የኩነት ትምህርት

ኩነት ማለት ምን ማለት ነው?

ኩነት ማለት መሆን፣ አኳኋን፣ ኹኔታ፣ አነዋወር ማለት ሲሆን በትምህርተ ሥላሴ ደግሞ የአካል ህላዌ ወይም ስም ተብሎ ይተረጎማል። ይኸውም ህላዌ ወላዲነት፣ ተወላዲነትና ሠራጺነት፤ ስም ወላዲ፣ ተወላዲ፣ ሠራጺ ወይም አብ፣ ወልድ፣ መንፈስ ቅዱስ መባል ነው።[1] በተጨማሪም " ወኩነትሰ ራዕይ ይእቲ እንተ ትከውኖ ለባሕትቱ ከሢነ አብ በአብና ከሢነ ወልድ በወልድና ከሢነ መንፈስ ቅዱስ በመንፈስ ቅዱስና ኩነትሰ ከሢነ አካል ይእቲ ዘውእቱ ባሕታዊ ህላዌ ስም። ወአካላትሰ ሠለስቱ ዘውእቶሙ ሠለስቱ ኩነታት ብሕትዋነ አስማት እለ ዕሩያን በአሐዱ ኃይል። --- ኩነት ግን ለእያንዳንዱ አካል ለየብቻው የምትሆን ናት፤ ይኸውም በአብነቱ አብ በወልድነቱም ወልድ በመንፈስ ቅዱስነቱም መንፈስ ቅዱስ መሆን ነው። በዚህም ረገድ የስም አቋም በየራሱ ብቸኛ ሆኖ ሲጠራ የሚታወቅበት አካል ናት። አካላቱም ሦስት ናቸው፤ እነርሱም በአንድ ኃይል የተካከሉ ናቸው።"[2]

የኩነት አስፈላጊነት ምንድን ነው?

1. ኛ) የሦስቱን አካላት አቋምና ስም ያለ መፋለስ ለመጠበቅ ያስችላል።
2. ኛ) በአንድ መለኮት ያሉ የሚኖሩ አካላተ ሥላሴን በአንድ ህልውና እያገናዘበ በአንድ መለኮት ሕያዋን መሆናቸውን ያሳይልናል።
3. ኛ) በአንድ መለኮት ሦስት አካላትና ሦስት ኩነታት እንዳሉ ማመን ሦስቱ አካላት ሰው ሆኑ ከማለት ስለሚጠብቅ ነው። ይህም ማለት መለኮትን በአካል ሦስት ማለት ሦስቱ አካላት ሰው ሆኑ ከማለት አይጠብቅም፤ ሦስት አማልክት ዘጠኝ አካላት ያሰኛል እንጂ።

ለዚህም "ወክዋኔሂ ያጠይቅ በእንተ አስተጋብኦ ባሕቲቱ ዘእምኔሁ ይከውን አካል በሥርዓቱ፤ --- ክዋኔም ስለ አንድነት ያስረዳል፤ ይኸውም ከእርሱ የተነሣ አካል በሥርዓቱ የሚሆንበት ነው።" ብሏል ዲዮናስዮስ ዘአንጾኪያ።

ኩነታት መለየትና መከፈል ሳይኖርባቸው በተዋሕዶ በአንድነት አካላትን በሕልውና በአኗኗር እያገናዘቡ በአንድ መለኮት የነበሩና ያሉ የሚኖሩ ናቸው፤ እነዚህም ከሢነ ልብ፣ ከሢነ ቃል፣ ከሢነ እስትንፋስ ናቸው። እነዚህ ሦስት ኩነታት ይባላሉ።[3]

የኩነታት ሦስትነትና የአካላት ሦስትነት ልዩነቱ ምንድን ነው?

"በስመ እግዚአብሔር ዋሕድ በመለኮት ዘይሜለስ በአካላት ወኩነታት --- በመለኮት አንድ በአካላትና በኩነታት ሦስት በሚሆን በእግዚአብሔር ስም እናምናለን " ሲሉ ሠለስቱ ምዕት በመጽሐፈ ሥርዓት ፩ኛ አንቀጽ እንደሚከተለው ማለታቸው እንደሆነ ተገልጿል።

የኩነታት ሦስትነት እንደ አካላት አይደለም፤ አካላት መጠቅለልና መቀላቀል ሳይኖርባቸው በተከፍሎ፣ በተፈልጦ፣ በፍጹም ገጽ፣ በፍጹም መልክ፣ በየራሳቸው የሚቆሙ ናቸው፤ ኩነታት ግን

