
The Harmonising Logos

The Cosmic Composer Logos

[The Word/Song] also composed the universe into melodious order, and tuned the discord of the elements to harmonious arrangement, so that the whole world might become harmony. It let loose the fluid ocean, and yet has prevented it from encroaching on the land. The earth, again, which had been in a state of commotion, it has established, and fixed the sea as its boundary. The violence of fire it has softened by the atmosphere, as the Dorian is blended with the Lydian strain; and the harsh cold of the air it has moderated by the embrace of fire, harmoniously arranging these the extreme tones of the universe. And this deathless strain, the support of the whole and the harmony of all, reaching from the centre to the circumference, and from the extremities to the central part, has harmonized this universal frame of things, not according to the Thracian music, which is like that invented by Jubal, but according to the paternal counsel of God, which fired the zeal of David.¹

Man as an instrument played by the Logos

He who is of David, and yet before him, the Word of God, despising the lyre and harp, which are but lifeless instruments, and having tuned by the Holy Spirit the universe, and especially man, who, composed of body and soul, is a universe in miniature, makes melody to God on this instrument of many tones; and to this instrument - I mean man - he sings accordant: "For thou art my harp, and pipe, and temple." ... A beautiful breathing instrument of music the Lord made man, after His own image.²

Salvation as a return to unity resulting in harmony

Let us haste to salvation, to regeneration; let us who are many haste that we may be brought together into one love, according to the union of the essential unity; and let us, by being made good, conformably follow after union, seeking after the good Monad.

The union of many in one, issuing in the production of divine harmony out of a medley of sounds and division, becomes one symphony following one choir-leader and teacher, the Word, reaching and resting in the same truth, and crying Abba, Father.³

¹ *Prot. 1* (ANF Vol.2, p.172b)

² *Prot. 1* (ANF Vol.2, p.172b)

³ *Prot. 9* (ANF Vol.2, p.197a)

The Cosmic Logos

The Logos as agent of blessing from the Father

And being communicated most speedily to men, having dawned from His Father's counsel quicker than the sun, with the most perfect ease [the Logos] made God shine on us. Whence He was and what He was, He showed by what He taught and exhibited, manifesting Himself as the Herald of the Covenant, the Reconciler, our Saviour, the Word, the Fount of life, the Giver of peace, diffused over the whole face of the earth; by whom, so to speak, the universe has already become an ocean of blessings.¹

The Alpha & Omega Logos

For He is the circle of all powers rolled and united into one unity. Wherefore the Word is called the Alpha and the Omega, of whom alone the end becomes beginning, and ends again at the original beginning without any break. Wherefore also to believe in Him, and by Him, is to become a unit, being indissolubly united in Him; and to disbelieve is to be separated, disjoined, divided.²

The inescapable Logos at the helm of the Universe

[The Son] is the highest excellence, which orders all things in accordance with the Father's will, and holds the helm of the universe in the best way, with unwearied and tireless power, working all things in which it operates, keeping in view its hidden designs. For from His own point of view the Son of God is never displaced; not being divided, not severed, not passing from place to place; being always everywhere, and being contained nowhere; complete mind, the complete paternal light; all eyes, seeing all things, hearing all things, knowing all things, by His power scrutinizing the powers. To Him is placed in subjection all the host of angels and gods; He, the paternal Word, exhibiting the holy administration for Him who put [all] in subjection to Him. Wherefore also all men are His; some through knowledge, and others not yet so; and some as friends, some as faithful servants, some as servants merely. This is the Teacher, who trains the Gnostic by mysteries, and the believer by good hopes, and the hard of heart by corrective discipline through sensible operation. Thence His providence is in private, in public, and everywhere.³

¹ *Prot.* 10 (ANF Vol.2, p.202b)

² *Strom.* 4.25 (ANF Vol.2, p.438a)

³ *Strom.* 7.2 (ANF Vol.2, p.524a)

The Teacher Logos

The arrival of the Teacher-Logos

Wherefore, since the Word Himself has come to us from heaven, we need not, I reckon, go any more in search of human learning to Athens and the rest of Greece, and to Ionia. For if we have as our teacher Him that filled the universe with His holy energies in creation, salvation, beneficence, legislation, prophecy, teaching, we have the Teacher from whom all instruction comes; and the whole world, with Athens and Greece, has already become the domain of the Word.¹

