

REVIEW ARTICLE

Worshiping the Holy Trinity in the St Basil Liturgy Part II: The Liturgy of the Word

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في مقاليتنا السابقة، تم مناقشة كيف أنّ نظامَ العبادة في خدمة رفع البخور في الكنيسة القبطية، يركّز على إقامة شركة روحية بين المؤمنين والله الثالوث القدوس: الآب والابن والروح القدس. ويُنطِيقُ هذا المبدأ الروحي على الصلوات الكهنوتية كما على صلوات الشعب أيضًا

وفي هذه المقالة، نُتابع ذات المناقشة، فنستقرُّ النَّمطَ نفسه من العبادة في قُدّاس الكلمة، إذ يُلاحظُ القارئُ أنّ جميع صلوات الكاهن، بما في ذلك الصلوات السريّة، تختتمُ دائمًا بتمجيد الثالوث القدوس. وكذلك، فإنّ جميع ردود الشعب تُعبّرُ عن الدعوة الي العبادة وفيها، تفيضُ بالمجد، والكرامة، وتُقدّمُ البركات للثالوث القدوس

Dutch: Ons vorig artikel besprak hoe de processie van de Dienst van het Opwekken van Wierook in de Koptische Kerk nadruk legt op het vastleggen van een spirituele relatie tussen de kerkgemeenschap en God 'de Heilige Drie-eenheid': de Vader, de Zoon en de Heilige Geest. Dit geldt voor zowel de gebeden van de priester als die van de kerkgemeenschap. In dit artikel onderzoeken wij een soortgelijk patroon van aanbidding tijdens de Liturgie van het Woord. De lezer zal waarnemen dat alle priesterlijke gebeden, inclusief de onverstaanbare, eindigen met het verheerlijken van de Heilige Drie-eenheid. Eveneens, alle antwoorden van de kerkgemeenschap nodigen aanbidding, schenken glorie en bieden zegeningen aan de Heilige Drie-eenheid.

English: Our previous article 'Worshiping the Holy Trinity in The Saint Basil Liturgy: Part I: The raising of incense service' discussed how the worship order of the Service of the Raising of Incense in the Coptic Church focuses on establishing a spiritual relationship between the congregation and God 'the Holy Trinity': the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This applies to both the priestly and the congregational prayers. In this article, we explore a similar pattern of worship throughout the Liturgy of the Word. The reader will observe that all of the priest's prayers, including the inaudible ones, conclude by glorifying the Holy Trinity. Likewise, all congregational responses invite worship, bestow glory and offer blessings to the Holy Trinity.

French: Notre article précédent expliquait comment le culte de l'encens dans l'Église copte met l'accent sur l'établissement d'une relation spirituelle entre les fidèles et Dieu, la Sainte Trinité : Père, Fils et Saint-Esprit. Ceci s'applique aussi bien aux prières du prêtre qu'à celles de l'assemblée. Dans cet article, nous explorons une démarche similaire tout au long de la liturgie du Verbe (la Parole). Le lecteur constatera que toutes les prières du prêtre, même celles prononcées secrètement, se concluent par la glorification de la Sainte Trinité. De même, toutes les réponses de l'assemblée invitent à l'adoration et à la glorification de la Sainte Trinité, ainsi qu'à une demande de bénédiction.

German: Unser vorheriger Artikel diskutierte, wie die Gottesdienstordnung des Dienstes der Aufrichtung des Weihrauchs in der koptischen Kirche sich darauf konzentriert, eine geistliche Beziehung zwischen der Gemeinde und Gott 'der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit': dem Vater, dem

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Sohn und dem Heiligen Geist herzustellen. Dies gilt sowohl für die priesterlichen als auch für die Gemeindegebete. In diesem Artikel untersuchen wir ein ähnliches Muster der Anbetung während der Liturgie des Wortes. Der Leser wird feststellen, dass alle Gebete des Priesters, einschließlich der unhörbaren, mit der Verherrlichung der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit enden. Ebenso laden alle Antworten der Gemeinde zur Anbetung ein, spenden Ruhm und bieten Segen für die Heilige Dreifaltigkeit.

