

ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION
A MASTER'S VOICE
WORD STUDY

QNUMA-THE DIVINE BEING AS BASIC TO ALL CREATION & LIFE

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DIPPING IN THE TOE

The most engrossing and at the same time enlivening term in theology as to the person of God is the term "Qnuma". It takes us further than the notion of "soul" takes us in understanding ourselves-it takes us to the very heart or reality of God. Theologians in a somewhat confusing manner dress this essentially Aramaic idea which Jesus and the apostles used in Greek clothing as "hypostasis" but the confusion arises when they equate this with "persona" assuming they have legitimacy because God though "Spirit" made us in His image and we are "persons".

THE LORD TALKS ESSENTIALS

Three times Jesus spelled out the implications of the inalienable reality that is His very being with the Father and the Spirit. On each occasion He used the word QNUMA to explain and explore the implications for His relationship with disciples.

(1) Our Lord Jesus first used the word in Luke 11.17 He said "Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined and any house or home divided against itself will fall". It is easily seen that Christ is speaking about the integrity of a state and a home. He is speaking of "utter unity" and the very nature of an integrated state and home. He is telling us that to divide either is to ruin them sine die. The absolute implication is that the QNUMA of God -His utter reality and being cannot be divided and so is immortal and unending in its glory- God does not die. QNUMA as applied to deity is fundamental to the life of God as God knows it.

(2) Again in John 6.53 Our Lord said I tell you the truth SHARIREH "Unless you eat the body of the Son of man and drink His blood there is no life united to yourselves(literally "your QNOMCON)". Each apostle to whom Christ spoke could not experience the "eternal HAYAH or life essential to God if he did not participate in the New Testament Passover of the atoning blood and body of Christ sacrificed for him. The incarnate Lord and His office of redemption applied by the Holy Spirit and consciously digested as truth alone affords eternal life and union with God for eternity. Thus our association with divine QNUMA is with God in his Glory-his life and lifegiving-his LIGHT and light-giving understanding-his love and covenant keeping-what He "really" is.

(3) Briefly it is instructive to notice that if you drop the terminal letter and the letter "N" you have QUM which word is not unrelated in Aramaic to QNUMA. This trick in English reflects a reality in Aramaic. QUM has to do with "standing" or "rising" and in several of the NT uses of QNUMA the relationship with "resurrection power" is clear. Thus God is by nature the God who stands for

ever and who is victorious over death. In a very real sense the LORD GOD stands for ever and is the living reality behind all things-the "ground of being" of Paul Tillich. These words inter-relate in Aramaic.

(4) Our Lord speaks again as recorded in John5.26 to say "As the Father has life in QNUMA(His divine self) so He gives the Son to have life in QNUMA. The verb "give" has no future tense in Aramaic so this is an eternal sharing not a temporal or initiated gift-the effect is the Father sacrifices within the QNUMA even to the extent of the judgment of creation. The intimate eternal oneness prior to the incarnation continues in the incarnate life of our Lord in such manner that eternal life is extended to His body and the ultimate prerogatives of deity belong to Him as "the Son of man". Just as Christ was a lamb slain before the foundation of the world so His sharing of all that was implied in incarnation was an eternal given within the essential nature of God Father Son and Holy Spirit. Because God is one nothing that is perfect is impossible to accomplish to our glorious Lord and what is given away is obtained again with interest. Therefore to create in His own perfect image and to resource man to retain that image eternally by sacrifice as man is His greatest and most glorious plan in which both redemption and judgment needfully figure to accomplish the will of God. We are given to participate in the divine KAYANA or "nature" for ever whilst in the Spirit God retains His GLORY as the God of covenant LOVE, the God of LIGHT and the God who alone has natural IMMORTALITY and LIFE eternal.

(5) There are fifteen uses of Qnuma in the New Testament Aramaic of which two link directly with God essentially as the God of Resurrection. This asserts that God to be God is God not of the dead but the living. For God to be God He must have a positive track record and authority in respect of resurrection. The Qnuma roster is as follows:

1. Luke 11.17 A kingdom divided against ITSELF cannot stand
2. John6.53 ...there is no life in YOURSELVES
3. John5.26A ...Father has life in HIMSELF
4. John5.26B ... Son has life in HIMSELF
5. Romans1.27 Men received in THEMSELVES the due penalty
6. Romans9.3 I could wish that I MYSELF were cut off
7. 1Corinthians 6.7 You have condemned YOURSELVES essentially
8. 1Corinthians15.16A If the dead are not raised /THEMSELVES again
9. 1Corinthians 15.16B Then Christ is not HIMSELF again
10. Ephesians 2.15 In HIMSELF (His Godhead)he created one new man
11. Colossians2.15 Triumphant over them in HIMSELF by the cross
12. Hebrews 1.3 upholding all in HIMSELF by the power of His word
13. Hebrews 9.28 ... in HIMSELF He sacrificed for sins of many
14. Hebrews 10.1 The shadow of good things not theseTHEMSELVES
15. Hebrews11.1 Faith is the VERY SELF of things hoped for.

(6) This specific theological term has its historical setting from Polycarp. Polycarp was personally assistant of John the divine and was mentored by him. Polycarp went to Rome from Ephesus to instruct Valentinus in the doctrine of the Trinity. This was during the time of Anicetus then bishop of Rome. Specifically Polycarp told Valentinus that the Christian Godhead did not exist in three hypostases -that is God is one QNUMA which is to be understood of each Person. Thus God is ONE QNUMA THREE persona. The far reaching implication is that for our Lord there was sacrifice on the cross whilst His glorified humanity and servanthood continued forever associated with His deity. Yet for the sake of a

redeemed humanity He gave of his human KAYANA. It is not good theology to say "God died" for God is a Spirit and Jesus initiated His human manhood's passage through death delivering His "spirit" to the Father when in the flesh He expired. It is, conversely, orthodox theology to say that God gave His only begotten and that He(our Lord Christ) remains man (and God) through all eternity.

FINIS

Bob Coffey L'shuvkha Marya

To the glory of the Lord

Aramaic Bible Companion