



Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday) The Reading is from Matthew 25:31-46

The Lord said, "When the Son of man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left.

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.'

Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Resurrectional Apolytikion Plagal 2nd Tone

When the angelic powers appeared at Your grave, the soldiers guarding it feared and became as dead. And standing by the sepulcher was Mary who was seeking Your immaculate body. You devastated Hades, not afflicted by it. You went to meet the virgin, and granted eternal life. You resurrected from the dead. O Lord, glory to You.

Seasonal Kontakion in the First Tone

O God, when You come upon the earth in glory, the whole world will tremble. A river of fire will bring all before Your Judgment Seat and the books will be opened, and everything in secret will become public. At that time, deliver me from the fire which never dies, and enable me to stand by Your right hand, O Judge most just.

Discussion

Final Judgement is something that awaits all of us. Our Lord is telling us in this Gospel lesson what the answers to the final exam will be.

Lessons that we heard earlier focus on what to do for ourselves:

Zacchaios: seek Christ and Salvation with all your heart and strength (and resources).

Publican/Pharisee: learn humility and run away from pride and arrogance.

Prodigal: repent for Our Father is always ready to forgive us as we forgive others.

Today is what to do for others.

Don't just be good, DO good; you will want to do good if you really are good.

Read the ACTIONS that save us. As we show our love for others, so love will be returned to us. When we show love, mercy, compassion to others, we are showing it to God.

Remember that we are created in God's image. We are all icons of God. We don't all look the same on the outside but our souls have common essence with Him. How we act toward others shows how we truly love Our Father.

Notice that the saving actions go beyond the 10 commandments. Murder, adultery, speaking falsely and the others are "assumed" to NOT be part of a Christian life. If you think about it, if you deny your brother food when you can feed him, aren't you "killing" him? If he is thirsty for the Word of God and you don't try to enlighten him, aren't you harming him? With prayer and help, you can help someone recover the Baptismal clothing that they have been stripped of by evil.

We are being called on to act with love and mercy, forgiving others and acting towards them as we would want Jesus Christ to act towards us.

And then it says, in verse 41: "Then he will say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared...' " for who? For you? No. "Prepared for the devil and his angels."

In other words, Christ does not prepare hell for us! It's not for us—if we believe, if we listen, if we act, if we recognize God in another person, in a human being who is in need. Hell is not for you. Hell is for the devil, and God loves us so much that he's not preparing hell for us.

So ultimately the judgment, you might say, is our own decision. It is the result of our decision; it is the result of our action.

Use what God gave you to do good and with His mercy, may we be placed at His Right Hand!