

A stylized icon of Saint Hippolytus. He has long, dark, wavy hair and a full, dark beard. He is wearing a yellow and brown striped shawl over a blue and white checkered garment. He is holding a large, ornate book with two black crosses on its cover. His right hand is raised in a gesture of blessing. He is set against a red circular halo on a green background.

SAINT
HIPPOLYTUS

SF
ROME

THE WRITINGS

OF

HIPPOLYTUS, BISHOP OF PORTUS.

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OF

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TRANSLATED BY

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says. For he sums up the things that were said by the prophets, and shows that this is the Word, by whom all things were made. For he speaks to this effect : “ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made.”¹ And beneath He says, “ The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not ; He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.”² If, then, said he, the world was made by Him, according to the word of the prophet, “ By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made,”³ then this is the Word that was also made manifest. We accordingly see the Word incarnate, and we know the Father by Him, and we believe in the Son, (and) we worship the Holy Spirit. Let us then look at the testimony of Scripture with respect to the announcement of the future manifestation of the Word.

13. Now Jeremiah says, “ Who hath stood in the counsel⁴ of the Lord, and hath perceived His Word ? ”⁵ But the Word of God alone is visible, while the word of man is audible. When he speaks of seeing the Word, I must believe that this visible (Word) has been sent. And there was none other (sent) but the Word. And that He was sent Peter testifies, when he says to the centurion Cornelius : “ God sent His Word unto the children of Israel by the preaching of Jesus Christ. This is the God who is Lord of all.”⁶ If, then, the Word is sent by Jesus Christ, the will⁷ of the Father is Jesus Christ.

¹ John i. 1-3. Hippolytus evidently puts the full stop at the οὐδὲ εἰ, attaching the δὲ γέγονεν to the following. So also Irenaeus, Clemens Alex., Origen, Theophilus of Antioch, and Eusebius, in several places ; so, too, of the Latin fathers—Tertullian, Lactantius, Victorinus, Augustine; and long after these, Honorius Augustodunensis, in his *De imagine Mundi*. This punctuation was also adopted by the heretics Valentinus, Heracleon, Theodotus, and the Macedonians and Eunomians; and hence it is rejected by Epiphanius, ii. p. 80, and Chrysostom. (Fabricius.)

² John i. 10, 11.

³ Ps. xxxiii. 6.

⁴ ὑποστήματι, foundation. Victor reads ἐν τῇ ὑποστάσει, in the substance, nature ; Symmachus has ἐν τῇ ὄμιλίᾳ, in the fellowship.

⁵ Jer. xxiii. 18.

⁶ Acts x. 36.

⁷ τὸ θελημα. Many of the patristic theologians called the Son the

14. These things then, brethren, are declared by the Scriptures. And the blessed John, in the testimony of his Gospel, gives us an account of this œconomy (disposition), and acknowledges this Word as God, when he says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” If, then, the Word was with God, and was also God, what follows? Would one say that he speaks of two Gods?¹ I shall not indeed speak of two Gods, but of one; of two Persons however, and of a third œconomy (disposition), viz. the grace of the Holy Ghost. For the Father indeed is One, but there are two Persons, because there is also the Son; and then there is the third, the Holy Spirit. The Father decrees, the Word executes, and the Son is manifested, through whom the Father is believed on. The œconomy² of harmony is led back to one God; for God is One. It is the Father who commands,³ and the Son who obeys, and the Holy Spirit who gives understanding (*συνέτιζον*): the Father who is *above all*,⁴ and the Son who is

Father’s βούλησις or θέλημα. See the passages in Petavius, *De S. S. Trinitate*, lib. vi. c. 8, § 21, and vii. 12, § 12.

¹ From this passage it is clear that Hippolytus taught the doctrine of one God alone and three Persons. A little before, in the eighth chapter, he said that there is one God, according to substance or divine essence, which one substance is in three Persons; and that, according to disposition or œconomy, three are three Persons manifested. By the term *œconomy*, therefore, he understands, with Tertullian, *adversus Praxeam*, ch. iii., the number and disposition of the Trinity (*numerum et dispositionem Trinitatis*). Here he also calls the grace of the Holy Spirit the *third œconomy*, but in the same way as Tertullian, who calls the Holy Spirit the *third grade* (*tertium gradum*). For the terms *gradus*, *forma*, *species*, *dispositio*, and *œconomia* mean the same in Tertullian. (Maranus.)

² οἰκονομία συμφωνίας συνάγεται εἰς ἕνα Θεόν, perhaps = the œconomy as being one of harmony, leads to one God.

³ This mode of speaking of the Father’s *commanding* and the Son’s *obeying*, was used without any offence, not only by Irenæus, Hippolytus, Origen, and others before the Council of Nicæa, but also after that council by the keenest opponents of the Arian heresy—Athanasius, Basil, Marius Victorinus, Hilary, Prosper, and others. See Petavius, *De Trin. i. 7*, § 7; and Bull, *Defens. fid. Nic.* pp. 138, 164, 167, 170. (Fabricius.)

⁴ Referring probably to Eph. iv. 6.

through all, and the Holy Spirit who is *in all*. And we cannot otherwise think of one God,¹ but by believing in truth in Father and Son and Holy Spirit. For the Jews glorified (or gloried in) the Father, but gave Him not thanks, for they they did not recognise the Son. The disciples recognised the Son, but not in the Holy Ghost; wherefore they also denied Him.² The Father's Word, therefore, knowing the œconomy (disposition) and the will of the Father, to wit, that the Father seeks to be worshipped in none other way than this, gave this charge to the disciples after He rose from the dead: “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*”³ And by this He showed, that whosoever omitted any one of these, failed in glorifying God perfectly. For it is through this **Trinity** (*Tριάδος*) that the Father is glorified. For the Father willed, the Son did, the Spirit manifested. The whole Scriptures, then, proclaim this truth.

15. But some one will say to me, You adduce a thing strange to me, when you call the Son the Word. For John indeed speaks of the Word, but it is by a figure of speech. [Nay, it is by no figure of speech.]⁴ For while thus presenting this Word that was from the beginning, and has now been sent forth, he said below in the Apocalypse, “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him (was) Faithful and True; and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. And His eyes (were) as flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written that no man knew but He Himself. And He (was) clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called

¹ The Christian doctrine, Maranus remarks, could not be set forth more accurately; for he contends not only that the number of Persons in no manner detracts from the unity of God, but that the unity of God itself can neither consist nor be adored without this number of Persons.

² This is said probably with reference to Peter's denial.

³ Matt. xxviii. 19.

⁴ αλλ' ἀλλως ἀλληγορεῖ. The words in brackets are given only in the Latin. They may have dropped from the Greek text. At any rate, some such addition seems necessary for the sense.