

~Other Speakers A-F: St. Antony:

Antony writes to his dear children, holy Israelites in their intellectual substance. There is no need to name your bodily names which will pass away, for you are Israelite children. Truly, my children, the love that is between me and you is no bodily love, but a spiritual, religious love. For this cause I grow not weary of praying to my God day and night for you, that you may be able to know the grace He has wrought towards you. For not at one time only did God visit His creatures, but from the beginning the world He makes disposition for His creatures, and in every generation rouses up each one by opportunities and by grace. Now, my children, neglect not to cry out day and night to God, constraining the bounty of the Father, and in His bounty He will give you help from heaven, teaching you until you know what is good for you.

Truly, my children, we are dwelling in our death, and staying in the house of the robber, and bound with the bonds of death. Now therefore, give not sleep to your eyes nor slumber to your eyelids (Ps. 132:4), that your may offer yourselves a sacrifice to God in all holiness, which none can inherit without sanctification. Truly, my beloved in the Lord, let this word be manifest to you, that you may do good, and so refresh all the saints, and give gladness to the ministry of the angels, and joy to the coming of Jesus: for never yet have they had rest on our behalf until this hour. And to me also, this poor wretch, who am dwelling in this house of clay “ you will give joy to my soul. Truly, my children, this sickness and low estate of ours is a grief to all the saints, and they weep and moan for us before the Creator of all. And for this cause the God of all is angry at our evil works, because of the groans of the saints. And again our progress in righteousness gives gladness to the people of the saints, and they make much prayer and joyful exultation before our Creator. And He Himself, the Creator of all, rejoices over our works at the testimony of His saints, and grants us gifts of His grace without measure.

That you may know therefore that God always loves His creatures “ their substance being immortal, not to be dissolved with their bodies “ He saw how the intellectual nature had gone down altogether into the abyss, dead altogether, and the implanted law of the covenant was dried up. And of His goodness He visited mankind by Moses. And Moses founded the house of truth, and desired to heal the great wound, and wanted to bring them back to the first union, and could not do it, and withdrew from them. Then again the choir of the Prophets built upon Moses’s™ foundation, and could not heal the great wound of their members. And seeing that their power had ceased, again all the peoples of the saints were gathered together in one, and offered prayer before the Creator and said, “œls there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered? O Lord, we would have healed Babylon, and she is not healed. Now let us forsake her and flee from her.” (Jer. 8:22; 51:9)

And as all the saints asked the goodness of the Father concerning His Only-begotten, because unless He Himself should come hither, none of the creatures was able to heal the great wound of men, for the sake of this the Father in His goodness spoke and said, “œSon of man, make to thyself instruments of captivity, and go into captivity willingly.” (Ezek. 12:3; Jer. 46:19) The Father spared not His Only-begotten, for the salvation of us all, but delivered Him up for our sins. (Rom. 8:32) For our iniquities humbled Him, and by His stripes we all are healed (Isa. 53:5): and He gathered us from one end of the world to the other, making resurrection of our minds from the earth, and teaching us that we are “œmembers one of another” (Eph. 4:25) Take heed, my children, lest that word of Paul be accomplished upon us, that we should “œhave the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.” (2 Tim. 3:5) Now let each one of you rend his heart, and weep before Him and say, “œWhat shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me?” (Ps. 116:11) Again I fear, my children, lest that word be accomplished upon us, “œWhat profit is there in my blood, when I go down to corruption?” (Ps. 30:9)

Truly, my children, I speak to you as to wise men, that you may understand what I say to you, and this I testify to you: unless each one of you shall hate all nature of earthly possession, and renounce it and all its works with all his heart, and stretch out the hands of his heart to heaven, to the Father of all, he cannot be saved. If he do what I have said, God will have pity upon him for his labor, and grant him that invisible fire which will burn up all impurity from him. And our principal spirit will be purified; and then the Holy Spirit will dwell in us, and Jesus will abide with us, and so we shall be able to worship God as we ought. But as long as we have peace with the natures of the world, we are enemies of God and of His angels and of all His saints.

Now therefore, my beloved, I beseech you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, not to neglect your salvation, that this transitory life may not deprive you of eternal life, nor the skin of a corruptible body deprive you of the kingdom of light ineffable, nor a guilty seat lose you the angelic thrones of judgment. Truly, my children, my heart is in wonder and my spirit in terror, that we all take our pleasure like drunkards on new wine; for each one of us has sold himself of his own free choice, and we are dominated of our own free choice, and we are not

Now therefore understand that, be it the holy heavens or angels or archangels or thrones or dominions or cherubim or seraphim or sun or moon or stars, or patriarchs or prophets or apostles, or devil or satan or evil spirits or powers of the air, or (to say no more) be it a man or a woman, in the beginning of their creation they are all derived from one – all save only the perfect and blessed Trinity of Father and Son and Holy Spirit. And from the evil conduct of some, it became needful that God should set names upon them according to their works. And to those who made most progress, He gave more abundant glory.