

12 ANATHEMATISMS OF ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA AND THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH*

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Abstract

It is well known that the Christology of the Armenian Church is based on the Christological teaching of St. Cyril of Alexandria. Following St. Cyril, the Armenian Church confirms the invariability and perfection of divine and human natures in Christ. The hypostatic union of Christ does not lead to a change or amalgamation of natures. It admits the union of Christ with God the Father in deity and with us in humanity. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is a perfect God and a perfect man, begotten before the ages from the Father according to deity, and for our salvation from Mary the Virgin according to humanity. And therefore, there is one nature of God the Word incarnate, revered together with His flesh in one worship. This is what the Armenian Church has believed since the 5th century to date. This article will examine the connection of 12 anathematisms contained in the letter of St. Cyril of Alexandria to Nestorius with the Christological teaching of the Armenian Church.

Keywords: Book of letters, St. Cyril, Nestorius, Apollinarius, the Word, Christ, the Holy Virgin, Armenian Church, anathematism, heresy.

The problem of the relation between the divine and human natures in the incarnate Logos began to worry the Church in the 4th century, at the height of the struggle against Arianism. Of course, the Christological problematic had interested fathers of the Church even earlier; in particular it was relevant during the struggle with the Gnostics, who were convinced Docetists, who denied the reality of the human flesh of Christ, in connection with which St. Irenaeus of Lyon was forced to stress energetically the reality and authenticity of the human nature of the incarnate Son of God. In the 2nd century, however, this was not the case, and it remained unclear how the Savior's human flesh was related to his divine nature. The appearance of the heresy of Apollinarius of Laodicea was a powerful impetus to the further development of the Christological teaching of the Church. He was a supporter of Nicene orthodoxy and a staunch opponent of Origenism and pagan Neoplatonism. This was largely due to the fact that he was an adherent of the Antiochian theological school with its principles of literal exegesis of Holy Scripture, incompatible with the Neoplatonist Alexandrian symbolic exegesis of the Bible. Apollinarius, being a follower of the teaching of St. Athanasius of Alexandria on the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, thought that this teaching inevitably led to the idea of two Sons of God, one of whom was a Son by nature, and one by adoption. A perfect God and a perfect man can never form a single being, and this, in turn, fun-

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damentally undermines the very idea of the Incarnation, which is the basis of Christian soteriology.

Apollinarius, as a typical Hellenist in his way of thinking, could not be satisfied with the opinion of St. Athanasius, according to which the unity of the divine nature of the Logos with the perfect human nature of the Father is not broken, despite the obvious logical contradiction, since in this case we are dealing with the mystery of faith. For Apollinarius, the comprehensibility of the dogmas was an axiom, and so he developed a conception in which, at first sight, both the laws of logic and the principles of Christian soteriology were harmonized. Apollinarius proposed to abandon the notion of the perfection of human nature in Christ. In his view, the Logos was not united in Christ with a full human person, but only with a partial and imperfect one. Christ's human nature had a physical body and animal soul, but it had no self-conscious rational principle, called in Greek *nous*, whose place was taken by the divine Logos [11: 433]. At first sight, Apollinarius' conception had a number of significant advantages. It allowed 1. avoiding the view that there were two Sons -one of God and the other of man; 2. regarding Jesus as an ordinary man on whom the Holy Spirit descended at his baptism at Jordan (the heresy of adoptionism); 3. teaching that the Logos became flesh in the literal sense of the word. Apollinarius felt sure that his conception did not contradict St. Scripture, since it says that "...the Word became flesh," and *nous*, in the context of the ancient philosophical tradition, is not included in the concept of flesh. Certainly, this view should be recognized as erroneous, since the term *sarx* used in the prologue of John's Gospel was nothing more than the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew term *basar*, which, unlike the Greek word, denoted not the purely physical nature of man, but the human person, in the inseparable unity of its material and spiritual aspects. The essence of Apollinarius' Christology was that the incarnation of the Logos is by no means synonymous with His becoming a man, and Christ's human nature is not identical with that of all other men. In view of this, Apollinarius denied the fullness of the human being in the Incarnate Word and maintained that the "mind" was not included in the union and its place was taken by the Word itself, united with the animal body. His concept was strictly in accord with the principles of ancient philosophical thought, but it contradicted Revelation and the Holy Tradition of the Church, according to which Christ was like men in everything except sin, and so his teaching was strongly rejected by the Church. Apollinarius was anathematized at the Second Ecumenical Council in Constantinople, but this did not mean that the theological problem he raised was irrelevant to the Church. On the contrary, it was the focus of Christian theologians for several centuries to come.

