



■ † Sunday of the Last Judgment

“Let Us Weep Now...”*

Epistle (I Corinthians 8:8-9:2)

Brethren, meat commendeth us not to God, for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee who hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols, and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? For when ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an Apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

Gospel (St. Matthew 25:31-46)

The Lord said: When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the Holy Angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory. And before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them

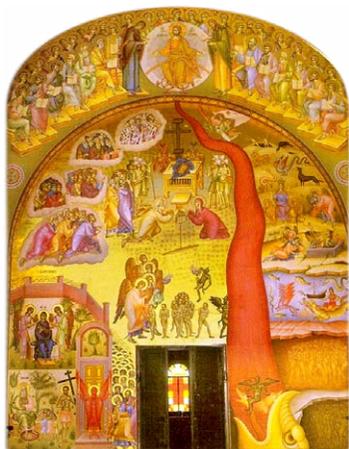
on His right hand, ‘Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I hungered, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.’ Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when saw we Thee hungering and fed Thee, or thirsty and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger and took Thee in, or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?’ And the King shall answer and say unto them, ‘Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.’ Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I hungered, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in; naked, and ye clothed Me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not.’ Then shall they also answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when saw we Thee hungering, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?’ Then shall He answer them, saying, ‘Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.’ And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

The dread Judgment! The Judge comes in the clouds, surrounded by a countless multitude of Bodiless Heavenly Powers. Trumpets sound to the ends of the earth and raise up the dead.

The risen regiments pour into the pre-ordained place, to the throne of the Judge, having a foreboding of what verdict will sound in their ears.

Everyone’s deeds will be written on the brow of their heads, and their very appearance will correspond to their works and morals.





The division of those on His right hand and those on His left will be accomplished in and of itself.

At last all has been determined.

Deep silence falls. In another instant, the decisive verdict of the Judge is heard: to some, “Come,” to the others, “Depart.” “Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us! May Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us!” they shall say, but then it will already be too late to plead.

We need to take the trouble now to wash away the unfavorable marks written upon our foreheads. At the Judgment, we may be ready to pour out rivers of tears in order to wash ourselves, but in vain. Let us weep now, if not rivers of tears, then at least streams; if not streams, then at least drops. If we cannot find even this much, then let us become contrite in heart, and confess our sins to the Lord, begging Him to forgive them, and promising not to offend Him any more through violation of His commandments. Then, let us be zealous to faithfully fulfil this promise.



(*) St. Theophan the Recluse, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God*.