

How Great is our God! How Great ... ! (Gen 1;1-2:3)

* The past Sunday we celebrated the Day of outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the elect. As you remember, on that day the Lord manifested his power over the sinful world. It should be a really memorable day for the rest of our lives because it produced the tremendous effect on the individuals, like the effect after an atomic explosion, - the darkness gave up its position, and the truth was out. The capital things were cardinally changed, and now the Holy Spirit has enabled His people to conceive of Jesus as the Lord of life and their Saviour; that is contrary to what the opposition stated about him. The opposition can trick God's people any more into a conviction that Jesus is a blasphemer of God and a false messiah. Next to this, we must not forget that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was signified with new visions of the mankind's salvation through Christ Jesus and with the new understanding of God's nature. After the long, but the victorious debate with the heterodox party, the church's fathers accepted the final description of the Trinitarian God that is well-known today as the Athanasian Creed. The formulation of this Creed defines the three divine Persons in one Essence, in the unity, coequality, and coeternity of the Son and the Holy Spirit with the Father. Contrary to the teaching of this Creed, the opposition teaches of Jesus as the one being created; of the Holy Spirit as the power of God; and of the Father as God to whom is attributed the absolute oneness. But people, whom the Holy Spirit teaches from inside, are given to believe and to worship the one inconceivable God, - the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; to Him we attribute unconditionally all the glory and the salvation of our souls.

* Now, let's speak about the purpose of our gathering today. Traditionally the first Sunday after Pentecost is set aside as the Feast of the Holy Trinity, and the worshipers are assigned the teaching of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. But before we make a fresh start, we wish to comment on what we learned on this subject one year ago. In a word, that time we focused on the interpersonal relationship within the Godhead. Particularly, we focused on how to be conformed into God's likeness respectively to the four characteristics of togetherness within the Trinity. We named them as equality, submission, deference, and intimacy. These four characteristics were detailed by the theologian and writer, Stephen Seammands, in his book, *Ministry in the Image of God*. It was said that conforming with the Trinitarian God means to imitate the four mentioned characteristics within the community of believers. Therefore, along with the passive way of growing in the image of our God by means of grace, we distinguished the active way that is established through God's children having brotherly relationships with one another. That is in brief teaching of last year. But today we decide to detail on the awesomeness of God's personalities attributed to all members of the Holy Trinity. This will assist us as we conduct a holy life and grow in grace.

* The Biblical text for the further discussion rests with (Gen 1;1-2:3), the O.T. lesson of the day. The first and second chapters of Genesis provide the incredible account of the nativity of our world. However, today we like to attach your interest to God Himself as the Architect, Creator and Sustainer of the world, rather than on the creation itself. It is natural that when a man reflects on God's deeds, he is awed. But if he would see the Creator Himself, he would die due to his ungodliness, (Exo 33:20). That is why God had chosen to communicate with us through His written words as a mediator so that we will live and be happy for being assured *how great is our God*. Just from the first page of the Bible, we became acquainted with His character and essence. Here we notice how genially the Persons of Godhead communicated within Godhead.

Now, as we start reading some fragments of our text, please focus your attention on what it says.

³ *And God said, "Let there be light ...;"*⁶ *And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters ...;"*

⁹ *And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens ...;"*¹¹ *And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation... ;*

¹⁴ *And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens ...;"*²⁰ *And God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures ...;"*²⁴ *And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds ...;"*²⁶ *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness* First, did you notice that the last address, *Let us make man in our image*, discloses the plurality of God's essence? And second, all eight conversations among the Persons within Godhead express pleasant agreement and mutual concern.

* Some people may think, when God made the universe, there was nothing to do, just He said it and it came into being. But we feel a lot of things differently. Without doubt, God made the world by the sweat of His brow. We think, it was extremely hard work for Almighty God! (Gen 2:3). With this concern, let us think about ourselves when we cannot bear patiently, without complain, and anger our daily work. Contrary to this, have you noticed how the great God's interpersonal relations within Himself are? No matter how difficult the objectives might seem to God, mutual agreements and calmness are present. There was not even one expression of unpleasantly or disagreement among the Persons of the Trinity, or a wish to give up. We only hear, *"Let us make ... , (v.26) ... And it was so, (v.24)*. Doesn't that impress us, especially, if we recall our own impatience about the little things, or our discontent with the kid's stuff? Yes, it impresses us very much.

The conclusion is the reverent exclamation, *How great is our God! How great ... !*

* As it was mentioned before, today we decided to emphasize God's great character, rather than His creation. Therefore, bearing this point in mind, we found that the Persons of the Godhead tried their best; whatever was planned to be done was done very well, the quality of things that were made exceed all our understanding of super quality. In our passage we counted the seven citations corresponding to a quality of creation. *It was good; It was good; It was very good, (v.31)* was a final conclusion.

God's character is embodied in the things He made. The beauty of the countless number lights and shapes reflect on the character of the Trinity who wishes that all beings would be happy on bearing God's harmony within themselves. And when the last work of creation, a human being, was accomplished, God observed everything that he had made; and it was very good, (v.31). It is awesome to have such great God who wishes you to be happy. With this in mind we exclaim one time more, *How great is our God. How great ...*

* Some of our listeners may skeptically remark contrary to what we exclaimed, *How great is our God. How great ...*. That is right, in some instances our world is terrible, many people, even the wealthy, suffer because of the weather disturbances, criminals, tyranny, diseases and etc. But it was not what God designed; there was a time when the creation was anything but very good. Based on the witness of the word of God, we say the truth that the sinful world is not the result of God's creativity but it is the result of the activities of God's creatures spoiled by sin. When the devil caused the world to sin through people's disobedience of the law, God cursed the land and banished the people from His presence. With the apostle Paul we exclaim, *Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?* (Rom 7:24). Then, is God's character cruel as far as His establishing the law of sin and death? The answer is found exclusively in God's character. *The Father so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life,* (Joh 3:16). Without delaying even a minute, we exclaim again, *Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!* (v.25). It is even beyond our understanding how great our God is. How great ...!

* And it is the absolute truth that God is great because we are given not only believe this but also to experience the greatness of the divine Persons in and through us. The solemn promise addressed to all who love Jesus is as valid today as it was in the beginning. Jesus said, *"If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him,* (Joh 14:23).

It is incredible, the Maker of the world, Almighty God, promised to dwell by the Spirit in His people and to save them from their sins granting them the everlasting life and the new world. This promise was fulfilled in the apostles and all others who follow their teaching. Because of the work of the Holy Spirit in us, we have come to know the character of the Persons of the Godhead. God the Trinity made us for themselves and now He is graciously inviting us to be the imitators of His character. Dear friends, keep on doing the right things with contentment and patience as we come closer into the image of our awesome God. Remember the Father's love and respond with love of His possession; remember the Son's suffering and be faithful; remember the peace from the Holy Spirit and be guided.

Then, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen, Amen, Amen.