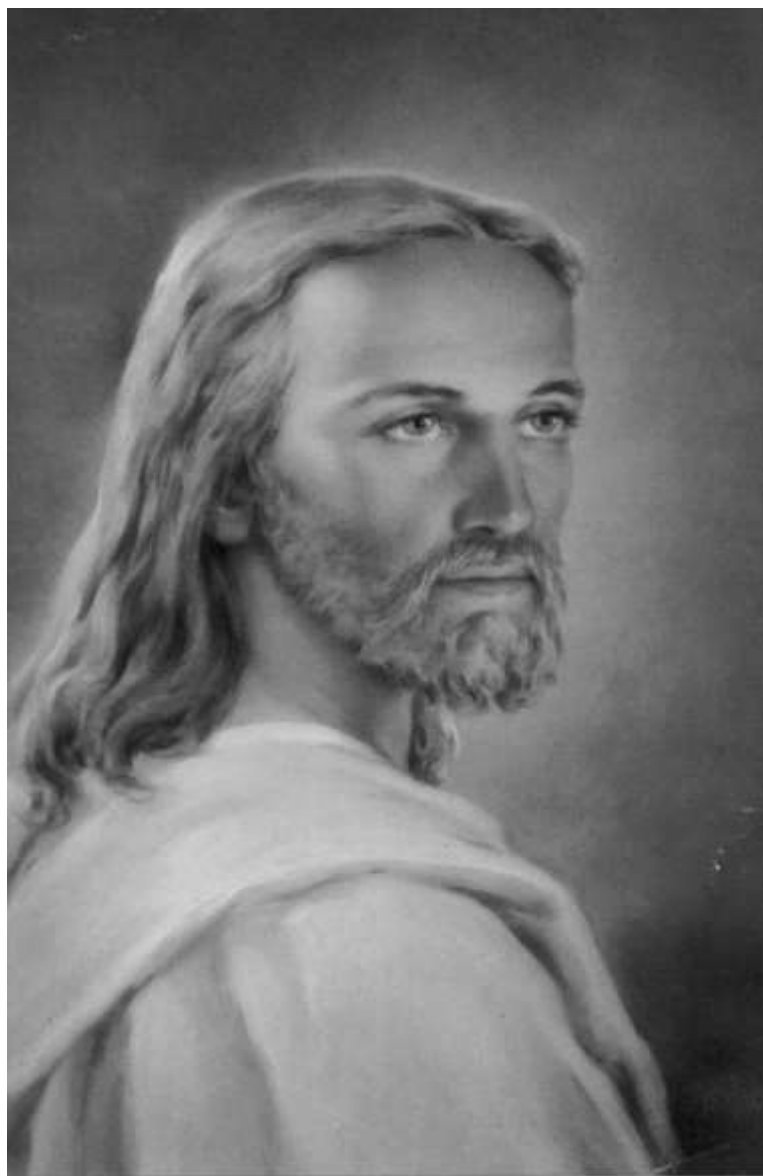




By His Death We Live

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H.H. Pope Shenouda III, 117th Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and the See of St. Mark

Introduction

How hideous the sin is! The sin penetrates into the human heart to pull him off his throne and authority and down into the abyss. Extinction started to work its way into humans deforming every beauty in them; and death is inevitably approaching as the passing days are nonrecurring.

The human being's days on earth have become his only way to live and so he became a slaughtering beast taking over his prey's share of life.

The earth became a forest until Christ came to end the bleeding of death and to calm the fearful human being. Christ came to restore the human being's lost peace and his potential for eternal life. Jesus Christ has come to make the human being truly human.

Father Angelos Gerges

Chapter I
My Father Came to Make Me live
(An Allegory)

To every human being throughout the different eras of time, we must tell this story as it bears our genuine and true heritage. It expresses the deepest feelings that a human being has ever experienced about the God that loved to the extent of sacrificing Himself so that humanity would be resurrected, and so it could break out of its imprisonment, its slavery and its death.

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There was a great and mighty king who had the power to do everything in his kingdom. It happened that this king longed for having a son that resembles him in power, creativity and wisdom and to inherit his throne. He wanted this son to be the subject of his love, the focus of his interest and to whom he would give everything.

Because his power was unlimited, the king's son came to be as good looking as his father wanted him to be. He had inherited the king's power, beauty and wisdom. Being raised in the royal court, the son grew to acquire a lifestyle of wisdom, wealth and vitality.

That was why the king granted him the authority to run his palace and to manage a section of his kingdom. Consequently, the beloved son became the most important person in the kingdom after his father, the great king.

The king's immense love to his son was the subject of envy of malignant people who were previously alienated from the kingdom. These people were the king's slaves to whom the former power, authority and glory only through his own goodness. Unfortunately, this kindness made the slaves think that they could seize the king's throne and overtake his kingdom, power, glory and greatness so all would be theirs!

When the king discovered their conspiracies, he dismissed them from his palace and kingdom as a whole. They could no longer live with him as they did not love him. Because of their evil nature they were no longer able to be part of the kingdom's fellowship of the good, and so they created their own kingdom of evil and darkness.

The resultant kingdom of darkness indeed coincided with their malign nature. However, they knew that this kingdom of theirs is not permanent and hence; someday, it will perish. Knowing that they will soon perish, the evil slaves grew to envy the King's son even more as it is he who has authority and will inherit his father's reign.