The Christological teaching of Apollinarius of Laodicea was most severely criticized by the representatives of the Antiochian theological school, of which he was a representative. Apollinarius was convinced of the unity of the nature of the incarnate Logos, but since he simultaneously insisted on the truth of both divinity and humanity in Christ; the Antiochians concluded from this that Christ had two natures - divine and human. This concept was developed by Diodorus of Tarsus

and Theodore of Mopsuestia. They were both unquestioning supporters of Nicene orthodoxy who did not doubt the incorporeal nature of the Logos, but at the same time they were deeply convinced that Christ had a human self-consciousness along with the divine identity of the Word, which made the Apollinarian teaching that Christ had no human nous entirely unacceptable to them. The Word, in their view, was united in Christ with a full human person, but this union was not substantive. God the Word dwelt in the man Jesus as his temple, and the two natures fully preserved their qualitative features without mixing or merging with each other. According to the Antiochians, there is no substantial hypostatic unity in Christ; the unity of the person of the Word and Jesus was purely moral, and only during His earthly life did it reach such a high level that it became possible to consider the person of Christ as worthy of religious veneration and worship. The Word, for the Antiochian teachers, did not become human; he only became incarnate, and these are two fundamentally different processes. Within the framework of Antiochian Christology, there is no question of any deification of the human nature of Christ, which is essential in orthodox Christianity, because if there is no essential interpenetration of the divine and human natures, then each of them remains itself, without undergoing any change [10: 9]. Their soteriology did not presuppose a radical transformation of human nature by overcoming the sinful corruption of human nature and the resulting corruptibility of human nature, but only the moral improvement of the human person and his gradual approach to God, just as Jesus did under the influence of the Word who dwelt in Him.

The representatives of the Alexandrian school of theology had a very different view of Christology. While the Antiochians based their Christology on the image of Christ as depicted in the Synoptic Gospels, i.e. with a maximum emphasis on his purely human features, the Alexandrians, and especially their distinguished representative St. Cyril of Alexandria, based their Christology mainly on the Gospel of John, which centers on the Word, who became flesh. This was not accidental, for St. Cyril was deeply convinced that only God could be the subject of the salvation process. No human being, even one with such impeccable holiness as Jesus of Nazareth, could break the power of sin and death. God the Word did not simply dwell in the man Jesus, as the Antiochians believed, but became him. Hence St. Cyril's conviction that between God and man in Christ there is not merely a moral unity or interpenetration, but an indissoluble unity, by virtue of which on the cross died not just the holy man in whom the Logos dwelt, but God the Word Himself. For this reason, Virgin Mary is also called the Mother of God, for he who was born to her was not merely a man, but God the Word. It was this latter assertion that was the immediate cause of the theological controversy that led to the convening of the Third Ecumenical Council at Ephesus, at which the Christological teaching of the Antiochian school was condemned. The immediate reason for the beginning of the dispute was the activity of the bishop of Constantinople Nestorius, who in his sermons refused to call Our Lady the Holy Virgin and supposed that she could be called only Mother of Christ. This led to strong opposition from St. Cyril of Alex-

andria, who had been involved in the controversy since early 429. He had earlier rejected the Christology of Nestorius, who refused to attribute to the Word of God the virgin birth and death on the Cross, and thus destroyed the ontological unity of the incarnate Word and with it the Church's doctrine of salvation. The teaching of Nestorius was in his eyes a manifest heresy.

