

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ
ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ
ΘΥΑΤΕΙΡΩΝ & Μ. ΒΡΕΤΑΝΝΙΑΣ



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ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ
THE WORD OF OUR LORD

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΣΩΤΟΥ
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Παμφίλου μάρτυρος, Φλαβιανού πατριάρχου Κων/πόλεως, Ρωμανού ἐξ Εὐρυτανίας
Pamphilus, Flavian archbishop of Constantinople, Marouthas & others Mm

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Α' Κορ. 6: 12-20

Αδελφοί, πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν, ἀλλ' οὐ πάντα συμφέρει· πάντα μοι ἔξεστιν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγὼ ἐξουσιασθήσομαι ὑπό τινος. Τὰ βρώματα τῆ κοιλίας, καὶ ἡ κοιλία τοῖς βρώμασιν· ὁ δὲ θεὸς καὶ ταύτην καὶ ταῦτα καταργήσει. Τὸ δὲ σῶμα οὐ τῆ πορνείᾳ, ἀλλὰ τῷ κυρίῳ, καὶ ὁ κύριος τῷ σώματι· ὁ δὲ θεὸς καὶ τὸν κύριον ἡγειρεν καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐξεγερεῖ διὰ τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ. Οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν μέλη Χριστοῦ ἐστίν; Ἴσως οὖν τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ ποιήσω πόρνης μέλη; Μὴ γένοιτο. Οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ὁ κολλώμενος τῆ πόρνη ἐν σώμα ἐστίν; Ἔσονται γάρ, φησὶν, οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν. Ὁ δὲ κολλώμενος τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν πνεύμα ἐστίν. Φεύγετε τὴν πορνείαν. Πᾶν ἀμάρτημα ὃ ἐὰν ποιήσῃ ἄνθρωπος ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν· ὁ δὲ πορνεύων εἰς τὸ ἴδιον σῶμα ἀμαρτάνει. Ἦ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν ἁγίου πνεύματός ἐστιν, οὗ ἔχετε ἀπὸ θεοῦ; Καὶ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐαυτῶν, ἡγοράσθητε γὰρ τιμῆς· δοξάσατε δὴ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν, καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ὑμῶν, ἅτινά ἐστιν τοῦ θεοῦ.

EPISTLE READING

1 Cor. 6: 12-20

Brethren, «all things are lawful for me,» but not all things are helpful. «All things are lawful for me,» but I will not be enslaved by anything. «Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food» -- and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, «The two shall become one flesh.» But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body and in your spirit which belong to God.

ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΝ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ

Λουκ. 15: 11-32

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἄνθρωπός τις εἶχε δύο υἱούς. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ νεώτερος αὐτῶν τῷ πατρὶ· πάτερ, δός μοι τὸ ἐπιβάλλον μέρος τῆς οὐσίας. καὶ διεῖλεν αὐτοῖς τὸν βίον. καὶ μετ' οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας συναγαγὼν ἅπαντα ὁ νεώτερος υἱὸς ἀπεδήμησεν εἰς χώραν μακρὰν, καὶ ἐκεῖ διεσκόρπισε τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ ζῶν ἄσώτως. δαπανήσαντος δὲ αὐτοῦ πάντα ἐγένετο λιμὸς ἰσχυρὸς κατὰ τὴν χώραν ἐκείνην, καὶ αὐτὸς ἤρξατο ὑστερεῖσθαι. καὶ πορευθεὶς ἐκολλήθη ἐνὶ τῶν πολιτῶν τῆς χώρας ἐκείνης, καὶ ἔπεμψεν αὐτὸν εἰς τοὺς ἀγροὺς αὐτοῦ βόσκειν χοίρους. καὶ ἐπεθύμει γεμίσει τὴν κοιλίαν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν κερατίων ὧν ἤσθιον οἱ χοῖροι, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐδίδου αὐτῷ. εἰς ἑαυτὸν δὲ ἐλθὼν εἶπε· πόσοι μίσθιοι τοῦ πατρὸς μου περισσεύουσιν ἄρτων, ἐγὼ δὲ λιμῷ ἀπόλλυμαι! ἀναστὰς πορεύσομαι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ ἐρῶ αὐτῷ· πάτερ, ἤμαρτον εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐνώπιόν σου. οὐκέτι εἰμι ἄξιος κληθῆναι υἱός σου· ποιήσον με ὡς ἓνα τῶν μισθίων σου. καὶ ἀναστὰς ἦλθε πρὸς τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ. ἔτι δὲ αὐτοῦ μακρὰν ἀπέχοντος εἶδεν αὐτὸν ὁ πατήρ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐσπλαγχνίσθη, καὶ δραμῶν ἐπέπεσεν ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ καὶ κατεφίλησεν αὐτόν. εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ υἱός· πάτερ, ἤμαρτον εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐνώπιόν σου, καὶ οὐκέτι εἰμι ἄξιος κληθῆναι υἱός σου. εἶπε δὲ ὁ πατήρ πρὸς τοὺς δούλους αὐτοῦ· ἐξενέγκατε τὴν στολὴν τὴν πρώτην καὶ ἐνδύσατε αὐτόν, καὶ δότε δακτύλιον εἰς τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ καὶ ὑποδήματα εἰς τοὺς πόδας, καὶ ἐνέγκαντες τὸν μόσχον τὸν σιτευτὸν θύσατε, καὶ φαγόντες εὐφρανθῶμεν, ὅτι οὗτος ὁ υἱός μου νεκρὸς ἦν καὶ ἀνέζησε, καὶ ἀπολωλὼς ἦν καὶ εὐρέθη. καὶ ἤρξαντο εὐφραίνεσθαι. Ἦν δὲ ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἐν ἀγρῷ· καὶ ὡς ἐρχόμενος ἤγγισε τῇ οἰκίᾳ, ἤκουσε συμφωνίας καὶ χορῶν, καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος ἓνα τῶν παίδων ἐπυνθάνετο τί εἶη ταῦτα. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὅτι ὁ ἀδελφός σου ἦκει καὶ ἔθυσεν ὁ πατήρ σου τὸν μόσχον τὸν σιτευτόν, ὅτι ὑγιαίνοντα αὐτὸν ἀπέλαβεν. ὠργίσθη δὲ καὶ οὐκ ἤθελεν εἰσελθεῖν. ὁ οὖν πατήρ αὐτοῦ ἐξελθὼν παρεκάλει αὐτόν. ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπε τῷ πατρὶ· ἰδοὺ τὸσαῦτα ἔτη δουλεύω σοι καὶ οὐδέποτε ἐντολήν σου παρήλθον, καὶ ἐμοὶ οὐδέποτε ἔδωκας ἔριφον ἵνα μετὰ τῶν φίλων μου εὐφρανθῶ· ὅτε δὲ ὁ υἱός σου οὗτος, ὁ καταφαγὼν σου τὸν βίον μετὰ πορνῶν, ἦλθεν, ἔθυσας αὐτῷ τὸν μόσχον τὸν σιτευτόν. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· τέκνον, σὺ πάντοτε μετ' ἐμοῦ εἶ, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐμὰ σὰ ἐστίν· εὐφρανθῆναι δὲ καὶ χαρῆναι ἔδει, ὅτι ὁ ἀδελφός σου οὗτος νεκρὸς ἦν καὶ ἀνέζησε, καὶ ἀπολωλὼς ἦν καὶ εὐρέθη.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 15: 11-32

The Lord said this parable: «There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me.’ And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his belly with the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.’ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let

us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'»

ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟΥ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΟΣ

“Εἰς ἀναμάρτητον χώραν, καὶ ζωηράν, ἐπιστεύθην, γεωσπορήσας τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, τῇ δρεπάνῃ ἐθέρισα, τοὺς στάχνας τῆς ἀμελείας, καὶ δραγμαίων ἐστοίβασα, πράξεών μου τὰς θημωνίας, ἃς καὶ κατέστρωσα οὐχ ἄλλων τῆς μετανοίας. Ἄλλ' αἰτῶ σε, τὸν προαιώνιον γεωργὸν ἡμῶν Θεόν, τῷ ἀνέμῳ τῆς σῆς φιλευσπλαχνίας ἀπολίκμισον τὸ ἄχυρον τῶν ἔργων μου καὶ σιτάρχησον τῇ ψυχῇ μου τὴν ἄφεισιν, εἰς τὴν οὐράνιόν σου συγκλείων με ἀποθήκην καὶ σῶσόν με”.