Instruction is a lengthy process

For those of us who are diseased in body a physician is required, so also those who are diseased in soul require a paedagogue to cure our maladies; and then a teacher, to train and guide the soul to all requisite knowledge when it is made able to admit the revelation of the Word. Eagerly desiring, then, to perfect us by a gradation conducive to salvation, suited for efficacious discipline, a beautiful arrangement is observed by the all-benignant Word, who first exhorts, then trains, and finally teaches.²

The Logos as physician of humanity

Our Instructor, the Word, therefore cures the unnatural passions of the soul by means of exhortations. For with the highest propriety the help of bodily diseases is called the healing art - an art acquired by human skill. But the paternal Word is the only Paeonian physician of human infirmities, and the holy charmer of the sick soul ... For a while the "physician's art," according to Democritus, "heals the diseases of the body; wisdom frees the soul from passion." But the good Instructor, the Wisdom, the Word of the Father, who made man, cares for the whole nature of His creature; the all-sufficient Physician of humanity, the Saviour, heals both body and soul.³

¹ *Prot.* 11 (ANF Vol.2, p.203a)

² *Paed.* 1.1 (ANF Vol.2, p.209b)

³ *Paed.* 1.2 (ANF Vol.2, p.210b)

The Logos as Image of God

The Word is the image of God, man is the image of the Word

For the image of God is His Word, the genuine Son of Mind, the Divine Word, the archetypal light of light; and the image of the Word is the true man, the mind which is in man, who is therefore said to have been made "in the image and likeness of God," assimilated to the Divine Word in the affections of the soul, and therefore rational; but effigies sculptured in human form, the earthly image of that part of man which is visible and earth-born, are but a perishable impress of humanity, manifestly wide of the truth. That life, then, which is occupied with so much earnestness about matter, seems to me to be nothing else than full of insanity.¹

The Gnostic as the third divine image

[The Son] is the true Only-begotten, the express image of the glory of the universal King and Almighty Father, who impresses on the Gnostic the seal of the perfect contemplation, according to His own image; so that there is now a third divine image, made as far as possible like the Second Cause, the Essential Life, through which we live the true life; the Gnostic, as we regard him, being described as moving amid things sure and wholly immutable.²

The restorative mission of the Logos

[The Word says...] I want, I want to impart to you this grace, bestowing on you the perfect boon of immortality; and I confer on you both the Word and the knowledge of God, My complete self. This am I, this God wills, this is symphony, this the harmony of the Father, this is the Son, this is Christ, this the Word of God, the arm of the Lord, the power of the universe, the will of the Father; of which things there were images of old, but not all adequate. I desire to restore you according to the original model, that ye may become also like Me.³

¹ *Prot.* 10 (ANF Vol.2, p.199b)

² *Strom.* 7.3 (ANF Vol.2, p.527b)

³ *Prot.* 12 (ANF Vol.2, p.205b)

The Incarnation

The source of our being, and well-being

This Word, then, the Christ, the cause of both our being at first (for He was in God) and of our well-being, this very Word has now appeared as man, He alone being both, both God and man - the Author of all blessings to us; by whom we, being taught to live well, are sent on our way to life eternal.¹

The Incarnation as manifestation of the Creator-Logos

This is the New Song, the manifestation of the Word that was in the beginning, and before the beginning. The Saviour, who existed before, has in recent days appeared. He, who is in Him that truly is, has appeared; for the Word, who "was with God," and by whom all things were created, has appeared as our Teacher. The Word, who in the beginning bestowed on us life as Creator when He formed us, taught us to live well when He appeared as our Teacher; that as God He might afterwards conduct us to the life which never ends. He did not now for the first time pity us for our error; but He pitied us from the first, from the beginning. But now, at His appearance, lost as we already were, He accomplished our salvation.²

The reciprocity of the Incarnation

This is why the Son Himself came to earth, this is why He put on our frail human nature, this is why He willingly endured man's lot, that, having been measured to the weakness of us whom He loved, He might in return measure us to His own power.³

Theosis

And now the Word Himself clearly speaks to you, Shaming your unbelief; yes, I say, the Word of God became man, that you may learn from man how man may become God.⁴

¹ *Prot. 1* (ANF Vol.2, p.173a)

² *Prot. 1* (ANF Vol.2, p.173a)

³ *QDS 37* (Loeb, p.347 - altered)

⁴ *Prot. 1* (ANF Vol.2, p.174a)