In opposition to Nestorius, St. Cyril taught the use of the term Mother of God in his Easter letter of 429 and in a letter to the monks of Egypt. Nestorius sent his sermons to Pope Celestine, but received no reply as the latter wrote to St. Cyril for more information. For Pope Celestine St. Cyril was the heir to the traditions of St. Athanasius of Alexandria. The pope convened a council and sent a letter to Alexandria with attachments to Constantinople, Philippi, Jerusalem, and Antioch. St. Cyril should assume the authority of the Roman See and warn Nestorius that if he did not renounce within ten days of receiving this ultimatum he would be excommunicated from the Church. This was the decree St. Cyril requested.

St. Cyril was the head of a theological school that rivaled that of Antioch, where Nestorius had studied. Meanwhile, in Constantinople itself, a large number of people kept away from Nestorius, and Emperor Theodosius II was persuaded to convene an Ecumenical Council at Ephesus. The council declared Nestorius deposed and excommunicated. The emperor confirmed the decision of the council; St. Cyril was allowed to return to his diocese, and Nestorius resigned. Later he was exiled to the Great Oasis of Egypt.

The letter of St. Cyril to Nestorius containing his anathematisms was translated into Armenian and was included in the Book of Letters, a medieval Armenian epistolary collection of religious texts, containing documents formulating the faith of the Armenian Apostolic Church and informing about the relations of Armenia with its neighboring countries; for some periods and phenomena this is a unique historical source. The literary genre of epistles, which developed in ancient culture and was popular during the Christian era, has played an important role in making the Book of Epistles popular. The Armenian authors included in the Book of Letters were written in the course of dogmatic disputes to substantiate and strengthen the doctrinal basis of the Armenian Apostolic Church in its struggle for independence and unity. Most of them are directed against Nestorianism and Chalcedonian Orthodoxy. Some of the dogmatic letters are so voluminous that they become almost independent works. Most of them are concerned with the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in the AAC, with the interpretation of the Nicene Creed and especially with the defense of the dogma of the oneness of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The time when it was compiled and the name of the compiler are unknown. Obviously, the first complete version of the collection was compiled not later than in the 7th century, because the 5th-7th century messages, in contrast to later letters, are classified in a strict chronological order. It is supposed that the Book of Letters began to be collected in the 7th century under Catholicos Komitas Akhtsetsi and that the 1st version of the collection was completed in the 8th century by Catholicos Hovhannes III Odznetzi which was later complemented by new documents. The Book of Letters

contains the works of Armenian, Greek, Syrian, Georgian and other authors. The material is presented in the volume in translations from the original languages into Armenian. Next, we will analyze 12 anathematisms from St. Cyril's letter to Nestorius.

1. "Whoever does not confess that Immanuel is the true God, and therefore the Holy Virgin is the Mother of God, because she bore in the flesh the Word, which is from God and became flesh let him be anathema" [4: 21]. The Alexandrians, and in particular their illustrious representative St. Cyril of Alexandria, based their Christology primarily on the Gospel of John, which is focused on the God-man, the Word, who became flesh. The Antiochians, on the other hand, based their Christology on the image of Christ as depicted in the Synoptic Gospels, that is, with the greatest emphasis on his purely human features. This was not a coincidence because St. Cyril felt sure that only God could be the subject of the process of salvation. No human being could defeat the forces of sin and death, not even one as perfect in holiness as Jesus of Nazareth. Unlike what the Antiochians thought, the Word actually became the man Jesus rather than just dwelt within him. Therefore, St. Cyril was convinced that God and man in Christ had an indissoluble connection that transcends moral unity [7: 184]. As a result, God the Word Himself died on the cross to atone human sins, not only the holy man in whom the Word dwelt. Due to the fact that the man Virgin Mary gave birth to was not a simple man, but rather the Word made flesh, she is referred to as the Mother of God. According to Alexandrian thought, the Word adopted the entirety of human nature, yet his divine nature remained untouched. Contrary to the Antiochians, the Alexandrians never compared the human nature of Christ to the temple where the Word dwelt, and for them the divine and human natures of Christ are inseparably united as a result of the incarnation. The renowned Christological formula of St. Cyril of Alexandria, "The One Nature of God the Incarnate Word," which sparked impetuous theological controversy after the Council of Chalcedon, was derived from this.

