods produced by them after they had passed. So it was that no place remained safe from being contaminated by them, as they raged with great cruelty, unchanging and relentless.

• [Victor] In particular, they gave vent to their wicked ferocity with great strength against the churches and basilicas of the saints, cemeteries and monasteries, so that they burned houses of prayer with fires greater than those they used against the cities and all the towns.⁴ When they happened to find the doors of a sacred building closed they were keen to open up a way with the blows of their hatchets, so that of them it could then rightly be said: 'They broke its doors in pieces with their axes as if they were in a forest of trees; they cast it down with axe and hatchet: they set your sanctuary on fire: they cast the tabernacle of your name to the ground and defiled it.' (Ps 73:5-7 Vulg) How many were the distinguished bishops and noble priests put to death by them at that time with different kinds of torments, as they tried to make them give up any gold or silver belonging to themselves or the churches! And so that the things which were in their keeping would be brought forth more easily under the pressure of pain, they inflicted cruel torments a second time on those who produced things, asserting that they had produced a part but not the whole, and the more a person gave, the more they believed he had still more.

• [Victor] Some had their mouths forced open with poles and stakes, and disgusting filth was put in their jaws so that they would tell the truth about their money. They tortured others by twisting cords around their foreheads and shins until they snapped. Devoid of mercy they offered many people sea water, others vinegar, the lees of olive oil, fish sauce and many other cruel things, while full wineskins were placed near their mouths. Neither the weaker sex, nor regard for nobility, nor reverence for the priesthood softened those cruel hearts; on the contrary, when they caught sight of some officeholder worthy of honour, the wrath of their fury was thereupon increased. I am unable to recount the number of the priests and men holding the rank of *inlustris* on whom they placed enormous burdens, as if they were camels or other kinds of baggage animals, and forced to walk using iron goads. Some of them breathed their last in wretched fashion under their burdens. Mature age and that greyness, worthy of veneration, which whitens the hair of the head so that it looks like shining wool, obtained no mercy from the enemy.⁶ Indeed, in their barbaric frenzy they even snatched children from their mothers' breasts and dashed the guiltless infants to the ground.⁷ They held others by the feet, upside down, and cut them in two from their bottoms to the tops of their heads; then it was, perchance, that captive Zion sang: 'My enemy said that he would bum my lands, kill my little children and dash my infants to the ground.' (cf II Kings 8: 12)

• [Victor] In some buildings, namely great houses and homes where fire had been of less service to them, they smashed the roofs in pieces and levelled the beautiful walls to the ground, so that the former beauty of the towns cannot be deduced from what they look like now. And there are very many cities with few or no

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

inhabitants, for after these events the ones which survive lie desolate; for example, here at Carthage they utterly destroyed the odeon, the theatre, the temple of Memoria and what people used to call the Via Caelestis. To speak only of the most noteworthy things, in their tyrannical presumption they delivered over to their religion the basilica of the Ancestors where the bodies of SS Perpetua and Felicitas are buried, the basilica of Celerina and the Scillitani, and others which they had not destroyed. But where there were some defensive works against which the hostility of their barbaric frenzy was unable to prevail, countless throngs were brought together at the walls of the towns. These they put to death with their savage swords, so that when the corpses had rotted away they were able, by means of the stench of the decaying bodies, to bring about the death of those whom they had not been able to approach because of the sheltering walls which protected them. Who will be able to declare how many and how numerous were the bishops who were then tortured by them? For it was then as well that Pampinianus, the venerable bishop of our town, IO was burnt all over his body by plates of glowing iron; in the same way Mansuetus of Urosi (Henchir Sougga) was burnt in the Porta Fornitana. At this time the city of Hippo Regius (Annaba), which the blessed Augustine, worthy of all praise, governed as its pontiff, was besieged.

- Victor Vitensis. Victor of Vita:History of the Vandal persecution, Book 1.

Appendix: Prayer of Eugenius : 1st Miracle

• [Victor] But when the fire of persecution was already kindled and the flame of the attacking king burned everywhere, our God displayed through his servant Eugenius a miracle which I must not pass over. In that same town of Carthage there was a certain blind man, a citizen very well known in the town, whose name was Felix. This man was visited by the Lord and was told by him in a vision one night, when the day of the Epiphany was dawning, "Rise, go to my servant bishop Eugenius, and tell him that I have sent you to him. And at the time when he blesses the font so that those coming to the faith may be baptized, he will touch your eyes. They will be opened and you will see the light." Having been instructed by this vision, the blind man believed that he had been deluded by a dream, as often happens, and decided not to get up. But while he was sinking back to sleep, he was urged in the same fashion to go to Eugenius. Again he paid no attention, and a third time he was threatened, speedily and fiercely. He roused the boy who usually guided him by the hand, and went with all speed to the basilica of Faustus. When he came there he prayed with many tears and asked a deacon, Peregrinus by name, to announce his arrival to the bishop, indicating that he had a secret of some kind to make known to him. Hearing of this the bishop ordered the man to come in. Because of the feast day that was being celebrated, the hymns of the night were already resounding throughout the church as the people sang. The blind man told the bishop the story of his vision and said to him: "I will not let you go until you let me have my sight back, just as you have been ordered by the Lord." The holy Eugenius said to him: "Depart from me, brother, for I am an unworthy sinner (cf Luke 5:8) and a wrongdoer above all men, seeing that even in these times I have been preserved."

• [Victor] But that man held onto his knees and said nothing beyond what he had said earlier: "Restore my sight to me, as has been ordered." Eugenius paid attention to his reverent trust and, because time was now pressing, he proceeded with him to the font in the company of the officiating clergy. There, immovable on his knees and groaning deeply, he disturbed heaven with his sobs. He blessed the rippling baptismal pool,²⁹ and when he had completed his prayer he arose and replied to the blind man in this way: "I have already told you, Felix my brother, that I am a sinful man; but may he who has deigned to visit you act in accordance with your faith and open your eyes." At the same time he signed his eyes with the standard of the cross, and immediately the blind man received his sight, as the Lord gave it back. The bishop kept him with him until all had been baptized in case the crowd, excited by such a great miracle, should crush the man who had received the light. Afterwards the miracle was made public throughout the church. The man who had been blind went forward to the altar with Eugenius to return to the Lord a thank offering for the restoration of his health, in accordance with the custom. The bishop received it and placed it on the altar. In the joy that followed, an uproar which could not be controlled arose from the people. Immediately, a messenger went to the tyrant. Felix was seized, and he was asked what had happened and how he had received the light. He explained everything in proper order, and the bishops of the Arians said: "Eugenius did this through sorcery."

• Victor Vitensis, Victor of Vita: history of the Vandal persecution, Book 2.

Appendix: African Confessors : 2nd Miracle

• [Victor] But let us go on quickly to tell what was done to the glory of God in the town of Tipasa (Tifech) in greater Mauritania. When they saw that a former notary of Cyrila had been ordained as the Arian bishop for their town, to the perdition of souls, the entire town fled together all at once on the next sailing to Spain, leaving behind only a few who had not been able to sail.¹⁴ The bishop of the Arians began to put pressure on these people, first by blandishments and later by threats, in an attempt to make Arians of them. But they were strong in the Lord: not only did they laugh at the madness of the man who was exhorting them, but they also began to celebrate the divine mysteries in public, gathering together in a house. When the bishop found out about this, in secret he sent to Carthage a report about it which was hostile to them. When this came to the attention of the king, in his wrath he sent a count with orders that the entire province was to be gathered together in the middle of the forum, and that he was to cut the tongues and right hands of these people completely off. But when this was done, thanks to the operation of the Holy Spirit they spoke, and continued to speak, just as they had spoken before. And if anyone finds this hard to believe, he should go to Constantinople now, and there he will find one of them, the subdeacon Reparatus, speaking correctly and in a faultless manner. For this reason he is held to be worthy of reverence in the palace of the emperor Zeno, and the queen in particular venerates him with an extraordinary devotion. (Victor Vitensis, *Victor of Vita: history of the Vandal persecution*; Translated by Moorhead, Liverpool Press 1992)

• [Twistleton] After several preliminary remarks, and after referring to the passage in Victor Vitensis, which I have already translated somewhat more fully, Dr. Newman translates the evidence of six writers, viz. i) Aeneas of Gaza; ii) Procopius of Caesarea; iii) the Emperor Justinian; iv) Count Marcellinus; v) Victor bishop of Tonno; vi) Pope Gregory I. [Newman, *Two Essays on Biblical and on Ecclesiastical Miracles*, 1892, §222-§230] Their evidence is set forth by him as follows:

• 1. AEneas of Gaza was the contemporary of Victor. When a Gentile, he had been a philosopher and a [PAGE 37] rhetorician, and did not altogether throw off his profession of Platonism when he became a Christian. He wrote a dialogue on the ' Immortality of the Soul and the Resurrection of the Body ;' and in it, after giving various instances of miracles, he proceeds, in the character of Axitheus, to speak of the miracle of the African Confessors : ' Other such things have been and will be ; but what took place the other day I suppose you have seen yourself. A bitter tyranny is oppressing the greater Africa, and humanity and orthodoxy have no influence over tyranny. Accordingly this tyrant takes offence at the piety of his subjects, and commands the priests to deny their glorious dogma. When they refuse, O the impiety! he cuts out that religious tongue, as Tereus in the fable. But the damsel wove the deed upon the robe, and divulged it by her skill when nature no longer gave her power to speak ; they, on the other hand, needing neither robe nor skill, call upon Nature's Maker, who vouchsafes to them a new nature on the third day, not giving them another tongue, but the faculty to discourse without a tongue more plainly than before. I had thought it impossible for a piper to show his skill without his pipes, or harper to play his music without his harp ; but now this novel sight forces me to change my mind, and to account for nothing fixed that is seen, if it be God's will to alter it. I myself saw the men, and heard them speak ; and wondering at the [PAGE 38] articulateness of the sound, I began to inquire what its organ was ; and distrusting my ears, I committed the decision to my eyes, and opening their mouth, I perceived the tongue entirely gone from the roots ; and astounded, I fell to wonder not how they could talk, but how they had not died."He saw them at Constantinople.