With time, the evil slaves' primary focus revolved about how to deprive the king's son of his legitimate reign and to fully control him. Perhaps they wanted to prove to the great king how powerful they have become and that they are capable of destroying his beloved son. On the other hand, the beloved son lived a happy life, just like his father, inside the great palace.

The son was filled with wisdom and freedom that was complete without any hindering restrictions. He had authority over everything as he derived it from his father's authority. Hence, no one, within the boundaries of the kingdom, could ever threaten the son's life.

The son continued to lead such a life until, one day, he asked his father about life outside the gates of his kingdom. The father replied to his son saying: "inside the gates of kingdom you live happily. Although I brought you up with knowledge about everything and I have given you everything. Nevertheless, your freedom entitles you to choose whatever you wish from

everything about you. I tell you however; outside the kingdom's gates, the evil people live dark lives.

These evil people were once part of my kingdom but I dismissed them because of their malevolence. And when you became the heir to the throne, their envy towards you increased. They await you out there; they wish to enslave you; they know that my loss will be sincerely great when you die with them.

This is why I closed my kingdom's gates and prevented you from going out so they would never come near you, but now you have grown up and are free to choose. You are wise and clever enough so here are the keys to the place and kingdom's gates. I'm handing them over to you so you know that you really are free.

You're free to choose between living with me in my kingdom where you'll have the power and authority I bestow upon you, you being a true son to me, or to leave the palace and live with them.

A very important fact, which you must know well, is that the day you leave my kingdom is the day you'll be under the authority of the kingdom of evil, as you would have declared that you no longer wish to live with me. Hence you will lose your authority over everything as it's derived from your life with me. If you exit the kingdom, all the glory that I gave to you will be lost.

They will have the power to enslave you and to deform your features to remove my image that is in you. After that, you will die with them as their kingdom will come to an end and become annihilated. They want to take you with them so that I don't annihilate their kingdom since you're with them. Nevertheless, this kingdom must end and all things in it must die; and so if you

enter it, you will die too. So remember my words to avoid such a death.

Yet you are free and you know that I love you dearly. I gave you everything but I want you to live with me by your own choice rather than out of obligation.

The son understood this speech very well. Whenever he approached the walls of the kingdom, he would become quite cautious as he knew that outside these walls he would die and his authority would be lost.

All was well until the day when approached the gates of the kingdom and heard a voice calling unto him softly. The voice tenderly asked him to converse with.

The son's heart beats rapidly increased out of fear. His father's words flashed into his memory but he still thought he should check out the source of the voice and what it wanted. And so, he approached the walls and replied: "what do you want?"

- The evil people: "we are friends to you and we come seeking your own good".
- The son: "my own good! How come? You only wish that I die with you".
- The evil people: "what? Never! Who told you that?"
- The son: "my father, the great king!"
- The evil people: "your father wants to steal your right to be a great king just like him rather than a subordinate. That's why he wants you to live inside the walls of his kingdom, and that you do not depart from it so you do not leave his area of

jurisdiction. We know that you have the same powers and authority as the King does.

You have brains, freedom, power and right to become a king just by leaving the kingdom you're in. It is time that you come out and declare your freedom, you will be pronounced a king from now on rather than secondary to your father, the king”.

The young man hesitated a little before continuing the conversation with them; however, the evil men's words had already found their echo in his heart. He continued saying: “but if I leave the kingdom, I will lose my power without my father and with you I'll die in the hell of death!”

The evil people laughed at the son's saying and replied: “of course your father will tell you such things to scare you so wouldn't dare depart his kingdom! Your father's sole purpose of telling you all these statements is to keep you under his jurisdiction and subordinate to him, rather than an independent king just like him.

No, dear friend, you will not die but you will become a king like him. You are a free king, just like him. Come out to declare your uprising against him and that you refuse to remain under his authority. Come out and pronounce yourself a king with mighty, glory, knowledge and freedom.

Are you not free? Use your freedom and leave! Until when will you follow the king without using your freedom to separate yourself from him?”

The evil people's words filled the young man's mind and for the first time in his life he doubted his father's love to him.

Following this, the young man took out the kingdom gate's keys and unlocked them with his complete free will. It was his choice to leave his father's kingdom and enter the kingdom of evil.

It would have been better he had not done that. He had not listened to them. He had not left his father's kingdom in search for his self!

Outside his father's kingdom he became without authority. He was completely vulnerable to the evil people who fiercely swooped down on him, took his clothes off and made him put on slaves clothes. They forced him to sign a document selling him to them in return for very cheap price; hence he became enslaved to them according to the slavery law.

To remove any resemblance the son had to his father, the evil people dragged him by the face on the ground. They also stamped his forehead with the seal of slavery and dragged him without dignity into their kingdom while they themselves were dancing and rejoicing their great plunder.

All the son's efforts of screaming and moaning went in vain as it was too late. The son descended to live in the kingdom of darkness knowing that he would be judged to death and that he will perish with them.

The son, regretting what he had done, kept on crying out and calling upon his father with a solemnly broken heart. Suddenly, the son heard his strong father's voice shaking his being coming to him from behind the walls of his kingdom: "where are you? Why did you leave my kingdom? Why did you obey the voice of the evil people? Did I not tell you that away from me there is

death, slavery and disgrace? Why did you rebel against me and leave me? Within my arms you were full of life and strength".

As the king was talking to his son, the evil people's voices were getting louder: "He is ours! He chose to leave you and become our slave. Here, he is without authority and will die with us. He became ours as he used the freedom you granted him.