2. "Whoever does not confess that the Word, being of God the Father, is united to the flesh hypostatically, and that therefore Christ is one with his flesh, that is, one and the same is God and man together, let him be anathema" [4:22]. This thesis opposes Nestorianism, which separated Christ into the Son of God and the Son of Man and established a merely moral but not substantial union between the two [7: 132]. Since the Church holds that Christ is One, Nestorianism in any form is heresy. Although Nestorius was a member of the Antiochian school of theology, it would be incorrect to blame his heresy proceeding from this fact. Numerous outstanding Orthodox theologians, including St. John Chrysostom, came from this school. Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, two of the Antiochian school's biggest exponents, had no desire to be heretics. Their understanding of Revelation was essentially historical, free of the philosophical speculations that typified Alexandrian interpretation. The reason for this thesis was not so much their inability to think philosophically. They just were convinced that since religious truths are totally transcendent, they are outside the scope of human cognitive

abilities. They held that the whole of human nature incorporated by the Word played a key role in the history of our redemption, even though they did not disagree in the slightest with the Nicene orthodoxy, which upheld God the Word's incorporeal essence. They prioritized Jesus' human traits over his divinity in their interpretations of the New Testament, placing a greater emphasis on the former. Although they drew no heretical implications from this argument, they had to do so logically because they considered the relationship between humanity and deity in Christ as akin to the temple in which God dwells. According to Antiochian Christology, Virgin Mary could not be referred to as the Mother of God because the child she bore was just the temple of God and not God made flesh. The danger of Nestorianism, however, rested more in its misunderstandings of the nature of salvation delivered by Jesus Christ than in its inaccuracies regarding the role of Virgin Mary. In contrast to the indwelling Word, who only contributed to redemption, according to Nestorius and his teachers, salvation was completed by the human Jesus. This argument directly contradicted the teaching of St. Cyril of Alexandria and the entire apostolic tradition, which held that a simple man, even the most perfect one, is evidently incapable of salvation; only God could be the subject of it.

3. "Whoever in one Christ, after the union (of the natures), divides the persons, uniting them only by a union of dignity, that is, in will or in power, and not, better, by a union consisting in the union of the natures, let him be anathema" [4: 22]. According to Nestorius' teaching, the unity of the Person in the Lord Jesus Christ is achieved by the union of the two natures - divine and human. He deemed that without their respective persons, the natures are not possible. Both the Word and man contribute to this union of two natures, each from their own sides. The natures remain as they are, but the persons are united to create a "person of connection" that is neither the person of the Word nor the person of man, but rather a composite person made up of both [7: 157]. Mankind uses the person of Godhead, and Godhead uses the person of humanity. This internal harmony is not the result of the union of the Divine Person with the human person. They continue to exist in some way as persons subservient to the person of Christ, of whom they are integral parts. Scripture calls Him the Son, the Christ, the Lord, sometimes according to the Person of the Godhead and sometimes according to the Person of humanity. The person of the Word and the person of man are subordinate to the person of Christ, of whom they are essential components.

4. "Whoever of the sayings of the Gospels and the Apostles, whether used by the saints about Christ or by Himself about Himself, relates separately to two persons or hypostases, and applies some of them to man, whom he presents as distinct from the Word of God, and others, as God-appropriate, to the Word of God the Father alone, let him be anathema" [4: 22]. Nestorius deemed that although Christ appears to us in the Gospel as one Person, He is actually two persons - divine and human. He is only one Person in respect to the outside observer. Although Nestorius never asserted that Christ has two persons, his entire style of thinking demonstrates that he believed Christ to have a second hypostatic center that is distinct

from the Hypostasis of God the Word. As a result, it seemed as though the relationship between the Son of God and the Son of Mary was only moral, much like that which existed between God and the pious in the Old Testament. St. Cyril of Alexandria advanced the hypostatic, or physical unity, theory in opposition to Nestorius. In Christ, according to St. Cyril, divinity and humanity were hypostatically connected, just as a person's soul and body are. This unique sort of unity necessitates the mutual communication and penetration of natures within a single Hypostasis. Speaking of any specific individual person in Christ is improper in the eyes of St. Cyril. The Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, the Son of God, is the sole "I" who exists in Christ. In the first person, Christ identifies as both God and man. The subject of all the activities and states of the God-man is the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, also known as God the Word. One single subject, identical to the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, exists in Christ. There is no special human subject in Him.