[1] መጽሐፈ ሰዋስው ወግስ ወመዝገበ ቃላት ሐዲስ፣ አለቃ ኪዳነ ወልድ ክፍሌ ገጽ 525

[2] መጽሐፈ ባሕርይ ገጽ 6 ዓምድ 1

[3] ፍኖተ እግዚአብሔር፣ አለቃ ጎሩይ ፊንታ፣ 2001 ዓ.ም. ገጽ 38

ተፈልጦ ተከፍሎ /መለየት መከፈል/ ሳይኖርባቸው በተዋሕዶና በተጋብኦ በአንድነት አካላትን በሕልውና /በአኗኗር/ እያገናዘቡ፣ በአንድ መለኮት የነበሩ፣ ያሉ፣ የሚኖሩ ናቸው፤ እሊህም ከዊነ አብ፣ ከዊነ ቃል፣ ከዊነ እስትንፋስ ናቸው። “ከዊነ አብ” በአብ መሠረትነት እራሱ ለባዊ ሆኖ፣ ለወልድና ለመንፈስ ቅዱስ ዕውቀት /ማወቂያ/ መሆን ነው። “ከዊነ ቃል” በአብ መሠረትነት ለራሱ ነባቢ ሆኖ፤ ለአብና ለመንፈስ ቅዱስ ንባብ /ማናገሪያ/ መሆን ነው። “ከዊነ እስትንፋስ” በአብ መሠረትነት ለራሱ ሕያው ሆኖ፣ ለአብና ለወልድ ሕይወት መሆን ነው። ሦስት ኩነታት ያልናቸው እሊህ ናቸው። የሊህም ኩነታት ምሥጢር፣ "ንግበር ሰብአ በአርአያነ ወበአምሳሊነ" ያለውን ንባብ /ዘፍ ፩፥፳፮/ መሠረት አድርጎ፣ የነፍስን የአካሏንና የባሕርይዋን ከዊን ቢመረምሩ ይታወቃል ይረዳልም። ሲመረመርም የባሕርያቸው ከዊን በአካሏ ከዊን፤ የአካለቸውም ከዊን፣ በባሕርይዋ ከዊን ይመረምረዋል፤ ነፍስ በአካሏ ከሦስት የማትከፈል ከዊን አላት። ይኸውም ከዊነ ልብ፥ ከዊነ ቃል፥ ከዊነ እስትንፋስ ነው:: በባሕርይዋ ሦስት ከዊን ያላት መሆንዋ፤ አካሏን ከሦስት አይከፍለውም:: እንዲህ ሳትከፈል፣ የልብነትዋ ከዊን /ልብ መሆንዋ/ ከቃሏና ከእስትንፋሷ ከዊን ሳይለይ፣ በራስዋ ከዊን ከሥጋዊ ልብ ጋር ይዋሐዳል። በቃልነትዋም ከዊን /የቃሏም ከዊን/ ከልብነትዋ ከዊንና ከእስትንፋስዋ ከዊን ሳይለይ፤ በራሱ ከዊን ከሥጋ አንደበት ጋራ ይዋሐዳል:: የእስትንፋሷም ከዊን ከልብነትዋ ከዊንና ከቃልዋም ከዊን ሳይለይ፣ በራሱ ከዊን ከሥጋ እስትንፋስ ጋር ይዋሕዳል:: እንዲህ አድርጎ የሥላሴን ከዊን በነፍስ ከዊን ቢመረምሩ፣ ሦስቱ ሰው ሆኑ ከማለት ይጠብቃል:: መለኮትን በአካል ሦስት ማለት ግን፤ ሊቃውንት ሁሉ በየአንቀጹ፣ "ይሜለሱ በአካላት ወይትወሐዱ በመለኮት” ያሉትን አፍርሶ፣ ሦስት አማልክት፣ ዘጠኝ አካላት፥ ከማለት ያደርሳል እንጅ፣ ሦስቱ አካላት ሰው ሆኑ ከማለት የሚጠብቅ አይደለም።[4]

ከአንድ መለኮት ተፈልጦ ስሌለበት በቃልነቱ ከዊን ሰው ሆነ ብለን ብናምን ሦስቱ ሰው ሆኑ እንዳያሰኝ የሚያስረዳ ነገር፣ የአንጾኪያ ሊቀ ጳጳሳት አግናጥዮስ እንደሚከተለው ተናግሯዋል::

ንባብ፦ “ነደረ አሐዱ አካል እም ሠለስቱ አካላት ውስተ ከርሣ ለድንግል ማርያም:: ወበእንተ ተዋሕዶተ መለኮት ዘንትናገር በዝየ፣ ዘህልው በወልድ፣ ወአኮ በእንተ አብ ወመንፈስ ቅዱስ፣ ወኢንቤ ግሙራ ከመ እሙንቱ ነደሩ ለተሰብኦ ውስተ ከርሣ ለድንግል፣ ዘእንበለ ዳእሙ ወልድ ባሕቲቱ አሐዱ አካል እም ሠለስቱ አካላት::"
ትርጉም፦ “ከሦስቱ አካለት አንዱ አካል በማኅጸነ ማርያም አደረ:: በዚህ አንቀጽ ነደረ ብለን የምንናገረው የመለኮት ተዋሕዶ፣ በወልድ በቃልነቱ ስላለው ከዊን አይደለም፣ ከሦስቱ አካላት አንዱ አካል ወልድ ብቻ ሰው ለመሆኑ በማኅጸነ ድንግል አደረ እንላለን እንጂ፣ አብ መንፈስ ቅዱስ ሰው በመሆን አደሩ አንልምና” ብሏል::[5]