This broke the king's heart as he looked upon the son whom he lost to the evil people where he will die as a slave. The king felt sad about all the power and glory he had granted his son, and which the latter simply lost by surrendering himself as a slave.

Moreover, his heart was broken over his son who no longer exhibited his father's likeness but rather the features of slavery. The king was exasperated as his only son would live with the evil in pain and suffering until their kingdom perished and that his son would perish with them. He knew that he was to abolish this kingdom of evil some time.

On the other hand, how could he while his only son resided with them, despite the fact that he no longer exhibited likeness to his father! It was his decision to refuse living with him preferring to live with the evil.

What could the king do about this? Should he leave his rebellious son just because he chose this path in spite of the warnings?

Should he just let go of his son to death after he lost him to evil and deformation? Could he forgive him his foolishness and disownment to his father?

And even if he forgave his son, how will he be able to get him back from the kingdom of evil since they now owned him (contract with slavery)? How will his son be able to live in his father's kingdom while bearing the image of slavery?

The question glowed in the king's mind: how will his son return unless someone saves him from his pitiful condition from prison and slavery?

What will the father do now? He cannot destroy this kingdom unless he first saved his son. This kingdom was after all doomed to destruction according to the judgment of death. The almighty king with such authority had to do something to save his son and restore him to his first condition and image. Long hours the king spent in the dilemma of thoughts how could he save his son whose image was deformed when he enslaved himself to evil?

The king found out that he must descend to the kingdom of evil to save his son from its grasp and from the death that found its way into his heart just as it found its way into theirs.

Consequently, the king sent messengers bearing messages to his son informing him that the former will come someday and save him. These messages were filled with encouragement for the son to withstand the pain and suffering from slavery. He had to believe that his father had the power to save him, with this believe, the son was to live and endure the suffering while upholding what's left of his image and determination.

These messages included what comforted the son in many difficulties. Every time he received a message from his father, the son felt happy and learnt it by heart until the time his father would save him and set him free. Thinking in this respect, the son came in accordance with the king's exact plan to save the former.

Once day, the king descended from his throne and put on ordinary clothes disguising in a slave's outfit; thus leaving his greatness, power and glory as a king. With this costume, the king approached his kingdom's gates and opened them to go to the kingdom of darkness to search for his lost son.

He asked and searched a lot until he got to know that his son was with the slaves under severe authoritarian rule. And so, the king agreed to enter the city of slaves, live and work amongst them as a slave.

The king ate, drank, slept and took the yoke upon him with them. He worked as a slave, endured all and executed all his predominates' instruction only to be able to search for his son and save him.

After several days, the king found his son amongst the slaves, and approached him with genuine love and care. He hugged and kissed him. As his father saw what they have done with to his son, he wept upon his son's condition as he was totally deformed and his wounds were not only severely painful to him but also deep, infected and incurable.

"Fear not, my son! You will no longer be a slave. They will not overpower you again." Said the father to his son who cried with regret while remembering all his pains during the days of slavery. The son told his father about what had happened in the days of capture and how fierce the enemies were.

Desperately and shamefully he hid his face and said to his father: "I sold myself for a very cheap price". His father replied to him while patting his shoulder: "don't be afraid, my son. I will pay the price and will tear apart the bond of your slavery".

The son's eyes sparkled with joy: "Is this really true, father? I will become free, and you'll tear the bond of my slavery? But it is very expensive, will you pay such a price for me, and it was I that foolishly chose to move away from you and left you in spite of your love to me?"

The father took him in his bosom and said: "But you are still my beloved son. I will forgive you your foolishness and weakness and I'll grant your life again".

The son replied desperately: "But there are shut doors, bolts of brass, locks and fierce guards how will we leave?"

The father looked at his son blamefully replying: "Why don't you trust your father? Do not forget, I am the king who has the power and authority. Even if these clothes hide my nature, they did not change it and they will not slip my power and authority away. My glory is hidden within me and I'll use my power when it is required".

The king took him by the hand and went where the papers of slavery were. He paid his son's debts and took the bond on which his son's slavery was contracted and tore it amid the amazement of attendants who could not believe that someone could agree to pay such a huge debt off for a wounded and deformed man. His son was indeed a weak slave with no power, beauty or great capabilities but only in the eyes of the others. On the other hand, his father looked upon him as his beloved son who was pleased to bear his name and live with him.

The father took his son's hand, after paying off his great debt, and walked together to exit the kingdom of darkness. It was then that the kingdom's guards and officials stopped them pronouncing their power and authority.

The father took off the slave's clothes he was wearing and exposed himself as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. At this moment, all those who saw him fell before him and feared him greatly. In the midst of the guards panic and fearful state the great king advanced towards the kingdoms gates while carrying his wounded son treading on all the power and authority of evil.

No one dared capture them or even approach them they only trembled with fear. While giving them a piercing look that wasted their hearts away, the king ordered the evil people to return to their kingdom of darkness. Not a single person could raise his eyes to the king but rather they all hid and fled.

Embracing his son, the king passed the doors of the age-old darkness thus granted him freedom once again. At the gates of the kingdom of darkness, the father said to his son: "This day have I begotten you a second time. This day I give you the freedom of life once again".

Therefore, I asked you: "Would you like to live in my kingdom and under my power? Would you like to live with me according to the laws of the Kingdom of Light? You are free to choose once again".

