

TEO, ISSN 2247-4382 91 (2), pp. 25-37, 2022

## The Death and Resurrection of Christ in the Rejection of Apollinarism by Saint Gregory of Nyssa

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#### Abstract

In mutilating the unity of the person of Christ by denying the fullness of the human nature in Him, Apollinaris of Laodicea also mutilates the human image of Christ by denying His rational soul, arriving at the same conception as the Arians. In rejecting Apollinaris' mutilation of Christ's human image, St. Gregory of Nyssa forcefully affirmed the whole human, reason, soul and will. He also showed this with regard to the death and resurrection of Christ. In his treatise Adversus Apollinarem he shows the fallacy of the conclusion drawn from Apollinaris' false thesis: if Christ has a soul devoid of reason, His death can no longer be presented as a human death. Furthermore, in the face of the Apollinarist claim about the separation of the Word from the body of Christ, St Gregory points out that even in Christ's death the Word of God remains united with his body and soul. At the same time, St Gregory takes a stand against the monothelite doctrine of Apollinaris, defending Eastern teaching about the two wills in Christ. Regarding the resurrection of Christ, St. Gregory defends Eastern teaching about the active role of Christ as the subject in His resurrection.

#### Keywords

person of Christ, nature, rational soul, will, consubstantiality, death of Christ, resurrection of Christ.

## I. Apollinaris' denial of Christ's rational soul leads to the mutilation of Christ's human image

The present study expounds the Apollinarist doctrine and its rejection by St. Gregory of Nyssa focusing on the aspect of Christ's death and Resurrection, as presented by St. Gregory in his treatise *Adversus Apollinarem*.

However, we must first see in broad outlines the Apollinaris' position on the person of Christ. In attempting to affirm the unity of the person of Christ Apollinaris took a stand against the Arian doctrine which denied the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father. In this regard he showed that the Logos is not creaturely, but has the "fatherly deity from nature"<sup>1</sup>.

The question he asks himself is how does the human image of Christ harmonize with the consubstantiality of the Logos with the Father, if the Jesus of the Gospels is to be the incarnate Word? Apollinaris answers this question in a monophysite sense and mutilates the human image of Christ for this purpose, because he allows the human reason of Christ to be replaced by the Logos. When asked, however, why he denies the fullness of the human nature in Christ, he replies: because in Christ there is but one ruler (ἡγεμονικόν). This can only be spiritually either a human reason or the Logos. If Christ is the Logos incarnate, this spiritual mode is the Logos. Apollinaris thus answers the question psychologically. It is impossible, he points out, as long as the One and the same is God and man that there can be no limitation  $(\dot{\epsilon}\xi \,\dot{\delta}\lambda \delta \kappa \lambda \eta \rho \sigma)^2$  on one side or the other. This is because the one Christ is able to will, to work and to be moved in unity. It is impossible that in One to live two different ways of thinking or of doing, for otherwise one might come into contradiction with the other in the accomplishment of the will and the work<sup>3</sup>.

In Apollinaris the body of Christ is only the outer part, the inner part is represented by the Logos. Apollinaris did not understand that the unity of the person cannot be present without human reason. In the case of the Incarnate Christ, He cannot be full person without the fullness of His human nature. In mutilating the human image of Christ by denying His

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A. HAHN, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, 3, Auflage, Breslau, 1897, p. 278.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> H. LIETZMANN, *Apolinarios von Laodiceea und seine Schule*, Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 1904, p. 206.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> H. LIETZMANN, *Apolinarios von Laodiceea und seine Schule*, p. 178.

rational soul, however, Apollinaris arrives at the same result as the Arian Eudoxius of Constantinople, who affirmed that the begotten Son of God "became flesh, not man, for He did not take on a human soul, but became flesh, so that through the flesh as through a curtain He might communicate with us as God; not two natures, for He was not fully man, but instead of the soul God in the flesh"<sup>4</sup>.