ስለሆነም መለኮት ከአካል ጋር ከሦስት የሚከፈል ከሆነ አንድ ልብ፣ አንድ ቃል፣ አንድ እስትንፋስ መሆን የለም:: ይህም ከሌለ በአብ ለባውያን፣ በወልድ ነባብያን፣ በመንፈስ ቅዱስ ሕያዋን መባል አይገኝም:: ከዚህ ይልቅ መለኮት እንደ አካላት ተከፍሎ ሳይኖርበት፣ በአንድነቱ ፀንቶ፣ አካላትን በተከፍሎ ሳለ በሕልውና እያገናዘበ፣ አንድ ልብ፣ አንድ ቃል፣ አንድ እስትንፋስ ያደርጋቸዋል ብለን ማመን ይኖርብናል።

ለዚህም አቡሊዲስ ዘሮም እንዲህ ሲል ተናግሯል፦

[4] ፍኖተ እግዚአብሔር፣ አለቃ ኅሩይ ፊንታ፣ 2001 ዓ.ም. ገጽ 37
[5] ሃይማኖተ አበው ዘአግናጥዮስ ምዕ. 11:3

ንባብ፦ “ወልድኒ ቃለ*ሙ ለአብ ወለመንፈስ ቅዱስ፣ ወመንፈስ ቅዱስኒ መንፈሶሙ ለአብ ወወልድ፣ ወበዝንቱ አእምርነ ከመ ፩ መለኮተ ሥላሴ፣ ወለ*ቱ ንሰግድ፣ ወአበዊነሂ እለተ*ጋብኡ በኂቅያ ይቤሉ እመ*ቦ ዘይፈልጥ መለኮቶ ለእግዚአብሔር አብ እምወልድ ወእም መንፈስ ቅዱስ ውጉዘ ለይኩን::” ትርጓሜ፦ “ወልድ ለአብና ለመንፈስ ቅዱስ ቃላቸው ነው:: መንፈስ ቅዱስ ለአብና ለወልድ እስትንፋሳቸው ነው:: በዚህም የምንሰግድለት የሦስቱ የአብ የወልድ የመንፈስ ቅዱስ መለኮት አንድ እንደሆነ አወቅን:: በኂቅያ የተሰበሰቡ አባቶቻችንም የአብን መለኮት ከወልድና ከመንፈስ ቅዱስ የሚለይ ሰው ቢኖር የተለየ ይሁን ብለዋል::”[6]

ሦስቱ መለኮት፣ መለኮት፣ መለኮት መባላቸው አንድ መለኮት በሦስቱ አካላት ሕልው ሆኖ፣ ሦስቱን አካላት ስለአገናዘበ ነው እንጂ መለኮት በአካል የተለየ ሆኖ እንዳይደለ አስተዋይ ልቦና ያለው ሰው መጻሕፍትን በጥንቃቄ ቢመረምር ይረዳዋል:: መለኮት በአካል የተለየ ቢሆን፣ ሦስቱ ሁሉ ባልተጠሩበትም ነበር:: አብ ወወልድ ወመንፈስ ቅዱስ መባል ግን፣ በአካል የተለየ ቢሆን በየራሳቸው ተጠሩበት እንጂ ሦስቱ ሁሉ እንዳልተጠሩበት። ለዚህም በሃይማኖተ አበው፦

ንባብ፦ “እንሰ ሶበ እቤ እግዚአብሔር፣ ዕብል በእንተ አብ ወወልድ ወመንፈስ ቅዱስ፣ እስመ አሐዱ ውእቱ መለኮተ ሥላሴ፣ ወሠለስቲሆሙ አሐዱ እሙንቱ በመለኮት፣ ወእሙነ እብል ከመ እሙንቱ መለኮት ወህላዌ፣ ወለለ አሐዱ እምአካላተ ሥላሴ፣ ያበጽሕ ፍጹመ መለኮት፣ ምስለ ዚአሁ አካል ወስም”

ትርጓሜ፦ "እኔ እግዚአብሔር ባልሁ ጊዜ፣ እግዚአብሔር ማለትን ስለ አብ፣ ስለ ወልድ፣ ስለ መንፈስ ቅዱስ እናገራለሁ:: የሦስቱ መለኮት አንድ ነውና:: ሦስቱም በመለኮት አንድ ናቸው:: እኒህም መለኮትና/ሕይወት/ ሕልውና/ባሕርይ/ እንዲባሉ በእውነት እናገራለሁ:: ልዩ ሦስትነት ካላቸው አካላትም፣ አንዱም አንዱም ከገንዘቡ አካልና ከገንዘቡ ስም ጋራ ፍጹም መለኮትን ገንዘብ ያደርጋሉ"[7] እንዲል።

ንባብ፦ “እሉ ሠለስቱ አካላት ፍጹማን ዲበ መንበረ ስብሐት፣ ወእጉዛን በፅምረተ አሐዱ መለኮት፣ ዘውእቱ አሐዱ ብርሃን ዘይሠርቅ እምኔሁ ሥላሴ”
ትርጓሜ፦ “እኒህ ሦስቱ አካላት በጌትነት ዙፋን ላይ ያሉ ፍጹማን ናቸው:: በአንዱ መለኮት አንድ አድራጊነትም የተገናዘቡ ናቸው:: ይህም መለኮት/ባሕርይ/ የአካል ሦስትነት ከሱ የሚገኝለት አንድ ብርሃን ነው”[8]

በኩነት መገናዘብ ማለት ምንድን ነው?