Greek: Στο προηγούμενο άρθρο μας, εξετάσαμε πώς η λατρευτική διάταξη της Ακολουθίας του Λιβανώματος στην Κοπτική Εκκλησία επικεντρώνεται στη δημιουργία μιας πνευματικής σχέσης μεταξύ του εκκλησιάσματος και του Θεού, της Αγίας Τριάδας: του Πατρός, του Υιού και του Αγίου Πνεύματος.

Αυτό ισχύει τόσο για τις ιερατικές όσο και για τις εκφωνούμενες από το εκκλησίασμα προσευχές.

Στο παρόν άρθρο, διερευνούμε ένα παρόμοιο μοτίβο λατρείας κατά τη διάρκεια της Λειτουργίας του Λόγου.

Ο αναγνώστης θα παρατηρήσει ότι όλες οι ευχές του ιερέα, ακόμη και οι ευχές που λέγονται μυστικά, καταλήγουν με δοξολογία προς την Αγία Τριάδα.

Αντιστοίχως, όλες οι απαντήσεις του εκκλησιάσματος προσκαλούν σε λατρεία, αποδίδουν δόξα και προσφέρουν ευλογίες στην Αγία Τριάδα.

Italian: Nel nostro articolo precedente abbiamo discusso di come l'ordine del culto nel Servizio dell'Offerta dell'Incenso nella Chiesa Copta si concentri sullo stabilire una relazione spirituale tra la congregazione e Dio, la Santissima Trinità: il Padre, il Figlio e lo Spirito Santo. Ciò vale sia per le preghiere sacerdotali che per quelle della congregazione.

In questo articolo esploriamo un modello di adorazione simile presente nella Liturgia della Parola. Il lettore noterà che tutte le preghiere del sacerdote, comprese quelle recitate in silenzio, si concludono con una glorificazione della Santissima Trinità. Allo stesso modo, tutte le risposte della congregazione invitano all'adorazione, rendono gloria e offrono benedizioni alla Santissima Trinità.

Swedish: I vår föregående artikel diskuterades hur ordningen i Rökelseoffret i den koptiska kyrkan är inriktad på att upprätta en andlig gemenskap mellan församlingen och Gud—den Heliga Treenigheten: Fadern, Sonen och den Helige Ande. Detta gäller både de prästerliga och de församlingsburna bönerna.

I denna artikel utforskar vi ett liknande mönster av tillbedjan som genomsyrar Ordets liturgi. Läsaren kommer att lägga märke till att alla prästens böner, även de tysta, avslutas med en doxologi som prisar den Heliga Treenigheten.

The Beginning of the Liturgy of the Word

The liturgy of the Word commences with the beautiful hymn of the Holy Trinity 'ΤΕΝΟΨΩΤ ΪΦΙΩΤ ΗΤΕ ΠΙΟΨΩΙΝΙ..'. which calls all believers to worship God in His Trinity, uniquely describing each hypostasis: the Father as the Father of light, the Son the Only Begotten and the Holy Spirit as the Comforter. The hymn culminates by affirming the coessentiality of the three hypostases.

This is followed by the Offertory prayers, including the chanting of **ΚΥΡΙΕ ΕΛΕΗΣΟΝ** forty-one times followed by its concluding prayer 'Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of your honor and glory... O Holy Trinity have mercy on us...'. The Lord's prayer follows.

After placing the chosen bread on his hand cross, the priest turns to the West and proclaims the glory of the Holy Trinity aloud: **ΟΥΩΟΥ ΝΕΜ ΟΥΤΑΙΟ. ΟΥΤΑΙΟ ΝΕΜ ΟΥΩΟΥ. ΗΪΠΑ-ΝΑΣΙΑ ΉΤΡΙΑΣ ΦΙΩΤ ΝΕΜ ΪΨΗΡΙ ΝΕΜ ΠΙΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΕΘΟΥΑΒ.**—‘Glory and honor, honor and glory be to the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit’. The priest then proceeds in the procession of the Lamb around the altar, surrounded by the deacons holding candles, before reaching his final position facing the altar towards the East. During the procession, the priest prays for the peace of the church and blessings upon the offerings and those who have prepared and presented them.

