

Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

July 28, 2024

On July 28th we Commemorate:

Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, & Parmenas, Deacons and Apostles of the 70.

Venerable Paul, founder of Xeropotamou & Saint Paul monasteries.

Venerable Irene of Chrysovalanton.



Icon of Christ Healing the Gergesene Demoniacs

Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission

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Great Vespers, Saturday Evenings at 6:00 pm

Divine Liturgy, Sunday Mornings at 9:30 am (Hours at 9:05 am)

Paraklesis to the Theotokos, Wednesday Evenings at 6:00 pm

Very Reverend Archpriest Luke Uhl, Retired, Interim Rector

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*Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission
is a parish in the Diocese of the West
of the Orthodox Church in America
under the spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction of
Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West*



EPISTLE AND GOSPEL READINGS

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Epistle for the Fifth Sunday of the Epistles, Romans 10:1-10

BRETHREN: My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down from above) 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, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Gospel for the Fifth Sunday of Saint Matthew, Matthew 8:5-13

AT THAT TIME: When Jesus had come to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water. Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region. So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.



The Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

“There met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs.” (Matthew 8:28)

What can be the reason that these men dwell in the tombs? Some might erroneously think that the souls of the dead have become demons, which of course is nonsense. This is a pernicious opinion, which – God forbid – we should ever allow into our conception.

First of all, it is not logical that an injured soul would cooperate with its wrongdoer. For the one doing an injury does not first ask his victim whether he can harm him, and the one injured does not embrace his torturer; thus we who are afflicted by Satan are not likely to become one of his demons.

Secondly, a man – being comprised of a body and a soul – is not able to change into an incorporeal power (such as the angels and the demons) to wander among the tombs. Upon the separation of the soul from the body at death, the immortal soul arises to be judged by God and the inanimate body rests in the grave; such a disconnected human being cannot thereafter become something else – an incorporeal being – to wander upon the earth.

Indeed, “the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God” (*Wisdom of Solomon 3:1*), and even the souls of sinners are immediately led away from their bodies which lie in the earth and are taken to heaven to be judged. This is evident from the account of Lazarus and the rich man, where Christ says, “this day your soul shall be required of you.”

How then could the soul, being taken away from its body and having gone away from its familiar earthly places, know how to walk once more upon the earth in unfamiliar places such as among the tombs in the country of the Gergesenes? Of course, it cannot.

Christ allowed these men to be taken by the devil so that they and we might be saved. This sounds strange, but the Lord allows this, even as Saint Paul instructed the Corinthians concerning the immoral man: “*you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*” (*1 Corinthians 5:5*).

He allows it that when we see the men delivered from such affliction we might understand the horrors malice of Satan’s malice. Thus we clearly understand that nothing happens without the knowledge of God. The demons cannot enter the swine unless He allows them to do so. We are assured that He is always with us, guiding us and caring for us.

Amen.

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

In the Gospel Jesus encounters two demon-possessed men in the countryside of the Gergesenes. We do not know why they are possessed; we only know the results. We see their anger with God and with their fellow man in the words of the Gospel: they were “*coming out from the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way*” (*Matthew 8:28*).

Saint Nikolaj Velimirovic observes that “Men work unrighteousness against God, and so they are angry with God.” All too often, people sin against God or their fellow man and then blame God for the consequences of their actions. All sin is rooted in the inappropriate use of our self will. When we sin, we either place ourselves above God or above our fellow man. In doing so, we enter into a dissonant state. We are out of harmony with God and creation. In the worst cases of a sinful life, the person becomes so out of harmony with God and creation no one wants to be near that person; or, to use the words of the Gospel, they become “exceedingly fierce.”

In the most severe cases, the person denies the existence of God. They say to themselves, “If there was truly a God, this would not have happened to me!” They do not see that the consequences which result from their own actions. In a sense, they try to silence God in their lives and the lives of others.

However this does not work. They often reach a point of despair and cry out, “God Help Me!” This is because in trying to silence God, His truth is proclaimed. It says this in the Gospel of Saint Luke, when the leaders of the Jewish people are trying to silence the children as our Lord is entering Jerusalem: “*I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out*” (*Luke 19:40*), or further: “*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork*” (*Psalms 19:1*).

If the soul does not reach this point of despair, crying out for God’s help, then the spirits of evil will take possession of the soul to fill the void left by the lack, or absence, of God. This is what happened in the case of these men.