• መገናዘብ ሲባል አንድነትን መዋሐድን ገንዘብ ማድረግን ወይም የራስ ማድረግን ያመለክታል፡፡ ስለሆነም ሥላሴ በኩነት ይገናዘባሉ ማለት፦

• ሥላሴ በኩነት ሲገናዘቡ መለያየትና መከፈል የለባቸውም፤ ቃልና እስትንፋስ ከልብ ሲወጡ ያለመከፈል ያለመለያየት በመሆኑ ነው።

• እንዲሁም መገናዘባቸው ያለመለወጥና ያለመፋለስ ነው፤ ይኸውም ልብ ቃል ወይም እስትንፋስ ወደ መሆን ቃልም ልብ ወይም እስትንፋስ ወደ መሆን እስትንፋስም ልብ ወይም ቃል ወደ መሆን

[6] ሃይማኖተ አበው ዘአቡሊዲስ 38:8-9
[7] ዝኒ ከማሁ 66:6-7
[8] ዝኒ ከማሁ 11:8-9

አይለወጥም አይፋለስም፤ በዚህ ይለያያሉና።።

• ለአብ ከወልድና ከመንፈስ ቅደስ ጋር ያለው መገናዘብ (ተዋሕዶ) ልባቸው በመሆን ነው እንጂ አካላቸው በመሆን አይደለም።። የወልድና የመንፈስ ቅዱስም እንዲሁ።።

የኩነታት ስማቸውን በመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ እንመልከት

“ሁልጊዜ እግዚአብሔርን በፊቴ አየዋለሁ በቀኜ ነውና አልታወክም። ስለዚህ ልቤን ደስ አለው ምላሴም ሐሴት አደረገች ሥጋዬም ደግሞ በተስፋ ታድራለች።” መዝ 15፡8-11 እና በሐዋ 2፡25-28 ላይ ስናነብ ልቤን ደስ አለው ብሎ አብን፣ ልሳኔም ሐሴት አደረገ ብሎ ቃልነቱን አስረዳን፤

“ቃልን የሚያወጣ ልብ ነው” ይለናል (ማቴ. 12፥35)።።

• ስለ ወልድ ቃልነት በዮሐ 1፡1-14 ያለውን ማንበብ በቂ ነው፤

• ስለ መንፈስ ቅዱስ እስትንፋስነት

“የእግዚአብሔር መንፈስ ፈጠረኝ ሁለንም የሚችል የአምላክ እስትንፋስ ሕይወት ሰጠኝ።”ኢዮ33፡4

“በእግዚአብሔር ቃል ሰማዮች ጸኑ፥ ሠራዊታቸውም ሁሉ በአፉ እስትንፋስ” መዝ 32፡6

“አጥብቀህ ልብህን ጠብቅ፥ የሕይወት መውጫ ከእርሱ ነውና” የሕይወት መፍለቂያ ልብ እንደ ሆነ ይነግረናል (ምሳ. 4፥23)።።

ለሥላሴ ማንነት ነገር ኩነታዊ መገኛው ማን ነው?

በምዕራባውያን የነገረ ሥላሴ አስተምህሮ በሥላሴ ህልውና ውስጥ ለእግዚአብሔር ማንነትና ሕይወት ነገረ ኩነታዊ መገኛ ምን ወይም ማን እንደሆነ ማወቅ አይቻልም። በአንድ ባሕርይና በሦስት አካላት ለሚኖር እግዚአብሔር ነገረ ኩነታዊ መገኛ የእግዚአብሔር አንድ ባሕርይ (Ousia) ነው ወይስ የአብ አካል (Hypostasis) ነው? ለሥላሴ ማንነት ነገር ኩነታዊ መገኛ የእግዚአብሔር አንድ ባሕርይ ነው የምንል ከሆነ ይህ መለኮታዊ ባሕርይ ከሦስቱ መለኮታዊ አካላት በፊት የነበረ አራተኛ ማንነት አለ ወደ ማለት አቅጣጫ ያመራናል። የአብ አካል ነው የምንል ከሆነ ደግሞ ወልድ ከአብ የተገኘ፣ መንፈስ ቅዱስ በአብና በወልድ መካከል በሚኖር ግንኙነት የወጣ መሆኑ የሥላሴን ማንነት በራሱ በእግዚአብሔር ማንነት ውስጥ የተቆለፈ ያደርገዋል። ይህ ከሆነ ስለ ሦስቱ መለኮታዊ አካላት የሚናገሩት በራሱ በእግዚአብሔር ማንነት ውስጥ ፍጹም የተዘጋ አንድ መለኮታዊ ማንነትን በተለያየ ቃላት እየገለጹ እንጂ ህልውናቸው በግልጽ ስለሚታወቅ ሦስት መለኮታዊ አካላት አይደለም ማለት ነው።[9]