5. "Whoever dares to call Christ God-bearing man, and not, better, true God, as one Son (with the Father) in nature, since the Word became flesh and came near to us, having taken our flesh and blood (Hebrews 2:14), let him be anathema" [4: 22]. According to St. Cyril, the Word who was born of God merged with our nature by uniting without confusion what belonged to both natures [11: 408]. As a result, He is conceived of not only as a man who carries the Godhead but also as God Incarnate, who took on human form and was born of the Holy Virgin. We should always keep in mind that the Word became flesh rather than saying that the Word dwelt in the man who was born of a woman.

6. "Whoever dares to say that the Word of God the Father is God or the Lord of Christ, rather than confessing, rather, that He Himself is God and also man, since, according to the Scriptures (John 1:14), the Word became flesh, let him be anathema" [4: 22]. Only when the divinity of the Word is acknowledged in conjunction with the human nature of Jesus does all Christian teaching about the God-man make sense. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to view God as Triune rather than simply One, as Jews and Muslims do. Additionally, the divine Hypostases must be seen as having one essence and being of an equal degree of perfection, between which there can be no subordination of any type. The Son is the same God as the Father, and all of the qualities that define Deity are equally his. The only-begotten Son cannot in any way be viewed as a result of the Father's act of will, despite the fact that the Father is the cause of the Son's Being. It is an enduring and indescribable generation that unavoidably occurs in the divine Essence. At the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, which blended biblical monotheism and the New Testament revelation of the existence of three hypostases of God, the notion of consubstantiality was created in order to defend the divinity of Christ and hence the truth of His salvific mission. The introduction of this term into orthodox theology required some effort on the part of the council participants. This word was compromised by the heretic Paul of Samosata, who used it to refer to the lack of separation between the Father and the Son, which was utterly unacceptable for the

Church, in addition to missing from the New Testament. It should be acknowledged that the Arians also disapproved of Paul of Samosata's doctrine, but they did so from a different position than the orthodox. The essence and hypostasis in God were also identical for them, and as there is one essence in God, so there is also one hypostasis, namely, the hypostasis of God the Father. Hence the conclusion that the Son had a different essence from the Father, and was therefore a creature. In so doing, the Arians denied the doctrine of the Trinity, and in fact destroyed the dogmatic basis of Christianity. To counterbalance this pernicious heresy, the Church Fathers put forward the idea of the real distinction of the three Hypostases in God. The whole Christian doctrine of the God-man makes sense only if the divinity of the Word, united with the human nature of Jesus, is recognized [11: 219].

7. "Whoever says that Jesus as a man was an instrument of the actions of God the Word and is surrounded by the glory of the only begotten as existing apart from Him let him be anathema" [4: 22]. St. Cyril, in complete accordance with Apostolic Tradition, resolutely breaks with the tendency inherent in the Antiochian theological school to rationalize Christian dogma, which vividly manifested itself in the Nestorian heresy, and states a super-reasonable understanding of Christological dogma that can be perceived only by an act of faith but is not open to rationalist speculation. First of all, St. Cyril emphasizes the natural, even bodily, unity of divinity and humanity in Christ, which enabled the salvation and deification of all mankind, in addition to their moral connection in Christ [8: 55]. Paradoxically, by this, the divine and human natures remained separate and distinct, rather than merged.

8. "Whoever dares to say that the man who has been received by God must be worshipped together with God the Word, must glorify him together with him, and call him God together, as one in another, and not honor Immanuel with one worship and sing him one praise, since the Word became flesh, let him be anathema" [4: 22-23]. St. Cyril of Alexandria claims that the God-man is one and not two, and that his single self-consciousness is the self-consciousness of the Word. He bases this claim on the unity of Christ's Hypostasis. If there is only one person, it must be the Word, not man, for two reasons: first, the Word was before man and could not be abolished as Person, and second, the Word was a part of the God-man from His very nature. In doing so, the Word absorbed all that the human nature of Christ experienced into the oneness of his Hypostasis: the body, the animal soul, and the intelligent spirit of man became the Word's body, soul, and spirit.