• 2. Procopius of Caesarea was secretary to Belisarius, whom he accompanied into Africa, Sicily, and Italy and to Constantinople, in the years between 527 and 542. By Belisarius he was employed in various political matters of great moment, and was at one time at the head of the commissariat and the

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

fleet. He seems to have conformed to Christianity, but Cave observes, from his tone of writing, that he was no real believer in it, nay preferred the old Paganism, though he despised its rites and fables. He wrote the history of the Persian, Vandalic, and Gothic war, of which Gibbon speaks in the following terms : "His facts are collected from the personal experience and free conversation of a soldier, a statesman, and a traveller ; his style continually aspires, and often attains, to the merit of strength and elegance ; his reflections, more especially in the speeches which he too frequently inserts, contain a rich fund of political knowledge, and the historian, excited by the generous ambition of pleasing and instructing posterity, appears to disdain the prejudices of the people and the flattery [PAGE 39] of courts." Such is Procopius, and thus he speaks on the subject of this stupendous miracle : "Huneric became the most savage and iniquitous of men towards the African Christians. For forcing them to Arianize, whomever he found unwilling to comply, he burnt and otherwise put to death. And of many he cut out the tongue as low down as the throat, who even as late as my time were alive in Byzantium, and talked without any impediment, feeling no effects whatsoever of the punishment. But two of them having allowed themselves to hold converse with abandoned women, ceased to speak."

- 3. Our next witness, and of the same date, is the Emperor Justinian, who, in an edict addressed to Archelaus, Praetorian Prefect of Africa, on the subject of his office, after Belisarius had recovered the country to the Roman Empire, writes as follows : "The present mercy which Almighty God has deigned to manifest through us for his praise and his Name's sake, exceeds all the wonderful works which have happened in the world — viz., that Africa should through us recover in so short a time its liberty, after being in captivity under the Vandals for ninety-five years, those enemies alike of soul and body. For such souls as could not sustain their various tortures and punishments by rebaptizing, they translated into their own misbelief; and the bodies of free men they subjected to the hardships of a barbaric yoke. Nay, the very churches sacred to [PAGE 40] God did they defile with their deeds of misbelief ; some they turned into stables. We have seen the venerable men who, when their tongues had been cut off at the roots, yet piteously recounted their pains. Others, after diverse tortures, were dispersed through diverse provinces, and ended their days in exile."

- 4. Count Marcellinus, chancellor to Justinian before he came to the throne, is the fourth layman to whose testimony we are able to appeal. He, too, as two of the former, speaks as an eyewitness, and the additional circumstances with which he commences seem to throw light upon Aeneas's singular account, that the confessors spoke "more plainly than before." "Through the whole of Africa," he says, in his Chronicon, under the date 484, "the cruel persecution of Huneric, King of the Vandals, was inflicted upon our Catholics. For after the expulsion and dispersion of more than 334 bishops of the orthodox, and the shutting of their churches, the flocks of the faithful, afflicted by various punishments, consummated their blessed conflict. Then it was that the same King Huneric ordered the tongue to be cut out of a Catholic youth who from his birth had lived without speech at all ; soon after he spoke, and gave glory to God with the first sounds of his voice. In short, I myself have seen at Byzantium a few out of the [PAGE 41] company of the faithful religious men, with their tongues cut off and their hands amputated, speaking with perfect voice."

- 5. Victor, bishop of Tonno, in Africa, Proconsularis, another contemporary, and a strenuous defender of the "Three Chapters" (Latin: *Tria Capitula*), which were condemned in the Fifth Ecumenical Council, has left behind him a Chronicon also, which at the same date runs as follows : "Huneric, King of the Vandals, urging a furious persecution through the whole of Africa, banished to Tubunnae, Macrinippi, and other parts of the desert, not only Catholic clerks of every order, but even monks and laymen, to the number of about four thousand, and makes confessors and martyrs, and cuts off the tongues of the confessors. As to which confessors, the royal city where their bodies lie attests that after their tongues

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

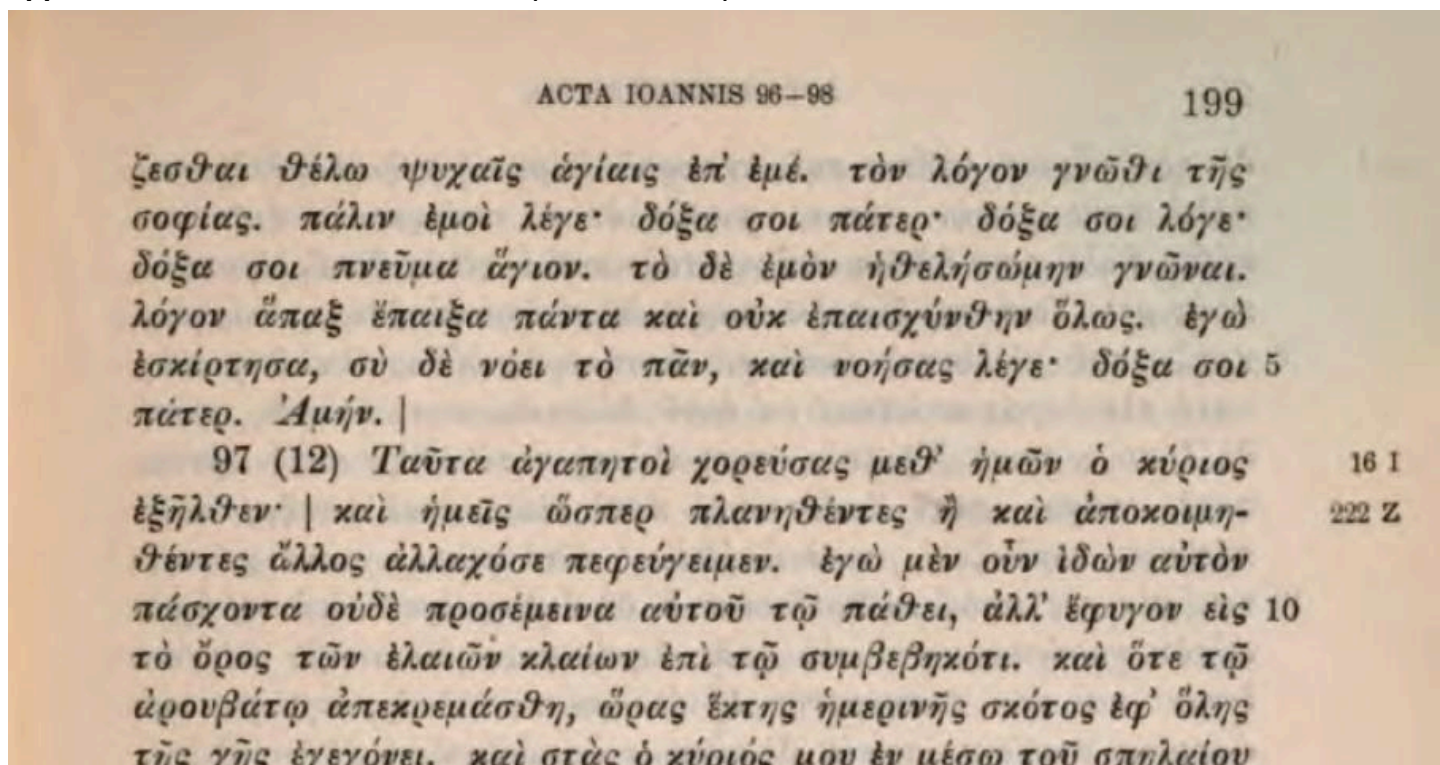
were cut out they spoke perfectly even to the end. Then Laetus, bishop of the Church of Nepte, is crowned with martyrdom, &c. It is observable from this statement that the miracle was recorded for the instruction of posterity at the place of their burial.”

- 6. Lastly, Pope Gregory I. thus speaks in his Dialogues :”In the time of Justinian Augustus, when the Arian persecution raised by the Vandals [PAGE 42] against the faith of Catholics was raging violently in Africa, some bishops, courageously persisting in the defence of the truth, were brought under notice ; whom the King of the Vandals, failing to persuade to his belief with words and offers, thought he could break with torture. For when in the midst of their defence of the truth, he bade them be silent, but they would not bear the misbelief quietly, lest it might be interpreted as assent. Breaking out into rage, he had their tongues cut off from the roots. A wonderful thing, and known to many senior persons, for afterwards, even without tongue, they spoke for the defence of the truth, just as they had been accustomed before to speak by means of it. These then, being fugitives at that time, came to Constantinople. At the time, moreover, that I was myself sent to the emperor to conduct the business of the Church, I fell in with a certain senior, a bishop, who attested that he had seen their mouths speaking, though without tongues, so that with open mouths they cried out, 'Behold, and see ; for we have not tongues and we speak.' And it appeared to those who inspected, as it was said, as if their tongues were being cut off from the roots, there was a sort of open depth in their throat, and yet in that empty mouth the words were formed full and perfect. Of whom one, having fallen into licentiousness, was soon after deprived of the gift of miracle.”