የእግዚአብሔር ነገረ ኩነታዊ መርሕ ወይም ለወልድና ለመንፈስ ቅዱስ አካላት መገኛ የሆነው አብ ነው። እግዚአብሔር የሚኖረው በአብ አካል ምክንያት ነው። ይህም እጅግ ታላቅ ህልውናዊ ጠቀሜታ አለው። ጎርጎርዮስ ዘኑሲስ ይህን ርዕሰ ጉዳይ ሦስቱ መለኮታዊ አካላት አንዱ ሌላውን የያዘ ነው ከሚለው ግንዛቤ አንጻር ይመለከተዋል። ቅዱስ አትናቴዎስም “በሁሉም ቦታ መገኘት” የሚለውን ፅንሰ ሃሳብ ተጠቅሞ አብ ፍጹም ከሆነና በሁሉም ቦታ ምሉዕ ሆኖ የሚገኝ ከሆነ ወልድ የሚይዘው ወይም የሚገኝበት ምን የተረፈ ወይም የቀረ ቦታ አለ? በማለት ይጠይቃል። ለራሱ የሰጠውም መልስ አብና ወልድ አንዱ ሌላውን ለመቀበልና ለማስገባት ክፍት ነው። እርስ በርሳቸው

[9] በትረ ሃይማኖት፣ ቀሲስ ዶ/ር መዝገቡ ካሣ፣ 2011 ዓ.ም፣ ገጽ 227

የሚያያዙ ናቸው የሚለው ሃሳብ አንዱ በሌላው ውስጥ የሚገባ መሆኑን ወይም የጋራ መገባባት መኖሩን የሚያስረዳ ነው። ስለዚህ አብ በመገኘነቱ ወልድና መንፈስ ቅዱስ በተገኝነታቸው ያለምንም መበላለጥና መቀዳደም አብረው የሚኖሩ መሆናቸውን ይገልጻል። ቅዱስ ጎርጎርዮስ ዘእንዚናዙም "ሦስቱ መለኮታዊ አካላት አንድ ባሕርይ አላቸው። የአንድነታቸው መሠረት ሌሎቹ አካላት ከእርሱ የተገኙበትና ወደ እርሱ የሚሄዱበት አብ ነው።" በማለት ገልጿል። በተጨማሪም አያይዞ "እያንዳንዱ መለኮታዊ አካል ልክ በራሱ ውስጥ እንደሆነው ሁሉ በመካከላቸው ባለው ማንነትና ሥልጣን ምክንያት ከሚገናኛቸው ጋር ሙሉ ለሙሉ አንድ ናቸው። እንደ እኛ መረዳት ለአንድነታቸው ምክንያት የሆነው ይህ ነው። ይህ ምክንያት የማሳመን ኃይል ካለው ይህን ምልከታ ለሰጠን ለእግዚ አብሔር ምስጋና ይሁን፣ ካልሆነ ግን ጠንካራውን አሳማኝ ምክንያት እንፈልግ" በማለት ይናገራል።

የቀጳዶቅያ አባቶች በነገረ ሥላሴ አስተምህሯቸው ውስጥ 'መገኛ ምክንያት' የሚለውን ሃሳብ ያስተዋወቁት የሥላሴ ነገረ ኩነታዊ መሠረትን ከባሕርይ ሳይሆን ከእግዚአብሔር አብ አካል ጋር የሚገናኝ መሆኑን ለማጽናት ነው። የሥላሴን አንድነት ለማሳየት አንዱ አካል በሌላው አካል ውስጥ ህልው ሆኖ ይኖራል (Perichoresis) የሚለውን ምልከታ በመጠቀም ታላቁ ባስልዮስና ጎርጎርዮስ ዘእንዚናዙ እያንዳንዱ አካል ሙሉና የማይከፈል መለኮታዊ ባሕርይን እንደሚጋራ እንዲሁም አንዱ በሌላው አካል ውስጥ ሕልው ሆኖ እንደሚኖር ይገልጻሉ። በዚህም ሦስቱም አካላት አንዱን ሙሉ መለኮታዊ ባሕርይ በመጋራት አንድነታቸው እንደሚገለጥ ያስረዳሉ።[10]

እግዚአብሔር ብሎ መጥራት የሚቻለው ሦስቱን አካላት ነው ውይስ አንዱን መለኮታዊ ባሕርይ ብቻ ነው?

ንባብ፡- "እንሰ ሶበ እቤ እግዚአብሔር፣ ዕብል በእንተ አብ ወወልድ ወመንፈስ ቅዱስ፣ እስመ አሐዱ ውእቱ መለኮተ ሥላሴ፣ ወሠለስቲሆሙ አሐዱ እሙንቱ በመለኮት፣ ወእሙነ እብል ከመ እሙንቱ መለኮት ወህላዌ፣ ወለለ አሐዱ እምአካላተ ሥላሴ፣ ያበጽሕ ፍጹመ መለኮት፣ ምስለ ዚአሁ አካል ወስም"