Choice, Effort & Grace

The instrument of wealth

[Riches] lie at hand and are put at our disposal as a sort of material and as instruments to be well used by those who know. An instrument, if you use it with artistic skill, is a thing of art; but if you are lacking in skill, it reaps the benefit of your unmusical nature, though not itself responsible ... We must not therefore put the responsibility on that which, having in itself neither good nor evil, is not responsible, but on that which has the power of using things either well or badly, as a result of choice ... and this is the mind of man, which has in itself both free judgment and full liberty to deal with what is given to it. So let a man do away, not with his possessions, but rather with the passions of his soul, which do not consent to the better use of what he has.¹

Seize life from God

When practising and striving after the passionless state by himself man achieves nothing, but if he makes it clear that he is eagerly pursuing this aim and is in deep earnest, he prevails by the addition of the power that comes from God. For God breathes His own power into souls when they desire, but if ever they desist from their eagerness, then too the spirit given from God is withdrawn; for to save men against their will is an act of force, but to save them when they choose is an act of grace. Nor does the kingdom of God belong to sleepers and sluggards, but “the men of force seize it.” This is the only good force, to force God and to seize life from God; and He, knowing those who forcibly, or rather persistently, cling to him, yields; for God welcomes being worsted in such contests.²

(See also Genesis 32:22-32 for the account of Jacob’s wrestling with God)

The magnetic attraction of the Holy Spirit

As, then, the minutest particle of steel is moved by the spirit of the Heracleian stone (magnet) when diffused over many steel rings; so also, attracted by the Holy Spirit, the virtuous are added by affinity to the first abode, and the others in succession down to the last. But those who are bad from infirmity, having fallen from vicious insatiableness into a depraved state, neither controlling nor controlled, rush round and round, whirled about by the passions, and fall down to the ground. For this was the law from the first, that virtue should be the object of voluntary choice.³

¹ *QDS* 14 (Loeb, p.299)

² *QDS* 21 (Loeb, p.315)

³ *Strom.* 7.2 (ANF Vol.2, p.525b)

The Philanthropy of God

God the mother-bird

For God, of His great love to man, comes to the help of man, as the mother-bird flies to one of her young that has fallen out of the nest; and if a serpent open its mouth to swallow the little bird, "the mother flutters round, uttering cries of grief over her dear progeny;"¹ and God the Father seeks His creature, remedies the falling away, pursues the serpent, restores the young one to strength again, and incites it to fly up to the nest.²

The affection of God

Whatever is feeble and tender, as needing help on account of its feebleness, is kindly looked on, and is sweet and pleasant, anger changing into help in the case of such: for thus horses' colts, and the little calves of cows, and the lion's whelp, and the stag's fawn, and the child of man, are looked upon with pleasure by their fathers and mothers. Thus also the Father of the universe cherishes affection towards those who have fled to Him; and having begotten them again by His Spirit to the adoption of children, knows them as gentle, and loves those alone, and aids and fights for them; and therefore He bestows on them the name of child.³

The Instructor as helmsmen

[As] the pilot steers the vessel, desiring to save the passengers; so also the Instructor guides the children to a saving course of conduct, through solicitude for us; and, in general, whatever we ask in accordance with reason from God to be done for us, will happen to those who believe in the Instructor. And just as the helmsman does not always yield to the winds, but sometimes, turning the prow towards them, opposes the whole force of the hurricanes; so the Instructor never yields to the blasts that blow in this world, nor commits the child to them like a vessel to make shipwreck on a wild and licentious course of life; but, wafted on by the favouring breeze of the Spirit of truth, stoutly holds on to the child's helm,- his ears, I mean,- until He bring him safe to anchor in the haven of heaven.⁴

¹ A reference to Homer's *Illiad*

² *Prot.* 10 (ANF Vol.2, p.197b)

³ *Paed.* 1.5 (ANF Vol.2, p.214b)

⁴ *Paed.* 1.7 (ANF Vol.2, p.223a)

Abbreviations

Texts by Clement of Alexandria

Abbreviation	Full title	English
<i>Prot.</i>	<i>Protreptikos</i>	Exhortation (to the heathen)
<i>Paed.</i>	<i>Paedagogus</i>	Instructor
<i>Strom.</i>	<i>Stromateis</i>	Miscellanies
<i>QDS</i>	<i>Quis Dives Salvetur</i>	Who is the Rich Man Who is Saved?

Publications

ANF *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (A. Roberts & J. Donaldson, eds., 1884 ff.)

Available online at <http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-02/TOC.htm>

Loeb *Clement of Alexandria: Exhortation to the Greeks, The Rich Man's Salvation, To The Newly Baptized*, G. W. Butterworth (translator), LOEB Classical Library (Harvard University Press)