- [Twistleton] Dr. Newman then recapitulates the evidence as [PAGE 43] follows :”Little observation is necessary on evidence such as this. What is perhaps most striking in it, is the variety of the witnesses, both in their persons and the details of their testimony, together with the consistency and unity of that testimony in all material points. Out of the seven writers adduced, six are contemporaries ; three, if not four, are eye witnesses of the miracle ; one reports from an eye witness ; and one testifies to a permanent record at the burial-place of the subjects of it. All seven were living, or had been staying at one or other of the two places which are mentioned as their abode. One is a pope, a second a Catholic bishop, a third a bishop of a schismatical party, a fourth an emperor, a fifth a soldier, a politician, and a suspected infidel, a sixth a statesman and courtier, a seventh a rhetorician and philosopher. ‘He cut out the tongues by the roots,’ says Victor, Bishop of Vite ; ‘I perceived the tongue entirely gone by the roots’ says Aeneas ; ‘as low down as the throat,’ says Procopius ; ‘at the roots,’ say Justinian and St. Gregory. ‘He spoke like an educated man without impediment,’ says Victor of Vite ; ‘with articulateness’ says Aeneas, ‘better than before’ ; ‘they talked without impediment,’ says Procopius ; ‘speaking with perfect voice,’ says Marcellinus ; ‘they spoke perfectly even to the end,’ says the second Victor ; ‘the words were formed full and perfect’ says St. Gregory.”

- Twistleton, Edward Turner Boyd. *The Tongue Not Essential to Speech; With Illustrations of the Power of Speech in the African Confessors*. London: J. Murray, 1873, p. 36-43.

Appendix: Greek text of Acts of John (circa 150-200)



§96 Line 2 & 3, Lipsius Richard Adelbert et al. Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha, p. 199.

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Appendix: List of the 500 (1986, p. 163-166)

1. JOH. 5,7-8

163

■ 72 1. JOH. 5,7-8

οτι τρεις εισιν οι μαρτυρουντες το
πνευμα και το υδωρ και το αιμα και οι
τρεις εις το εν εισιν

1/2 το πνευμα και το υδωρ και το αιμα και οι τρεις εις
το εν εισιν

01	02	03	018	020	025	048	049	056	0142
0296	1	2	3	5	6	18	35	36	38
42	43	57	69	81	82	88T	90	93	94
97	102	103	104	105	110	131	133	141	142
149	172	175	177	180	181	189	201	203	204
205	209	216	221T	226	234	250	254C	256	263
296	302	307	308	309	312	314	319	321	322
323	325	326	327	328	330	337	363	365	367
368	378	383	384	385	386	390	393	394	398
400	404	421	424	425	431	432	440	442	450
451	452	453	454	457	458	459	460	462	464
465	466	467	468	469	479	483	489	491	496
498	506	517	547	582	592	601	602	603	604
605	606	607	608	614	616	617	618	619	620
621	622	623	624	625	627	630	631	632	633
634	635	636*	637	638	639	641	642	643	656
664	665	676	680	699	720	743	757	794	796
801	808	824	832	876	901	910	912	913	914
915	917	919	920	921	922	927	928	935	941
945	959	986	996	1003	1022	1040	1058	1066	1069
1070	1072	1075	1094	1099	1100	1101	1102	1103	1104
1105	1106	1107	1115	1127	1149	1161	1162	1175	1241
1242	1243	1244	1245	1247	1248	1249	1250	1251	1270
1292	1297	1311	1315	1319	1354	1360	1367	1384	1390
1398	1400	1404	1424	1482	1495	1501	1503	1505	1508
1509	1521	1523	1524	1548	1573	1594	1595	1597	1598
1599	1609	1610	1611	1617	1618	1619	1622	1626	1628
1636	1637	1642	1643	1649	1656	1661	1668	1673	1678
1704	1717	1719	1720	1721	1722	1723	1724	1725	1726
1728	1729	1730	1731	1732C	1733	1734C	1735	1736	1737
1738	1739	1740	1742	1744	1745	1746	1747	1748	1749
1750	1751	1752	1754	1757	1758	1761	1762	1763	1765
1767	1768	1769	1780	1827	1828	1829	1830	1835	1836
1837	1838	1839	1840	1841	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846
1847	1849	1851	1852	1853	1854	1855	1856	1857	1858
1860	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	1867	1868	1869	1870
1871	1872	1873	1874	1876	1877	1880	1882	1885	1888
1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1897	1899	1902	1903
2080	2085	2086	2125	2127	2130	2138	2143	2147	2186
2191	2194	2197	2200	2218	2221	2242	2243	2255	2261
2288	2289	2298	2344	2352	2356	2374	2378	2400	2404
2412	2423	2431	2466	2483	2484	2492	2494	2495	2501
2502	2516	2523	2527	2544	2554	2558	2587	2625	2626
2627	2652	2653	2674	2691	2696	2704	2712	2716	2718S
2723	2736	2774	2776	2777	2805				

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 446

1/2B το πνευμα το υδωρ και το αιμα και οι τρεις εις το εν
εισιν

4	51	206	223	429T	522	628	1405	1456	1490
1741	1753	1831	1832	1889	1896	2131	2180	2279	2508

Grunewald, Winfried, and K. Junack. 1986. Das Neue Testament Auf Papyrus. 1, Die Katholischen Briefe. Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter. page 163.

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

164

1.30H. 5,7-8

2511 2675C 2705
ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 23

1/2C το πνευμα και το υδωρ και αιμα και οι τρεις εις το εν εισιν

1646

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

1/2D το πνευμα το υδωρ το αιμα και οι τρεις εις το εν εισιν

2675*

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

1/2E το πνευμα και υδωρ και το αιμα και οι τρεις εις το εν εισιν

2464

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

1/2F το πνευμα και το υδωρ και το αιμα οι τρεις εις το εν εισιν

044

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

1/2G το πνευμα και το υδωρ και το αιμα και οι τρεις εις εν εισιν

218 1359 1563 1718 1875

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 5

1/2H το πνευμα και το υδωρ και το αιμα και οι τρεις το εν εισιν

62 456 615 1448 1702 1727 1850

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 7

1/2I το πνευμα και το υδωρ και το αιμα και οι τρεις εν εισιν

254* 436 444 1067 1352 1409 2475 2541

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 8

1/2J το πνευμα και το υδωρ και το αιμα και οι τρεις εις το εν

76 1743 2746

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 3

Grunewald, Winfried, and K. Junack. 1986. Das Neue Testament Auf Papyrus. 1, Die Katholischen Briefe. Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter. page 164.

1/2K το πνευμα και το υδωρ και το αιμα και οι τρεις εν τω εν εισιν

1732* 1881

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 2

1/2L το πνευμα το υδωρ και το αιμα και οι τρεις το εν εισιν

999 2401

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 2

3 απο του ουρανου πατηρ λογος και πνευμα αγιον και οι τρεις εις το εν εισιν και τρεις εισιν οι μαρτυρουντες επι της γης το πνευμα το υδωρ και το αιμα

629

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

4 εν τω ουρ.πατ.λογ.κ.πν.αγ.κ.ουτοι οι τρ.εν εισ.κ.τρ.εισ.οι μαρτ.εν τη γη πν.υδ.κ.αιμα

61

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

5 εν τ.ουρ.πατ.λογ.κ.πν.αγ.κ.οι τρ.εν εισ.κ.τρ.εισ.οι μαρτ.εν τη γη τ.πν.κ.τ.υδ.κ.τ.αιμα κ.οι τρ.εις τ.εν εισιν

636C

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

6 εν τ.ουρ.πατ.λογ.κ.πν.αγ.κ.ουτ.οι τρ.εν εισ.κ.τρ.εισ.οι μαρτ.εν τη γη πν.κ.υδ.κ.αιμα κ.οι τρ.εις το εν εισιν

918

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

6B εν τ.ουρ.πατ.λογ.κ.πν.αγ.κ.ουτ.οι τρ.εν εισ.κ.τρ.εισ.οι μαρτ.εν τη γη τ.πν.κ.τ.υδ.κ.τ.αιμα κ.οι τρ.εις τ.εν εισιν

429L

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

6C εν τ.ουρ.ο πατ.ο λογ.κ.τ.αγ.πν.κ.ουτ.οι τρ.εν εισ.κ.τρ.εισ.οι μαρτ.εν τη γη τ.πν.κ.τ.υδ.κ.τ.αιμα κ.οι τρ.εις τ.εν εισιν

221L 2318 2473

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 3

Grunewald, Winfried, and K. Junack. 1986. Das Neue Testament Auf Papyrus. 1, Die Katholischen Briefe. Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter. page 165.