9. "Whoever says that the only Lord Jesus Christ is glorified by the Spirit in the sense that He enjoyed a power as if alien to Him and from Him received power to overcome unclean spirits and perform divine signs in people, rather than considering His own Spirit, through whom He performed miracles, let him be anathema" [4: 23]". In this passage, St. Cyril denounces the heresy of adoptionism. Some Christians, such as Theodotus the Leatherman, attempted to interpret Christian monotheism from a Greek philosophical standpoint in the second century while denying that Jesus Christ is God. According to them, the piousness and personal holiness of

the man Jesus of Nazareth led to his adoption as the Son of God during his baptism in Jordan. Although this spirit is not viewed as God's own Hypostasis as in the later theology of the Trinity, God still bestowed him with its power.

10. "The divine Scripture says that Christ was the High Priest and the intercessor of our confession, that He offered Himself for us as a pleasing fragrance to God and the Father. Whoever therefore says that it was not God the Word Himself who was our High Priest and our intercessor, when He became flesh and man like us, but as if He were another and distinct from Him, descended from a woman; or whoever says that He offered Himself as an offering for Himself, not for us alone, since, knowing no sin, He had no need of an offering for Himself, let him be anathema" [4: 23]. Here again St. Cyril rejects the dualistic Christology of the Antiochian school, of which Nestorius was the spokesman.

11. "Whoever does not confess that the flesh of the Lord is life-giving and proper, belonging to the Word of God the Father Himself, but belongs as though to another person distinct from Him and united to Him in dignity, that is, has only divine (in itself) habitation, and does not confess, as we said, that His flesh is life-giving, since it has become proper to the Word who can life-giving everything, let him be anathema". One particular aspect of St. Cyril's Christology is the idea of natural, physical sanctification via the Son, in the Son, and in Him alone. St. Cyril definitely refers to the sanctification we obtain by partaking in the Eucharist when he talks about bodily sanctification [9: 237]. Even after ascending to Heaven in the flesh, Christ sanctifies us using His Eucharistic Body as a kind of tool. The only way God, who is holiness and life, is united with the flesh of Christ and gives it life is through this union. Because the Lord's physical body was sanctified by the force of the Word that was united with it, it is efficacious for us in the sacramental blessing, the Eucharist, and can therefore give its holiness to us as well.

12. "Whoever does not confess that God the Word was suffered in the flesh, crucified in the flesh, accepted death in the flesh, and finally became the firstborn from the dead, because He is life and life-giving as God, let him be anathema" [4: 24]. According to St. Cyril, the Incarnation was God's physical manifestation. Due to the name's connotation, he frequently refers to Christ as Emmanuel ("God is with us"). Christ is not only a divinity wearing a human body; rather, he is God Incarnate because God the Word is joined with our nature. Thus, the human essence that Christ received does not exist independently, but is in His divine Hypostasis, being most closely united in Him. His Christological teaching excludes any form of Docetism. This heresy, gnostic in its origin, was revived in the 6th-7th centuries, when some followers of the famous monophysite bishop Julian of Halicarnassus confused the principle of the one nature of the incarnate Word with the absence of His perfect human nature, which inevitably led to the denial of the fullness of His incarnation. For them, the Christological formula "one nature" actually meant that Christ had only one - divine - nature. Although, unlike the Gnostics, they never denied the incarnation of the Logos, they believed that His body was so closely intertwined with His divine nature that it was stripped of all the qualities

