

ELEMENTS OF MARIOLOGY IN CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA AND GREGORY OF NYSSA: MARY AND THE CHURCH

THE TEXTS

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

1.) *Strom.* I, 21, 147, 5, 1-3:

In the Gospel of Matthew the genealogy from Abraham concludes in the Lord's mother Mary (Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς τοῦ κυρίου): "There are," he says, "fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the deportation to Babylon".

2.) *Strom.* VII, 16, 93, 7, 1 - 94, 2, 1:

But, as appears, many even down to present moment regard Mary, on account of the birth of her child, as having been in the puerperal state, although she was not. For some say that, after she brought forth, she was found, when examined by a midwife, to be a virgin. Now such to us are the Scriptures of the Lord, which gave birth to the truth and continue virgin, in the concealment of the mysteries of the truth.

Ἀλλ', ὡς ἔοικεν, τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ μέχρι νῦν δοκεῖ ἡ Μαριάμ λεχῶ εἶναι διὰ τὴν τοῦ παιδίου γέννησιν, οὐκ οὔσα λεχῶ (καὶ γὰρ μετὰ τὸ τεκεῖν αὐτὴν μαιωθεῖσάν φασί τινες παρθένον εὐρεθῆναι): τοιαῦται δ' ἡμῖν αἱ κυριακαὶ γραφαί, τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀποτίκτους καὶ μένουςαι παρθένοι μετὰ τῆς ἐπικρύψεως τῶν τῆς ἀληθείας μυστηρίων.

3.) *Strom.* III, 17, 102, 1, 1 - 3, 1:

If birth is an evil, then the blasphemers must place the Lord who went through birth and the Virgin who gave him birth in the category of evil. Abominable people! In attacking birth they are maligning the will of God and the mystery of creation.

Εἰ δὲ ἡ γένεσις κακόν, ἐν κακῷ λεγόντων οἱ βλάσφημοι τὸν γενέσεως μετεληφότα κύριον, ἐν κακῷ τὴν γεννήσαν παρθένον. οἷμοι τῶν κακῶν, βλασφημοῦσι τὸ βούλημα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὸ μυστήριον τῆς κτίσεως, τὴν γένεσιν διαβάλλοντες.

4.) *Paed.* I, 6, 42, 1, 1 - 3, 1:

O mystic wonder! The Father of all is one, the Word of all is also one, the Holy Spirit is one and the same everywhere. One alone, then, is the virgin Mother. I like to call her the Church. She alone, although a mother, had no milk because she alone never became a wife. She is at once virgin and mother: as virgin, undefiled; as mother, full of love. Calling her children about her, she nourishes them with a holy milk: the infant Logos. That is why she did not have milk, because this Son of hers, beautiful and all hers, the Body of Christ, was milk [and] she nourishes with the Logos the young people whom he himself, the Lord, brought into the world in the pain of the flesh and whom he himself wrapped in precious blood.

Ὡ θαύματος μυστικοῦ· εἷς μὲν ὁ τῶν ὅλων πατήρ, εἷς δὲ καὶ ὁ τῶν ὅλων λόγος, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πανταχοῦ, μία δὲ μόνη γίνεται μήτηρ παρθένος· ἐκκλησίαν ἔμοι φίλον αὐτὴν καλεῖν. Γάλα οὐκ ἔσχεν ἡ μήτηρ αὕτη μόνη, ὅτι μόνη μὴ γέγονεν γυνή, παρθένος δὲ ἅμα καὶ μήτηρ ἐστίν, ἀκήρατος μὲν ὡς παρθένος, ἀγαπητικὴ δὲ ὡς μήτηρ, καὶ τὰ αὐτῆς παιδιά προσκαλουμένη ἀγίῳ τιθηνεῖται γάλακτι, τῷ βρεφῶδει λόγῳ. Διὸ οὐκ ἔσχε γάλα, ὅτι γάλα ἦν τὸ παιδίον τοῦτο καλὸν καὶ οἰκεῖον, τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τὴν νεολαίαν ὑποτροφοῦσα τῷ λόγῳ, ἣν αὐτὸς ἐκύησεν ὁ κύριος ὡδῖνι σαρκικῇ, ἣν αὐτὸς ἐσπαργάνωσεν ὁ κύριος αἵματι τιμίῳ.