166

1. JOH. 5,7-8

6D εν τ.ουρ.ο πατ.κ.ο λογ.κ.τ.αγ.πν.κ.ουτ.οι τρ.εν
εισ.κ.τρ.εισ.οι μαρτ.εν τη γη τ.πν.κ.τ.υδ.κ.τ.αιμα
κ.οι τρ.εις τ.εν εισιν

88L

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 1

V AUSLASSUNG, SIEHE TESTST. 71

1240 1886

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 2

X UNLESERLICH

33 1734*

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 2

Z LUECKE

P9	P20	P23	P54	P72	P74	P78	P81	04	093
0116	0156	0173	0206	0209	0232	0245	0246	0247	0251
0285	122	197	356	567	610	612	626	640	644
712	911	997	1277	1526	1652	1759	1848	1859	1904
2201	2303	2310	2441	2718	2731	2741	2799		

ANZAHL DER ZEUGEN: 48

=====

Grunewald, Winfried, and K. Junack. 1986. Das Neue Testament Auf Papyrus. 1, Die Katholischen Briefe. Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter. page 166.

Addendum: Refuting Critics & Skeptics

1. Context in which "said critic" made a 2 hr monologue
2. FB critic: No Greek speakers are using it
3. FB critic: Ur putting an awful lot of faith in Victor!
4. Joe Critic: How many of these bishops spoke or read Greek?
5. JS Critic: so what? That was the Arian Vandals. We don't have their manuscripts do we.
6. TF said "So there is nothing to say that all of them put this together."
7. TF: What about the scarcity of manuscripts for these works
8. TF said "Of course, Cyprian is a a completely different scenario"
9. TF said "Latin only bishops at Council : Augustine, Fulgentius aren't proof : No evidence for this..."
10. TF: Known throughout all Christendom?
11. TF said "no one died"
12. TF said "only the title was read outloud"
13. TF said "only 4 composed the book"
14. TF said "oh, the Arians did not know Latin"
15. TF: oh... they used it like so many other verses... nothing special about including it in this confession
16. TF said "it was from the Vulgate"
17. TF said "oh, the confession has many non-KJV verses in it"
18. TF: Victor Vita : Confession : Quoting Non Canonical Books

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

[Mike Ferrando] Here is the context in which "said critic" made a 2 hr monologue vid doubting every sentence from my presentation.

1. This was my first time on YouTube
2. I wrote papers (years of research) and was asked to give a presentation on YouTube
3. I had only 20 min (but I was confident my written work would support and/or correct whatever I said)
4. I was disabled: could not use my eyes, limited time meant I had to condense condense condense
5. I was presenting information on a paper full of evidence. THE CRITIC NEVER ONCE LOOKED AT MY PAPER...
6. The "said critic" was just doubting everything I said despite the fact that he had no evidence and was often surprised that in my next sentence I give examples supporting my statement. Then the critic says, "Oh, yeah... that's true... but not really relevant... but not good enough... not really evidence..."

It was just ugly egotistical arrogance on full display. No Christian compassion. Just a stomach-turning watch.

"said critic" even doubted the miracles wrought by prayer (alone) in Victor's account. Really? Is that the level of rationalism the critics have that they DOUBT THAT GOD CAN ANSWER PRAYERS??? Have you ever prayed for healing for someone in your congregation or family??? Well, don't tell that to the "said critic". HE WILL JUST SPEW HIS CONTEMPTFUL KNOW-IT-ALL FACTUAL ORIENTATION ALL OVER YOU WITH DISDAIN AND INSINUATIONS OF YOU BEING A LIAR. Just listen to him go on and on. Really, the 2 hr. monologue is more of a confession than anything else.

Despite the cynicism and skepticism of bible agnostics, we are presenting evidence to refute a number of ad hoc theories concerning the Heavenly & Earthly Witnesses authenticity as Scripture. We are presenting evidence demonstrating that the verses were known throughout Christendom even in the midst of persecution. The council is only relevant for the numbers of bishops that composed, defended, and affirmed the Heavenly Witness of John 5 before an Arian council. Further, we also have the Arians affirmation of the verse as Scripture (they made no objection). The 460 bishops used the verse asserting the equal nature and personhood of the Holy Spirit in the Godhead. This usage is aimed at the Arian teaching that the Holy Spirit is a creature. Therefore, if the verse was not in the Arian bible, the Arians would have absolutely objected to this part of the confession. After all, the confession was not only composed by the 460 bishops, but also read out loud to all who attended the council: bishops, and spectators. In conclusion, our mission to demonstrate the affirmation of the Heavenly & Earthly Witnesses, we are not obligated to "prove" every part of everything in our presentation. We rest in the confidence that Victor's account is accurate and the council was an actual historic event that provides all the evidence necessary to support our assertion that these verses were always a part of John's letter. So, we will not waste time and resources on every "doubting Thomas" who insists that we must give them satisfaction for the host of irrelevant suspicions they voice about our presentation.

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

FB Critic: you don't see anyone complaining about censoring the JC. In fact no Greek speakers are using it and Augustine ... who felt Greek was the language of inspiration mostly treated the Comma by ignoring it ... ignoring it in a time when Arianism and trinitarianism were major issues.

- [Mike Ferrando] Wrong. Greek speakers are using it as I proved in my presentation of Origen, etc introducing it with the Greek word YAP. Also Greek speakers using it in works are Eusebius of Vercelli in De Trinitate (7 books), the Greek compiler of Disputatio Contra Arium (in Greek) Ambrose of Milan, and others before the 4th century. Also we have posted Augustine's uses of the Heavenly witnesses ad nauseam for u. Further we have posted the letter of the bishop who spoke of Augustine's knowledge of the verse (The Letter of Egilbert of Trier circa 1085 AD). SO STOP THE PROPAGANDA that fathers trained in Greek were not using it. Really HOW MANY TIMES MUST I REPEAT THESE FACTS. Bro give it a break already... u lost that argument long ago.

FB critic: Ur putting an awful lot of faith in Victor!

- [Mike Ferrando] Ummm he was there... I don't see why we should put more faith in the critics who came thousands of years later... esp when we have confirming testimony from others who were on the European continent in the 6th century and in Constantinople. Like I said, you should read the account.

Joe Critic: How many of these bishops spoke or read Greek?

- [Mike Ferrando] *Why are they writing in Latin instead of Greek? Did they know Greek? Yes, they did. Because most fathers at this time period, knew Greek and Latin. They were taught Greek when they were growing up in the Roman education system, OK. And we know that because of Augustine's confessions Augustine learned Greek.* [The following are proofs for my statements]

- Archeological Evidence - Work books from young Romans learning Greek & Latin.
- Tertullian was known for translating Greek into Latin on the fly
- Cyprian was trained in Greek. He was in the profession of an Advocate decades before he came to Christ. He translated Greek into Latin in a Letter from his bishop friend in Europe and also from the LXX to Latin in his work on quoting verses from the OT.
- Carthage was the home of educating "pleaders" Rhetors/Advocates in Greek & Latin.
- Augustine from the coast (Carthage) a small town outside of the city learning Greek
- The previous bishop of Hippo let Augustine preach because he was more comfortable in Greek than Latin.
- Fulgentius from the island Sardinia a small town on the island
- Facundus was trained and fluent in Greek and Syriac but wrote in Latin

JS Critic: so what? That was the Arian Vandals. We don't have their manuscripts do we

Response:

- [Mike Ferrando] Yes we do. But the Wulfila bible is incomplete. None of the leaves containing the General Epistles survive. You must have forgotten about these when you wrote your comment. How Silly...

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

- Wulfila Bible. Surviving fragments of the Wulfila Bible consist of codices and one lead tablet from the 5th to 8th century containing a large part of the New Testament and some parts of the Old Testament, largely written in Italy. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_Bible>

TF said “So there is nothing to say that all of them put this together. It’s just an error on Mike’s part and that.”

RESPONSE:

- [Victor] [King Huneric's Edict] 39. **...we have decreed this: that on the first of February next you are all to come to Carthage, making no excuse that you are frightened, so that you will be able to debate concerning the principles of faith** with our venerable bishops and establish the propriety of the faith of the Homousians, which you defend, from the divine scriptures. **From this it will be clear whether you hold the faith in its fullness. We have sent a copy of this edict to all your fellow bishops throughout Africa. Given on 20 May 483 in the seventh year of Hunirix.** (Victor of Vita: History of the Vandal Persecution, book 2.39; Moorhead, 1992, p. 38)
- [Victor] Finally the debate took place, needless to say at a place their enemies had selected. **Our people chose to avoid the disturbances which loud voices would have caused, in case the Arians were later to say that they had been overpowered by weight of numbers, and chose ten of their number who would answer on behalf of them all.** Cyrila, with his lackeys, most arrogantly placed a throne for himself in a high place, while our people were standing. (Victor of Vita: History of the Vandal Persecution, book 2.53; Moorhead, 1992, p. 43)
- [More literal translation] **Our people chose to avoid the disturbances that loud clamoring would have caused. Fearing that the Arians would later claim that they had been overpowered by the mere multitude of our people, our people selected ten men out of their own number to answer on behalf of them all.** (translated by Sarah Van der Pas, correspondence, June 2026)
 - Latin: Tandem venit ad disputationis conflictum, ad locum scilicet quem delegerant adversarii. Evitantes igitur nostri vociferationis tumultus, ne forte postmodum Ariani dicerent, quod eos nostrorum oppresserit multitudo, deligunt de se nostri qui pro omnibus responderent decem. (Book 2.XVIII; Migne Latina, PL 58.217-218)

Questions for Sarah Van der Pas:

Q. Are the 10 writing the confession? Or are they simply going to represent the bishops (460) in the council?

A. "Ten of their number" means ten of "our people". "Our people" are, of course, the anti-Arians. These ten people are going to represent the whole anti-Arian party. The passage that you quoted in your email doesn't mention a book; it just says that the ten will represent the anti-Arian party at a "debate" (Sarah Van der Pas, correspondence, June 2026)

- [Lombino] **Vittore di Vita reports that before the conference of 484 a commission of ten Catholic bishops was chosen to represent the others.** (Lombino, Il "Comma Johanneum" in Africa vandalica. Polemica antiariana e identitaria, on "Rivista biblica" 1-2/2022, p. 130)
- Vincenzo Lombino, Il "Comma Johanneum" in Africa vandalica. Polemica antiariana e identitaria, on "Rivista biblica" 1-2/2022, pp. 115-139, doi: 10.69074/112170

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

TF: What about the scarcity of manuscripts for these works - starting in the 9th century? Do these documents have scriptural integrity and early provenance?