The demons – or fallen angels – have utter contempt for man. They wish to destroy the crown of God’s creation – man – because man is created to be in God’s image and likeness. The demons are this way because they were once close to God before their fall. Their leader was one of the brightest and closest to God, and his fall is described by the Prophet Isaiah: “*How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How are you cut down to the ground... yet you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit*” (*Isaiah 14:12,15*). The demons want to bring man down so that he may suffer in the same manner as them. The demons are out to destroy every man.

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Continued from page 4 ☞ We see the lack of concern for God and men by demons in today's Gospel when they say to the Lord, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" (*Matthew 8:29*)

In the response of the demons to Jesus, we see two things. The first is that a life with God is incompatible with a life with evil. Saint Paul reminds us of this saying, "What concord has Christ with Belial?" (*2 Corinthians 6:15*).

The second is that demons already know the results of their rebellion against God. They know the torment that awaits them. The prophet Isaiah describes this torment in the following way: Lucifer will be "cast out of your grave like an abominable branch ... that go[es] down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet" (*Isaiah 14:19*).

Our Lord further testified to this when He said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (*Luke 10:18*).

The same end that awaits the demons will also come to an unrepentant sinner. Our Lord tells us of this when he describes the awesome and fearful Last Judgment: "Depart from me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (*Matthew 25:41*).

Saint Nikolaj further points out that that the demons never mention the men when they say, "If you cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine," (*Matthew 8:31*). This is because the men are dead to the demons. Saint Nikolaj continues, "They did not want to leave the men; they would have infinitely rather have stayed in them than go into the swine ... While the demons can make men like swine, and far worse than swine, what can they make of swine? ... They will, through the swine, go on doing man harm; if in no other way than by drowning the swine and provoking men's fury against God."

Why does our Lord allow the demons to enter the swine? Saint John Chrysostom writes: "First, to teach those who are delivered from those wicked tyrants, how great is the malice of their insidious enemies; second, that all might learn, how the demons cannot even enter the swine unless God allows them; and third, that the demons would have done worse to the men than the swine. The demons hate all creation, but especially man. In one moment the swine were cast down; what worse things would they have done to the possessed men? But, the loving care of God abounds, and He curbed the excess of the demon's violence. Clearly, there is no one, who does not enjoy the benefit of God's providence. And if not all alike, nor after one manner, this is itself a very great instance of providence; in that according to each man's profit, the work also of providence is displayed."

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The town's people see the two men in their right minds healed but their swine destroyed. They cannot see the miracle that just happened. All they can see is the destruction of the swine. They do not see how much God valued these men or any man. Our Lord reminds us of our value to Him when He says, "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear you not therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows" (*Matthew 10:30-31*).

Dear brothers in sisters in Christ, know that you are under attack by the demons that wish to drag you down with them into the abyss of hell, which they created for themselves; know that you can create this same hell for yourself; and know that God is there to save you from the abyss of hell because you are the crown of His creation, created in His image and likeness.

Amen.

V. Rev. Milan Medakovic, Spiritual Father of New Mark Monastery, Richfield, Ohio

PATRISTIC COMMENTARY

From The Explanation of the Gospel of Saint Matthew
by Saint Theophylaktos, Archbishop of Ochrid (AD 1055- 1107)

Matthew 8:28. And when He was come to the other side into the land of the Gergesenes, there met Him two possessed with demons, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. While the men in the boat were yet wondering what manner of man this was that even the winds and the sea obeyed Him, the demons come to proclaim the answer.

Although Mark and Luke speak of one man who was possessed by a legion of demons (*cf. Mark 5:9, Luke 8:27*), understand that this one man was one of the two mentioned by Matthew, evidently, the more notorious of the two. Jesus came alone towards them, since no one dared to bring them to Him, so fierce were they. They dwelt among the tombs because the demons wish to inspire the belief that the souls of those who have died become demons. Let no one believe this: for when the soul departs from a man, it does not wander about the earth. "For the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God" (*Wisdom of Solomon 3:1*), and the souls of sinners are also led away, as was the soul of the rich man, Lazarus.

Matthew 8:29. And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God? Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?

Behold, they proclaim Him to be the Son of God, but first they declare their enmity. The demons consider it torment to be prevented from harming men. Understand the demons' words, *before the time*, to mean that they thought

Continued on page 7 ☞

Continued from page 6 ☞ that Christ, not enduring their great wickedness, would not wait for the time of their punishment. But this is not so; the demons are permitted to contend with us until the end of the world.