ትርጓሜ፡- "እኔ እግዚአብሔር ባልሁ ጊዜ፣ እግዚአብሔር ማለትን ስለ አብ፣ ስለ ወልድ፣ ስለ መንፈስ ቅዱስ እናገራለሁ:: የሦስቱ መለኮት አንድ ነውና:: ሦስቱም በመለኮት አንድ ናቸው:: እኒህም መለኮትና/ሕይወት/ ሕልውና/ባሕርይ/ እንዲባሉ በእውነት እናገራለሁ:: ልዩ ሦስትነት ካላቸው አካላትም፣ አንዱም አንዱም ከገንዘቡ አካልና ከገንዘቡ ስም ጋራ ፍጹም መለኮትን ገንዘብ ያደርጋሉ" ብሏል::[11] ሃይማኖተ አበው ምዕ ፷፮ ፥ ፮-፯

[10] ዝኒ ከማሁ ገጽ 261-263

[11] ሃይማኖተ አበው ምዕ ፷፮ ፥ ፮-፯

The Theology of PERICHORESIS[12]

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void...." Isa. 55:11

When talking about the activity of the Godhead the first thing to remember is that God does not exist in time, but apart from time, since time is a created property of this universe. There is no eternity past, in the sense of time going on forever backwards. Time had a beginning in Gen. 1:1, and, before then, there was no time. With that being the case, there could not be succession, since succession is a quality of time.

Therefore, when we view the activity of God we must be sure to realize that there is no succession. All of the activities of the ontological Trinity are eternal. One act does not occur before another act. In fact, if God does not exist in time, then there can only be one eternal act within the Godhead, for to have more than one act would presuppose succession, and that would presuppose time, and as we have stated time did not exist before Gen. 1:1.

Therefore, when we talk about divine activity we must remember that we are talking about one eternal and necessary movement within the Godhead. The term we have assigned to this movement is the Greek word "perichoresis."

The word "perichoresis" originally meant to "dance around" or "revolution." The word was extremely rare until the time of John of Damascus. Leonard Prestige tells us that perichoresis meant

—[to be]…of extremes (on opposites sides of a rotating mechanism) ..., [to] come round to, reciprocate or interchange with, pass or resolve themselves into, one another, Gr. Naz. Or. 18.42. ...John of Damascus in...turn found the terms...indicated a sort of penetration or permeation....

Although Prestige relates that this caused a problem in properly understanding an accurate Christology, he goes on and states:

"But John compensated…by an advance of real theological value. From the time of Saint John the Evangelist there had not been found any convenient general term to describe the mutual relations of the Three Persons of the Godhead to each other. Origen had safeguarded the timelessness of their active relations by his phrase 'eternal generation,' and Gregory of Nyssa had done more perhaps than any other to illustrate their mutual involution, but no one phrase existed which was capable of finally disposing both of Sabellianism and of Tritheism by casting a ray of explanatory definition over their simultaneity of mere being, and shewing in a single illuminating term how they were really three, eternally and not just successively, without being three of a species and consequently three Gods.... What John of Damascus did was to remedy the defect by extending to 'theology' the term he had derived from the Christology of Maximus. He extended it not in the semi-technical sense of 'interchange' or 'reciprocity' which was its proper meaning, but in the new and fully technical sense of 'interpenetration in which he himself understood it, a sense really unsuited to Christology but admirably expressive of Trinitarian unity."

In other words, John combined the idea of revolution with interpenetration. This showed that any activity of the Godhead must be, by definition, within itself. It disallowed any idea of separation or division in the

[12] UNDERSTANDING THE TRINITY, B.P. Harris, 2006 G.C, pp. 279-290

Godhead, because, if each Person mutually coinheres in each other, how could there be division or separation of substance? This is important because what it showed us is that any activity of God must result in perfect unity.

Perichoresis then means, the one eternal movement of the Godhead out from the Father and back towards the Father by which all Three Persons exist in perfect consubstantiality, coinherence, and communionality.

In other words, "*perichoresis*" defines the Trinitarian Persons activity in unity. This is the one eternal movement of the Godhead. This is very important to understand because it speaks of the simplicity not only of God's being, but also the simplicity of God's activity. If the activity of God did not result in perfect unity, then one could not have equality amongst the Persons, for one Persons activity could be greater or more important than the other Person's activity.

What this means is that we cannot assign a greater importance to the Father's generation and spiration of the Son and the Holy Spirit, than the Son and Holy Spirit's reciprocal activity back to the Father. All activity is equal and harmonious. It would be wrong to say that the Son and Holy Spirit are dependent upon the Fathers activity, but the Father is not dependent upon the Son and Holy Spirits reciprocal activity. They all need each other's activity to truly be the one Divine Being.

This shows why some Christian's objection to generation is nonsensical when they say it shows subordination of the Son to the Father. What they don't realize is not only is the Son's existence dependent upon the Father through generation, but so too, the Father's existence is dependent upon the Son's own reciprocal activity. The Son gives back everything He receives.

This is the great circle of life within the ontological Trinity that is dramatically portrayed in the Economic Trinity. In the Economic Trinity, the Father gives life in the incarnation of His Son by the Holy Spirit and the Son in turn gives back that life to the Father through His sacrifice on the cross by the Holy Spirit. This is divine *perichoresis*.

