

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΝΙΑΣ



ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ THE WORD OF OUR LORD

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
ARCHDIOCESE OF
THYATEIRA & GREAT BRITAIN



KYPIAKH E' MATOAIOY

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Πρόκλου & Ίλαρίου μαρτύρων, Βερονίκης τῆς αἰμορροούσης, Παϊσίου ὀσίου τοῦ Άγιορείτου Proclus & Hilarion Martyrs, Veronica, Paisius of Mount Athos

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Ρωμ. ι΄, 1-10

λ δελφοί, ἡ μὲν εὐδοκία τῆς ἐμῆς Ακαρδίας καὶ ἡ δέησις ἡ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ ἐστιν εἰς σωτηρίαν. Μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ὅτι ζῆλον Θεοῦ ἔχουσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ κατ' ἐπίγνωσιν. Άγνοοῦντες γὰρ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην, καὶ τὴν ἰδίαν δικαιοσύνην ζητοῦντες στῆσαι, τῆ δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν. Χριστὸς Τέλος νὰρ νόμου δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῶ πιστεύοντι. Μωϋσῆς γὰρ γράφει τὴν δικαιοσύνην την ἐκ τοῦ νόμου, ὅτι ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς. Ἡ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει, Μὴ εἴπης ἐν τῆ καρδία σου, Τίς ἀναβήσεται είς τὸν οὐρανόν; - τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν - ή, Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; - τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν έκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν. Άλλὰ τί λέγει; Έγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν, ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῆ καρδία σου τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸ ρημα της πίστεως δ κηρύσσομεν ότι ἐὰν δμολογήσης ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ίησοῦν, καὶ πιστεύσης ἐν τῆ καρδία σου ότι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήση· καρδία γάρ πιστεύεται είς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται είς σωτηρίαν.

EPISTLE READING

Rom. 10: 1-10

rethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified. Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on the law shall live by it. But the righteousness based on faith says, Do not say in your heart, «Who will ascend into heaven?» (that is, to bring Christ down) or «Who will descend into the abyss?» (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach); because, if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved.



ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Ματθ. η', 28-34 - θ', 1

Το καιρῷ ἐκείνω, ἐλθόντος τῷ L 'Ιησοῦ εἰς τὸ πέραν εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γεργεσηνῶν ὑπήντησαν αὐτῶ δύο δαιμονιζόμενοι ἐκ τῶν μνημείων έξερχόμενοι, χαλεποὶ λίαν, ώστε μὴ *ἰσχύειν τινὰ παρελθεῖν διὰ τῆς ὁδοῦ* έκείνης. καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔκραξαν λέγοντες τί ήμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; ἦν δὲ μακρὰν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀγέλη χοίρων πολλῶν βοσκομένη, οἱ δὲ δαίμονες παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν λέγοντες εἰ ἐκβάλλεις ἡμᾶς, ἐπίτρεψον ἡμῖν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ἀγέλην τῶν χοίρων. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὑπάγετε. οί δὲ ἐξελθόντες ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὴν ἀγέλην τῶν χοίρων καὶ ἰδοὺ ὥρμησε πᾶσα ἡ ἀγέλη τῶν χοίρων κατὰ τοῦ κρημνοῦ είς την θάλασσαν καὶ ἀπέθανον ἐν τοῖς ύδασιν. οἱ δὲ βόσκοντες ἔφυγον, καὶ άπελθόντες είς την πόλιν ἀπήγγειλαν πάντα καὶ τὰ τῶν δαιμονιζομένων. καὶ ἰδοὺ πᾶσα ἡ πόλις ἐξῆλθεν εἰς συνάντησιν τῷ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν παρεκάλεσαν ὅπως μεταβῆ ἀπὸ τῶν ὁρίων αὐτῶν. Καὶ ἐμβὰς εἰς πλοῖον διεπέρασε καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν πόλιν.

GOSPEL READING

Matt. 8: 28-34; 9: 1

t that time, when Jesus came to The country of the Gergesenes, two demoniacs met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one would pass that way. And behold, they cried out, «What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?» Now a herd of many swine was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, «If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine.» And he said to them, «Go.» So they came out and went into the swine; and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and perished in the waters. The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, and what had happened to the demoniacs. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their neighborhood. And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own citv.

ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΟΣ

Στό σημερινό Εὐαγγέλιο, βλέπουμε τόν Κύριό μας στή χώρα τῶν Γεργεσηνῶν. Αὐτή ἡ χώρα ἦταν μᾶλλον ἕνα τόπος ἁμαρτίας, ὅπου οἱ κάτοικοι ἀγνοοῦσαν τούς νόμους τοῦ Μωϋσῆ. Σάν συνέπεια, πολλοί Ἰουδαῖοι ἀπό τίς γειτονικές χῶρες ἑλκυόταν ἀπὸ τὸν τόπο ἐκεῖνο γιὰ νὰ πραγματοποιήσουν ἄνομες πράξεις. Μέ ἄλλα λόγια, ζοῦσαν σύμφωνα μέ τόν Νόμο στήν δική τους χώρα, ἐνῶ πήγαιναν καὶ στήν χώρα τῶν Γεργεσηνῶν ὅπου εἶχαν τήν ἐλευθερία νά κάνουν ὅ,τι ἐπιθυμοῦσαν. Γιά αὐτό τόν λόγο βλέπουμε τούς κατοίκους νά τρέφουν χοίρους, παρ' ὅλο πού γιά τούς Ἰουδαίους ἦταν αὐστηρά ἀπαγορευμένο νά τρῶνε χοιρινό. Λόγω τῶν πολλῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, αὐτή ἡ περιοχή εἶχε κυριευθεῖ ἀπό τούς δαίμονες, καί γι' αὐτό τό λόγο βρίσκουμε δύο ἀνθρώπους βαριά δαιμονισμένους ἐδῶ.

Μόλις οἱ δαιμονισμένοι βλέπουν τόν Χριστό, ἀμέσως φωνάζουν «Τί ἔχεις νά κάνεις μέ μᾶς;» καί «Ἦλθες νά μᾶς βασανίσεις πρίν τήν ὧρα μας;» Βλέπουμε τήν σύγχυση μέσα



στήν ὁποία οἱ δαίμονες ζοῦνε. Ἡ ὕπαρξή τους περιλαμβάνει τήν ὑπερηφάνεια καί τόν φόβο. Ρωτώντας τόν Χριστό ἐάν ἔχει ἔλθει νά τούς βασανίσει, στήν οὐσία ρωτᾶνε ἐάν ἔχει ἔλθει γιά νά τούς ἐμποδίσει ἀπό τό νά βασανίζουν ἐμᾶς. Ἡ ὕπαρξή τους εἶναι τόσο ἀνυπόφορη, πού ἡ μόνη παρηγοριά τους εἶναι νά μᾶς κάνουν ἐμᾶς νά ὑποφέρουμε.

Μετά ρωτοῦν τόν Χριστό καί ζητοῦν νά τούς ἀφήσει νά μποῦν μέσα στούς χοίρους, οἱ ὁποῖοι ἀμέσως πέφτουν ἀπό τόν γκρεμό καί κυριολεκτικά αὐτοκτονοῦν. Ἔτσι βλέπουμε πώς τό κακό φέρνει τήν καταστροφή, ἀλλά καί ἐπίσης πώς οἱ δαίμονες δέν ἔχουν τήν ἐξουσία νά μᾶς σκοτώσουν ἀλλά μόνο νά μᾶς βασανίζουν. Οἱ βοσκοί φεύγουν

καί λένε στούς κατοίκους τῆς περιοχῆς γιά τό γεγονός. Οἱ κάτοικοι, ὅμως, ἀντί νά ζητήσουν τόν Χριστό νά μείνει μαζί τους, τόν διώχνουν. Αὐτό τό κάνουν λόγω τῆς ἐνοχῆς πού αἰσθάνονται μέσα τους γιά τήν ἁμαρτωλή ζωή τους καί γιά τά ἀγαθὰ πού κέρδιζαν ἀπό τήν ἁμαρτία τῶν ἄλλων. Μέσα τους ἤξεραν ὅτι ὁ θάνατος τῶν χοίρων ἦταν τιμωρία ἀπό τόν Θεό γιά τήν ἁμαρτωλότητά τους. ἀντί νά μετανοιώσουν, ὅμως, καί νά ἀλλάξουν τήν ζωή τους, προσπαθοῦν νά ἀρνηθοῦν ὅτι ὁ Θεός εἶχε κάτι νά κάνει μέ αὐτό τό γεγονός. Προτιμοῦν νά διώξουν τόν Χριστό ὁ ὁποῖος τούς ὑπενθυμίζει τήν ἁμαρτωλή ζωή τους.