The denial of natures in Christ is also found in Apollinaris, for according to him the unity of the person ( $\pi\rho\delta\sigma\omega\pi\sigma\nu$ ) of Christ cannot be imagined unless He does not exist from two natures, for divine reason has united its divine thought and the will of the Logos with the human body for "one nature of the Word of God incarnate". The denial of natures in Christ means for both Eudoxius and Apollinaris the denial of the whole person of Christ. Hence the conclusion of some modern theologians that by forcing Orthodoxy to the defense Apollinaris gives a new impetus to the dialectic of the history of dogmas, even in his intention contrary to the direction: replacing the Nicean thesis ὁμούσιος τῷ Πατρί with the antithesis ὁμούσιος καὶ ἡμῦν, is not correct either with regard to the theological formulation of the antithesis, which is in fact wrong in Christology, or to the history of dogmas.

It is certain that both realities concerning the person of Christ have already been outlined by the Church Fathers, as we see in St. Gregory of Nazianz, who forcefully affirms both Christ's consubstantiality with the Father and His consubstantiality with us. In his take on Apollinaris, St. Gregory answers the question of why Christ's human nature cannot be thought of as unhealed: "What has not been taken away has not been healed. What has been united with God is saved"<sup>5</sup>.

The best part of man, reason, is in great need of salvation. Christ must take a rational soul to heal evil from its roots. Here the basic truth of the Eastern Church's understanding of salvation emerges: the Incarnation is healing, because the taking of the body by the Son of God for the whole human race is the basis and guarantee of universal salvation. The consubstantiality of Christ with the Father and of Him with us was also emphasized by St. Gregory of Nyssa in his work and in his rejection of the doctrine of Apollinaris in his treatise *Adversus Apollinarem*, as we shall

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> A. HAHN, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, p. 261 and the following.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> St. Gregory of Nazianz, *Epistle 101, to Cledonius, PG* 37, 181 C.

see below. To better understand this rejection, we will turn to Apollinaris' doctrine of God's non-suffering. Apollinaris emphasized God's unholiness and used the formulas "God was crucified", "God suffered". He shows that of Christ the Word can only affirm one nature, since any affirmation of a duality would call His incarnation into question.

The Logos made flesh took upon himself the sufferings. But this does not mean that He took a full man. The thought and will by which the body inspired by the animal soul of Christ is moved, is fulfilled by the Logos as the divine ruler ( $\dot{\eta}\gamma\epsilon\mu\sigma\nu\kappa\dot{\sigma}\nu$ ). But Apollinaris arrived at the opposite of what he intended. By his scheme the unity of the person of Christ that he wanted to make understood is really blown up. The human capacity for suffering and the divine non-suffering are only apparently united. They are divided into two parts. Only the body enlivened by the animal soul is the suffering ( $\pi\alpha\vartheta\eta\tau\dot{\sigma}\zeta$ ), the divine ruler ( $\dot{\eta}\gamma\epsilon\mu\sigma\nu\kappa\dot{\sigma}\nu$ ) who replaces human reason, is non-suffering ( $\dot{\alpha}\pi\alpha\vartheta\dot{\eta}\zeta$ ).

The premise for Apollinaris' construction is the Greek conception that did not place weight on the notion of nature. Because Apollinaris lets the non-suffering Logos take the place of Christ's human reason, the image of the prepaschal Christ is split into two parts: the suffering and the nonsuffering. Apollinaris' doctrine cannot support his theopaschite claims. On the contrary it has unnecessarily burdened them.

### II. St. Gregory's rejection of the mutilation of the human image of Christ. Christ's death as His remaining in union with body and soul

In rejecting Apollinaris' mutilation of the human image of Christ, the Church Fathers had in view the whole human, reason, soul and will. It is in this direction that St. Gregory of Nyssa takes a stand against the doctrine of Apollinaris in view of the death and Resurrection of Christ. In his treatise *Adversus Apollinarem*, Saint Gregory points out that death consists in the separation of the soul from the body: "Death is nothing other than the severance of the bond between soul and body"<sup>6</sup>. Apollinaris also considers the death of man as the separation of the soul from the body, but for Christ, death is the separation of the Logos from the body without reason. St. Gregory leads his argument on this point. If, as Apollinaris says, Christ has a soul devoid of reason, how does he present his death as a human death?<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 1, 153 D, 6-7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 189 C.