Response:

- [Mike Ferrando] These documents were taken to Gaul/France in the mid 6th century. They were then copied and distributed through Christendom.
- [Graham] A rare collection of patristic texts provides more evidence for the dissemination of African texts directly to Gaul in the sixth century. **Laon, Bibliothèque municipale 113** was copied at the cathedral chapter of Notre-Dame at Laon in the second quarter of the ninth century.⁶⁵ It contains a unique collection of fourteen texts, seven of which are not found in any other manuscript. ...**the collection was started under the Vandals, but not completed and circulated until after the addition of Facundus's text ca. 550, making this collection another work that left Africa once administrative communication with the empire was reestablished in the mid-sixth century.** ...The African texts in Laon 113 include two works associated with the late fifth century *Historia persecutionum* of Victor of Vita: namely, the *Libellus episcoporum catholicorum ad Unericum regem Vandalorum datum*, and the *Notitia provinciarum et civitatum Africae*, for which it is the only manuscript witness.⁷¹ This latter work serves as an index of bishops who were exiled by the Arian Vandal king Huneric in 484, and because it follows upon the *Libellus episcoporum* in this manuscript, it, too, has become an appendix to Victor's larger work. ...**Since at least half of the texts in Laon 113 show evidence of having been copied directly from a late antique African exemplar...** (Graham, *The Transmission of North African Texts to Europe in Late Antiquity in Medieval Manuscripts*, 2011, , p. 13,14)
- [Graham] In medieval monastic libraries and scriptoria, African texts were collected and perceived in the same way as any other texts of a patristic, grammatical, or literary nature in late antiquity. **Once an African text reached Europe in late antiquity, that text was then copied and circulated according to a new set of circumstances—namely, the relation and communication of monks, scholars, and clergy in early medieval Europe.** Nevertheless, the circumstances of the western Mediterranean between 430 and 697—namely, the continued use of Roman trade routes, the shifting imperial administration, and the challenges faced by the Catholic Church—are what facilitated the dissemination of North African Christian and intellectual culture in late antiquity. (Graham, *The Transmission of North African Texts to Europe in Late Antiquity in Medieval Manuscripts*, 2011, p. 16,17)
- Stacey Graham, *The Transmission of North African Texts to Europe in Late Antiquity in Medieval Manuscripts, Their Makers and Users*. A Special Issue of *Viator* in Honor of Richard and Mary Rouse Turnhout, Brepols 2011 pp. 321, 151-67

TF said “Of course, Cyprian is a completely different scenario [than the 460 quote in their confession]. It has nothing really to do with. If Cyprien is using “SON”, he’s not quoting from the comma.”

Response:

- I. **WRONG.** That is not part of the Quote. “Son” is used because the heretics believed and taught that “Son”, “Word”, “Christ”, and “Jesus” were all separate created beings. (see Irenaeus)
 - [Irenaeus] For their system [the heretics] is blasphemous above all [others], since they represent that the Maker and Framer, who is one God, as I have shown, was produced from a defect or apostasy. They utter blasphemy, also, against our Lord, by cutting off and dividing Jesus from Christ, and Christ from the Saviour, and again the Saviour from the Word, and the Word from the Only-begotten. And since they allege that the Creator originated from a defect or apostasy, so have they also taught that Christ and the Holy Spirit were emitted on account of this defect, and that the Saviour was a product of those Aeons who were produced from a defect; so that there is nothing but blasphemy to be found among them. (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 4.Preface 2-3)
- II. Cyprian was trained in Greek, but writes this work in Latin. Thus, the use of “Son” is his way of saying that the Word and the Son are the same person (rejecting the heretical position described by Irenaeus above).
- III. Cyprian and the evidence he was using the Heavenly Witnesses
 - A. Just like the council “these three are one”
 - B. The Latin quibble over not having “et” or “hi” is a nothing burger.
 - C. My debunk paper goes into more detail about why Cyprian COULD NOT HAVE USED “spirit, water, blood” as the three persons of the Godhead.

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

TF said “Latin only bishops at Council : Augustine, Fulgentius aren’t proof : No evidence for this...”

• *[Mike Ferrando] All right. And they wrote here in their confession before the Arians that this is a part of it. Why are they writing in Latin instead of Greek? Did they know Greek? Yes, they did. Because most fathers at this time period knew Greek and Latin and they.*

TF: So there's nothing to support this. Position... Well, yes, Augustine learned Greek. So that's true. And also there's another Bishop who knew Greek, who was actually at this Council, his name is. Fulgentius of ruspe...

Response:

[Mike Ferrando] “They were taught Greek when they were growing up in the education system, OK. And we know that because of Augustine's confessions Augustine learned Greek. OK.”

//How many of these bishops spoke or read Greek?//

- [Mike Ferrando] Why are they writing in Latin instead of Greek, did they know Greek? Yes, they did. Because most fathers at this time period, knew Greek and Latin. They were taught Greek when they were growing up in the Roman education system, OK. And we know that because of Augustine's confessions Augustine learned Greek.
- Archeological Evidence - Work books from young Romans learning Greek & Latin.
- Tertullian was known for translating Greek into Latin on the fly
- Cyprian was trained in Greek. He was in the profession of an Advocate decades before he came to Christ. He translated Greek into Latin in a Letter from his bishop friend in Europe and also from the LXX to Latin in his work on quoting verses from the OT.
- Carthage was the home of educating "pleaders" Rhetors/Advocates in Greek & Latin.
- Augustine from the coast (Carthage) a small town outside of the city learning Greek
- The previous bishop of Hippo let Augustine preach because he was more comfortable in Greek than Latin.
- Fulgentius from the island Sardinia a small town on the island
- Facundus was trained and fluent in Greek and Syriac but wrote in Latin

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

TF: Known throughout all Christendom?

1. The Council members' persecution is spoken of in Count Marcellinus Chronicle (chancellor to Justinian). written in Constantinople, covers the period from 378 to 534 (Croke, 2001, v):

- [Twisleton] Count Marcellinus, chancellor to Justinian before he came to the throne, is the fourth layman to whose testimony we are able to appeal. He, too, as two of the former, speaks as an eyewitness, and the additional circumstances with which he commences seem to throw light upon Aeneas's singular account, that the confessors spoke "more plainly than before." "Through the whole of Africa,"he says, in his Chronicon, under the date 484,"the cruel persecution of Huneric, King of the Vandals, was inflicted upon our Catholics. For after the expulsion and dispersion of more than 334 bishops of the orthodox, and the shutting of their churches, the flocks of the faithful, afflicted by various punishments, consummated their blessed conflict. Then it was that the same King Huneric ordered the tongue to be cut out of a Catholic youth who from his birth had lived without speech at all ; soon after he spoke, and gave glory to God with the first sounds of his voice. In short, I myself have seen at Byzantium a few out of the [PAGE 41] company of the faithful religious men, with their tongues cut off and their hands amputated, speaking with perfect voice." (Twisleton, Edward Turner Boyd. The Tongue Not Essential to Speech; With Illustrations of the Power of Speech in the African Confessors. London: J. Murray, 1873, p. 36-43.)