Ενδεικτικά παρέθεσα στήν ἀρχή τοῦ σχολιασμοῦ τῆς περικοπῆς, τὸ πρῶτο στιχηρὸ τῶν ἐσπερίων τῆς ἡμέρας, γιατί ἡ οἰκεία, γεωργικῆς προέλευσης, εἰκόνα, μπορεῖ νά μᾶς εἰσάξει καλύτερα στοῦ μυστήριου τῆς μετανοίας. Ὁ νεαρός τῆς παραβολῆς, κληρονόμος πλουσίου πατέρα, ὑποκύπτει στή δαιμονική παραίνεση νά ἐγκαταλείψει τή μέχρι τώρα ζωὴ του, γιά νά ξεκινήσει νά ἀπολαμβάνει τὸ “ὄνειρο”, τή μαγεία τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν, τῶν προκλήσεων, σπέρνοντας τὴν ἁμαρτία μέ κάθε δυνατό τρόπο, σκορπίζοντας τὴν ὕλη ἄσκοπα καὶ τὸν πλοῦτο τῶν χαρισμάτων τοῦ πνεύματος ἀναιδῶς καὶ ἀσεβέστατα. Τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα ἦταν νά θερίσει μέ τὸ δρεπάνι τοῦ πνευματικοῦ θανάτου τοὺς καρπούς τῆς ἀμελείας, στοιβάζοντάς τους ἔτσι ὥστε νά φτάσει στήν καταστροφή καὶ τὴν ἀπόγνωση. Ἐνα καθρέφτισμα τῆς ζωῆς μας εἶναι ἡ διδαχὴ τοῦ Κυρίου. Ὁ πλάνος ἐγωισμός μᾶς ὀδηγεῖ στή χειραφέτηση, τὴν ἀποταγή τῆς γνήσιας ἐλευθερίας μας, τὴν υἰοθέτηση ἀνατρεπτικῶν ἀλλαγῶν πού νομίζουμε ὅτι θά μᾶς φωτίσουν τὰ σκοτάδια, τὸ παιγνίδισμα μέ τὴν ἀπώλεια, τὴ συντριβή. Ὅταν, πιά, φθάσουμε στήν κατάπτωση καὶ τὴ μιζέρια τῆς φθοράς, τότε, συνήθως, ἀναλογιζόμεστε τὸ βυθὸ τῆς γέεννας πού μᾶς καταπίνει καὶ καλοῦμε τὸν προαιώνιο γεωργὸ θεό, νά ξεκαθαρίσει τὰ ἀχυρῶδη ἔργα μας, βάζοντάς μας στή σειρά τῆς ἄφεισης καὶ κλείνοντάς μας στίς παραδείσεις ἀποθήκες τῆς μετανοίας, ὅπου βρίσκεται ἡ πραγματικὴ εὐτυχία.

Ἐστιάζοντας, ὄχι στήν ὀλέθρια παρορμητικότητά τοῦ διαφθαρέντος γιοῦ, ἀλλά, οὔτε καὶ στήν ἀναληγσία τοῦ μεγαλύτερου, νομικιστικὰ ἄτεγκτου, μένουμε στὸν πατέρα. Παραβλέπει τὴν παράβαση μέ τὴ μυστηριακὴ δύναμη τῆς ἀγάπης. Δικαιώνει τὴν ἐπιστροφή, ἔστω κι ἂν διαισθάνεται ὅτι ἡ συλλογιστικὴ βάση της εἶναι ὠφελμιστικὴ, ἐπενδύει καὶ προβάλλει τὴ μετάνοια πού πυροδοτεῖ τὸν ἄνεμο τῆς φιλευσπλαχνίας καὶ βραβεύει τὴν ἀπόφαση τῆς ἀποτίναξης τοῦ ζυγοῦ τῆς ἁμαρτίας μέ περίσσεια χάριτος. Αὐτὸς εἶναι ὁ Θεός. Ἀπροϋπόθετος, συμπαθής, “ἔχων ὑπερβάλλον τὸ ἔλεος”. Δίνει τόπο στήν ἐπίγνωση τῆς ἐνοχῆς μας, ἀγκαλιάζοντας τὴν κατάνυξη τῶν δακρύων μας, γιατί μόνο μέσα ἀπὸ τὸ λουτρό τους ξεπλένεται τὸ ἔρεβος τῆς πονηρίας καὶ τῆς ἀκάθαρτης σπατάλης τοῦ κατ’ εἰκόνα.

