

Creeds of the Kehillah ~ Part 30

The Nicene Creed ~ Part 16

In our last post, we continued to explore the **Nicene Creed**. In this post, we continue to dig into the third article of faith in the **Nicene Creed**.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, **the giver of life**,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son, He is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE GIVER OF LIFE ~ *In Creation*

When it came time to formulate the **Ruach's** role in the **Trinity** and its interaction with the world, the ancient **Kehillah** chose to emphasize the **Ruach's** role as the **Giver of Life**. They viewed the work of the **Ruach** as bringing to completion the work of the **Father** and the **Son**. This is especially true when contemplating the **Genesis** account. On its most basic level among the ancient **Messianic** writers, the phrase **Giver of Life** evokes the **Ruach's** presence with the other persons of the **Trinity** at creation, brooding over the waters, bringing life to them and through them, animating all living creatures with the breath of life.

Even though the Hebrew and Greek words for **Ruach** in **Genesis 1:2** and **Genesis 2:7** are different words, this did not stop the Fathers from understanding the same **Ruach** as the breath breathed ultimately into **Adam**, which brought life to him and his descendants.

Passages that connected the **breath** and the **Ruach of God** with creation, such as **Genesis 1:2**, as well as **Psalms 33:6**, figured prominently in the ancient **Kehillah's** understanding of the third person of the **Trinity's** involvement in creation. Other passages, such as **Proverbs 8:22** and **Wisdom 1:7**, spoke of the **Wisdom of God** present at creation, which was often identified from the second century with the **Ruach** just as **John** had identified the Word (Logos) with the **Son**. Thus, in writers such as Irenaeus, there arose the conception of the two hands of **God** operative in creation: **The Word and Wisdom**, that is, the **Son** and the **Ruach**. This later evolved into the **Son** is referred to as the right hand of the **Father** and the **Ruach** as the finger of **God**. Either of these conceptions has as its preconception the source of creative power in the **Father**. The creative work originated in the **Father** and was exercised through the Son and perfected in **Ruach**. Thus, the peculiar work of the **Ruach** was to actuate and bring to fulfillment the creative work of **Father** and **Son**. The **Ruach** is the vitalizer and perfecter of the **Trinity's** work in creation, and it was to Him, along with the **Word**, that **God** said, *Let us make man in our image*. Thus, the spiritual nature of humanity also became the unique purview of the **Ruach**, whose work is to bring fallen humanity back to the image that was lost. The ancient **Kehillah** did not confine the **Ruach's** work to the original creation. The same **Ruach** present at creation enlivened the dry bones in **Ezekiel's** vision and will revitalize our dry bones at the **Resurrection**. The Fathers also spoke of the **Ruach's** role in the **Son's** conception, memorializing it in the creedal statement *and was incarnate by the Ruach of the Virgin Mary*. They realized that just as human and divine were joined together in the **incarnation** through the power of the **Ruach**, so the **Ruach** also joins the **divine** to created things, bringing life through them too when His presence and power is invoked in consecration and blessing as the giver of Life. ¹

¹ Elowsky, J. C., & Oden, T. C. (Eds.). (2009). **We Believe in the Holy Spirit** (Vol. 4, pp. 37–38).

In my next post, we continue to dig into the third article of the **Nicene Creed: We Believe in The Holy Spirit.**