The son's eyes were filled with tears and he bowed before his father: "My father and King, I am totally yours! My heart, mind, emotions, body and spirit. I was sold out of my weakness and foolishness and so I became a slave and you have bought me. I was wounded and insulted and you became my medicine and restored my dignity. I have known that you are the life and outside you there is death and extinction. How can return to choose death away from you? I have known that you are my existence and the strength, so how can I possibly leave you, father and become

without meaning and existence. Now I ask you not to be disgusted by my wounds and injuries but to treat them".

With a caring look, the father addressed his son saying: "My son, as long as you want me to change you, I will; I will treat your wounds and cure them".

The son looked into his father's eyes and said: "Father, please do not ask me about the clothes you gave me, as I foolishly tore them and they wore out in the kingdom of evil".

His father looked back at him, took him into his arms and said: "Son, I will give you my robe to wear and to shine in".

The son turned his face around and covered his face with his hands saying: "Oh father! I don't want anyone to see me in your kingdom as I am deformed and I no longer bear your features or likeness! I ruined myself when I gave up the likeness you granted me and left your kingdom".

The father kindly replied: "I will restore my likeness onto you and will reshape your features to match mine. Once again you will have my authority and power and your glory will become clear to everyone".

The king took him into his arms again and led him into his kingdom amongst the joy and cheering of all members of the kingdom of light. Everyone was chanting the songs of victory and playing the most pleasant tunes glorifying the great king whose love is unlimited, whose kingdom is endless and his work is magnificent.

The son entered the kingdom with his father who cured him and gave him royal clothes. Through the almighty king's power and authority over all things, he restored his likeness onto his son's features and removed the signs of slavery. The king also gave his son a ring to wear.

He also ordered a feast to be prepared for his son, so they could celebrate together eating at the same table to compensate the latter for the years of hunger, pain and sadness. At the feast, the musicians played joyful tunes and the singers recited songs of victory.

The king went out with his beloved son who wore beautiful clothes and whose face was shining again as his father had wiped his tears away.

The king had treated all his son's illnesses and granted him his likeness so that he would reign with the former in his kingdom forever. Indeed, forever will he be seated with his father in the kingdom of light!

What a beautiful story this is. What a great king this one is whose love is unlimited; he forgave his son all his rejection out because he loved him.

He descended to save his son and to bring him back to existence once again. He defeated death while giving himself to his son as a remedy leading to eternity.

🕯️ **Prayer** 🕯️

O Lord, my strength
I praise you;
As without you, I am easily prey.
Outside you my blood is shed in vain,
Wolves snap at me,
Dogs frighten me,
Because I am without you.
Their teeth bite at me,
Their mouths swallow me,
Because without you
I am a meaningless wanderer.
The fire is surrounding me.
So who can extinguish the flames?!
Who can enlighten my darkness?!
Who can protect me?!
Who can make me raise my eyes?!
Whom do I have but you, my Lord?
So would you kindly
Return to me and fill my heart?!
Embrace me so your breath could warm me,
Your words are the secret of my strength and victory.

O Jesus...

Allow me to return to your kingdom.

I'm longing for my place in you

And your features to be imprinted on me.

O beloved

Hold my nature in your right hand

And make me a new to reconstitute me;

Hold the paintbrush to draw my features;

Send your spirit to me,

To teach me and guide me,

And to support and contain me.

My father,

Here is my heart in your right hand.

Inhabit it so it'll become your heaven;

Anoint it with your blood

So it will be purified to fit for you.

Amen

Chapter II

Tragedy of Man's fall

Dear reader, allow me to reveal the truth behind this allegory. It is indeed the story of humanity. This is the tragedy that devastated our entire being and so changed our features, thoughts and images of our lives and days.

Humanity lived long and terrifying years until it experienced salvation for real and when Jesus put a decisive end to death. The story started when God created Man because he loved him.

Indeed, Man was subject of God's love before He created him. Since there is nothing that is new to God, the idea of Man's existence could not have become new to God's thoughts at any moment in time. This is impossible theologically because God is perfect and does not lack even the simplest of ideas.

Man has always had a pre-existence in God's thought. And after the whole creation was completed, God created Man as a beloved son bearing his father's image and likeness. All this was so that Man could have all the love, power and life just as God wanted him to.

God created Man out of dust to be his physical nature and breathed the breath of life onto him to be his spiritual nature that resembles Him. Thus Man has become bearer of a living soul which includes his personal image but which also resembles God.

There was no conflict between the physical and spiritual matters and there was no deformity and or weakness in the soul but everything was in coordination and in complete harmony.

The physical identity of Man is sublime, exalted and changeable to a higher status when compared to the other physical images as a result of the unity of its physical matter with the breath of life that came from God. It is this Godly breath of life that is the spiritual soul or the psychological spirit making him

the crown of the whole creation. This first nature, before the fall, was not controlled by the laws of extinction.

The human soul that which embraces will, emotions and thought was in complete and continuous harmony with the spirit with which it was working with through sublimed spiritual powers; for the will, emotions and thought are spiritual and psychological powers without any defect or conflict.

The likeness that Man took from God included that he had:

- A free and wise thinking mind.
- The image of righteousness and holiness as well as authority and powers like God.
- An eternal life that will not become extinct.

* * * * *

Firstly: A truly free thinking mind

God, who has absolute wisdom, mind and freedom, created Man in His own image bearing His features but with a limited nature.

Man's limits are God's authority. This authority is of absolute goodness, so it is not a tyrannical and/or masterful authority of love and goodness.

If such a relationship between God and Man exists, it is impossible for Man to have a relationship with the evil or to have a will that is against God.

But when he refuses God's authority as limitation for him, then he entered into a circle of another authority that limits his freedom which is the authority of evil and darkness and how hideous this authority is.

