

**Invocatory Prelude (ca. 1979, original version)**  
**by Anthony J. Damiani**  
**Paper V09P**

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TOPIC: Astronoesis

SUBJECT: Introduction

SUBSUBJECTS: Eternal Word, Plotinus, Astrological Symbolism

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**The sacred Word and Truth's presence**  
**Meister Eckhart on the eternal Word**  
**Universal expressions of the sacred Word**  
**Plotinus as mystical philosopher and Sage**  
**The three Hypostases: Plotinian metaphysics**  
**Astrological mandala as philosophical framework**

BOOKS QUOTED FROM OR REFERENCED:

- C. de B. Evans (tr.), Franz Pfeiffer (ed.), *Meister Eckhart: Sermons and Tractates*
- Bible, John (1:1), Jeremiah (7:2)
- Plato, *Republic*
- *Chaldean Oracles*
- Plotinus, *The Enneads* (MacKenna translation, 4th ed.)

PLOTINUS QUOTES REFERENCED: V.1.8, V.1.10

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NOTES:

- Astronoesis, Invocatory Prelude, beginning -- as read by Anthony, ca. 1979.
- Many edited and transcribed versions of the Invocatory Prelude exist; 1979 appears to be the earliest extant.
- This version used in the *From the Heart* manuscript, 2022.
- On masculine-gendered words in the Invocatory Prelude: Per my research, the gender convention has changed over the years. In 1979, it was acceptable in scholarly writing to use “man” and “he” to refer to human beings generically, both female and male. This is how Anthony spoke, and this is how Thomas Taylor (whom Anthony read extensively) translated Greek texts, and how Paul Brunton usually referred to human beings generically. “Man” here means “generic man.” We hope that there will be something

about this in the general introduction to the AD Birthday book. Keep in mind that other AD writings also use “man” generically, e.g., Idea of Man, etc., as does the published *Astronoesis*. I (jf) think Randy’s edited version in *Astronoesis* is the best option to deal with these words.

AUDIO FILES: ND033a (AD reading Prelude, ca. 1979)

## INVOCATORY PRELUDE (ca. 1979, original version)

[Audio File ND033a Begins]

The sublime majesty of Truth's presence in the sacred sermons of so many wise men, men of good will, ultimately guide us to the ways of peace and wisdom, the lovely, the holy. And so our troubled hearts are reassured and we can read and reread about God's word in many scriptures.

However incomprehensible, a faith settles into our hearts that awakens the desire to understand Infinity and Forever. The dedication is eternal and to the Eternal. For the Word becomes flesh--and this is an eternal utterance or act that includes the heart of man mounted on a towering aspiration. Yet even this pyramiding love is without effect unless winged with His Grace. So we shall let fly our supplications, enfolded in holy silence on wings of veneration to the throne of our most Sovereign Good with the request to guide the spirit of our understanding, wherein we stand within His Light, in order to see the pouring out of the Sacred Word made manifest.

We may read from Eckhart, sermon #17, entitled *In principio erat verbum* (John 1:1):

"Theologians talk of the eternal Word. God never spoke but one word, and that is still unspoken. The explanation is this. The eternal Word is the logos of the Father which is his only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ. In Him he pronounces all creatures without beginning and without end. This accounts for the Word remaining unborn, for it never came out of the Father."

And perhaps even more profoundly (in) his sermon #35, *Dominus dicit: sta in porta domus domini et praedica verbum istud* from Jeremiah 7:2. And the quote runs:

"The Lord says 'Stand in the gate of God's house and proclaim his word, extol his word.' The heavenly Father speaks one Word and that he speaks eternally and in this Word expends he all his might: his entire God-nature he utters in this Word and the whole of creatures. This Word lies hidden in the soul unnoticed and beyond our ken, and were it not for rumours in the ground of hearing we should never heed it; but all sounds and voices have to cease and silence, perfect stillness, reign. This is a meaning I will not pursue."

In this relatively short compass, Eckhart indicates the abysmal vastness of this revelation which has preoccupied the intellect of man and despite all historical difference, in the spirit of any age, and which can be testified to by a number of sacred discourses. Plato's "Idea of the Good," or John's "the Word made flesh," in the Chaldean sacred oracles this "conception of the Father," in the Hindus the sacred syllable Aum, Pranava Aum.

Our intentions are to pursue the meanings, the meaning that Eckhart did not wish to pursue. But we must remind our readers that we pursue a vision, for in the Vision all of it lies. With this necessary invocatory prelude behind us, we shall now attempt to deliver fragments of that vision.

Plotinus, often referred to as the mystical philosopher par excellence, has hardly been granted the deserved status of a Sage, in the technical sense of the word. For this notion is not generally available among irreverent and secular cultures. We, for our part, disagree with that, and hope to show that Plotinus' uncanny precision and skillful dialectic can only have been the result of the final stages of

ultimate human intelligence, and it is required for a comprehensive and totally encompassing philosophy, or a special form or variant of such a philosophy. Consequently, we have gathered a garland of quotations whose thread can only be such intimacy with the grace of divine understanding. And our inclination will be to use McKenna's quasi-poetical and inspiring interpretation of the *Enneads*, and when necessary supplement it with other translations. We shall list a series of quotations and, in the ordering of this list, follow his inward vision in contemplation. We will be guided.

We begin with a quotation from V.1.10:

“There exists a Principle which transcends Being: this is The One, whose nature we have sought to establish in so far as such matters lend themselves to proof. Upon The One follows [AD: following] immediately the Principle which is at once Being and the Intellectual-Principle. Third comes the Principle, Soul.

“Now just as these three exist for the system of Nature, so, we must hold, they exist for ourselves. I am not speaking of the material order--all that is separable--but of what lies beyond the sense realm in the same way as the Primals are beyond all the heavens. I mean the corresponding aspect of man, what Plato calls the Interior Man.”

We can pictorialize the preceding quote by taking the astrological mandala or wheel and divide the circle into four quadrants, the first symbolizing the One, the second, the Intellectual-Principle, the third, Soul, and the fourth, what Plotinus calls the system of Nature, or the cosmos. So that we have the three pure Hypostases and the cosmos.

Now this schemata will be more than a useful device to objectify our thinking only. Later on as we shall see, it will become a mandala in the true sense of the word.

This is again repeated in Ennead V.1.8:

“This is the explanation of Plato's Triplicity, in the passage where he names as the Primals the Beings gathered about the King of All and establishes a Secondary containing the Secondaries and a Third containing the Tertiaries . . .”

An emphasis is made that the first three principles are pure Hypostases. Plotinus reinforces his argument by an appeal to Plato. And what we should note in this tractate is that the groupings of these principles with their derivatives, the establishment of priorities or an order among them, and that here Plotinus is laying down in a general way a solid foundation for the teachings of Neo-Platonism. These abstractions need more thought-coverings in order for them to appear to the dimness of our mental eye. Therefore, we will use the astrological symbolism of mundane astrology, and from these borrowed meanings infuse more substance into these conceptions, ordinary significations which are ascribed in mundane astrology to the planetary dignities that they work with.

For instance, Mars would be ruler of Aries and Venus ruler of Venus [Venus ruler of Taurus], Mercury ruler of Gemini. Again, the Sun exalted in Aries, the Moon exalted in Taurus, the Head exalted in Gemini. And continuing, the Venus in Aries, the detriment, followed by Mars in Taurus and Jupiter in Gemini. And finally Saturn in Aries in its fall.

The explanation and meaning of these significances will have to be tremendously enlarged and amplified. But there is a kernel of truth which has remained hidden in the astrological symbolism and which we will expound as we go along.

[Audio File ND033a Ends]