When Christ suffers death in the body, the Word of God does not cause death by separating Himself from the body and soul which He assumed through the Incarnation, but even in death He remains united with the body and soul:

"Being united with the one and with the other, the Word separates neither from the one nor from the other"<sup>8</sup>. "For as it has been said, the divine nature, being joined together in one body and soul and becoming one with the one and the other, because 'the gifts of God cannot be taken away' (Romans 11, 29), withdraws neither from the one nor from the other, but remains without interruption"<sup>9</sup>.

In the same work *Adversus Apollinarem*, St. Gregory explains how the union of the Word with His body and soul is preserved in Christ's descent with His soul into hell:

"By His power, He surrenders the body into the heart of the earth, as it is written, and surrenders His soul according to what He says to the Father: «Into Your hands I commend my spirit» (Luke 23, 46), and according to what he says to the thief, «Today you will be with me in heaven» (Luke 23, 43), the two statements being in accordance with the truth. We must indeed believe that this divine abiding, being surely called heaven, is nothing else but in the Father's immense hand, as the prophet also makes God speak by addressing Jerusalem from above: «I have marked you in My hands; your walls are ever before My eyes!» (Isaiah 49, 16)"<sup>10</sup>.

The correction of the deviations maintained by Apollinaris' theses gives the opportunity to discover the precision of St. Gregory's theological thought. Apollinaris seems to share the same conviction as St. Gregory when he states that "no one has the power to die or to rise from his own will"<sup>11</sup>. This means that for people, death is a destiny in the face of which all

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 156 D.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 256 C.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 156 A.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 188 B.



are forced to acknowledge their radical helplessness. For Christ, however, this is not true, because according to John 10, 18 he has the power to give up his soul and take it<sup>12</sup>.

# III. Apollinaris, forerunner of Monothelitism and its rejection by St. Gregory through his teaching on the two wills in Christ

In the face of these statements, St. Gregory draws attention to the inconsistencies in Apollinaris' interpretation which are based on his anthropological assumptions. These are shown in the face of the scriptural text: "Not my will, but Your" (Luke 22, 42). Apollinaris admits only one will in Christ, thus becoming the forerunner of monothelitism. St. Gregory took a stand against Apollinaris' monothelite doctrine, defending the teaching of the Eastern Fathers about the two wills in Christ, the divine and the human will: "By saying «Not my will», He indicated by this expression the human will, and by adding «but Your», He meant the merging of His own deity with the Father, a deity for whom there is no difference of will (in relation to the Father), because of the communion of nature"<sup>13</sup>.

Apollinaris' opposition to the two wills in Christ concerns the role of Christ's humanity in relation to the divine hypostasis of the Son of God. Apollinaris' theory makes Christ's assumed humanity a pure instrument, all the more so since this humanity is considered to be devoid of the rational soul, the seat of the will. According to St. Gregory, Apollinaris introduces by his theory division and inequality into the bosom of the Holy Trinity:

"So the will of the Son is separate from that of the Father...But how then do you prove the identity of nature from the diversity of wills?...If, then, the fruit of the will is different in the Father and in the Son, they (the adversaries) necessarily confess that the nature of the one is different from that of the other. For what, then, was Arrius opposed?"<sup>14</sup>.

According to St. Gregory, if on the one hand Christ does not have a rational soul and therefore no human will, as Apollinaris claims, and on

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 188 B.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 196 A.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 192 B.

the other hand he wants to understand the scriptural text: "Not my will, but Your", he arrives at an aporia: "How can deity condemn his own will?"<sup>15</sup>.

In order to avoid any unfounded reduction of Christ's humanity, as found in Apollinaris, St. Gregory makes theological arguments for its defense and also for the defense of the teaching of the two wills in Christ. The human will of Christ accepts the fulfillment of the divine will. This freely accepted subordination is shown by the obedience that leads to the cross. Thus, Christ freely wills death, the human will accepting in an act of free obedience what the Word decides in union with the Father. Explaining the place of Matthew 26, 39, St. Gregory grounds the distinction of the two natures in the person of Christ which helps him to explain the divine fearlessness in his death. In this sense he comments on Christ's words before his passion as rendered by the evangelist Matthew: "Not my will but Your" showing that they concern Christ's humanity, not his deity. In order to prove this, he brings a purely logical reasoning by which he locks Apollinaris into an aporia: God cannot say that he wills what he wills never to be fulfilled<sup>16</sup>.

