

Resurrection

(The Resurrection after Death)

Ekchristos anesti. Alithos anesti! Piekchristos aftonf. Khen oumethmi aftonf!

This is the spirit-igniting shout of jubilation by the first church ushering in the age of the kingdom. On Holy Great Friday, with the Golgotha hymn, Adam was entrusted in the blood of the crucified Jesus Christ; and on Holy Joyous Saturday, with myrrh and oil, Adam was buried thus ending the age of the old mankind. On Holy Glorious Sunday, the light of the new life resurrected forth from the dark grave of the first Adam; and Jesus Christ, the second Adam, the first fruit and head of the new creation rose from the dead announcing the onset of the coming age and the appearance of the kingdom of God within the human heart.

Holy Great Friday embraced the most awesome incidents in the history of mankind. It was a day not only of terminating our pains and sins for which Jesus Christ assumed accountability and carried in His body on the cross; but it was a day of total eradication and final annihilation of the element, essence, source and master of darkness. God had convicted sin and the world in His body. Consequently Jesus Christ died on the cross carrying in His body the curse that belonged to Adam and his descendents. With the thorn of death pierced deep into His forehead, the righteous Jesus Christ died on behalf of all sinners after having fulfilled the law verdict previously bestowed by sin on everybody.

“if One died for all, then all died” (2 Corinthians 5:14). The death and burial of all humanity in Jesus Christ has put an end to the first humanity with all its curses preparing us for the day of the new recreation.

For Jesus Christ, His resurrection accomplished in His very severely wounded, dead body and pierced open side was in itself just a mere resurrection from the dead. But, for us our human body it was an impartation of a new creation to our human body. *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new”* (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Resurrection as a Transition from Darkness to Light

At the crucifixion, Jesus Christ issued to the world His verdict marking the last hour in the age of the old world and first Adam. *“When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness”* (Luke 22:53). *“Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out”* (John 12 31).

At the resurrection Jesus Christ pronounced the new world and the second Adam recreated for God to be in Him, with Jesus Christ as His king and the Holy Spirit as the giver of spiritual birth and renewal to all those who believe and get baptized transitioning them from the darkness of Satan to his wonderful light. *“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love”* (Colossians 1:13).

If Jesus Christ’s resurrection was essentially and primarily rising “from the dead” for the One who ascended is the one who came down (John 3:13) and the One who rose is the One who died first our resurrection must also be rising from the dead. Therefore, rising, by necessity has to be preceded by dying.

Jesus Christ’s glorified, magnified resurrection had its starting point in a dark grave, with real death, total selfless submission and commitment in the hands of the father and brave, willing obedience that walked the walk in steps anchored in love till the cross!

It is impossible to taste the joy of resurrection before going through death and the burial rituals. Whoever wants to rise with Jesus Christ has to be baptized to Jesus Christ’s death, be buried with Him in willful love.

It is impossible for the Father to move us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love while there is still in us some darkness left. For, it is impossible for the old creation to transition to the new orbit of the resurrection because the process is exclusively spiritual. Whoever is born of the flesh is flesh; and according to the flesh he lives, thinks, and rejoices and his joy, sadness, fears, regrets and assurance are all drawn from and revolve around the flesh and the world with all its enticements and delusions.

Resurrection is the beginning of the second birth by the Spirit. Whoever is born of the Spirit is spiritual and all the details of his life are according to the spirit; and according to the Spirit he lives, thinks, and his joy, sadness, fears, regrets and assurance are all drawn from and revolve around the Spirit and are done for the glory of God and according to His will.

The carnal man and spiritual man both live on this planet. The former does everything in response to the flesh and dies with the flesh. The latter does everything according to the Spirit; and therefore lives above the world and will never taste death.

Resurrection as a New Age and New Door

The cross has put an end to the age of no-salvation, that age of the old creation, of the sinful Adam, of death and all the afflictions on the earth. The Resurrection has started the everlasting age, that age of Jesus Christ and new creation, the age of the new man born from above for the Kingdom of God. The cross has become like a fiery sword standing to guard the way to the Kingdom of God blocking the way to anyone or anything that belonged to the

old creation. The Resurrection is the Iron Gate with which God has fastened the salvation era, granted the joy of the kingdom, and lighted the road to everlasting life.

However, the salvation era and the joy of the kingdom do not have their onset with the Resurrection but at the cross and its pain. For, in the mystery of pain and death we get baptized to Jesus Christ, to a new, resurrected life on which neither suffering nor death has authority except in an appropriate measure required to deepen salvation, clarify vision, and ease the path.

For those who are new in their walk towards the glorified kingdom, the cross seems an inevitable load wished to be removed or done without as if wanting to put on the new heavenly man over the old patched one.

Those who have preferred the road and approached the light, regard the cross as an essential inevitable necessity for which they have scented the fragrant breeze of the Resurrection from afar and heard the sound of the true Salvation hymn from behind the gates of the body. They had their spirits awakened and prepared for the coming great event. That great event facilitated the crossing from death to life, from darkens to light, from the authority of Satan to the Kingdom of God, from the bonds of the old man to the liberty of the children of God in glory. That great event granted and guaranteed the passage from death to life after it had been impossible *“For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection”* (Romans 6:5). This verse presents the first act of unity in the likeness of Jesus Christ’s death as a past tense act. The second act is presented in the perpetual future. This means that unity with Jesus Christ in His death is one subject and unity with Him in His Resurrection is another one. In His death we were truly in Him, within His human body which is ours because through His incarnation He took what was ours and died with it. His Resurrection does not procure unity by default. For, it is essential that the risen Jesus Christ come to us. We were in Jesus Christ at His death, but after His resurrection He comes to us, and makes a dwelling. But Jesus Christ cannot make His Resurrection an act of a new life except within those who have accomplished the complete death of the old man. That is what he had taught repeatedly time and time again.