Matthew 8:30-32. And there was a good way off from them a herd of many swine grazing. So the demons besought Him, saying, If Thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And He said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine.

The demons asked this so that they could drown the swine, and thus the owners would be grieved and would not welcome Christ.

Christ granted the demons their request in order to show how great is their bitterness towards men, and that if they had the power, and were not prevented as they are by God, they would do worse things to us than they did to the swine. For God protects those possessed by demons so that they do not kill themselves.

Matthew 8:32-34. And, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told everything, and what was befallen to those possessed of the demons. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw Him, they besought Him that He would depart out of their region.

The inhabitants of the city begged Jesus to leave because they were grieved and thought that they would suffer something worse thereafter. You, O reader, learn that where there is swinish life, it is not Christ Who dwells there, but demons.

Matthew 8:1-2. And He entered into a boat, and passed over, and came into His own city. And, behold, they brought to Him a paralytic, lying on a bed.

His own city means Capernaum, for it was there that He was living. He was born in Bethlehem, raised in Nazareth, and lived for an extended length of time in Capernaum.



Tone 4, Troparion, Resurrection

When the women disciples of the Lord • learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, • they cast away the ancestral curse • and elatedly told the apostles: • “Death is overthrown. • Christ God is risen, • granting the world great mercy.”

Tone 8, Troparion of the Temple (Midfeast of Pentecost)

O Savior at the Middle of the Feast, • fill my thirsting soul with the waters of piety, as Thou didst cry to all: • “If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink.” • O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee.

Tone 3, Troparion (Apostles)

Holy Apostles Próchorus, Nicanor, Timon, and Parménas, • entreat the merciful God, • to grant our souls forgiveness of transgressions

Tone 4, Kontakion, Resurrection

My Savior and Redeemer • as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. • He has shattered the gates of hell, • and as Master, • He has risen on the third day.

Tone 4, Kontakion of the Temple (Midfeast of Pentecost)

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, • cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: “Come and draw the water of immortality.” • We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: • “Grant us Thy mercies for Thou art the Fountain of our life.”

Tone 1, Kontakion (Apostles)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

• Therefore, we celebrate your holy memory today, • blessing you with gladness of heart.

Tone 2, Kontakion of the Theotokos

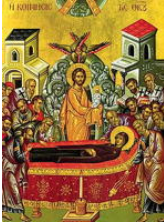



Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Steadfast protectress of Christians, • constant advocate before the Creator; • despise not the entreating cries of us sinners, • but in thy goodness come speedily to help us who call on thee in faith. • Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, • for thou dost always protect those who honor thee.

Prokeimenon

Sing praises to our God, sing praises. Sing praises to our King, sing praises.



