

wealth and power; and do not rest, since in your life – limited, well taken care of and pedestrian – it does not have such spectacular and dreadful issues.

Do we not often appear servile ourselves before our superiors, but unyielding to them, whom we think we can “get away with it”? How many times in human history, but unfortunately even today, do we not observe nations, states, peoples, entities that have benefited in various ways in the past, when they themselves come to the position of power, they forget everything, and simply impose their power on others through violence? So let us set an example and be careful, so that we can always pray without condemnation: "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors". May it be!

Archim. A. A.

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 28, 2022 11<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF MATTHEW**

*Moses the Black of Skete, Diomedes & Laurence the Martyrs, 43 Martyrs of Nicomedeia, Job of Pochaev, Synaxis of the Kiev Cave Fathers.*

**EPISTLE READING:** *St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 9:2-12*

**GOSPEL READING:** *Matthew 18:23-35*

**TONE OF THE WEEK** : *Second Tone*

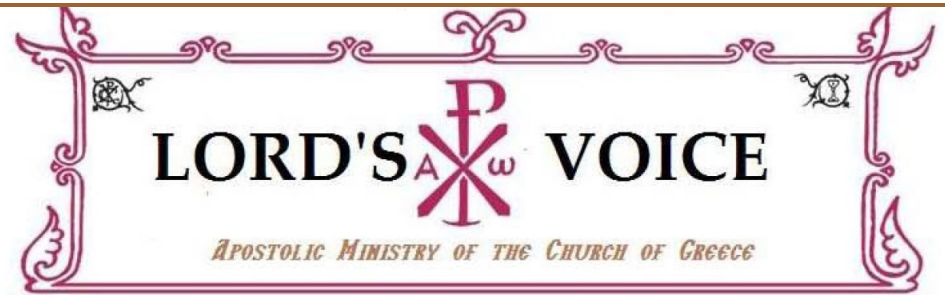
**EOTHINON** : *Eleventh Eothinon*

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2022 12<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF MATTHEW**

*Babylas the Holy Martyr, Moses the Prophet and Godseer, Our Righteous Father Anthimus of Coroucle in Cephallenia, Anthimos the new ascetic, Hermione the Martyr, daughter of St. Philip the Deacon*

**EPISTLE READING:** *St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 15:1-11*

**GOSPEL READING:** *Matthew 19:16-26*



70<sup>TH</sup> YEAR AUGUST 28 2022

PAMPHLET # 35

(3613)

## THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM

The quintessence of Jesus' preaching from the first moment of His public appearance, is none other than the joyful announcement of the coming of a new reality, i.e. from the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. However, just as the people of that time, as of every era, did not have the spiritual maturity to fully understand the essential content of this hopeful message, Jesus used various parables, helping them to grasp the deeper meaning of His words, with a series of images, as He also does in today's gospel passage.

### Debts and debtors

“Be ye repenting; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”; as John's preliminary preaching began, this is also how the saving preaching of Jesus opens, according to the Evangelist Matthew. But the arrival of the Kingdom of God in our lives, is not only a beneficent gift, but it is also the practical undertaking by the one who accepts the responsibility that belongs to him; this is exactly what today's passage comes to teach us.

### **THE SUNDAY GOSPEL READING: MATTHEW 18: 23- 35**

The Lord said this parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord delivered him to the torturers, till he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

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A certain man, the Lord tells us, once decided to collect the money owed to him by those to whom he had lent from time to time. One of them, however, to whom he had lent a very large amount, was unable to pay it back. According by the law of the time, the creditor ordered the debtor and his

family to be sold as slaves, but also his possessions, in order to collect the amount that was due to him. However, he yielded when the debtor began to beg him for mercy, and he made a strange decision for human measures. He did not simply want to make it easier for him to settle his debt in installments, or to give him some small or big extension; he decided to write off the debt in its entirety. The debtor was relieved of the burden, but - as it seems - he did not change in the depth of his soul. So, when he immediately afterwards, met someone to whom he had lent a small amount, not worth mentioning, he grabbed him by the throat and demanded that he pay it. However, he did not stop there, but he reached the point of throwing him into prison. When that fact reached the ears of his benefactor, that merciful man revoked the favor he had given him, and ordered that the great debtor be punished as he deserved.

### **Our obligation**

How many meanings this passage contains! It teaches us, first of all, that nothing of what we think we have, little or much, belongs to us; everything is borrowed from God, the source of goods. It also reveals to us that God is not only just, but also merciful; God's justice is often scandalous, even unfair, according to the human viewpoint, precisely because it is leavened with infinite love. After all, the ethics of the Gospel is not moralistic, neither meticulous, nor inspired by sterile and rigid legalism. But this merciful God has the reasonable expectation of us, that we treat one another as He Himself treats us, as far as possible. And this does not apply only to those who possess