

Confessions - Book Xiii - Chapter IX

by St. Augustine

Transcript

10. But was neither the Father nor the Son "moving over the waters"? If we understand this as a motion in space, as a body moves, then not even the Holy Spirit "moved." But if we understand the changeless supereminence of the divine Being above every changeable thing, then Father, Son, and Holy Spirit "moved over the waters."

Why, then, is this said of thy Spirit alone? Why is it said of him only--as if he had been in a "place" that is not a place--about whom alone it is written, "He is thy gift"? It is in thy gift that we rest. It is there that we enjoy thee. Our rest is our "place." Love lifts us up toward that place, and thy good Spirit lifts our lowliness from the gates of death.[521] Our peace rests in the goodness of will. The body tends toward its own place by its own gravity. A weight does not tend downward only, but moves to its own place. Fire tends upward; a stone tends downward. They are propelled by their own mass; they seek their own places. Oil poured under the water rises above the water; water poured on oil sinks under the oil. They are moved by their own mass; they seek their own places. If they are out of order, they are restless; when their order is restored, they are at rest. My weight is my love. By it I am carried wherever I am carried. By thy gift,[522] we are enkindled and are carried upward. We burn inwardly and move forward. We ascend thy ladder which is in our heart, and we sing a canticle of degrees[523]; we glow inwardly with thy fire--with thy good fire[524]--and we go forward because we go up to the peace of Jerusalem[525]; for I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." [526] There thy good pleasure will settle us so that we will desire nothing more than to dwell there forever.[527]

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