Μποροῦμε νά μάθουμε ἀπό τό σημερινό Εὐαγγέλιο. Όταν ζοῦμε μιά ζωή ἁμαρτωλή, αὐτὸ ἔχει σὰν συνέπεια νὰ μὴν γνωρίζουμε ἢ νὰ προσποιούμαστε ὅτι δὲν γνωρίζουμε τό κακό πού δημιουργοῦμε γύρω μας, στὴν οἰκογένειά μας, στὴν κοινωνία. Ὁ Θεός μᾶς



στέλνει σημάδια, καί πολλές φορές ἐπιτρέπει συμφορές, γιά νά μᾶς ξυπνήσει ἀπό αὐτόν τόν ἐφιάλτη. Ἐάν δώσουμε προσοχή στά σημάδια τοῦ Θεοῦ καί μετανοήσουμε, θά πονέσουμε λίγο στήν ἀρχή, ἀλλά θά σωθοῦμε. Ἐάν ὅμως συνεχίσουμε νά ἀμαρτάνουμε καί νά ἀρνούμαστε τό κακό πού κάνουμε, τότε ὁ πόνος μας θά εἶναι ἀπεριόριστα πιό μεγάλος καί αἰώνιος. Ἄς προσπαθήσουμε ἀπό αὐτή τήν ὥρα νά ἀλλάξουμε τήν ζωή μας γιά τό καλύτερο, καί ὁ Θεός, βλέποντας τήν προσπάθειά μας, θά μᾶς βοηθήσει στό δρόμο καί θά μᾶς φέρει ὅλο καί πιό κοντά στήν ἀγκαλιά Του.

SERMON ON THE GOSPEL READING

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God."

Tot only the opening verse of today's first reading, from the Holy Apostle's Letter to the *Romans* (10:1-10), contains the word *heart* but four other verses too. his short reading speaks briefly about the Law, that of the Old Covenant and its relevance for those who have found its true meaning and fulfilment in Christ who proclaimed his coming not to abolish the Law and the Prophets but to fulfil them (*Matt.* 5:17).

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When the question of law is raised it will almost certainly at some time or another involve the issue of *letter and spirit*. Conflicts between the *spirit*, that is the essential purpose and meaning of the law, and the *letter*, its formal and rigid implementation, are not always easily resolved and it may be necessary for *oikonomia* (dispensation) and *philanthropia* (loving kindness) to be shown. Might we think of the spirit as those things belonging to the heart and those of the letter to the head and so sometimes the heart should be allowed to rule the head? In truth it would be best when both are in full accord.

Frequently in the Holy Gospels we read of such conflicts and whilst upholding the law, the resolution of a problem involved seemingly disobeying the law, an example is when Christ's actions including healing on the Jewish Sabbath incurred severe criticism from the chief upholders of the Law. After being questioned for allowing his disciples to pick grains of wheat when passing through a field on the Sabbath Jesus responded by saying "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" and he reminded the Pharisees of notable examples from the Old Testament times (Mar. 2:23-28) after which declaring: "The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

There will be times when we do not achieve our personal heart's desire and begin to look here and there to discover why, find alternatives and perhaps to blame others or even God for this disappointment until by both heart and mind we recoginise the path to which we are truly called even if it turns out to be something quite different from that we first imagined. "Where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also." (Matt. 6:21). Jesus said those words to make it clear that earthly treasures must not be our ultimate goal in life for they do not last and are subject to decay but the things of heaven – the treasure to which our hearts belong - is worthy of our desire and is eternal.

In his sermon - *The Divine Liturgy: the Window of Heaven* - Archimandrite Aimilianos, formerly abbot of the monastery of Great Meteoron and the Monastery of Simonopetra in Mount Athos, wrote the following: "We find ourselves in church. As we've said, it is the most suitable place from which to look at heaven. But where is the window? How do we open it? The answer is simple. The window is the Divine Liturgy which we are celebrating. We aim to turn our eyes toward spiritual things. Let us therefore turn our soul to the Holy Spirit, and let us ask him to shine his light on the darkness of our thoughts. When he does, we will be able to feel, to believe, to understand, and make our own, everything which is said and done during the Divine Liturgy."

In this we *lift up our hearts* and can have no greater hearts desire, especially when we have for a while been dreprived of so great a blessing, gathering in penitence and thanksgiving. Glory to God!

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