And because God is an absolute good and permanent goodness the relationship between Man and God should have been based on free choice and not compulsion.

And as Man has a mind that has the ability to think then he is free and he would have been given the possibility of choice for the forced love is not love and the forced good is not good. For this reason, God gave the commandment to Man to declare his real will.

In obeying it there will exist the fellowship of love and the will of good and in rebelling against it is the declaration of refusing to live with God and going out from His kingdom.

Man has to choose and to bear the results of his choice. Either to choose to live forever with God in mighty, richness and glory or to refuse living with God bearing the results of rebellion against good so he agrees upon evil refusing life and agreeing upon death and refuses holiness so he will be in fellowship with perversion so his image is damaged and he became under other one's authority where there are death and nihility because existence with God is the real and true existence.

Second: Bears the image of the righteousness, holiness and an authority from the likeness of God

Really what a marvelous image that God gave to Man when He prepared to create him. He loved him so much that He gave him His likeness in righteousness and holiness so that he becomes His son bearing His image in mighty and authority amongst the universe and before all characters and creatures as his holiness stems from being similar to God! Holiness is to be related to God for anything enters in a relationship with God should become holy. Nothing is holy by itself but holiness is granted from God.

Nature becomes holy if it is related to God in its work so you say that this place is holy when God uses it so it becomes holy through Him but the whole entity of Man was holy because he was created in God's image and likeness.

The physical body is holy and sublime by God's breath which is in him. He is no longer dust only but our entities have united with the spirit and the soul which bear God's likeness.

The soul, emotions and thought were holy because they were controlled by the will of absolute good that is in God. In spite of the freedom that was given to Man since creating him, he did not know anything else but God's will.

Therefore, he lived in such a state that has made him holy having an authority over the whole nature because he is God's typical example and shadow on earth and this was the secret of Adam's authority.

So his authority is related to his holiness which is from God's likeness that is in him and this holiness is related to his choice of living with God and being united with Him.

When he refuses to live with God holiness will be lost and subsequently the authority.

Third: Eternal, not to perish

God created Man to live with Him forever putting in him life which is from Him in order that he will not perish. This means that for life to last in him he would be related to God with his whole entity.

For life is God and outside Him there is no life.

God is the only source for life and going apart from Him means extinction and death but the other physical creatures have not spirits that related to God but only souls so they die immediately on shedding their bloods,

**"for the life of the flesh is in the blood"
(Lev. 17: 11)**

Law of extinction

All physical creatures live according to a special law which is limited by an exact fixed time and when this time ends they are destroyed and have no existence any more.

But concerning Man, although he has physical entity but he also has a spirit that makes him live forever if his spirit is related to God but if he separates himself from God the spirit will be quenched.

Law of life

To live forever Man must choose freely to continue in the state of righteousness and holiness and this will not be achieved except by permanent existence and relationship with God and from this point comes the importance of the commandment because through it the way of life or death will be determined.

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply; and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not bear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swear unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac"
(Deut, 30: 15-20)

Law of commandment and freedom

The commandment was like guideposts on the way of life to indicate the end of the road that Man will walk through by his own will.

The commandment was as follows: In the day when Man wants or will want to live without God losing the relationship with Him and choosing to go out from the circle of His will and obedience the he will die.

And this happened through eating from fruits of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The fruit was not the sin in itself but the sin was in breaking the commandment.

God did not create the sin and the name of the tree was the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Then, it was not evil but it was to declare the knowledge of evil when Man breaks the commandment and to declare the knowledge of good when Man chooses to fulfill it.

This is what has happened when Man ate from the fruit and declared his refusal of the relationship with God and agreed upon the will of evil presented to him to become like God.

"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Gen. 3: 5-6)

Then the commandment was not a restriction on Man's freedom but it was to show his freedom in choosing the way of living with God or rebellion against Him.

By his own will Man broke life and deformed the image and spoiled the likeness God created when he became independent with his entity. He thought that he will be knowing everything like God. He trusted in the devil's speech who seduced him and entered him willingly into the circle of evil by his rebellion against good, refusing to obey God's words and breaking the relationship with Him and so he became apart from God, spoiled and a slave under the law of death and destruction.

Effects of sin and consequence of transgression

1- Corruption of the human nature, deformation of God's image and losing the likeness

Before falling away Man was holy and righteous bearing God's likeness that was reflected into his holy image.

But when he chose to become separated from God this image was deformed as the features of holiness were lost from Man and so he lost the likeness but did not lose the image (God created the mind in Man in His image and gave him likeness through the wisdom of thinking).

But the image became deformed and without life because it lost the relationship with God and got the effects of transgression and sin. So after the blessing of permanent existence with God and the authority of image's holiness Man got an entity in which corruption is working and which does not resemble God.

And instead of righteousness and holiness Man became in a state of rebellion and got a sinful nature, corruption took power over the state that Man put himself in it and started spoiling his whole entity because he became outside God's entity.

Law of corruption

Before falling away Man was living in the circle of righteousness with his whole entity and righteousness was his normal law.

But after falling away he entered in the circle of evil and now he became exist permanently in the circle of the normally being attracted to sin to spoil his whole entity.

This is because he allowed his will to complete this attraction to the evil's law which has become working inside him and completing this means death.

But he remained bearing in his entity the traces of God's image even if it is not working because he is separated from God. And he still has a spirit that loves God even if this spirit is far from Him. And a soul that longs from Him and for His righteousness even if this soul is still deceived from the devil and corrupted by the relationship with him. And a body that longs for eternity and for getting out of the death circle even if it is restricted to the earth and to his physical needs.