August 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			31 <i>Fast Day</i> <i>Forefeast of the Procession of the Honorable and Lifegiving Cross</i>	1  <i>Dormition Fast</i> Feast of the Procession of Lifegiving Cross 8:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 8:30 am Divine Liturgy	2 <i>Dormition Fast</i>	3  <i>Dormition Fast</i> 5:00 pm Choir Practice 6:00 pm Great Vespers
4  <i>Dormition Fast</i> 6th Sun After Pentecost 9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy	5 <i>Dormition Fast</i> 6:00 pm Great Vespers	6  <i>Dorm. Fast</i> Feast of the Transfiguration 8:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 6:00 pm Paraklesis	7 <i>Dormition Fast</i> 6:00 pm Paraklesis	8 <i>Dormition Fast</i> 6:00 pm Paraklesis	9  <i>Dorm. Fast</i> <i>Glorification of Herman of Alaska.</i> 6:00 pm Paraklesis	10  <i>Dormition Fast</i> 5:00 pm Choir Practice 6:00 pm Great Vespers
11  <i>Dormition Fast</i> 7th Sun After Pentecost 9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy	12 <i>Dormition Fast</i> 6:00 pm Paraklesis	13  <i>Dorm. Fast</i> <i>Leavetaking of the Transfiguration</i> 6:00 pm Paraklesis	14 <i>Dormition Fast</i> 6:00 pm Great Vespers	15 Feast of the Dormition 8:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 8:30 am Divine Liturgy	16  <i>Fast Day</i> <i>Afterfeast of the Dormition</i>	17 5:00 pm Choir Practice 6:00 pm Great Vespers
18 8th Sun After Pentecost 9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy	19	20	21 <i>Fast Day</i> 6:00 pm Paraklesis	22 6:30 pm Parish Council	23 <i>Fast Day</i>	24 5:00 pm Choir Practice 6:00 pm Great Vespers
25 9th Sun After Pentecost 9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy	26	27	28  <i>Fast Day</i> Uncovering of the Relics of Ven. Job, Abbot and Wonderworker of Pochaev 6:00 pm Great Vespers	29  <i>Strict Fast</i> Feast of the Beheading of the Forerunner 8:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 8:30 am Divine Liturgy	30 <i>Fast Day</i>	31 5:00 pm Choir Practice 6:00 pm Great Vespers
<p style="text-align: center;">Fasting</p> <p><i>Fast Days:</i> On fast days, we <u>abstain from</u> (a) all vertebrate products, including <u>meat</u>, <u>dairy</u> items, and <u>fish</u> (by “fish” we mean vertebrate fish; shellfish, however, may be consumed on any day), (b) <u>olive oil</u>, and (c) <u>wine</u> (as well as all alcohol).</p> <p><i>Weekly Fast Days:</i> According to the ancient tradition of the Orthodox Church, we fast on Wednesdays to recall the betrayal of Judas and on Fridays to recall the Crucifixion.</p> <p><i>Dormition Fast:</i> The Great Fast is a fourteen-day period, August 13th through August 14th.</p> <p> <i>Fast Day:</i> On Saturdays and Sundays the Dormition Fast, as well as certain feast days, the Fast is relaxed to consume olive oil and wine.</p> <p> <i>Fast Day:</i> On Major Feasts during the Dormition Fast, the Fast is relaxed to consume fish, olive oil, and wine.</p>						<p style="text-align: center;">Holy Wisdom Orthodox Church</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Grand Junction, Colorado</p>

September 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1 10th Sun After Pentecost <i>Feast of the Indiction Beginning of the New Liturgical Year</i></p> <p>9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p>	2	3	4 <i>Fast Day</i>	5 <i>Holy Prophet Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth</i>	6 <i>Fast Day</i>	7
<p>8 11th Sun After Pentecost <i>Nativity of the Theotokos (Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Cross)</i></p> <p>9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p>	9	10	11 <i>Fast Day</i>	12	13 <i>Fast Day</i>	14 <i>Strict Fast</i> 🍇🍇 Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Cross 9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy
<p>15 12th Sun After Pentecost Sunday After the Exaltation of the Cross</p> <p>9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p>	16	17 <i>Martyr Sophia, and her three daughters: Faith (Vera), Hope (Nadézhdá), and Love (Liubóv', Charity, Caritas)</i>	18 <i>Fast Day</i>	19	20 <i>Fast Day</i>	21
<p>22 13th Sun After Pentecost</p> <p>9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p>	23 <i>Conception of the Honorable Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John</i>	24 <i>Holy New Martyrs of Alaska, Hieromonk Juvenaly (ca. 1796) and Peter the Aleut (1815)</i>	25 <i>Fast Day</i> <i>Venerable Sergius (Sérgii), Abbot and Wonderworker of Rádonezh and All Russia (1392)</i>	26 <i>Rest of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian (2nd c.)</i>	27 <i>Fast Day</i>	28
<p>29 14th Sun After Pentecost</p> <p>9:05 am 3rd & 6th Hours 9:30 am Divine Liturgy</p>	30					

Fasting

Fast Days: On fast days, we abstain from (a) all vertebrate products, including meat, dairy items, and fish (by “fish” we mean vertebrate fish; shellfish may be consumed on any day), (b) olive oil, and (c) wine (all alcohol).

Weekly Fast Days: According to the ancient tradition of the Orthodox Church, we fast on Wednesdays to recall the betrayal of Judas and on Fridays to recall the crucifixion of the Lord.

Strict Fast 🍇🍇: The Feast of the Universal Exaltation of the Cross is a strict fast day in our ancient Orthodox Tradition, in commemoration of the Cross on which our Savior was crucified. Our tradition is also that we do not fast on Saturdays and Sundays, such that whenever a fast day or season falls on these days, we consume oil and wine while still abstaining from all vertebrate products (see above).