- Brian Croke, Count Marcellinus and his chronicle. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

2. Pope Felix III Council 488 on Apostasy of North African Bishops under Vandals:

- [Dunn] In 488, Pope Felix III convened a Roman ecclesiastical council, **at which four African bishops were present**, to condemn widespread apostasy in North Africa among both clergy and laity.⁴ (fn. 4. Felix III, Epistolae et decreta/ Epistola VII, Migne Latina, PL 58.924–927) The council prescribed penances according to age and status for those seeking re-admission to the Nicene Church, with particularly severe punishments for bishops and clergy. (Dunn, Arianism, 2021, p. 84)

- [Colman] In Africa the Arian Vandals, Genseric and his son Huneric had been persecuting the Church for more than 50 years and had driven many Catholics into exile. When peace was restored, numbers of those who through fear had fallen into heresy and had been rebaptized by the Arians desired to return to the Church. **On being repulsed by those who had remained firm, they appealed to Felix who convened a synod in 487, and sent a letter to the bishops of Africa, expounding the conditions under which they were to be received back.** Felix died in 492, having reigned eight years, eleven months and twenty-three days. (Colman, Pope St. Felix III, Catholic Encyclopedia, 1909)

- Coleman, A. (1909). Pope St. Felix III. In The Catholic Encyclopedia. New York: Robert Appleton Company. <www.newadvent.org/cathen/06030b.htm>

- Marilyn Dunn, Arianism, Series: Past Imperfect, 2021-06-30

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

TF said "no one died"

• [Mike Ferrando] Now, after the Council, what ended up happening? Was that all of the bishops were persecuted and stripped of all of their property and all of their clothes and forced to walk the streets. Exactly. Had anyone who helped them, who gave them anything, any help at all, they would be executed and their house would be burned down and all of their family will be slaughtered. Anyone who helped them, some of the bishops, they they who refused to convert, they ripped their tongues out of their mouth. Yes, this is kind of graphic. I'm sorry, but you've got to read this right.

Martyred some before the council.

• [Victor] 52 That day of treachery which the king had appointed, 1 February, was now drawing near. There came together not only the bishops of the whole of Africa, but also those of many of the islands, **worn out with suffering and grief.**³¹ **Silence was observed for many days, until he separated every skilled and learned man from among them, so that they could be put to death on the basis of false charges.** For he committed to the flames one of that choir of the learned, whose name was Laetus. a vigorous and most learned man, after he had long endured a squalid imprisonment.³² He thought that making an example of him would strike fear into the others and enable him to wear them down. (Victor of Vita: History of the Vandal Persecution, book 2.52; Moorhead, 1992, p. 42-43)

Martyred After the Council

• [Victor] 15 After these deadly edicts, full of toxic poison, **he ordered that all the bishops who had come together at Carthage and whose churches, homes and property they had already taken, were to be despoiled in the lodgings where they were. After they had been despoiled, they were to be driven outside the walls. Not an animal, not a slave, not so much as the clothes on their backs was left them; furthermore, no-one was to take any of them into his house or provide them with food. Anyone who tried to do this out of pity was to be consumed by fire, together with his entire household.**

• [Victor] 16 **The bishops who had been cast forth then behaved wisely, for even though they were now beggars they did not go away from where they were.** This was partly because, if they did go away, they could have been forcibly called back and a false claim would be made, just as it was made, that they had fled from the debate. But the chief reason was that there was now nothing at all left where they would have returned, their churches, property and homes having been taken over. Now, when they were lying around the walls in the open air and groaning, it happened that the wicked king went out on his way to the pool where he used to swim. They all chose to run up to him, saying: "Why are we oppressed in this way? What evil deeds have we done for us to be enduring these things? If we were brought together in order to dispute, why have we been despoiled, why have we been moved away, why have we been dispersed, and why, separated from our churches and homes, are we suffering outside the city in hunger and nakedness, Swallowing in the midst of dung?" He looked on them with wild eyes, and before he had given a hearing to what they had to say **he ordered that the horses, with their riders, were to be set upon them, with such violence that they could not only have been trampled upon, but also killed. Many of them, especially the old and infirm, were trampled upon at that time.** (Victor of Vita: History of the Vandal Persecution, book 3.16-17; Moorhead, 1992, p. 69-70.)

TF said "only the title was read outloud"

- [Victor] When **our little book had been presented to them and read out**, their blind eyes found it impossible to endure the light of the truth. They raved with intolerable shouts, taking it amiss that in the title of the book we had called ourselves 'Catholics'.¹ (fn. 1. The reading of a document of this length would have been conducive to feelings of restlessness. Augustine observed that all heretics wished to be called Catholics: con ep fund 4.5; Migne Latina, PL 42:175.) (Victor of Vita: History of the Vandal Persecution, book 3.1; Moorhead, 1992, p. 64.)
- Latin: Qui **cum noster libellus legeretur oblatus**, ueritatis lumen nequaquam sufferre caecis oculis potuerunt, insanientes uoce uociferantis grauiusque ferentes, quare nos nomine nostro catholicos dixerimus. (Victor Vitensis, Historia persecutionis Africae provinciae, book 1.IV.1; Migne Latina, PL 58.233)

cum noster libellus legeretur oblatus == the Latin used

- [Van der Pas] A more precise translation of this clause would be "when our little book had been presented to them and was being read out." The tense of the verb *legeretur* makes it clear that the outcry happened while the book was being read out (rather than after it had been read out). The Latin does not specify at what point through the book the outcry started, and nothing is said here about the title. (Latin Translator: Sarah Van der Pas, correspondence, June 2026)

cum eorum legeretur libellus = "read out loud"

- [Földvári] The earliest records of miraculous healings resulting from contact with relics—records independent of any hagiographical **vita**—were authored by Augustine of Hippo (354–430).¹⁹³ In Chapter 8194 of Book XXII of his work **De Civitate Dei**¹⁹⁵ (426/427), he recounts twenty-four miracles that occurred through prayers, sacramental acts, the memorial sites (**memoriae**) of saints, or the veneration of relics—specifically those of St. Stephen.¹⁹⁶ This collection of miracles comprises two parts: in the first, the author describes miracles that took place at various times—some long past—and in different locations across North Africa. The second part contains accounts of miracles brought about by the veneration of St. Stephen's relics, all of which had occurred only a few years prior. In 424, Augustine introduced the so-called **libelli miraculorum** in his diocese; these were accounts written by the recipients of the miracles themselves, detailing the entire event.¹⁹⁷ They were composed under the bishop's supervision¹⁹⁸ and were intended to be read aloud to the congregation in church.¹⁹⁹ **During the reading, the person who had been healed was often placed in an elevated position where everyone could see them.**²⁰⁰ (fn 200. As in the account of the healing of Paul and Palladia: "on the steps of the raised place from which I used to speak; **and while they stood there their pamphlet was read.**" *De Civitate Dei* 22,8.20 Augustinus 1993: 771. vgl. Sermo 322.) (Földvári, Katalin, *Der Wiener Kult der Ikone „Maria Pocs“ in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts im Spiegel der Mirakelbücher*, Dissertation, 2024, p. 37)
- [Augustine] Quod cum ex dominico Paschae die tertio fieret in gradibus exedrae, in qua de superiore loquebar loco, feci stare ambos fratres, **cum eorum legeretur libellus**. (Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, Liber Vigesima Secundus 7.22; Migne Latina, PL 41.770)

TF said "only 4 composed the book"

Response:

SENT not "composed"

- [Victor] This is the end of the book **sent** on 20 April by Januarius of Zattara (Kef Benzoune) and Villaticus of Casae Medianae, bishops of Numidia, and Boniface of Foratiana and Boniface of Gratiana, bishops of Byzacena. (Victor of Vita: History of the Vandal Persecution, book 2.101; Moorhead, 1992, p. 63)

TF said "oh, the Arians did not know Latin"

Response:

- [Victor] Our people turned round and said to Cyrila: "Say what you intend to do." Cyrila said: "I do not know Latin." Our bishops said: "We know very well that you have always spoken Latin; you should not excuse yourself now, especially since you have set this fire going."³⁵ (fn. 35 In view of the progress of Latin among the Vandals and other barbarian peoples, Cyrila's claim that he did not know Latin can hardly be taken seriously.) (Victor of Vita: History of the Vandal Persecution, book 2.55; Moorhead, 1992, p. 44)
- [Sumruld] By the beginning of the fifth century... Intermarriage, again, was bound to dilute not only their blood but also their language. For many Goths of the second and succeeding generations, Latin was their mother tongue. (Sumruld, Augustine and the Arians, 1994, p. 20, 21)
- Sumruld, William A., Augustine and the Arians : the Bishop of Hippo's encounters with Ulfilan Arianism. Selinsgrove [Pa.] : Susquehanna University Press, 1994.

Evidence the Arians KNEW LATIN. Debating with Augustine in Latin. Debating with Fulgentius in Latin. Latin commentaries (Job) by Arians. Also I believe I read that the royal correspondence was all in Latin (because the Arians claimed they were "Romans" and "Catholics" so they wanted to use Latin to prove this assertion). Correspondence with other cities and dignitaries would be in Latin. So, the idea that the king's notary did not know Latin was nonsense. KING'S EDICTS WERE IN LATIN...

TF: oh... they used it like so many other verses... nothing special about including it in this confession

Response: The 460 used the verse specifically refuting the Arian claim that the Holy Spirit is a creature. Therefore, in proving this point against the Arians any fake or verse that was only in the North African bible would cause Arian outrage against them. Thus, 460 declared the verse with confidence that it was in all bibles...