The Blessing of the Oblations

Standing in front of the altar, the priest holds the chosen bread on his left hand while the deacon presents the wine. He then prays ‘In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy spirit. **ΨΕΜΑΡΩΟΥΤ ΝΧΕ ΦΝΟΥΪ ΦΙΩΤ ΠΙΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ. ΨΕΜΑΡΩΟΥΤ ΝΧΕ ΠΕΨΜΟΝΟΣΕΝΗΣ ΪΨΗΡΙ ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΠΙΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΠΕΝΘΙΟΣ. ΨΕΜΑΡΩΟΥΤ ΝΧΕ ΠΙΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΕΘΟΥΑΒ ΪΠΑΡΑΚΛΗΤΟΝ**—Blessed be God the Father the Almighty, Blessed be His Only begotten Son and Blessed be the Holy Spirit the Comforter.

This is followed by an inaudible prayer ‘Glory and honor, honor and glory be to the Holy Trinity: the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit now and forever and to the ages of ages, Amen’. The deacon responds ‘Amen’ after each blessing, then reiterates the one essence of God in His Holy Trinity in Greek (**ΙΣ ΠΑΤΗΡ ΑΣΙΟΣ. ΙΣ ΥΙΟΣ ΑΣΙΟΣ ΕΝ ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΑΣΙΟΝ. ΑΜΗΝ**—One is the Holy Father, one is the Holy Son, one is the Holy Spirit, amen). The deacon then calls upon all nations to praise God, reciting *Psalm 118* ‘for His mercy endures forever’, while the choir and congregation respond with **ΔΟΞΑ ΠΑΤΡΙ ΚΕ ΥΙΩ ΚΕ ΑΣΙΩ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙ. ΚΕ ΝΥΝ ΚΕ ΑΙ ΚΕ ΙΣΤΟΥΣ ΕΩΝΑΣ ΤΟΝ ΕΘΝΟΝ ΑΜΗΝ. ΑΛΛΗΛΟΥΙΑ**—‘Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Now and forever and to the ages of ages. amen. Allelouia’. This section of the liturgy concludes by the Thanksgiving prayer which includes intercessions for the peace of the life of the church and its members, concluding with the Gloria, previously discussed in the Service of the Raising of Incense.

Calling the Holy Spirit to bless the Oblations and the Absolution of the Servants

After the Thanksgiving Prayer, the priest prays inaudibly, asking God to bless the oblations so that the bread may become the Body and the wine to become the Blood of the Only Begotten Son, Lord Jesus Christ. This prayer also concludes with the Gloria. The priest then covers the oblations and processes around the altar before stepping out of the sanctuary to greet the co-celebrant (if present), handing him the cross to pray for the Absolution of the Servants While facing the East with all servants before him praying ‘*May Your servants O Lordbe absolved from the mouth of the Holy Trinity the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit*’. This prayer also concludes with the Gloria. Then the choir and congregation chant together this beautiful response **ΨΕΝΟΥΩΨΤ ΪΜΟΚ Ω ΠΙΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΝΕΜ ΠΕΚΙΩΤ ΪΑΣΑΘΟΣ ΝΕΜ ΠΙΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΕΘΟΥΑΒ ΧΕ ΑΚΙ ΑΚΩΪ ΜΜΟΝ. ΜΑΙ ΝΑΝ**—‘We worship you O Christ with your Good Father and the Holy Spirit, for you have come to save us. Have mercy on us’. The priest greets the co-celebrant and then takes the cross back from him to bless the incense before putting it in the censer. He blesses the incense in the name of the Holy Trinity – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – just as he did earlier for the oblations. Each time he places incense in the censer, he invokes the name of the Holy Trinity, emphasizing the continuous act of worship and sanctification.

The Epistles and Their Respective Prayers

The priest, holding the censer, prays inaudibly three prayers requesting that the congregation receive full comprehension and understanding while listening to the epistles. Each prayer concludes with the Gloria. At the end of the Catholic Epistle, the choir and congregation chant together: **Κεμαρωττ αληθος νευ πεκιωτ ηαγαθος νευ πιπνευμα εθοταβ χε ακι ακωτ ημουν. Παι παν**—For you are indeed blessed with your Father and Your Holy Spirit for you have come to save us, Have mercy on us’.

Following the epistles, the priest stands at the door of the sanctuary reading the synexarium, summarizing the lives of the saints commemorated on that day, starting by blessing the name of the Holy Trinity and saying ‘In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, One God, Amen’. Following the synexarium, the choir and congregation chant the hymn ‘**ασιος ο θεος. Ασιος ισχυρος. Ασιος αθανατος**—Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal’ and conclude with ‘**δοξα Πατρι κε υιω κε ασιω Πνευματι. Κε ντην κε αι κε ιστοις εωνας τον εονον αμην. Ασια τριας. Ελεησον ημας**—Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Now and forever and to the ages of ages. O Holy Trinity have mercy on us’.

The Sacrament of the Gospel

The priest stands at the sanctuary gate and prays the Litany of the Gospel, asking for both intellectual and spiritual enlightenment for all listeners. This prayer concludes with the Gloria, to which the congregation responds ‘**δοξα ci κριε**—Glory to you O God’. After the Gospel in Coptic and its translation into the congregation’s language, the church chants the gospel response ‘**χε υμαρωττ ηχε φιωτ νευ πωμηρι νευ πιπνευμα εθοταβ. ττριας τηχη εβολ τενοτωτ τ ημοκ τενητωτ ηακ**—For blessed is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the coessential Trinity, we worship and glorify Him’. This is followed by the three litanies for the peace of the church, the clergy and the gathering of the believers. This too concludes with the Gloria as did all previous litanies.

The Creed and the Prayer of Reconciliation

Following the sacrament of the gospel and the three litanies, the whole church recites the Creed, and the believers declare their belief in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one universal church, the baptism for the remission of sins, the resurrection of the dead and the life to come. This is followed by the Prayer of Reconciliation, which also concludes with the Gloria. Even the recently added congregational response to the Reconciliation Prayer reflects this theme emphasizing worship of the Holy Trinity ‘**ειτεν ηιπρεσβια ητε θεοτοκος εθοταβ Παρια. τενοτωτ ημοκ ω πιχριστος νευ πεκιωτ ηαγαθος νευ πιπνευμα εθοταβ χε ακι ακωτ ημουν**—Through the intercession of the Theotokos St Mary, O Lord grant us forgiveness of our sins. We worship you O Christ with your Good Father and the Holy Spirit for you have come and saved us’. This part concludes the Liturgy of the Word.

Conclusion

It may be challenging to understand accurately the exact intent behind the church’s restructuring of the Liturgy of the Word in this order, but the central focus is evident: giving glory and worshipping God in His trinitarian nature, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We could propose the following reasons as potential answers for this question.

- (1) From the name of the liturgy, one can understand that while it is structured around the heard Word of God, its ultimate aim is to establish the Word of God as Spirit and Life, **John 6:63**. Believing in and abiding by the Word of God, ultimately draws us closer to the true life in Lord Jesus, the Word of God while being the Son of God.
- (2) The consistent recitation of the Gloria at the end of all priestly prayers, including those in the raising of incense, directs one's attention to the presence of God in the liturgy rather than merely reciting supplications. Likewise, all congregational responses either call for worship of the Holy Trinity or declare His Glory, thereby affirming His mystical presence in the Liturgy of the Word.
- (3) Having observed such consistency in worshipping the Holy Trinity in the Liturgy of the Word, the believer enters the Liturgy of the Sacrament, lifting up his heart and talking to God the Father in St Basil Liturgy and God the Son in St Gregory Liturgy, filled with great reverence for standing before God in His Trinitarian presence.
- (4) The Liturgy of the Sacrament is founded upon the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit, which we will discuss in the next article. Before the believers get to that stage of worship, the church aims at establishing their sacramental relationship with God's Spirit preparing them to be worthy for His work within them, just as in the oblations.