Then he points out,

"Indeed, by saying «Not My will» He expressed the human character by this word. But by adding «but Your» He showed the affinity of His deity with the Father in whom there is no difference of will because of the communion of nature. For in saying the will of the Father He also showed the will of the Son"<sup>17</sup>.

This commentary shows how Christ's words are evidence of His two natures. In this respect St Gregory is in line with the teaching of St Athanasius the Great against the Arrian doctrine. In his work "Against the Arrians", III, 57, referring to the place in Matthew 36, 39, St. Athanasius says:

"As for the words, «If it be possible for the cup to pass» (Matthew 26, 39), you find how they said to him in rebuking Peter, «You

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Saint GREGORY OF NYSSA, Adversus Apollinarem, PG 45, 193 A.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, edited by Fr. Müller, Leiden, 1958, p. 172, 1-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 172, 23-28.



do not think the things of God, but of men» (Mark 8, 33). For he wanted what he had prayed not to come to him and for which he had come. And it was his own to will, for for this he came. But it was proper for the body to be afraid"<sup>18</sup>.

Apollinaris uses the words in Matthew 26, 39 to show that there are not two wills, which would be in disagreement, coming from two distinct persons in Christ (οὐκ ἄλλου καὶ ἄλλου θελήματος). The duality of persons is given by the coexistence of two deliberative authorities. On the contrary, Apollinaris insists that there is one will of one and the same subject (ἐνὸς καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ), who on the one hand acts in a divine way, on the other hand being incarnate, tries to ward off death. This is what the two expressions θεΐκῶς μὲν ἐνεργουμένου and οἰκονομικῶς δὲ παραιτουμένου τὸν θάνατον speak of According to him Christ's words in the place of Matthew 26, 39 concerned His deity, as we see in the fragment "On the manifestation of God in the flesh", rendered by St Maximus Confessor:

"And the verse «Father if it be possible for this cup to pass from Me, yet not as I will, but as You will» does not show the will of one with another, since they did not agree with one another, but of one and the same, working in a deity-like manner, but rejecting death after iconomy, because it was God clothed in the flesh who said this, without introducing distinction into His will"<sup>19</sup>.

According to Apollinaris, from the unity of nature flows the one will, but for him the verse does not relate to the deity of the Son. Against the theory of the one nature in Christ claimed by Apollinaris, St. Gregory develops his argument by maintaining the distinction of natures. At the same time, he proves by scriptural arguments that in death the deity of Christ is separated neither from the soul nor from the body. Secondly death is defined as the decomposition of what is compound ( $\tau \circ \mu \dot{\epsilon} v \gamma \dot{\alpha} \rho$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Saint ATHANASIUS THE GREAT, *Three words against the Arians, III, 57*, trans. by Father Professor Dr. Dumitru Stăniloae, in the volume "Saint Athanasius the Great, Writings. Part I", Institutul Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române Publishing House, Bucharest, p. 387.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> H. LIETZMANN, *Apolinarios von Laodiceea und seine Schule*, p. 233.

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σύνθετον μερίζεται). Because deity is by nature simple and uncompounded (ἀπλοῦς καὶ ἀσύνθετος), being unable to be decomposed, remaining in every part of man dissolved after the body in death, it has the capacity to reunite that which has been dissolved in death.

## IV. The active and determining role of the Word as subject in His resurrection as man

At the same time, it should be pointed out that in *Adversus Apollinarem*, as in other works of St. Gregory, one of the constants of the argument is that by which he shows that Christ did not passively undergo resurrection, but that by His divine power the Word worked His own resurrection of the man with whom He mingled.