5.) *Paed.* I, 6, 27, 2, 1-5:

The very fact that we believe in Him and are reborn is perfection of life. For God is by no means powerless. As His will is creation, and is called the universe, so His desire is the salvation of men, and is called the Church.

PROVISIONAL TEXT - 2021 PUSC-ROR Theology Conference

Οὕτω τὸ πιστεῦσαι μόνον καὶ ἀναγεννηθῆναι τελειώσις ἐστὶν ἐν ζωῇ· οὐ γὰρ ποτε ἀσθενεῖ ὁ θεός. Ὡς γὰρ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ἔργον ἐστὶ καὶ τοῦτο κόσμος ὀνομάζεται, οὕτως καὶ τὸ βούλημα αὐτοῦ ἀνθρώπων ἐστὶ σωτηρία καὶ τοῦτο ἐκκλησία κέκληται.

GREGORY OF NYSSA

1.) Virg. II, 1, 1-8: GNO VIII/1, 253, 9-16:

It is necessary that we have a lot of intelligence, according to which we can know the excellence of this grace that is included in the idea of the incorruptible/immortal Father. In fact, it is a paradox to find virginity in a father who has a son and generates him without passion. It is also found in the Only-Begotten God, head of the choir of incorruptibility/immortality, who shone with His pure generation without passion. And once again the same paradox: the Son is considered in virginity.

Συνέσεως γὰρ ἡμῖν χρεια πολλῆς, δι' ἧς ἐστὶ γνῶναι τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῆς χάριτος ταύτης, ἥτις συνεπινοεῖται μὲν τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ πατρί· ὃ δὲ καὶ παράδοξον ἐν πατρὶ παρθενίαν εὐρίσκεσθαι τῷ καὶ υἱὸν ἔχοντι καὶ δίχα πάθους γεννήσαντι. Τῷ δὲ μονογενεῖ θεῷ τῷ τῆς ἀφθαρσίας χορηγῶ συγκαταλαμβάνεται, ὁμοῦ τῷ καθαρῷ καὶ ἀπαθει τῆς γεννήσεως αὐτοῦ συνεκλάμψασα· καὶ πάλιν τὸ ἴσον παράδοξον υἱὸς διὰ παρθενίας νοούμενος.

2.) Virg. XIII, 3, 17-20: GNO VIII/1, 305, 19-22:

The virgin mother truly rejoices, she who begets immortal children by the Spirit, she who is called barren by the prophet because of her continence.

Εὐφραίνεται γὰρ ὡς ἀληθῶς ἡ παρθένος μήτηρ, ἡ τὰ ἀθάνατα τέκνα κυοφοροῦσα διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, στεῖρα διὰ τὴν σωφροσύνην ὑπὸ τοῦ προφήτου ὀνομασμένη.

3.) Virg. XIV, 1, 24-30: GNO VIII/1, 306, 21 - 307, 1:

For just as (it happened) in Mary, the Mother of God, (when) death reigned from Adam down to her, after which it also came against her, crashing down just as against a stone, it breaks on the fruit of virginity, so in every soul that, through virginity, breaks the life that takes place in the flesh, the power of death is also dissolved, having no one in whom to place its sting.

ὡσπερ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῆς θεοτόκου Μαρίας ὁ βασιλεύσας ἀπὸ Ἀδάμ μέχρις ἐκείνης θάνατος, ἐπειδὴ καὶ κατ' αὐτὴν ἐγένετο, καθάπερ τινὶ πέτρᾳ τῷ καρπῷ τῆς παρθενίας προσπταίσας περὶ αὐτὴν συνετρίβη, οὕτως ἐν πάσῃ ψυχῇ τῇ διὰ παρθενίας τὴν ἐν σαρκὶ παρῆσθη ζωὴν συντρίβεται πως καὶ καταλύεται τοῦ θανάτου τὸ κράτος, οὐκ ἔχοντος τίσι τὸ ἑαυτοῦ κέντρον ἑναπερίσθαι.

4.) Virg. XIV, 3, 16-22: GNO VIII/1, 308, 14-19:

This happens whenever the incorruptibility/immortality of the spirit is received into the living part of the heart, [which] then generates wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. It is possible for everyone to become the mother of the One who is these things, as the Lord says: Whoever does my will is my brother and sister and mother.

