

there also is the “wine” which corresponds to prodigality and the defilement from the smoke of haughtiness.

On the opposite pole, the “wise one” is he who lives in God and is informed by Him many times what to do. It is he who obeys the exhortation of today’s Epistle passage to be filled in the Spirit. It is he who buys the time. Time was given to us as a deadline for repentance, in the wickedness of the days of our life, so that we change our life. A repentant life is the foundation of virtuous and graceful works. The enlightened and discerning person buys the time, to which the Epistle of the Apostle Paul refers, when-also- he prays ceaselessly, as he himself says elsewhere. Prayer is the pricking of time, where only the pricking remains and the time vanishes. Then, the time which gives birth to our death, gives birth to us with prayer within the Church in eternity. Amen.

Archim. E. T.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2017 14TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, *The Holy Prophet Sophonias (Zephaniah) , Our Righteous Father John, Bishop and Hesychast , Holy Martyrs Agapius and Seleucius Theodore, Archbishop of Alexandria , Angelis the New Martyr, Karpos the Hieromartyr*

TONE OF THE WEEK : Plagal of the Fourth Tone

EOTHINON : Third Orthros Gospel

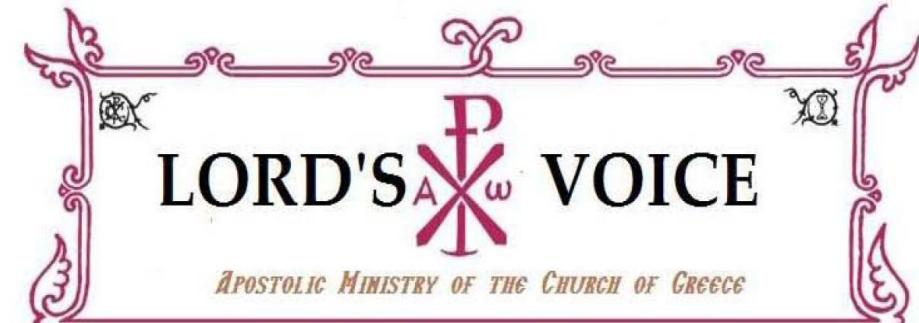
EPISTLE READING: St. Paul’s Letter to Ephesians 5:8-19

GOSPEL READING: Luke 18:35-43

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2017 10th Sunday of Luke *The Holy Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes, and Eraphus Thomas the Righteous of Bithynia*

EPISTLE READING: St. Paul’s Letter to Ephesians 6:10-17

GOSPEL READING: Luke 13:10-17



65TH YEAR

DECEMBER 3 2017

PAMPHLET # 49 (3366)

THE DISCERNING AND ENLIGHTENED PERSON

In today’s excerpt from the Epistle to the Ephesians, my brethren, the Apostle Paul gives to them spiritual directions, so they proceed spiritually, as Christ wishes. He himself is discerning and enlightened, he imparts his spiritual wealth to the hearts of his listeners and comprises for them, but also for us, in the passage of the ages, a true guidepost and spiritual compass.

“Children of light”

He urges them to an illumined life and illumined works, reminding them of their spiritual condition before they met Christ. He calls this condition “darkness.” Each one of us can also think of his condition before he met Christ. He will understand and will feel that Christ, each person who accepts Him and desires to live according to His commandments, He enriches him with His grace and with the longing to resemble Him and to follow Him, no matter what this costs him. A spiritual “wall” stands between his two lives, the one before Christ and the one after Christ, in a way so that the repented believer is unable to return and look back, because he knows from experience, the danger to end up a “pillar of salt”, like the wife of Lot.

ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO EPHESIANS 5:8 - 19

Brethren, walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is a shame even to speak of the things that they do in secret; but when anything is exposed by the light it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light." Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart.

Lot abandoned the land of Sodom, Moses came out of Egypt toward the land of promise, Abraham heard God's commandment to proceed to a land which God would show him and none of them turned back to look. Thus also each "child of light", considering his condition before Christ, is secured more in his association with Christ and strives constantly more to give himself to works of repentance and to embark on the spiritual struggle with fervor and enthusiasm, so as to be founded in the life in Christ, the life of the Church. So each one of us is called to abandon the noetic Egypt, the land of his passions and sins, "the fruitless works of darkness" and to proceed to the noetic Canaan, enriching his life with the "fruits" of the Spirit, kindness, righteousness and love of truth. It is a constant journey, where in each end a new beginning occurs and each beginning ends. "We fall and get up, and again we fall and get up, and again we fall and again we get up" as we read in the Gerondikon.

What is the will of the Lord?

The Apostle indicates to his listeners to be thinking in each case what is the will of God, chastening them. So for this reason, let a blessed suspicion exist in us, if our works truly please God, or if we're doing them only for us ourselves. Many times in daily life, we discover that we are serving, working "spiritually", not for the name of Christ to be glorified among our faithful brethren, but in order for us to show off, being interested in our public image, our self idol and our posthumous fame. Such a work however is not able to have the seal of divine Grace. It follows, after a little while-in relation to eternity, whatsoever time is small-that it will be torn down like a paper tower. This same "work" in which we had invested so much, with its falsehood, becomes cause for the name of God to be blasphemed among the gentiles (Rom. 2:2), as the Apostle Paul says.

This must make us think, brethren, maybe with today's plethora of works and sermons we have all neglected the purification of our heart. Fewer works which have been beautified by the salt of faith and of humility are preferable to many, which nevertheless, seem to be more, a result of the "mania for work" for our public recognition, but also to avoid boredom and the emptiness, which our heart feels from the lack of prayer. The first things remain unto the ages, the second ones disappear like dust.

Do we buy the time?

Again the Apostle insists a second time that we examine, in every case, what the will of God is. The "unwise" one and "fool" function as if God does not exist, obeying their thought alone. Thus they become intoxicated spiritually and are prodigal in "places and manners" which their own self imposes on them. So