Holy Wisdom
Orthodox Church



Grand Junction,
Colorado



Евангелие

И когда Он прибыл на другой берег в страну Гергесинскую, Его встретили два бесноватые, вышедшие из гробов, весьма свирепые, так что никто не смел проходить тем путём. И вот, они закричали: что Тебе до нас, Иисус, Сын Божий? пришёл Ты сюда прежде времени мучить нас. Вдали же от них паслось большое стадо свиней. И бесы просили Его: если выгонишь нас, то пошли нас в стадо свиней. И Он сказал им: идите. И они, выйдя, пошли в стадо свиное. И вот, всё стадо свиней бросилось с крутизны в море и погибло в воде. Пастухи же побежали и, придя в город, рассказали обо всём, и о том, что было с бесноватыми. И вот, весь город вышел навстречу Иисусу; и, увидев Его, просили, чтобы Он отошёл от пределов их. Тогда Он, войдя в лодку, переправился обратно и прибыл в Свой город (Мф. 8,28 - 9,1).



Святитель Феофан Затворник

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.

Гадаринцы видели дивное чудо Господне, явленное в изгнании легиона бесов и, однако же, всем городом вышли и молили Господа, «чтобы Он отошел от пределов их». Не видно, чтобы они враждебно относились к Нему, но не видно и веры. Их объяло какое-то неопределенное страхование, по которому они желали только: иди мимо, куда знаешь, только нас не касайся. Это настоящий образ людей, которые мирно в имениях своих живут. Сложился около них порядок вещей не неблагоприятный; они привыкли к нему, ни помышлений, ни потребности нет, чтобы изменить, или отменить что, и боятся они сделать какой-либо новый шаг. Чувствуя, однако, что если придет повеление свыше, то страх Божий и совесть заставят их отказаться от старого и принять новое, - **они всячески избегают случаев, могущих довести их до таких убеждений, чтоб прикрываясь неведением, жить покойно в старых привычках. Таковы те, которые боятся читать Евангелие и отеческие книги, и заводят беседу о духовных вещах, из опасения растревожить свою совесть, которая пробудившись начнет понуждать одно бросить, другое принять.**

Аминь.



Блаженный Феофилакт Болгарский

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.

И пришедшу Ему на он пол в страну гергесинскую, сретоста Его два бесна. Между тем как находившиеся в корабле ученики недоумевали, кто есть Сей, яко и ветри и море послушают Его, - являются проповедниками демоны. Так как Марк и Лука говорят об одном бесноватом, имевшем легион бесов: то надобно думать, что один из двух (и именно тот, о котором говорят Марк и Лука) был страшнее другого. Христос Сам подошел к ним, поелику к таким страшным людям никто не осмеливался приступить или привести их к Нему.

От гробов исходяща, люта зело, яко не мощи никому минути путем тем. Живя в гробах, демоны хотели утвердить мысль, будто души умерших делаются демонами. Но да не будет сего и в мысли у кого либо: потому что душа по разлучении с телом уже не блуждает по сему свету, но души праведных покоятся в руце Божией, равно и души грешных также отводятся отсюда в свои места, как, например, душа богатого.

И се возописта, глаголюще: что нам и Тебе, Иисусе Сыне Божий? пришел еси семо прежде време мучити нас. Обнаружив сперва неприязнь ко Христу, потом провозглашают Его Сыном Божиим. Мучением называют они непозволение им мучить людей: а выражение - прежде време - понимай так, что демоны думали, будто Христос, не терпя чрезмерной их злобы, не станет отлагать времени казнить их, чего впрочем не случилось, ибо им предоставлено враждовать на нас до кончины века.

Бяше же далече от нею стадо свиний много пасомо, Беси же моляху Его, глаголюще: аще изгониши ны, повели нам ити в стадо свиное: И рече им: идите; они же изшедше идоша в стадо свиное. Лукавые демоны домогаются погублением свиней огорчить хозяев их, чтоб они не приняли Христа. А Христос снисходит к демонам для того, чтобы показать, какую злобу питают они к людям, - так что, если бы имели власть и не были возбраняемы, хуже бы поступили с нами, чем с свиньями. Господь сохраняет бесноватых, дабы не умертвили сами себя.

И се (абие) устремися стадо все по брегу в море, и утопоша в водах. Пасущи же бежаша, и шедше во град возвестиша вся, и о бесноу. И се весь град изыде в сретение Иисусови: и видеши Его, молиши, яко дабы прешел от предел их. Просят Его о сем, жалея свиней и

2 ☞ опасаясь потерпеть еще что либо большее. **Познай из сего, что где свинская жизнь, там живет не Христос, а живут демоны.**

И влез в корабль, преиде, и прииде в свой град. Своим городом называет Капернаум, ибо Христос жил там. Родился Он в Вифлееме, в Назарете воспитался, а Капернаум был всегдашним местом Его жительства.