Articles on the Christian History - The Fourth Century

The Twentieth Article

As said before, the use of power is irresistible to the unrighteous. That explains why Vilagoreus and Gregory inflicted indescribable persecution on the Copts. To add insult to injury, Gregory with some of his soldiers visited Egypt launching attacks on the Copts, killing, destroying and bombarding till

gradually the Arians got hold of most of the churches forbidding bishops and priests to enter or conduct any prayers, rituals, sacraments or any other services. History records the martyrdom of St. Potamon who in his debate with Gregory rejecting Arius' teachings was arrested, stripped off of his clothes and beaten to death before the eyes of his congregation.

Hearing the sad news of his people, Pope Athanasius, from his hiding place, sent an appeal to the churches all over the world. It was one of his most wonderful letters in which he likened himself to the Israelite, in the Holy Book of Judges chapter nineteen, who was offended in the person of his wife who had been attacked by evil men. During those perilous days, Bishop Julius, the bishop of Rome called for a council to be headed by him to discuss matters with the Arian bishops.

Shortly after that, Pope Athanasius, receiving an invitation to attend that council, saw no choice but to attend. He left his hiding place in Egypt in the hope of defending his faith, people and church; and went to Rome in April 339 AD where he would face his second exile.

3. Pope Athanasius in Rome- the Council of Rome 340 AD

Bishop Julius of Rome met Pope Athanasius with extreme cordiality. Eighteen months had passed during which Bishop Julius had written a letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia defending Athanasius and saying, "In response to our invitation, Athanasius came to Rome to defend himself with great bravery. If he were not innocent and sure of his cause, he would not have come and waited for a confrontation for such a long time."

After a lot of procrastination, delay and excuses on the side of Eusebius and the Arian bishops, a local council was convened in November 340 AD to which the Eastern and Western bishops were invited. Some of Arius' followers were invited but they were afraid to face Athanasius and a defeat similar to the one they had received at Sur Council.

During the council, Pope Athanasius presented his true faith and defended his miserably inflicted people. Totally convinced by Athanasius and totally angry at Eusebius and the Arian followers, the bishops present at the council issued a number of decrees:

+Confirming St. Athanasius' position and their adherence to the validity of the Faith of the Nicene Council.

+Abolishing the outsiders.

+Invalidating the stance of Gregory in Alexandria.

At the end of the council, the bishops implored Bishop Julius, bishop of Rome, to send all those decrees to the bishops around the world for recognition and immediate implementation and execution.

22. Comments on Bishop Julius' Message

Bishop Julius' biscopal letter comprises useful information pertaining to the history of the church. Its style reveals the Roman bishop's utter conviction in Athanasius' cause and the subsequent weightlessness of Arius' and the Eusebian's argument. The letter implies that Athanasius' cause, in its totality does not need a council in contrast to the sinful, futile acts of those church outcasts void of sensibility and consequently who deserve to be ignored.

23. Dissemination of Monasticism and the Coptic Liturgy in the West

The two or more years that St. Athanasius had spent in Rome were not idly spent. On the contrary, like his Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, he went about sowing seeds for the kingdom. The two monks the one-eared Amonios and Theodore impressed the Romans with their asceticism and their attire and attitude drew the attention, not only of Rome, but of other countries in the West. Recounting the life story of St. Anthony was a starting point for establishing the foundation of monasticism with its rules and regulations and an inspiration for a life of asceticism and worship. Moreover, St. Athanasius and the monks travelling him would pray with the Roman bishops in and out of Rome thus leaving behind them an influential legacy of the Coptic Liturgy. In general, the presence of St. Athanasius in Rome along with the Egyptian monks was enough to spread his theology in the Western world and promote monasticism. St. Jerome confirmed it in his message saying "the Coptic monasticism became known for the first time in Rome during St. Athanasius' exile."

History has it that St. Athanasius would visit St. Peter's and St. Paul's tombs and pour himself in deep tearful prayers asking their prayers that God might interfere and proclaim the true faith for which he was in trouble.

24. "An ungodly man digs up evil, and it is on his lips like a burning fire." (Proverbs 16:27)

The Roman Council decrees and recommendations convened in December 340 AD reached the Arians of Antioch in the beginning of 341 AD. Their usual response was to appeal to the National authority in order to arouse Emperor Coinstantaneous against Pope Athanasius taking the occasion of the inauguration of gilded church in Antioch as an opportunity. They also called for a council headed by the Arian bishops in which Eusebius of Nicomedia was present and during which (according to the historians Sozomenus and Socrates) the Arians were very furious at Bishop Julius of Rome and decided to write a letter full of dissensions and hatred.

A delegation of four bishops handed Emperor Constantius of the West a deluding false report concerning what had taken place in Antioch with the intention of spreading dissension, animosity and envy in the heart of the Emperor against St. Athanasius. The historian Hilary records that Bishop Maximianus of Trieva, in his firm stand against the Arians, he refused to pray with the

Arian delegation considering them excommunicated from the Catholic Apostolic church according to the Nicene Council.

25. **“The forcing of wrath produces strife.” (Proverbs 30:33)**

Meanwhile the Copts in Egypt were very upset concerning the afflictions imposed on St. Athanasius. On the other hand, the Christians in Rome were either supporters of Bishop Julius, or Eusebius or just being stubborn. All these news made the emperor think of convening a council wherein all the ends in strife would come together and try to end all the skirmishes and dissensions. He invited St. Athanasius and received him with great cordiality and respect. A council was agreed upon to be held in Serdica (what is Sofia, Bulgaria today).