This now leads us then to explain what this harmonious activity of the Trinity is. If we accept that *perichoresis* defines the one eternal movement of the Godhead, then *perichoresis* must be seen from two different facets: Procession and Reciprocation (see the ff. figure)

DIVINE ACTIVITY WITHIN THE GODHEAD

1. One Eternal Movement:

PERICHORESIS

2. Two Facets of Perichoresis

PROCESSION
RECIPROCATION

The first facet of the one eternal movement in the Godhead is procession. Procession is defined as the movement out from the Father and is understood by two modes and three aspects. Begetting and Spiration are the two modes of procession, and communication, production, and impartation are the three aspects (See the ff. fig.). It must be understood that these are not separate acts within the Godhead, as if succession was a part of His Being, but one eternal movement. The begetting of the Son and the spiration

of the Holy Spirit do not occur at a separate time. It must not be thought that the Son is first generated and the Holy Spirit is then spirated. No, it is simply two modes of the same act. This is not to confuse the two modes. Begetting is distinct from spiration. The Holy Spirit is not begotten, but is spirated. And if we remember our theological definition of "distinction," we should then see sameness, difference, and distinguishability in these modes.

The sameness is that it is one act; the difference is that the Son is begotten from the Father, and the Holy Spirit is spirated from the Father through the Son; the distinguishability is that the Son is filial and the Holy Spirit is spirital. In addition, procession is defined by three aspects –communication, production, and impartation (Jn. 5:26). This too must not be thought as three separate acts, but are simply three aspects of the same movement. Communication is production seen from a different angle, and production and communication are impartation seen from yet another angle. They are all the same in that they are one act, yet they are all different in that *communication refers to substance, production refers to subsistence, and impartation refers to attributes*, and because of these three different reference points, they can be distinguished and thus be distinct.

DIVINE ACTIVITY OF THE FATHER

1. First Facet of Perichoresis
PROCESSION

2. Two Modes of Procession
BEGETTING
SPIRATION

3. Three Aspects of Procession
COMMUNICATION
PRODUCTION
IMPARTATION

The second facet of perichoresis is reciprocation. Reciprocation is defined by activity back toward the Father by the Son and the Holy Spirit and is also defined by two modes and three aspects. Imaging and Affirmation are the two modes of reciprocation, and reception, relation, and response are the three aspects (See fig. below). All these, also, are the same act, yet seen from different angles.

Imaging and affirmation are the same in that they are one act. Yet it is the Son, not the Holy Spirit, that images, and the Holy Spirit, not the Son, that affirms – this is difference. The distinguishability is that imaging gives forth manifestation, and affirming gives forth understanding. The three aspects are the same in that they are all one act. They are all different in that reception, like communication, refers to substance, relation refers to subsistence and response refers to attributes. And they are all distinguished in that each has its own reference point.

And so we see the great eternal circle of life within the Godhead. All activity begins from the Father and returns back to Him in the activity of the Son and the Holy Spirit: all distinct activities, yet the same one eternal movement. With this understanding laid down let's now look at each facet a little closer.

DIVINE ACTIVITY OF THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Second Facet of Perichoresis
RECIPROCATION

2. Two Modes of Reciprocation
IMAGING
AFFIRMATION

3. Three Aspects of Reciprocation
RECEPTION
RELATION
RESPONSE

PROCESSION

As we saw, procession is the first facet of perichoresis. It defines all activity from the Father. While it is the Son and the Holy Spirit who proceed, it is the paternity of the Father that is the cause of their procession. Procession, in an active sense, speaks of the giving activity of the Father as the cause, while procession, in a passive sense, speaks of begetting and spiration as the effect.

As we saw, the giving activity of the Father is not some separate act, but part of the one eternal movement within the Godhead. It is in the nature of the Father to give, thus causing the procession of the Son and the Holy Spirit. As a result this giving should be seen, not as a voluntary act, but as a necessary act. The Father would not exist if He was not causing the procession of His Son and the Holy Spirit. His whole existence is to beget a Son and spirate the Holy Spirit. It is no more a voluntary act than say breathing is a voluntary act in humans. We breathe not because we will to breathe, we breathe because it is a necessary act of our humanity. It is part of our nature to breathe, and if we did not physically breathe on this earth, we would not physically exist on this earth. So it is with the Father. If the Father would not cause the procession of the other two Persons, He would not exist. This is what makes procession eternal. If there was a time that the Father was not begetting a Son or spirating the Holy Spirit, He would not even exist, for they are all co-equal and co-dependent on each other. This timeless or eternal activity is understood as begetting and spiration.

Begetting, by definition, must be eternal because it is a necessary act of the Father. If one believes that there was a time when the Son was not, then one also must believe there was a time when the Father was not, for as we said before, if the Father was not causing the procession of His Son, He would not exist.

Spiration, of course, must be seen in the same way. The spiration of the Holy Spirit is eternal because it is part of the Father's eternal activity. Even the word ―Spirit implies this since "*ruach"* can be understood as "breath," and as we stated before, according to the revelatory example of mankind, if a human cannot exist on this planet apart from the procession of breathe, so too the Father could not exist apart from His procession of the Holy Spirit. It is all part of His necessary activity.