Λίγο-πολύ, ὁ καθένας κουβαλᾷ ἕνα δισάκι πού βαραίνει τοὺς ὤμους του, ἐξαιτίας τοῦ πλήθους τῶν πεπραγμένων δεινῶν. Ἄς μὴ βλέπουμε τὰ πάντα μέ χαλαρὴ τὴ συνείδηση, βάζοντας τίτλους καθημερινῆς ἀτέλειας καὶ ἀστοχίας -δαιμονικὸ τέχνασμα- γιά νά μὴ βροῦμε ποτέ τὸ δρόμο τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τῆς συγγνώμης. Ὑπάρχει ὁ δρόμος τῆς κάθαρσης, τὸ πετραχήλι

τοῦ πνευματικοῦ, ἡ συγκλονιστικὴ κραυγὴ “Κύριε ἔλεησόν με τόν ἁμαρτωλόν καί σῶσον με!”. Ἔτσι τελεσφορεῖ ὁ ἀγώνας γιὰ τὴ σωτηρία. Ἡ περίοδος πού διανύουμε εἶναι τό σχολεῖο της. Ἄς μελετήσουμε σωστά, μαθητεύοντας στὸν πλοῦτο τῆς θεϊκῆς ἀγάπης, γιὰ νά ἀξιωθοῦμε νά ἀπολαύσουμε, φωτόλουστοι ἐορταστές καί συγκληρονόμοι, Πάσχα Χριστοῦ τό σωτήριον!

SERMON ON THE GOSPEL READING

Our approach to the Great Lenten Fast in preparation for Holy Pascha brings again familiar parables and events to increase our understanding of the Christian way and deepen our spiritual life as we seek to draw closer to Christ. This will include self-examination in the light of the readings and other content of our worship which enables us to experience the growth which is not momentary but life long, hence the necessity to hear again and again the riches brought before us year by year.

Last week we recalled the one who extolled his own virtues. It was not that generous giving was wrong, nor fasting (both very commendable) but what the Pharisee was guilty of was his boastfulness and judgemental attitude towards others. We do not know what the tax collector's problems were but whatever they might have been he merely pleaded for forgiveness and in the simplest but heartfelt words – *“God, be merciful to me a sinner!”*

Today we are reminded of the fact that the Prodigal Son made some serious mistakes but then there is a saying that “the man who never made any mistakes never made anything at all!”. At least he came to recognise how he went wrong and saw that the way out of his predicament was to first acknowledge the fact – *“he came to himself”* (v 17) and then realising that the remedy was to return to all that had been good and wholesome in his life and ask forgiveness from the provider of those good things.

The two brothers were perhaps not so different from each other. Whilst the prodigal went off and fell into bad ways his elder brother showed envy, resentment and anger by the way his brother was treated on his return. Perhaps the elder brother was always prone to these passions and today's parable highlights the fact? Yet among the beautiful passages in the Bible is that which records the father's response to the elder brother's tantrum: *“Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.”* (v 31). The father's love was impartial – no favourites. The rejoicing was right and the sons and the servants all were able to make merry and join in the feast celebrating the return of the one who was lost but now found, as if dead but now alive. Two other parables in this chapter are about losing and finding – that of the lost coin and the lost sheep – both stressing the importance of recovering the lost and rejoicing when found.

Today's parable is of a generous, loving and forgiving father; sons equally loved; faithful servants; one household. We know that this parable speaks to us about our loving God who allows us our freedom and how that freedom can be misused and in its misuse bring us distress and suffering. It is possible to continue on that course unless and until we remember, as did the Prodigal Son, where the place for healing of those ills is and the one who provides the remedy.

Next Sunday – of the Last Judgement or Meatfare – begins the Great Lenten Fast in earnest, the season of “bright sadness”. *“God, be merciful to me a sinner!”* Pharisee, tax-collector, prodigal, brother, servants, we all are called by God to take part in the journey to Holy Pascha, for this is where we know our joy will be complete.

Oeconomos Nikitas Lantsbery