Τοῦτο δὲ γίνεται, ὅταν συλλαμβάνη μὲν τις ἐν τῷ ζωτικῷ τῆς καρδίας τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν τοῦ πνεύματος τίκτη δὲ σοφίαν τε καὶ δικαιοσύνην, ἀγιασμόν τε καὶ ἀπολύτρωσιν. Παντὶ γὰρ ἔξεστι μητέρα γενέσθαι τοῦ ταῦτα ὄντος, καθὼς φησὶ πῶς ὁ κύριος, ὅτι Ὁ τὸ θέλημά μου ποιῶν καὶ ἀδελφὸς καὶ ἀδελφὴ καὶ μήτηρ μου ἐστίν.

5.) Virg. XIX, 1, 39-45: GNO VIII/1, 324, 11-17:

Thus the womb of the Blessed Virgin is also called blessed in the Gospel, for it was at the service of an immaculate birth: neither did childbirth destroy virginity, nor did virginity become an obstacle to her pregnancy. For where a spirit of salvation is begotten, as Isaiah says, [all] the desires of the flesh become useless.

Οὕτω μακαρίζεται καὶ ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ ἡ τῆς ἁγίας παρθένου κοιλία ἢ τῷ ἀχράντῳ τόκῳ ὑπηρετήσασα, ὡς οὔτε τοῦ τόκου τὴν παρθενίαν λύσαντος οὔτε τῆς παρθενίας τῇ τοιαύτῃ κυοφορίᾳ

έμποδών γενομένης· ὅπου γὰρ πνεῦμα σωτηρίας γεννᾶται, καθὼς Ἡσαΐας φησίν, ἄχρηστα πάντως τῆς σαρκὸς τὰ θελήματα.

6.) *Diem. nat. 1140, 32-35: GNO X/2, 254, 3-7:*

Unlike the voice addressed to the first woman, the word is now addressed to the Virgin. That one was condemned because of sin to throes of childbirth; in the case of this one, pain is expelled through joy. ἀπεναντίον τῆ πρώτῃ πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα φωνῆ νῦν γίνεται πρὸς τὴν παρθένον ὁ λόγος. ἐκείνη λύπαις ἐν ταῖς ὡδίσι διὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν κατεδικάσθη, ἐπὶ δὲ ταύτης ἐκβάλλεται διὰ τῆς χαρᾶς ἡ λύπη.

7.) *Diem nat. 1148, 16-24: GNO X/2, 265, 5-13:*

The woman is defended by the woman. The former introduced sin, the latter served the entrance of righteousness. That one was persuaded by the serpent's counsel, this one introduced the slayer of the serpent. That one introduced sin through the wood, this one brought the good through the wood. Since the wood was the cross, the fruit of this wood is always in blossom and becomes for those who eat it the incorruptible life.

ἀπολελόγηται ὑπὲρ τῆς γυναικὸς ἡ γυνή. ἡ πρώτη τῆ ἁμαρτία τὴν εἴσοδον ἔδωκεν, αὕτη δὲ τῆ εἰσόδῳ τῆς δικαιοσύνης ὑπηρετήσατο. ἐκείνη τοῦ ὄφεως τὴν συμβουλήν ἐπεσπάσατο, αὕτη τὸν ἀναιρέτην τοῦ ὄφεως παρεστήσατο. ἐκείνη διὰ τοῦ ξύλου τὴν ἁμαρτίαν εἰσήνεγκεν, αὕτη διὰ τοῦ ξύλου τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἀντεῖσήνεγκε. ξύλον γὰρ ἦν ὁ σταυρός. ὁ δὲ τοῦ ξύλου τούτου καρπὸς ἀειθαλῆς καὶ ἀμάραντος ζωῆ τοῖς γευομένοις γίνεται.

8.) *Cant. 6, 197, 17 - 198, 2: GNO VI, 197, 17 - 198, 2:*

(There is) one strategy of combat and one army and one bed, that is, one Church and one people and one bride, and all are held under one military command and one head of the assembly and one bridegroom and are gathered together in the communion of one body.

μία παράταξις καὶ στρατὸς εἷς καὶ μία κλίνη, τουτέστιν ἐκκλησία μία καὶ λαὸς εἷς καὶ νύμφη μία οἱ πάντες γενήσονται ὑφ' ἐνὶ ταξιάρχῃ καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικῇ καὶ νυμφίῳ πρὸς ἐνὸς σώματος κοινωνίαν συναρμοζόμενοι.