inherent in human nature. As a result, they came to the same conclusion as the Gnostics: Christ did not have a real human body. This heresy had numerous followers in Armenia. The most famous of the Armenian docetists was Sargis of Mairagom, the pupil of the famous vardapet John of Mairagom, who later banished his pupil who fell into heresy. Teodoros Krtenavor and Khosrovik the Translator wrote against Sargis of Mairagom and his supporters, but the decisive role in the ideological defeat of Docetism was played by one of the most prominent Armenian theologians, Catholicos St. John of Odzun, who is the author of the treatise "Against Docetists". According to him, the source of the Docetists' delusions was their misunderstanding of the principle of "the one nature of Christ". For him, as well as for the whole Armenian Apostolic Church, the indivisibility does not mean either identification of human and divine natures in Christ, or their mixing and mutual separation. The unity of God and man has here a wholly unspeakable and mystical character, it is identity in difference, and difference in identity [6: 128]. "For concerning this the eyes of the mind of all Christ-lovers are enlightened, that the nature of the flesh and of the Word are one not because of the identity of the natures, for both of them are neither human nor divine. Neither the flesh descended from heaven, according to the former nonsense of Eutyches, nor did God the Word arise from Mary, as it seemed to Photinus, but the uncreated Word descended from the most uncreated Father and put on the flesh received from the Virgin's womb" [12: 50].

Conclusion

The Armenian Church's conception of Christ is renowned for its coherence and persuasiveness. It regards Christ as the heavenly Word who took on a perfect human nature. The purpose of the Incarnation is to save the world. It was done by God in and by the incorporation of Him into actual human life. God the Son, by whom the world was created, was incarnate for the salvation of the world. The incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, is the Mediator between God and man. As related to the eternal God and to created man, He is the one and only Savior of the world. He is the second Adam, in whom the human race is recreated, the firstborn of a new humanity, who will remain forever as its Head. In being united with human nature, God the Son gave Himself as Mediator between God and man, becoming perfect God and perfect man. As God, He is an uninterrupted continuation of God the Son and, through Him, of the Holy Trinity; and as man, the same is an uninterrupted continuation of the whole human race, since in Him is individualized the whole human nature in its perfection. Inasmuch as He is individualized in His perfection, He represents each human being personally and the human race as a whole. Any attempts to rational explanation of this great mystery of faith are doomed to failure because after the incarnation, the divine and human natures in Christ formed an ineffable unity without mixing or merging. The mind is unable to comprehend the inseparable unity of ontological opposites, each of which still retains the fullness of its qualities. For the Son of God to be free from the effects of original sin, the

Word was incarnated from the Holy Virgin, whose nature had previously been purified by the Holy Spirit. The human essence of Jesus and the divine nature of the Word were inseparably merged at the moment of the Immaculate Conception, creating what St. Cyril of Alexandria called “the one nature of the incarnate God-Word” from the very beginning. That this Christological formula has nothing to do with the Eutychian heresy, which really acknowledges in Christ only one, divine nature and rejects that Christ is consubstantial to us in humanity, should be reiterated forcefully. Theological ideas in Armenia developed from the fourth century to the end of the 5th century, but they did not include the adoption of the theory of the division of the two natures of Christ, which was established in 451 at the Council of Chalcedon. In these formulations, the Armenians saw an expression of Nestorianism. The Armenian Church is not a Monophysite in the sense commonly given to the concept. Monotheism is often understood as the recognition of the only one divine nature of Christ with the near-complete disappearance of His human nature, which, according to Eutychius, had lost His divinity, “like a drop of honey in the ocean”. The Christological nature of the Armenian Church, according to the teaching of Saint Cyril of Alexandria, can be expressed in one sentence: after the Word became flesh, one can speak only of one nature. When St. Cyril spoke of the “one nature of God the Word incarnate”, he emphasized that the Word had not abandoned His nature or undergone any loss or diminution in His Hypostasis. The term “incarnation” refers to the taking of flesh by the Word from the Virgin, whereby from the two natures, that is, Deity and humanity, one Christ came forth from the Virgin. He is both God and man, consubstantial with God the Father in Deity and consubstantial with us in humanity.

