



**RELEASE YOUR SPIRIT FROM YOURSELF
AND THE PRAISE OF PEOPLE**

Reference: The Release of the Spirit

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117th Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark

A Mighty Arrow

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I have previously talked to you about self-denial but there is still much to be said in this concern so that we may attain together the release of spirit.

Dear brother, do you want to get closer to God? Do you want to say along with the blessed St. Paul, “*having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.*” (Phil. 1:23). **Then be released First of your self, that self which you worship instead of God and which you try always to glorify and exalt before others.**

Does the world glorify you, my beloved brother? And

do you accept this? How wretched you are!.. **Do you not know that glory is due to God alone** because He is the Creator and the author of all creation? He alone is self-existent, eternal, powerful and present everywhere... Do you not know that when you glorify yourself or when you let others glorify you, you rob one of God’s attributes and ascribe it to yourself!! It is the same temptation in which your father Adam fell, for Adam was not satisfied with what God bestowed on him but aspired to exalt, himself and become like God! Who are you, brother, that you may be glorified? **Does the dust have any glory or the ashes have any honour?** Or does nothingness have any respect and veneration?! Are you not a sinner like me! However, God protects you and conceals your defects from the sight of people... Does this give you, though a sinner and a weak person, the right to have any glory or dignity? Why then do you glorify yourself though you are aware of your nature and of all your sins, defects and weak points?...

Is it because people have not yet found out your lowliness or known all about your past? They have not yet discovered your weak points and your faults?.. Why do you deceive them though you know all this? Why do you deceive yourself for nothing? Do you thus misuse God’s protection and concealment of your sins?..

Do you want God to reveal your thoughts, your feelings and your suppressed desires before people..!!

Besides, why do you seek a vain glory which will not



accompany you after death nor avail you on the day of judgment before the Righteous Judge who judges not

according to the opinion of people.. He needs not to do so because everything which is hidden is revealed to him and is apparent... Is the praise of people still dear to you? Then know that **it is false**.. for sometimes they praise you out of courtesy or flattery or to encourage you or to show tactfulness.. Even if people are true and faithful, they will judge according to the outside. None can read your thoughts, know your intentions or examine your heart... No doubt, my beloved brother, I bothered you with many thoughts; now I shall tell you a story. Let it be the story of Nebuchadnezzar.. (Dan 4:29-33)

Do you know how he ascribe himself vain glory? Do you know what was his end? I wish that you would take a lesson from this story... Have I annoyed you? Please forgive my weakness and my harsh talk..

But is it your habit to get annoyed whenever anyone talks to you frankly without flattering you or addressing you in a respectful way as the others do? .

Why?.. Dear brother, you rather have to like this style because it reveals to you the truth about you. And you are in great need to know it for this is necessary for your salvation.. Now, let us discuss the matter together... **why do you want to appear great before others?** Is this due to inferiority complex? Do you feel that you are inferior, and in order to make up for this, you seek the praise of people by every means? If they praise you, you become pleased, and if they attack you, you defend yourself hard in order to appear

blameless before them.. Even if they take a middle way neither praising nor attacking, you do not feel glad either but you try to beg their praise by telling them about your virtues so that they may admire and praise you... Is not this true? If so, let us discuss the matter together further more...



It is good for you, my brother, to feel that you are not perfect but a sinner and a weak person the meanest of all people.. But, the remedy for all this is not to add a new weakness which is the love of the praise of people but to **improve yourself and make yourself perfect. Why are you concerned about the people's opinion concerning you or about gaining their praise?** Would you not enter God's Kingdom unless people recommend you? know then that many of those who are praised by others will be cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone as the Holy Bible says, *"Woe to you when all men shall speak well of you."* (Luke 6:26).

The praise of people, my friend, is temporal and passing for they have no firmness.. Once, they cried out for the Lord Jesus Christ as king and soon they changed and cried out "crucify Him, crucify Him". The praise of people is also false because they do not know the whole truth.. Here is a question which I am interested to know your answer of: **How do you feel when people praise you while you know your shameful hidden doings?**

Do you forget - while they are praising you-those sins which if they knew about, they would dismiss you out? Or do you pretend to have forgotten? Do you consider such sins trouble's which must not appear at the time



of your ecstasy created by the praise of the others? Then you are only concerned about the outside of the cup.. You only want to be like the whited sepulchres which appear beautiful outward but are stinking within! Your only concern is the earthly life not the life to come.

Be frank, my beloved brother, in revealing your real feelings to yourself. First confess before yourself, then **pour yourself before your confessor** weeping bitterly and moaning.

Now, see how you ought to feel when people praise you:

1. Think first that perhaps you are a hypocrite and your outside differs from your real inside. Say to yourself frankly, 'I am a sinner and a filthy person.. When I sit before my confessor, I feel disgraced; when I count my sins I feel humiliated, low and base and I feel my meanness; and when I stand for prayer I feel undeserving to lift my eyes unto heavens... Why then do people praise me! Perhaps I am a hypocrite or a double-faced person who appears before people in a personality which is different from the real one! Or am I an actor? Perhaps I am so...'

2. Feel that when people praise you, you receive your due on earth and lose the reward of heaven. Thus you lose your crown for a trifling. When people praise you, you ought to feel sorry for the crown which you are about to lose.. This holy sorrow will purify yourself and make your spirit more free.

3. When people praise you, feel that this may be embezzlement. You rob God's glory and ascribe it to yourself. while the Lord Jesus Christ says, "*.. that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven*" (Matt. 5:16). So, if glory is ascribed to you in stead of being ascribed to the heavenly Father, you are considered as if robbing Him whether you are aware or not... Therefore, when you pray saying, "*For Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory..*" blame your self which you want to

be glorified and to rival God's power, for the psalm says, "*Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, But to Your name give glory*" (Ps. 115:1)

4. When people praise you, deny yourself and draw their attention to God. Without hypocrisy or pretended humility tell them that you are a sinner and a weak person and that it is God who deserves praise for such matters.. Address the same words to yourself as well and be convinced so that you may not be puffed with pride again.

5. When you find that a certain story or talk or some news would lead to your praise, try to change the course of the talk or at least do not be pleased but ascribe all honour to God contentedly.

6. When people praise you, remember the two beautiful verses which say, "*I do not receive honor from men.*" , "*And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself*" (John. 5:41, 17:5). Learn them by heart and repeat them always within you.

7. When people praise you, remember your sins and let your conscience blame you in order that there may be a balance between your inside and the praise of people.

Lastly, if this is what you ought to do when people praise you, then it is a matter of course that you will not seek or beg such praise. We shall return to the same point once again in another article if the Lord wills that we live.. Pray for me.

