

However it was difficult for the Christians of Jerusalem to be convinced, because many had suffered from the unto just previous, fanatic persecutor. Here the contribution of the Apostle Barnabas comes gracefully to be added, who in a sweet manner, “with sweet addresses”, as at another time, Christ to the Samaritan woman, softens the heart of the justifiably scandalized Jerusalemites and presents to them the now captive of God, the repented offspring of Tarsus, who follows, obeying his guide.

Barnabas accompanied Paul in his first journey to Cyprus, leaving his nephew Mark, the later Evangelist there, as a helper to the Apostle of the gentiles. Later on, he went again to Cyprus, making firm and strengthening the Church. There he also finished his life, crowning it with martyrdom from the Jews of Cyprus, who could not endure to see the Great Island brightened by the torch of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Barnabas. Let us ask him, brethren, to give us the good boldness of confession, when and wherever it is needed

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2017 SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN, *Isidore the Martyr of Chios, Holy Hieromartyr Therapontus, Holy New Martyrs Mark and John, Serapion the Holy Martyr, Leontius, Patriarch of Jerusalem*

TONE OF THE WEEK : Tone Four

EOTHINON : *Sixth Orthros Gospel*

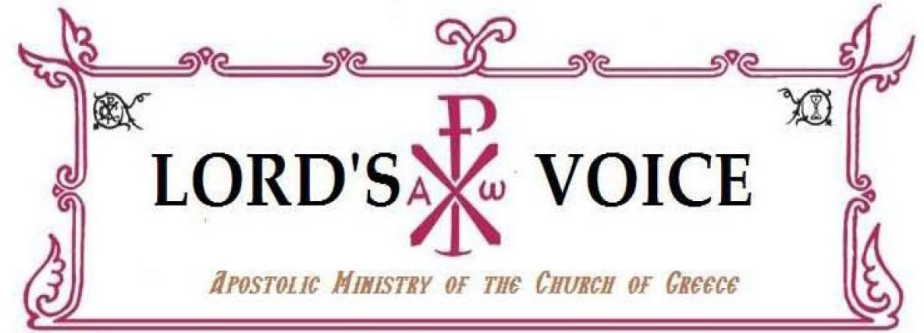
EPISTLE READING: **Acts 11:19-30**

GOSPEL READING: **John 4:5-42**

NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 21, 2017 SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN, *Constantine and Helen, Equal-to-the Apostles, Pachomios the Righteous New Martyr*

EPISTLE READING: *Acts 26:1,12-20*

GOSPEL READING: *John 9:1-38*



65TH YEAR

May 14 2017

PAMPHLET # 20 (3337)

BARNABAS, THE POWER SON OF CONSOLATION

In today's excerpt from Acts, beloved brethren, the missionary activity of quite a few Christians of the Church of Jerusalem is described, who, with the stoning of Stephen and the persecution that arose there, descended toward Antioch. Others reached up to Phoenicia and Cyprus and, as some of these, having been born in Cyprus or Cyrene, knew Greek, they taught the Gospel to the Jews of Antioch who had lost Hebrew, in the Greek language. Subsequently the activity of the apostles Barnabas and Paul in Antioch is described.

“Internationalisation” of the Gospel

The teaching of the Gospel in the international language of the time, which is Greek, is a great spiritual and cultural event, because the then known world in a few years is informed, catechized in its language about the belief, all, in other words, that they must believe, and do, all that they must to do, in order to be saved, following Christ of the Church. Divine Providence uses as a vessel, as a linguistic garment of the divine truths the Hellenistic common language, which then was spoken to the ends of the universe. Of course, the translation “of the 70”, 72, initially Hellenistic Jews, but also of other more translators, of the Old Testament into the Greek of that time, had preceded 2 ½ centuries before. This means that there was already a Hellenized Old Testament,

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 11:19-30

IN THOSE DAYS, those apostles who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to none except Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number that believed turned to the Lord. News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad; and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose; for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a large company was added to the Lord. So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church, and taught a large company of people; and in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians. Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabos stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world; and this took place in the days of Claudius. And the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brethren who lived in Judea, and they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

and whoever had a good disposition, studied it, and understood that the prophecies of the texts were realized in the person of Christ and, as soon as they heard the preaching of the apostles they were becoming Christians. So for this reason, the Jews “hated” the text of the 70 and they produced their own faulty translations.

The power of the Lord with them

As soon as the Hellenists, Christians of Jerusalem, began the preaching in Antioch, a multitude of people began believing and “were returning to the Lord”, as the text characteristically says. The reputation

of this success reached the Church of Jerusalem, and the Christians there decided to send Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas saw the grace of God and a multitude of all those who believed, rejoiced very much and he exhorted them to struggle spiritually, so that they remain attached to the Lord. The text informs us that he was a person of a good disposition and full of the presence of the Holy Spirit, in his life and his works, so for this reason, he was able to support the others also. Furthermore, he went to Tarsus in order to bring Paul, so as to help them in the work of the governing of the Christians of Antioch. For one year, both together taught a very large multitude in the gatherings of the local Church. Here for the first time the disciples of the Lord were called Christians.

In the meantime, a certain Christian named Agabos, from the Church of Jerusalem, with a prophetic gift, came to Antioch and forewarned the people about a great starvation that would strike the universe, an event that took place during Claudius Caesar’s reign. Then, help was collected and sent from the believers of Antioch for the believers of Jerusalem, which Barnabas and Paul handed to the pastors of Jerusalem.

The Apostle Barnabas

Already, the New Testament itself, gives us data from the synaxarion of the Apostle Barnabas also in today’s passage. “Barnabas” in Aramaic means “son of consolation”, comfort and support. He was a Jewish Levite, previously initially an inhabitant of Cyprus, named Joses. He was a select worker of the Gospel, a compass giving direction to everyone with his exemplary life, since he was humble minded and sweet speaking, joyous preacher.

Saint Clement of Alexandria writes that he belonged to the wider circle of the seventy Disciples and he quickly became an important leading member of the Church with dedication and zeal that were distinguished. He was the one, who after Paul’s conversion brought him to the Church of Jerusalem. Paul met Christ in a blinding dazzle which shone around him in his journey to Damascus: he was blinded in order to obtain real vision. He found however real truth, the Person of Christ and became truly a “chosen vessel”, as he was called by Christ. He was no longer the fearful persecutor, but the prisoner of the grace and eros of Christ, who would carry the burden of his name, before all nations, Kings and authorities.