[Lombino] Finally, it should not be overlooked that the CJ was presented with the specification that it would be even clearer than light (*adhuc luce clarius*), or as an absolutely evident passage regarding the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Such peremptoriness in a profession of faith drawn up for polemical and defensive purposes by the Arians would lead one to think that the latter had the CJ in their manuscripts

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

of the epistle. (Lombino, Il "Comma Johanneum" in Africa vandalica. Polemica antiariana e identitaria, on "Rivista biblica" 1-2/2022, p. 132)

[Lombino] the large space that is reserved for the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son (II, 75-99). The reason is to be attributed to the anti-Arian polemic in Africa, where the Arian Vandals decisively denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, consequently presenting a not indifferent fragility in the ecclesiological field.⁵⁸ In any case, the pneumatological argument is developed on the basis of biblical evidence, taken first from the Old and then from the New Testament (II,77).⁵⁹ After having listed, therefore, the biblical passages considered pertinent to the cause of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, finally in the Liber comes the truly decisive and incontrovertible proof, because it is clearer than the light itself (*adhuc luce clarius*), that is, the CJ... (Lombino, Il "Comma Johanneum" in Africa vandalica. Polemica antiariana e identitaria, on "Rivista biblica" 1-2/2022, p. 128-129)

Vincenzo Lombino, Il "Comma Johanneum" in Africa vandalica. Polemica antiariana e identitaria, on "Rivista biblica" 1-2/2022, pp. 115-139, doi: 10.69074/112170

TF said "Its from the Vulgate"

- [TF] The Vulgate, reading that they were using, it's the fact that they knew Greek doesn't mean they were using Greek copies of the Scriptures or anything like that. So I think that he's trying to like kind of hint that maybe these bishops also we're reading Greek manuscripts and checking to see things and so forth and checking for textual variants, but there's no evidence of that. And if there were, you just cite that evidence. Yeah, Carthage was. But remember all a lot of these were rural bishops. Not meaning not from the cities. And they're picked by their congregations. They're not all necessarily the most highly educated urban bishops, like Augustine. Well, Cyprian is a different story. Tertullian is different story. Ambrose of Milan is a different story. Augustin is a different story, but none of those men were there.

- [TF] He says it's drastically it. It did not get it from the Vulgate. It's drastically different. That's his claim. So let's see how drastically different it is. Let's use the Clementine Vulgate as the bait. I don't know which Vulgate he means. But he's saying that it's drastically different from the Volt gates. Let's see Clementine Vulgate online. Compared with the other variants that exist of the comma, I don't know if Mike knows about the the actual variants that exist with respect to the comma. I just don't know. I'm not saying he's, you know, as I said, I'm just taking all of his things as being said in good faith.

Response:

- [Mike Ferrando] So you first argue that the same Latin appears in some of the NT verses in the Confession and Jerome's Vulgate, thus it must be from Jerome's Vulgate. Then you argue that even though I John 5:7 IS DIFFERENT FROM THE VULGATE, but it must have come from the Vulgate anyway??? You are just inventing things as you go along.. You don't even know what I said, but whatever it is you say "No, there is no evidence for that" and "I doubt that was happening"...

- I. **THE ARGUMENT OF THE CRITICS: "The verse got into the Vulgate, and others simply copied the verse out of the Vulgate." Is the verse in the confession the same as the Vulgate or not? That is what is in question here.**

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

Other manuscripts are not relevant (not proven to be from the Vulgate). THE VERSE EXISTED BEFORE THE VULGATE (Idacius Clarus & Priscillian used it BEFORE THE VULGATE WAS CREATED).

PROVING THAT THE SOURCE for the verse is the 2nd Century OLD ITALA (Old Latin), NOT THE VULGATE. THE Old Latin was translated from the GREEK in the 2nd century BEFORE THERE WAS EVER an Arian controversy. THE USE OF PRAEBENT is USED IN THE OLDER LATIN (hence my Latin Translator's research). MORE EVIDENCE THAT IT DID NOT COME FROM THE VULGATE.

*[Sarah Van der Pas] Overall, you seem to be right; the reading **praebent** seems older than dant and probably also than dicunt. (Latin Translator, Sarah Van der Pas, correspondence, June 2026)*

Jerome Translation of the Bible (382–405) <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerome>

quia tres sunt qui testimonium **dant** in caelo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus. Et hi tres unum sunt. Et tres sunt qui testimonium **dant** in terra: Spiritus et aqua et sanguis et tres unum sunt (Vulgate <latinvulgate.com>)

Perhibent/Perhibuit/perhibet

Idacius Clarus. Contra Marivadum (Varimadum) Arianum (circa 350-385 AD)

Et Ioannes evangelista ait: In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum (Ioan. I, 1) . Item ipse ad Parthos: Tres sunt, inquit, qui testimonium **perhibent** in terra, aqua, sanguis et caro, et tres in nobis sunt (I Ioan. V, 8) . Et tres sunt qui testimonium **perhibent** in coelo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus, et ii tres unum sunt (I Ioan. V, 7, 8) . (Idacius Clarus, Contra Varimadum (Marvidamun), Book 1. Chapter 5; CCSL 90:20-21; Migne Latina, PL 62 359)

Symboli Apostolici et Athanasii Enarratio (circa 350-400 AD)

Tres sunt,"inquit,"qui testimonium **perhibent** in caelo, Pater, Verbum, & Spiritus, & ii tres unum sunt. (Pseudo-Athanasius & Bianchini, 1744, p. 38-40)

Priscillian of Avila (d. 385)

Around 385, Priscillian was charged with sorcery and executed by authority of the Emperor Maximus. (Priscillian. Wikipedia. <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Priscillian>).

sicut Iohannes ait:"tria sunt quae testimonium **dicunt** in terra: aqua, caro et sanguis et haec tria in unum sunt, et tria sunt quae testimonium **dicunt** in caelo: pater, uerbum et spiritus et haec tria unum sunt in Christo Iesu."(I Jn 5:8,7) (Priscillian"Tractates" in Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum edited by Schepss 1889, vol 18, p. 5-6)

Fulgentius of Ruspe (462-533 AD)

Beatus enim Ioannes apostolus testatur, dicens: Tres sunt qui testimonium **perhibent** in coelo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus; et tres unum sunt (I Ioan. V, 7) (Fulgentius, Responsio contra Arianos; Migne Latina, PL 65.224)

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

- II. YES THERE WERE GREEK MANUSCRIPTS because we have Cyprian's work on the Old Testament FULL OF VERSES DIRECTLY TRANSLATED FROM THE LXX (per Scholars study).

WE ALSO HAVE ON THE FLY TRANSLATIONS INTO LATIN BY TERTULLIAN (NT & OT)

WE have TRANSLATIONS INTO LATIN from AUGUSTINE latter in life work on all Heresies.
- III. AND WE HAVE THE EVIDENCE OF YOUNG ROMANS STANDARD EDUCATION LEARNING GREEK AND LATIN. (workbooks - archeological evidence).
- IV. Bishops were selected from local areas... (no not necessarily) but even so Fulgentius was LOCAL. Augustine was LOCAL. Both of these had training in Greek
- V. AND WE HAVE THE FACT that many of these BISHOPS came to Christ late in life and already had a profession in which they used GREEK and LATIN (Cyprian, Tertullian, Augustine, etc.)
- VI. WE NEVER SAID THEY WERE AT THE COUNCIL!!!! The point in bringing up Cyprian, Tertullian, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine is that WE KNOW ABOUT EXAMPLES OF THOSE WHO WERE TRAINED IN GREEK AND CAME TO CHRIST LATE... these men wrote in Latin, but were trained in Greek and actively translated from Greek to Latin. They were from Africa and other places. So, in the group of 460 bishops, there were also men like this. THE EXPERIENCE OF THE MEN WE KNOW OF IS NOT UNIQUE TO THE TIME PERIOD NOR TO THE FACT THAT THEY PREFERRED TO WRITE IN LATIN FOR THE MAJORITY OF THEIR WORKS. These are real life examples. To list off all these names and then say "Oh, they weren't there..." is simply hand waving deceptive attempt to deny the obvious evidence that the 460 COULD HAVE BEEN TRAINED IN GREEK. Really you are despicable in dealing with the evidence in such an underhanded way.

TF said "oh, the confession has many non-KJV verses in it"

John 8:25 is not a variant, but a translation choice

The 'beginning' is the one who said to the Jews when they asked who he was: 'I who speak to you am the beginning.' (Joh 8:25 Vulg) Victor Vita, Moorhead, 1992, p. 54.

They said therefore to him: Who art thou? Jesus said to them: The beginning, who also speak unto you. "dicebant ergo ei tu quis es dixit eis Iesus principium quia et loquor vobis" (John 8:25) <www.latinvulgate.com>

NA 27: εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν;

TR: καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὃ τι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν.

• [Förster] the words Τὴν ἀρχὴν may be read as an accusative noun meaning "the beginning" or as an adverb meaning "primarily." (Forster, Hans. Possible Similarities in the Linguistic Structure of John 8.25b and John 8.45a, 2017, p. 166.)

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

• Hans Förster, Possible Similarities in the Linguistic Structure of John 8.25b and John 8.45a. Institut für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, University of Vienna, 2017.

I Cor 6:20 is different between the TR and the Critical text.

And again, he says: 'Glorify God and carry him about in your body.' (I Cor 6:20 Vulg). Victor Vita, Moorhead, 1992, p. 59.

Vulgate: empti enim estis pretio magno glorificate et portate Deum in corpore vestro <www.latinvulgate.com>

This is not simply a Latin variant. There is a great difference between the NA 27 and the TR. (see below)

- **KJV:** *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.* (**TR Greek:** ἡγοράσθητε γὰρ τιμῆς· δοξάσατε δὴ τὸν Θεὸν ἐν τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν, καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ὑμῶν, ἃτινά ἐστι τοῦ Θεοῦ.)
- **NIV:** *you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.* (**NA 27 Greek:** ἡγοράσθητε γὰρ τιμῆς· δοξάσατε δὴ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν.)