Both of these modes are understood through the aspects of communication, production, and impartation (Jn 5:26). The Son's substance is communicated from the Father *by* generation. The Son's subsistentiality is produced by the Father *in* generation, and the Son's attributes are imparted from the Father *with* generation.

In the same way, the Holy Spirit's substance is communicated from the Father through the Son *by* spiration. The Holy Spirit's subsistentiality is produced by the Father through the Son *in* spiration, and the Holy Spirit's attributes are imparted from the Father through the Son *with* spiration.

This all defines the Father's activity within the Godhead. Let's now look at the activity of the Godhead from the perspective of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

RECIPROCATION

As procession is activity from the Father, reciprocation is activity towards the Father. As procession is the result of the activity of the Father, so reciprocation is the result of the imaging and affirming activity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Both of these activities must also be understood as a necessary act.

The Son eternally has been and always will be in harmony with the Father's will, obeying or imaging the Father in perfect communion (Col. 1:15). His imaging of the Father is just as much a necessary act as the Father's causal activity in procession is necessary. In the same way, the Holy Spirit has ever been affirming the Father's will, as it is manifested in the Son, in perfect harmony (Jn. 16:13-15). He is the Spirit of Truth; it is a part of His nature to affirm what He knows of the Father's will (I Cor. 3:10-12). So, it too is a necessary act. It is in the Holy Spirit‘s nature to affirm, as it is in the Son's nature to image, and the Father's nature to cause procession.

This is the eternal perichoresis of the Godhead – the perfect circle of life – the procession of life from the Father and the reciprocation of life back toward the Father – all Three Persons working in perfect communion – in perfect unity.

Lastly, as the two modes of begetting and spiration were defined by three aspects, so the two modes of imaging and affirmation are defined by the three aspects of reception, relation, and response. The Father's substance is imaged by the Son's reception. The Father's subsistent is imaged by the Son's relationality, and the Father's attributes are imaged by the Son's response. In the same way, the Father's substance, through the Son, is affirmed by the Holy Spirit's reception, and the Father's subsistent, through the Son, is affirmed by the Holy Spirit's relationality and, lastly, the Father's attributes, through the Son, are affirmed by the Holy Spirit's response.

The significance of this is that it tells us that communication and reception speak to us *of giving and receiving within the Godhead.* The Father is ever giving and is thus selfless, and the Son and Holy Spirit are ever humbly receiving and so too are selfless. *Self-love or selfishness is not a part of the Godhead.*

Production and relation speak to us of relating within the Godhead. The Father eternally produces in a paternal way, and the Son eternally relates in a filial way and the Holy Spirit in a spiritual way.

And, finally, impartation and response speak to us of perfect love within the Godhead. God is love, and the Father is ever imparting that love to the Son and Holy Spirit, with the Son and Holy Spirit ever responding to that love in perfect communion.

Therefore, we conclude our section on defining the doctrine of the Trinity in its many facets, qualities, and aspects. Perhaps it might be good if we would remind ourselves of what we stated earlier. Our God is so great and transcendent. We would never be able to know Him or understand Him if He had not revealed Himself to us.

However, defining all these facets, qualities and aspects of Triune existence should humble us and make us pause, for God is not someone that can be analyzed and dissected and put into neat little boxes. And so it should give us angst to speak so assuredly, and define so succinctly these facets, qualities, and aspects of God's Triune existence. God cannot be defined by us, but only by Himself.

Yet if God has so revealed Himself to us as one who *communicates*, eternally *gives* and is ever *imparting* to His Son and the Holy Spirit; and the Son and the Holy Spirit are ever *reciprocating* back to the Father in perfect *imaging* and *affirming* respectively. And if all Three Persons *receive*, *relate* and *respond* in perfect harmony – we should humbly accept His revelation and seek to conform *our being* to *His Being*. We should realize that what is true of Him eternally is true of us in a limited, temporal way. We should realize that as His children we have had a new life communicated to us. We should realize He has given in us a new heart, and has imparted to us His love with infinite mercy and grace.

As such, we should reciprocate back to our Master and not hide our light under a bushel, but image to a dying world the glory and beauty of Christ Jesus our Saviour (II Cor. 3:18 - 4:7). We should also affirm, to all who will hear, the truth of the blessed gospel.

We should learn, not to think more highly of ourselves, than we ought, but realize that we have received all things from Him. (Rom. 12:3; I Cor. 4:7). We should learn to relate to all of God's children as brethren, realizing that we all possess the same life from God and therefore we should receive all whom Christ has received (Rom. 15:7).

And lastly, we should respond to one another with lowliness of heart, esteeming others as more important than ourselves (Phil. 2:3). And so we see that, although, by defining God by these facets, qualities, and aspects might seem too artificial or presumptuous, when we realize that it was God, Himself, who gave them to us – to help us understand who He is – we can humbly realize that by understanding Him, we are able to understand ourselves and thus, live accordingly.

Yet this should be only the starting point in our study of the Trinity. God has given to us three great revelatory objects created to correspond to His own Triune nature – Universe, Man, and Scripture. By observing these created models, within the parameters of the Blessed Word of God, we can all grow in our knowledge of the Blessed Trinity.

"Great are the works of the Lord; *They are* studied by all who delight in them." Ps. 111:2

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