



The Prophet of Suffering Roman Hellenism

In Memory of Photios Kontoglou

Open Letter to Athenagoras *

YOUR All-Holiness' desire—and that of those with you—to submit the Orthodox Church to the Pope, and the inexplicable haste on your part, have filled our hearts with unspeakable grief and despondency. Our ears are still ringing from this frightful report.

The Orthodox Flock has been divided. On the one side are those who have followed you on the slippery road that leads to perdition; on the other are those who have remained firm and unshakeable in the Orthodox Faith of their Fathers, revolted at the very thought that the Œcumenical Patriarchate has embraced the Pope and has been defiled by this abomination of impiety.

It was a foregone conclusion that those who *have* followed you *would* follow you, being as they are materialistic, vainglorious, unbelievers, and foreign workers, adulating and being adulated. They hastened, then, to fall in with the “world”: with the sinful world of earthly comfort, of life without hardships and struggle, “*here, in the continuing city,*” not seeking “*the one to come,*” as it is a non-existent and unbelievable one for them.

The others, however, the faithful, have remained unshakeable in the Orthodox Faith, in the land of hunger, deprivations, tribulations, and persecutions, being certain that present among these things is the Lord, Who said that His Church would be bound up with martyrdom, contempt, poverty, and derision, which shall be the recompense for their resolute confession in this world. By day and by night, they hear in their ears Christ's comforting words: “*If they have persecuted*

Me, they will also persecute you.” Persecution, hardship, and death are the blessed lot of the genuine disciple of Christ. His All-Holy mouth also said: *“The Kingdom of God suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.”* How is it possible for the “violent” to exist in the array of non-combatants, who hastened to compromise with lies, in order to live in the peace and pleasures of worldly goods?

And you, the shepherds of the people, what kind of shepherds are you? The sheep that were entrusted to you by Christ, you deliver over to the wolves. You consort with the rulers of this passing world, because you were zealous for their glory and not for the one that comes from God. You subjugated the Faith to the sinful people of worldly desires, who are guided by Satan. You have given over yourself and the sheep to the rulers of this world, to those possessing material, gold, inventions, and machinery, which astonish the masses as marvels of the Antichrist. You have given over yourself and the sheep to knowledge falsely so called: to the *“vain deceit”* taught in the lands of atheism and despair, where there is not so much as a smell of eternal life or true knowledge, which is the knowledge of God.

And all of these things, because you are not the good shepherds who sacrifice their own lives for their sheep and lead them to the fragrant meadows of eternal life. You are the hired shepherds and, according to the All-Holy mouth of the Lord: *“he that is an hireling is not a shepherd”* (cf. St. John 10:12). You are the hirelings of the rulers of this world, for the sake of whose glory and wealth you are laboring.

And once you become the servants of such men, you become armed with the arms of violence, with which you menace the faithful sheep of Christ, in order to force them to follow you.

But those blessed sheep accept martyrdom as a deliverance and as an unfailing sign that they will receive the unfading crown from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the setter of the contest.

Yes! We are ready to suffer martyrdom with joy and exultation for the Orthodox Faith, which we hold as our greatest treasure. We call ourselves blessed because we will be persecuted and die for the Faith and Truth.

Sharpen the knife of disgrace. Dispatch the instruments of violence, which escort you and wherewith apostasy is always fully armed. Dispatch them against us. The bloody and atrocious dagger of violence

has already been manifested on the Holy Mountain, in order to sow terror in the holy hearts of the elders, ascetics, and hermits, who live a life of trials, deprivation, and perfect renunciation of their flesh so as to please the Lord. The frightful face of violence manifests itself like the mythical head of Medusa in the sanctified Garden of the *Panagia*. And behind this abomination of violence are you, the “*hired shepherds*,” thrice-enslaved to the rulers of the murky world of money, atheism, degeneration, and of every sort of vice.

You tore to pieces the innocent, holy Confessors, once you, the very shepherds, had turned into wolves.

You tore to pieces Orthodoxy in the Colosseum wherein are the Caesars of contemporary criminal atheism. It is time, however, to shed your sheep’s clothing, since it does not deceive anyone anymore.

“*That you do, do quickly.*” [cf. *St. John 13:22*]

JOB [Photios Kontoglou]



(*) Source: *Orthodoxos Typos*, No. 51 (April 1965), p. 1.