

The Poem as Offering in Gregory of Nazianzus' Poetry

1. Carm. II.1.34.77-8, 83

Μέλπω δ' ὑψιμέδοντα Θεὸν μέγαν, ἠδὲ φαεινῆς
εἰς ἓν ἀγειρομένης λάμπριν ἐμῆς Τριάδος
. . . καὶ Χριστοῦ παθέων κλέος ἄφθιτον.

I sing the great God **who rules on high** and the
splendor of my shining Trinity gathered into
one . . . and the **undying glory** of Christ's
sufferings.¹

2. 1 Samuel (1 Kings LXX) 15:22

εἰ θελητὸν τῷ Κυρίῳ ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ
θυσίας ὡς τὸ ἀκοῦσαι φωνῆς Κυρίου; ἰδοὺ
ἀκοὴ ὑπὲρ θυσίαν ἀγαθὴν καὶ ἡ ἐπακρόασις
ὑπὲρ στέαρ κριῶν.

Are burnt offerings and sacrifices as wanted to
the Lord as hearkening to the voice of the
Lord? Behold, hearing is better than sacrifice
and listening than the fat of rams.²

3. Psalm 51:16-17 (50:18-19 LXX)

. . . ὅτι εἰ ἠθέλησας θυσίαν, ἔδωκα ἄν·
ὀλοκαυτώματα οὐκ εὐδοκήσεις.
θυσία τῷ θεῷ πνεῦμα συντετριμμένον,
καρδίαν συντετριμμένην καὶ τεταπεινωμένην
ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐξουθενώσει.

Because if you had wanted sacrifice, I would
have given it; with whole burnt offerings you
will not be pleased; sacrifice to God is a broken
spirit; a broken and humbled heart God will not
despise.³

4. Carm. II.1.1.414-17, 419

Λίσσομαι, εἴ ποτε δὴ σε πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
δάκρυσι καὶ στοναχῆσι καὶ εὐχολῆσι ἔτισαν
ἢ τινὰ τοι κτεάνων τυτθὴν ἀπὸ μοῖραν ἔνειμαν
ἢ θυσίαις καθαρῆσι καὶ εὐαγγέεσσι γέρηραν,
. . . τῶν μνησαί . . .

I beseech you, if ever my father and reverend
mother made repayment with tears and groans
and prayers, or allotted to you something of
their possessions from their small portion, or
honored you with pure and undefiled sacrifices
. . . remember them.

5. Carm. I.1.30.36-39, 42

Πάτερ, ἴλεως γενοῦ μοι.
Διὰ παντὸς θεραπεύειν
Τὸ σέβασμα τοῦτο, δός μοι.
Τὰ δ' ἁμαρτήματα ρίψον
. . .
Ἵνα δοξάσω τὸ θεῖον.

Father, be propitious to me.
Grant that I may forever
Offer you this act of worship.
Cast away my sins
. . .
That I may praise the divine.

¹ Translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

² NETS (Pietersma & Wright 2009).

³ NETS (Pietersma & Wright 2009).

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