★ ★ Fish is an example of the corruption according to law of state

As long as the fish is in the water it can live because it is in the life environment that is suitable for it but when it comes out of the sea it becomes dead. Although it has all possibilities of life organically but because it came out of the atmosphere of life (water) it must die and after some time of being outside the sea

the rottenness of its nature is shown clearly to all and its smell diffuses a bad odor and it degenerates and ends.

The same happens to Man. His life was in God and from God. So when he wanted to go out of being exist with him and of living in Him the corruption becomes able to work in him and he came to an atmosphere where corruption is working so he will end and die.

Under the effect of corruption, soul began to accept evil and sin and subsequently started to know grudge, hatred and murder.

"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD, and Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD has respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him" (Gen.4: 3-8)

The body which was created to live forever became vulnerable to be ill, to get tired, to die and to degenerate (Gen.5).

And the spirit, as being separated from God, is imprisoned under devil's authority as the devil imparted in Man what makes him to be attracted to the devil who will have authority over him.

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD

that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them" (Gen. 6: 5-7)

Man, by his rebellion and refusal, entered willingly into the state of corruption His will's power. Which was created for righteousness, was opened to do evil.

So Man's beauty was ruined, the soul has had the evil working in it, the body has been perished and died and the spirit has been extinguished and no longer has real power for eternal life.

2- Man's deprivation of his authority and his entering under the devil's authority

Separation from God is a very dangerous state that no one feels it except this who has known God therefore the change of Man's state from holiness that he has had with God to the corruption that he experienced after falling away was of results that appeared quickly.

Man lost the power of righteousness and holiness that he was bearing and by which he was resembling God.

So he no longer has neither the authority of the king nor the fear and power he has had as a creature that created in God's image and likeness and he became very weak and entered into the slavery of Kingdom of darkness which is under the authority of the devil because when Man agreed upon transgression and rebellion he became under his grasp and this is what Lord Jesus Christ declared for He is The Holy One so the devil could not subjugate Him to his authority because He did not and does not bear any evil image that can be subjected to him.

"hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14: 30)

Man became weak and without power, so the devil enslaved him and entered him into his slavery but Man remained longing for returning and giving the prisoner's cries from the walls of his slavery which has become there in all his life.

3- Man became a bearer of death judgment and entered into the circle of law of matter

"And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1: 31)

This means that he is an entity that has not anything weak or bad. For although there is a matteristic nature which is the body and a spiritual nature but the body, spirit and soul are in a state of righteousness and without any conflict between the two natures.

But when Man fell away he became in a state of conflict as the likeness that is from God was deformed and Man entered into the evil authority.

This made Man in a state of conflict between the old image that was deformed and the devil's authority that is prevailing upon him now and with the weakness of the spirit that is in Man because this spirit is outside God, Man became living under the law of matter that is subjected to foolishness and extinction and the body now is tending to the earth and dust into which he will be turned after death.

Every Man turned now to live in struggle according to a personal law, which is the law of soul as soul is the constitutional personal image of the individual. And by it he chooses to take sides with either to the image of spirit that is working weakly in

him after the sin or to the earth and dust that became under the devil's authority.

God's work for Man was to talk to his spirit outside his entity in order to be patient towards this state till his salvation comes. It was as if he is a prisoner inside thick and high walls. But through a small window from which he could see the sun, His father came to speak to him about the way of living and behavior in the prison until He comes and sets him free completely.

For a state of a prisoner is not the normal state for him but it is a state that is against his nature so a conflict arises inside him as he is living under the law of prison, slavery and bonds.

When God created Man His intention was that he'll live forever but because of his matteristic and moral nature it should have happened a sublimation of the matter in order to get this image that enabled it to live forever.

And this what happened in person of Lord Jesus Christ as he sublimed the matter when he raised with our nature that he took in his humanity and turned the dusty image into a glorified image that is not subjected to the law of matter.

Through sinning Man turned to bear the sentence of death according to the law which God put because when he refuses life and chooses evil he will go out of the authority of God's kingdom.

"And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life" (Gen. 3: 17)

Man no longer lives as before falling away but he turned to live as the rest of matteristic creatures he even gets tired, eats and struggles to live. Lusts and instincts control him according to the law of animal nature. Death, diseases and weakness has crept to his entity in order that he would return again to the earth that would open her mouth to receive his death and physical body.

"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7: 24)

So becomes the state of Man after separating from God. An entity that bears contradictions between the matter and the spirit, bears death and longing to depart and live.

But he can not because all his entity is sold under an authority that is outside God. This happened involuntarily from him even though he entered under the devil's authority by his voluntarily sin.

4- Separation from God made Man in strange structural state, spiritual blindness and mental foolishness

Before his falling away Man's entity was being attributed to God. And was living in God, surrounded by His grace and God's power was working in his character and entity and that made him a head of the whole universe, having a dominion over the earth.

But after falling away Man separated with all his entity from God and became a rebellious creature against the Lord of the universe and bears in his entity corruption and evil as marks of his rebellion, poverty and death.

And because evil became dominant over him and because corruption turned to be working in him for he became under the law of matter. Therefore, he no longer has the possibilities of strong enlightenment by God's spirit that dwells in him because he rejected Him and asked to be set free from existing in and/or with Him.