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Ս. ԿՅՈՒԵՂ ԱԼԵՔՍԱՆԴՐԱՅՈՒ 12 ՆՁՈՎՔՆԵՐԸ ԵՎ ՀԱՅՈՑ ԵԿԵՂԵՑՈՒ ՔՐԻՍՏՈՍԱԲԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ

Աղթուր Մաթևոսյան

Բանալի բառեր՝ Գիրք թղթոց, Ս Կյուրեղ, Նեստոր, Ապողինար, Բան, Քրիստոս, Սուրբ Կույս, Հայոց Եկեղեցի, նզովք, հերձված:

Հայտնի է, որ Հայոց եկեղեցու քրիստոսաբանությունը հիմնված է Կյուրեղ Ալեքսանդրացու քրիստոսաբանական վարդապետության վրա: Կյուրեղին հետևելով՝ Հայ Եկեղեցին հաստատում է Քրիստոսում աստվածային և մարդկային բնությունների անփոփոխությունն ու կատարելությունը: Քրիստոսի անձի միությունը չի հանգեցնում բնությունների փոփոխության կամ միաձուլման: Այն ընդունում է Քրիստոսի միությունը Հայր Աստծո հետ աստվածության մեջ և մեզ հետ՝ մարդկության մեջ: Հիսուս Քրիստոսը՝ Աստծո միաձին Որդին, կատարյալ Աստված է և կատարյալ մարդ, որը ծնվել է դարերից առաջ՝ ըստ աստվածության, և մեր փրկության համար՝ ըստ մարդկության՝ Մարիամ Կույսից: Եվ, հետևաբար, գոյություն ունի Աստծո մարմնացյալ Բանի մեկ բնություն: Այս հողվածում քննարկվում է Կյուրեղ Ալեքսանդրացու Նեստորին ուղղված նամակում պարունակվող 12 նզովքների կապը Հայոց Եկեղեցու քրիստոսաբանական վարդապետության հետ:

Կյուրեղի նամակը Նեստորին, որը պարունակում էր իր նզովքները, թարգմանվել է հայերեն և ընդգրկվել «Գիրք թղթոցում»՝ կրոնական տեքստերի միջնադարյան հայկական ժողովածուում, որը պարունակում է փաստաթղթեր, որոնք ձևակերպում են Հայ առաքելական եկեղեցու հավատքը և տեղեկացնում Հայաստանի հարևան երկրների հետ հարաբերությունների մասին. որոշ ժամանակաշրջանների և երևույթների համար սա եզակի պատմական աղբյուր է: Թղթերի գրական ժանրը, որը զարգացել է անտիկ մշակույթում և տարածված է եղել քրիստոնեական դարաշրջանում, կարևոր դեր է խաղացել «Գիրք թղթոցի» հանրաճանաչության գործում: «Գիրք թղթոցում» ընդգրկված հայ հեղինակները գրվել են դոգմատիկ վեճերի ընթացքում՝ Հայ առաքելական եկեղեցու դավանաբանական դիրքորոշումը հիմնավորելու և ամրապնդելու համար: Դրանց մեծ մասն ուղղված է նեստորականության և քաղկեդոնականության դեմ: Որոշ դոգմատիկ թղթերն այնքան ծավալուն են, որ դառնում են գրեթե ինքնուրույն ստեղծագործություններ: Նրանցից շատերը նվիրված են ՀԱԵ-ում Սուրբ Երրորդության վարդապետությանը, Նիկիական դավանանքի մեկնաբանությանը և հատկապես Որդու մի բնության դավանանքի շտապանությանը: Անհայտ է այն կազմելու ժամանակը և կազմողի անունը: Այնուհայտ է, որ ժողովածուի առաջին ամբողջական տարբերակը կազմվել է ոչ ուշ, քան 7-րդ դարում, քանի որ 5-7-րդ դարերի հաղորդագրությունները՝ ի տարբերություն հետագա թղթերի, դասակարգված են խիստ ժամանակագրական հաջորդականությամբ: Ենթադրվում է, որ «Գիրք թղթոցը» սկսել է կազմվել 7-րդ դարում Կոմիտաս Աղցեցի կաթողիկոսի օրոք, իսկ ժողովածուի 1-ին տարբերակը լրացրել է 8-րդ դարում Հովհաննես Գ Օձնեցին կաթողիկոսը, որը հետագայում ևս լրացվել է. «Գիրք թղթոցում» գետեղված են հայ, հույն, ասորի, վրացի և այլ հեղինակների ստեղծագործություններ: Նյութը ներկայացված է բնօրինակ լեզուներից հայերեն թարգմանություններով: