

(a) The expressions of the Alexandrian Fathers is complicated on this point, however. There is no question about the Divine Person, but there is some question to how he came and how he delivered the Light. Summarizing the Alexandrian position, Berkhof notes:

Clement of Alexandria is by no means clear in his representation of the Logos. He stresses the personal subsistence of the Logos, His oneness with the Father, and His eternal generation; but also represents Him as the Divine reason, and as subordinate to the Father. (History of Doctrines..p. 76)

Citations from the Fathers about the Person of Christ

(b) Irenaeus (Fragment III) works to represent this mysterious matter in perhaps clearer language than Clement when he says:

The sacred books acknowledge with regard to Christ, that as He is the Son of man, so is the same being not a (mere) man; and as He is flesh, so is He also Spirit, and the Word of God and God. And as He was born of Mary in the last times, so did He also proceed from God as the first-begotten of every creature; and as He hungered, so did He satisfy (others) etc.

(3) The concepts of the Spirit are less forcefully noted but as Kelly says (p. 101): "In spite of incoherencies, however, the lineaments of a Trinitarian doctrine are clearly discernible in the Apologists. The Spirit was for them the Spirit of God; like the Word, He shared the Divine nature, being (in the words of Athenagoras) an "effluence" from the Deity."

The Holy Spirit

(4) In short we may say that the church in the Ante-Nicene period comprehended the monotheistic ideology of the Old Testament and received it heartily while being able to reckon with the plurality of Divine Persons in the One. They likely had the correct view of Deuteronomy 6:4.

Theology Proper: summary

b. Selected Readings (suggested)

The student must remember that not all men and ideas sound the same when read in past light. Be ready not to expect modern cliches and to see (positive) terms and developments in the light of their own times. The range of potential readings is large and I have selected some which I think will interest you. All are from the Ante-Nicene Fathers although the translations occur in other sets as well.

Suggested Readings (Theology Proper in the Fathers)

- (1) Origen: De Principiis: Book I:1.1 (God)
2.1-2 (Christ)
3:2 (Spirit)