His mind became into a state of opacity and now he is no longer able to recognize good and truth and he became alien to God as to knowledge so his mind now is unable to enter into a true fellowship with God because he became under the curtains of the matter with its opacity and thick nature as the law of corruption that prevails upon him now made him alien to God and the law of matter which he belonged to after falling away outside God made him in a state of spiritual blindness and stained his mind with a general foolishness towards God.

So he went searching for Him among rocks and in dust, fire and stars and foolishly he worshipped evil powers and followed the aberrations through the ages without true or real spiritual insight losing the enlightenment.

And as long as he deeply embedded in sin, he came far and turned to be spiritually dead and unable to see the real God.

But there was that who was honestly searching for truth so he got a special declaration or general revelation that God has sent to humanity to follow His way and to know Him in spite of the picture's opacity.

God's manifestations of Himself to Man were compatible with Man's aptitude in each age to receive God's knowledge but he could not see or hear God face to face, as he was before sinning.

"And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself" (Gen. 3: 8-10)

🕯 **Prayer** 🕯

O my Father
When I return to you,
Do not ask me about your robe that you granted me
Because I lost it by my foolishness and lust
Do not detest me because I'm naked again
Because I do not know what I answer
The robe was torn and I'm the cause
Wolves that I loved bitted it and how wonderful
I entered them to my house
So that they may comfort me from tiredness
They ignited fire in my heart
Then I found it more black than flames
Do you see these ulcerations, and wounds that hurt me
And I do not know other doctor but you
Disgrace fills all my entity
Because it was not the first robe you gave to me
I know that it is so precious.
Its price is your blood
I know that you made it to grant it to me
But I lost it, I defiled all my robes
I stained all my images

I sold Your existence in me with the cheapest price
My face that was resembling you
I deformed it with mud and wounds
I razed the vineyard, destroyed the edifices
Now I have nothing but nakedness and shame
I forgot your love and cross, wounds, and nails.
What I can answer when you ask me about my nakedness?!
I can never see you because of my shame,
And I can not leave you and run away
What I can utter when your eyes blame me?
By what I can justify that I lost your robe
My Father,
I insulted your name among the people.
I gave my heritage to your enemies.
Then does any love remained for me in your heart?
Doe is any grace in your sight remained for me?
Can I see your face as I am in this state?!

Amen

Chapter III

Crossing from Death to Life

Thus my dear reader,

From all what was mentioned, we find that Man entered into the circle of corruption, being alien to God under the authority of the devil then he lives in the kingdom of darkness and bears the sentence of death waiting that it would happen at any time so he would have to die.

But at the same time, how would he die?

- 1- God has loved Man therefore He made him then how does he die? It is as if there is a father who warned his son from getting into the sea lest he will drown and die and as he was sitting by the shore he found his son in the depth of the sea crying for help because he was drowning then how the feelings of the father would be at that time?! Would say "I said to you not to get into the sea otherwise you will die" and let him face his destiny absolutely not. He would move to save him because he has loved him overlooking the state of rebellion.
- 2- How can God's creatures and works fail? How can God create Man then leave him to end and be perished? The problem as a whole stems from the free will by which Man chose his death.

It was a must that his will be reformed again after the experience of sin and death to be able to choose once again but at this time he has the ability to know the meaning of death and to know freedom truly so life with God again will be without hesitation and out of choice through stages of conflict and love exerted by a real will.

So God would have to search for a way to save Man from the state of death into which he entered himself in condition that this solution must not contradict with.

First: God's justice and mercy.

Second: Nature of the life with God, which is holiness, and the role of Man's will in choosing this life.



First: God's Justice and mercy

A question may arise into the minds of some people: could not God with his great ability return Man to his first state by just a word from Him as He loved him to this extent then why did not He forgive him and turn him back to his first state?

My friend, You must know that God's characteristics are not contradicting: He is Merciful and Almighty but He is also Just and His justice must be compatible with His mercy and His mercy must be compatible with His justice. As the commandment is a law that is coming from God's mouth bearing the power of the source from which it comes. Then law must happen.

So when He said that the penalty of rebellion is death then Man must die otherwise God's word will be not acting.

This is like a judge in a city who reigns with justice and he is the only one who enacts laws and rules his city with them. This man must be completely just and not contradicting with his judgments. He enacted a law that protects the life in the city which is the whole creation. Plants, animals or Man and this laws stated that if someone would kill he must die or there must be someone else who should pay his life instead of him as life and all the city has known this law and feared it. Once a day when he was in the courtyard people arrested a person breaking this law as he pulled out a tree and made it dead.

He stood in the dock as condemned before the judge and he was the judge's son.

According to the law which was agreed upon this person was condemned and sentenced to death or there must be someone else who must pay his life instead of him.

Then what would the judge do? Would he judge him as innocent because he is his beloved son or would he judge him as law states?

If he judged him as innocent we cannot describe him as a just man regardless how much he has loved his son.

Then for justice he would sentence him to death and for love he would die instead of him so the son would go safely and he judge would die and he put himself as prisoner and condemned so that the judgment that he issued might be executed in him.

The same was true with God. It was absolutely impossible that God says to Man you are condemned but you will not die because this contradicts God's justice but He found the solution and this coincides with His mercy.

Second: The solution must be not contradicting to either God's holy nature or the freedom of Man in choosing this life

Because Man has become in the state of corruption with a nature that is sold to the devil and that is under evil's authority so there was no possibility at all that Man can unite with God again as long as he is in this state of corruption.