Аминь.

Митрополит Антоний Сурожский

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.



Раз за разом мы слышим в Евангелии рассказы о людях, которые были исцелены от болезни. В Евангелии это кажется таким простым и ясным: вот нужда – и Бог на нее отзывается. И встает перед нами вопрос: почему же это не случается с каждым из нас? Каждый из нас нуждается в физическом исцелении или в исцелении души, а исцеляются только немногие; почему?

Когда мы читаем Евангелие, мы упускаем из виду, что Христос не исцелял всех и каждого: *один* человек в толпе оказывался исцеленным, а многие, тоже недужные телом или душой, исцелены не были. И это происходит потому, что **для того, чтобы принять действие благодати Божией во исцеление тела или души, мы должны раскрыться Богу: не исцелению, а Богу.**

Мы часто хотели бы, хотим исключить болезнь из нашего опыта жизни не только потому, что болезнь утруждает жизнь, не только потому, что болезнь идет бок о бок с болью, но также или даже главным образом потому, что она напоминает нам о нашей хрупкости; она как бы говорит нам: «Не забывайся! Ты смертен, ты смертна; твоё тело сейчас как будто обращается к тебе и говорит: у тебя нет власти вернуть меня к здоровью; ты ничего не можешь сделать; я могу как бы вымереть, угаснуть; я могу обветшать и зачахнуть – и это будет конец земной жизни...» Не это ли главная причина, почему мы изо всех сил боремся за выздоровление, хотим вымолить себе здравие?

Если мы из таких предпосылок просим Бога исцелить нас, вернуть нас в состояние цельности, это значит, что мы просим только о забвении, о том, чтобы забыть о нашей смертности, вместо того чтобы она была нам напоминанием, пробуждением, и мы *осознали бы*, что дни проходят, что время коротко. Если мы хотим достичь полного роста, к которому мы призваны на земле, мы должны спешить стряхнуть с себя все, что в нас самих есть смертоносного. Потому что **болезнь и смерть обусловлены не только внешними причинами; в нас**

3 ☞ **качествует и злопамятство, и горечь, и ненависть, и жадность, и столько других вещей, которые убивают в нас живость духа и не дают нам жить *теперь*, в настоящем времени, вечной жизнью; той вечной жизнью, которая и есть попросту *жизнь* в полном смысле слова, жизнь в ее полноте.**

Что же мы можем сделать? Мы должны ставить самим себе внимательные вопросы; и когда мы приходим к Богу, прося нас исцелить, мы должны раньше приготовить себя к исцелению. Потому что **быть исцеленным не означает только стать целым, чтобы вернуться обратно к такой жизни, какой мы жили прежде; это значит стать целым для того, чтобы начать *новую жизнь*, как если бы мы осознали, что мы умерли в исцеляющем действии Божиим.** Все, что было в нас ветхим человеком, тем *телом* тления, о котором говорит Павел апостол, тот ветхий человек должен *уйти*, чтобы новый человек жил, и что мы должны быть готовы стать этим новым человеком через смерть прошлого для того, чтобы начать жить заново: как Лазарь, который был вызван из гроба не просто обратно в прежнюю его жизнь, но чтобы, пережив что-то, что не поддается описанию никакими человеческими словами, войти в жизнь вновь, на новых основаниях.

Способны ли мы принять исцеление? *Готовы ли* мы, согласны ли мы принять на себя ответственность новой цельности для того, чтобы войти снова, и еще *снова* в мир, в котором мы живем, с вестью о новизне, чтобы быть светом, быть солью, быть радостью, быть надеждой, быть любовью, быть *отданностью* и Богу, и людям?

Задумаемся над этим, потому что **мы все больны, так или иначе, мы все хрупки, мы все слабы, мы все неспособны жить полнотой даже той жизни, которая нам дарована на земле! Задумаемся над этим, и начнем становиться способными открыться Богу так, чтобы Он мог сотворить Свое чудо исцеления, сделать нас *новыми*, но так, чтобы мы несли свою новизну, поистине *Божью* новизну в мир, в котором мы живем.**

Аминь.