This insistence is characteristic of the Eastern Fathers, and in St. Gregory it is explained by the intention to react against Apollinaris' thesis of the death of the godhead in Christ and against the Arian and Eunomian thesis of the inferiority of the Son in relation to the Father. Emphasizing the full divine power of Christ and unity in the bosom of the Holy Trinity, St. Gregory affirms with equal force the determining role of the Word in his resurrection as man:

"For what is compound is divided, but what is not compound does not receive decomposition; at the same time the uncompounded nature remains in every part of the compound, and, while the soul withdraws from the body, it is separated neither from the one nor from the other. The proof of this is the work as has been said which at once makes the body uncorrupted and remains in heaven for the soul. Not as if He Who is simple and undivided were divided by the separation of these elements, but, on the contrary, He makes a unity: for by what is undivided in Him, He leads also to unity what was divided. This is what the one who says, «God raised him from the dead» (Colossians 2: 12; I Thessalonians 1, 10) shows. For it is not right to think of the Lord's resurrection as of Lazarus or another of those who came back to life by some power from the outside (John 11, 43), but God the Only-Begotten resurrects Himself the man with whom He mingled, after separating the soul from the body and uniting



them again, thus having the common salvation of nature. This is why He is called «the Beginner of Life» (Acts 3, 15). For through him who died for us and rose again, God the only-begotten has reconciled the world to himself, redeeming us from slaves by the linking of his blood to us, uniting us all to himself through his body and blood: therefore the word of the Apostle concerns this state, he who says that «we have redemption through his blood and forgiveness of sins» (Ephesians 1, 7) through his body"<sup>20</sup>.

Christ's death is explained as the separation of the soul from the body and is treated in connection with the resurrection. The anthropological scheme that serves the argument is dihotomistic, in response to Apollonian trihotomy. St Gregory shows how the deity remaining in each part of Christ's humanity during death has the power to reunite them. St Gregory here takes up an argument already developed in a work shown as earlier, Dialogus de anima et resurrectione: the soul escapes dissolution in death because of its simplicity. It is spread and united with every element of the human compound in death:

"After the mixture (which constituted the body) has dissolved and reunited its proper elements, which this simple and uncompounded nature remains present in each of the parts, even after dissolution, we can think it without departing in any way from credibility and also say that this reality which once was, according to a principle which cannot be described, united in its nature with this combination of elements, remains itself without ceasing with the compounds of the mixture, without being in any way removed from this natural union which it has once and for all concluded"<sup>21</sup>.

# V. St. Gregory's rejection of the trihotomist conception of Apollinaris' anthropology and its transfer to Christology after Origen's model

Moreover, in this last work St. Gregory rejects the thesis of the preexistence of the soul and explains the personal resurrection of each person.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 153, 4 - 154, 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, *Dialogus de anima et resurrectione*, PG 46, 44 C-D.

The argumentative procedure in *Adversus Apollinarem* is the same, but totally readapted to Christology. In his work *De Tridui spatio* St Gregory shows that Christ gave himself in death at the same time in three places: in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12, 40), in heaven with the thief (Luke 23, 43) and in the hands of the Father (Luke 23, 46)<sup>22</sup>.

Heaven corresponds in the same place with the hands of the Father, just as in *Adversus Apollinarem*. The equivalence between heaven and the Father's hands is based on the scriptural place of Isaiah 49: 16: "Behold, I have marked you in my hands". In developing this equivalence, St. Gregory relates to a certain part of the exceptical tradition which saw Christ divided into three, body, soul and pneuma, corresponding to earth and heaven, as seen in the *Easter Homily* of St. Hippolytus<sup>23</sup>.

In his discussion with Heraclitus, Origen used the scriptural place of I Thessalonians 5, 23 to prove his trihotomistic anthropology, explaining how at the moment of the Passion the three elements were separated, the body in the grave, the soul in hell, and the spirit in the hands of the Father<sup>24</sup>. On the contrary, by reducing the state of Christ in death to a separation of the soul from the body, St. Gregory rejected the trihotomist conception of anthropology proper to Apollinaris in Origen's wake. By reducing Origen's anthropological trihotomy of body, soul and spirit to the dichotomy of body and soul, St. Gregory reduced in parallel the trihotomy of the heart-earth, heaven and the Father's hands to the earth-earth dichotomy.