Chrysostom also has the Greek text of “*bear God in our body*”, but more importantly Chrysostom has “and in our spirit” in his Greek text of the verse matching the TR. So, the assumption that this difference between the Confession and any current bible is simply a Latin variant is greatly simplified.

- **Chrysostom:** *Let us then glorify God, and bear God both in our body and in our spirit.* (**Greek:** Δοξάσωμεν δὴ τὸν Θεὸν, ἄρωμεν τὸν Θεὸν ἐν τῷ σώματι καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν. Migne Graeca, PG 62.523-524)

Psalms 98:5 is actually Psalm 99:5 in our bibles

Now if someone considers this hard, let him hear how David exhorts the faithful to the worship of God: 'Adore,' he says, 'his footstool' (Ps 98:5 Vulg); 97; p. 61 [actually ps 99.5 in our bibles]

TF: Victor Vita : Confession : Quoting Non Canonical Books & Susanna : Notes

- [TF] Which I'm sure Mike doesn't think is the correct reading of that text. ...Ohh and the other thing is this, there's this kind of implication of ah, well, they would never have used something that wasn't that they wouldn't have used something that was just a textual variant. In this discussion, but if they do in fact use things that are textual variants in the discussion, they use the bonus material of Daniel. That's not part of the original, they use a book that's not really scripture, so rock they use.
- [TF] It's very important information when things like this happen. According to him now, and that we should make our decision about what's in the original Bible based on that. This idea from my standpoint is something of a sword with two edges. And I say that it's something

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

of a sword with two edges because. Also in this same book. This little book that that is was presented at the Council. 0:34:29

• [TF] We have. The text of. John 8:25 being this *I who speak to you am the beginning*. It also cites Ciroc as though it's a scripture. It also cites Daniel 13:42, which is as though it's scripture, although it's in a it's a spurious addition to the book of Daniel. It also cites Wisdom 17 as though it were a work of Solomon. And it has first Corinthians 6:20 as *glorify God and carry him about in your body*. Which I'm sure Mike doesn't think is the correct reading of that text. And I'm I'm confident that Mike will agree. Adore his footstool is not the right reading of Psalm 98:5. But why does Mike think first on five, seven through 8?

RESPONSE:

The presentation I did was to answer the following question:

Q. Do the 460 bishops quote 1 John 5:7 attributing the verse to John the Apostle?

The issue is whether 1 John 5:7 is a "fake verse" in the NEW TESTAMENT. All of these Deuterocanonical books have been quoted and used by the Christian fathers since Christianity began (see Hippolytus of Rome (c. 165 – c. 235 AD) use of Susanna from Daniel's LXX version - Wisdom is originally in Greek - Daniel additional chapters are part of the Greek text of Daniel). There is no "translation interpolation" issue concerning verses from these books, but this is usual for this time. None of these Deuterocanonical quotes are "fake", and the attributions to Daniel and/or Solomon are universally accepted by all at this time (Arians and Trinitarians). Given these facts, of all these verses you mention, 1 John 5:7 is the only verse that could be disputed between the Arians and the 460 bishops.

But attributing a fake verse to the Apostle John is a much different case because if it never appeared in John's letter or writings, it would be caught out by the Arians. If the verse is fake, the Arians would object to it because they too know John's Epistle (writings) from their exposure to the New Testament while in Europe in the 4th century. So, the question of authenticity can be validated by the Arians, but they raised no objection to the use of the verse.

Did John the Apostle write 1 John 5:7 ?? Was this verse part of John's letter (writings)? Was it universally acknowledged as authentic? 460 bishops say yes and they use it to refute the Arian claim the Holy Spirit is a creature. And more directly, they use it to refute one of the main tenets of the Arians belief - the Holy Spirit is a creature. So, that would bring this part of the confession under particular scrutiny by the Arians. Using fake Scripture would surely be objected to by the Arians in this specific case.

The Arians used the same OT canon as other Christians

• [Mullen] Donatists, Arians, Pelagians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Monophysites, etc., waged incessant war on dogma and morals throughout the fourth and fifth centuries, and some of them long after. Yet, with the exception of St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, at first admitted but afterwards rejected by the Arians ...not a word was said by any of the sects against a single book on the canon of either Testament. (Mullen, Tobias. The Canon of the Old Testament, 1892, p. 221)

The Comma Calmly Considered : Vandals Invade & Council of Carthage 484

• Mullen, Tobias. The Canon of the Old Testament. New York: Fr. Pustet & Co. 1892

The OT canon was not universal in terms of “inspired” Scripture. Demonstrates that the Confession quoting Deuterocanonical books does not equate to “inspired” by the 460.

Athanasius Easter Letter 367

7. But for greater exactness I add this also, writing of necessity; that there are other books besides these not indeed included in the Canon, but appointed by the Fathers to be read by those who newly join us, and who wish for instruction in the word of godliness. The Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Sirach, and Esther, and Judith, and Tobit, and that which is called the Teaching of the Apostles, and the Shepherd. <www.newadvent.org/fathers/2806039.htm>

Rufinus

• Rufinus in Expositio Symboli, § 38 (AD 401), who distinguishes three classes of books: (1) The Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments, which alone are to be used in proof of doctrine; (2) Ecclesiastical, which may be read in Churches, including Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, and the Books of the Maccabees, in the Old Testament, and The Shepherd of Hermas, and The Two Ways in the New Testament; (3) The other writings they called “Apocryphal,” which they would not have read in Churches. The distinction is useful, though the second class is not complete. (see: Charles A. Heurtley in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, series 2, vol. 3.) <www.bible-researcher.com/rufinus.html>

Augustine

[Solomon] also is found to have prophesied in his books, of which three are received as of canonical authority, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. But it has been customary to ascribe to Solomon other two, of which one is called Wisdom, the other Ecclesiasticus, on account of some resemblance of style,—but the more learned have no doubt that they are not his; yet of old the Church, especially the Western, received them into authority,—in the one of which, called the Wisdom of Solomon, the passion of Christ is most openly prophesied ... But the things which are not written in the canon of the Jews cannot be quoted against their contradictions with so great validity. (The City of God, xvii.20)

As you can see, the Deuterocanonical books are classed differently by different fathers. These books are not assumed to be “inspired”, but rather simply written by spiritual men. Even Augustine voiced his doubt as to the author of Wisdom of Solomon (above). So, please stop making grandiose assumptions about OT non canonical books. Thus the Arians would not have objected to the use of these books. Neither are we compelled to regard them as “inspired”. Further, we are not asking Christians to accept Deuterocanonical books as inspired. So do us a favor and stop trying to derail the evidence with irrelevant nonsense.

Bibliography

[For a full bibliography : See my paper "The Witness of God is Greater"]

- 'Ben David' [John Jones], 'Letters to the Editor', The Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature, vol 21, 1826, 279-280.
- Benduhn-Mertz, Annette, Gerd Mink, and Kurt Aland, eds. Text und Textwert der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments, I, Die Katholischen Briefe. Band 1: das Material. Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung Bd. 9. W. de Gruyter, 1987, pp. 163-166.
- Brownlee. "Gleanings and Hints Towards an Argument for the Authenticity of John v. 7, No. IV" in The Christian Advocate 2 (August, 1824), 546-547.
- Dorhout, Ambrosius. Ambrosii Dorhout V.D.M. Dokkumani, Animadversiones in loca selecta V.T. ... Annexæ sunt III Dissertationes. Leovardiæ: Abrahamum Ferwerda, 1765. vol. 1 <www.worldcat.org/oclc/71435040>. <books.google.com/books?id=dXRpZT-mhuwC&source=gbs_navlinks_s>.
- Grunewald, Winfried, and K. Junack. 1986. Das Neue Testament Auf Papyrus. 1, Die Katholischen Briefe. Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter. <search.worldcat.org/en/title/912393025>
- Hefele, Karl Joseph von. A History of the Councils of the Church: From the Original Documents. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895. <www.worldcat.org/oclc/679305685>. <books.google.com/books?id=ETIqAQAAMAAJ>.
- Kettner, Friedrich Ernst. Historia Dicti Johannei de sanctissima Trinitate 1. Joh. Cap. V. Vers. 7. per multa Secula omissi, Seculo V. restituti, et exevnte Secvlo XVI. in Versionem vernaculam recepti, una cum Apologia B. Lutheri. 1713. <www.worldcat.org/oclc/1142545297>. <books.google.com/books?id=yjJBAAAACAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s>.
- Lapparent Pierre de. Note sur les mansucrits 994 et 995 de Troyes. In: Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes. 1943, tome 104. pp. 261-266; <doi.org/10.3406/bec.1943.449306>
- Sumruld, William A., Augustine and the Arians : the Bishop of Hippo's encounters with Ulfilan Arianism. Selinsgrove [Pa.] : Susquehanna University Press, 1994.
- Twisleton, Edward Turner Boyd. The Tongue Not Essential to Speech; With Illustrations of the Power of Speech in the African Confessors. London: J. Murray, 1873. <archive.org/details/tonguenotessenti00twisuoft>. <www.worldcat.org/oclc/5168459>.