By reducing the question of Christ's state in death from the three terms of the human compound to two terms, St Gregory has in mind the struggle against anthropological autonomy. If the spirit is distinct from the soul at the moment of Christ's death, it would separate from Christ's soul and body, meaning the abandonment of human nature. In his argument, St. Gregory proves how the deity cannot separate himself from the whole human with which he has intimately united himself, that is, from all the elements of human nature. He thus resolutely opposes Apollinaris' view of the union

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, *Opera IX, De Tridui spatio*, edited by E. Gebhardt, Leiden, 1967, p. 290, 19-21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> HIPPOLYTE, *Homélies pascales, I, 56*, coll. *Sources Chrétiennes* 27, Lyon, 1950, éd. trad. P. Nautin, réed. 2003, pp. 184-185.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> ORIGÈNE, Entretien avec Héraclide, 7, coll. Sources Chrétiennes 67, Lyon, 1960, éd. J. Scherer, rééd. 2002, p. 70-72.

of the divine and the human, according to which the presence of the divine is restricted to only one of the elements of the human composite<sup>25</sup>.

In *Adversus Apollinarem*, St. Gregory emphasizes that the divine nature being united with human nature is present in every element of human nature and remains in such a way that it fulfills the reunification of the human composite. This he did in order to refute the Logos-sarx Christology of Apollinaris. Unlike Apollinaris who sees the human body as needing transformation through the penetration of divinity, St Gregory shows that the composite nature of man needs the Incarnation of the Son of God to overcome its tendency to decomposition. There is thus a reversal of perspective: the unity between divinity and humanity is not at the end of its development, as it is between body and soul, reunited by the undivided divine nature ( $\hat{\epsilon}v \,\hat{\epsilon}p\gamma \acute{a}\zeta\epsilon\tau \alpha$ )<sup>26</sup>.

In this sense St. Gregory uses the distinction between the uncompounded divine nature (ἀσύνθετος φύσις)<sup>27</sup>, that doesn't damage (τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν)<sup>28</sup>, simple (ἀπλοῦς)<sup>29</sup> and human nature (τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν)<sup>30</sup>, composed (σύνθετον)<sup>31</sup>, damageable (τὴν φθοράν)<sup>32</sup>.

At the end of *Adversus Apollinarem*, St. Gregory defends the patristic tradition that Apollinaris attacks, arguing that in Christology present in this tradition the divinity and humanity of Christ would be distinct as two autonomous entities. ( $i\delta\iota\alpha\zeta\acute{o}\tau\omega\varsigma$   $\dot{\upsilon}\varphi\epsilon\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ )<sup>33</sup>. St. Gregory responds with an argument in which he proves the unity of the person of Christ, showing that the deity of the incarnate Son does not withdraw from His human nature at the moment of death. At the same time, in rejecting the Apollinarist thesis, St. Gregory seeks to prove that the Incarnate Word is Christ throughout the Incarnation and not only after the Ascension. Concerning the suffering of Christ in His death, St. Gregory replies: "Let them hear our answer: we confess that the deity is in that which suffers, but certainly not that its non-suffering nature becomes suffering"<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 154, 11-13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 154, 5-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 154, 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 154, 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 154, 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 153, 13-14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 153, 27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Gregorii Nysseni, *Opera III/1*, *Adversus Apolinarium*, p. 153, 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> H. LIETZMANN, *Apolinarios von Laodiceea und seine Schule*, p. 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> GREGORII NYSSENI, Opera III/1, Adversus Apolinarium, p. 223, 13-14.

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At the basis of this statement referring to the person of Christ, however, is not the principle of sympathy, of which the Neoplatonists speak when referring to soul and body, as H. Grelier states when referring to this passage<sup>35</sup>, but the dogma of the hypostatic union of the Eastern Church, which St. Gregory strongly affirms, so this is not a reuse of the Neoplatonic principle of sympathy with the divinity and humanity assumed in Christ, as Grelier believes<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> H. GRELIER, *L* argumentation de Gregoire de Nysse contre Apolinaire de Laodicee, t. 2, Lyon, 2008, p. 765.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> H. GRELIER, *L* argumentation de Gregoire de Nysse contre Apolinaire de Laodicee, t. 2, p. 765.