Whatever the extent that God may forgive him, his nature needs changing and renewal in order that he becomes able to enter the fellowship of union. At this point Man's repentance can have the possibility of forgiveness. The steps should have to take place as follows:

- 1- God must renew the human nature and remove the corruption existing in it to break the authority of the devil by paying for the right of divine justice.
- 2- Man must return and choose living with God again by his own freedom.
- 3- God will accept Man's renewed image and will.

An example:

A father once warned his son of becoming a drugs' addict because at this moment his image will be incompatible with being a son as he will lose his competency and his father's fortune in vain.

Therefore the father said to the son: "if you rush towards the drugs and addict them you will destroy yourself and your brain's cells and will lose your head and at this time I shall disinherit you.

The son paid no attention to his father's speech but went and listened to evil people's speech and became addicted to drugs that already destroyed his mind, he lost his head and his competence and his father disinherited him. Some people came and said to the father: "forgive your son and bring his heritage back to him".

The father would have to treat his son first and after that the son must promise not to go back to addiction i.e. to repent of it and choose to obey his father and when the father accepts his son the heritage will be back to the son.

So God's forgiveness to Man and that He accepted his return back to Him was related to renewal of his nature that was corrupted and after that Man chooses by his new freedom to live with God then God forgives Man his first transgression and accepts him joyfully.

🕯 **Prayer** 🕯

I cry to you O my father
From my soul's deep
I know that you hear me
But do you know me
Yes, I am your son
But my features are deformed
I no longer bear the features that resemble you
I am your son,
But my robe that you gave to me
Became torn and dirty
I am your son,
But the ring which was in my finger,
The symbol of my son ship to you, I wasted
I entered in the midst of the evil
By my own will
I made ways for my feet
That has death in its end.
Yes, I'm who was protected in your bosom
And now I came out so that I become the evils laugh
I'm who was carried on your shoulders
And now I became driven without choice

I'm whose name was carved on your hands
And now I became alien to you
As to my name and shape
Come and look these wounds and tortures.
Come and check what I have become:
Dust and ashes
I know that you love me.
In spite of my deformed features
In spite of my wounds and illnesses
In spite of my weakness and departure from you
Don't disgust of my looking and my sins
I came to you my Father
In order to reshape my image and correct my steps.
There is no one but you who will reshape me
There is no one but you
Who know my constitution!!
In spite of my state and my weakness
I'm quite sure that,
You will have a mercy upon me and accept me.
My Father,
I've come to you
After the years of going astray

Will you open your bosom to me to rest on it?
I'll show you my wound to remedy it
I'll show you my weakness to cure it
Let me enter to you to reshape me again
Let me enter with you into your death and cross
Let me go out of your tom as a newborn
With a new nature
With a new life
With a new age
Behold here I'm cast myself on your feet
Make whatever you want to me.

Amen

Here is still the important question!!!

How God will renew Man's deformed nature?!

And how will He recreate him again and remove the effects the sin and lift up the judgment of death to give life again?!

Man is sentenced to death and at the same time, we must live.

Then if he died how will he live then it is inevitable that a savior must come and he must be able to die for the human race and life after death so that all will live in him.

But who is this redeemer who must bear all these characteristics to be able to solve the case?!

Characteristics of the redeemer who solves the case of death of Man

1- A man who bears the characteristics of the source

There must be a solution of the case that was to execute the judgment of death in this redeemer.

And to bear the characteristics of the source so that the judgment may be enough for all humanity and that he will be a man who is a representative of the second Adam as the first Adam who sinned was the first on of the humanity so the judgment has become upon the whole as the whole as sinned.

Therefore the one upon which the judgment will be executed must bear the characteristic of the source. There is no source of humanity but Adam and there is no source of Adam and the whole nature but God.

"wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5: 12, 17-19)

Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

So the redeemer should have be a Man:

- Bears the same image of the first Adam i.e. the first one from whom came out every man so that the judgment of death that is executed in him will be enough for the whole human race so the judgment is true and the execution is true.
- It is impossible that redemption of the judgment of death happens through other nature, which is not human like angels because the judgment was upon Man.
- Bears the value of the whole sources i.e. its value must equal the whole creation like Adam for humanity. Otherwise, when judgment of death is executed in Him so He will die as an individual and will not be able to fulfill the justice that is required for all humanity.
- When the change in his nature takes place, the nature of the whole humanity will be changed to as he is the origin, image and value of whole humanity and gives it the nature of the new capabilities.

2- Righteous and without sin

This who gives himself as a redemption of the sinful humanity must be without sin so if this person bears sin or corruption then how can he give righteousness and if he was sentenced to death as a sinner then how can he die for others sin so if a person is about to die for another one and he found that this person is sentenced to death for a personal crime then redemption can not be made therefore this redeemer must be without sin as apostle Paul said:

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5: 9)

The righteousness of the redeemer is a must to swallow the corruption so the devil will have no authority upon Him as Christ said:

"For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14: 30)

Because He is outside the authority of the devil and so He is able to raise from dead as it is impossible for the devil to enter Him into his authorities.

3- Unlimited

Sin has transferred into the whole human race through the ages so the work that will be done to redeem Man must include all human beings through the years. This means that from Adam till the end of the ages redemption must be available to every Man that was born, is born, and will be born this will not happen unless the raise a redeemer who can redeem the whole humanity on a personal level and must be unlimited in the level of time, place, and capability i.e. he can remove every corruption.

"And Jesus looking upon the saith, with men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible" (Mark 10: 27)

So the redeemer must be above times, places, and capabilities.

To be able to reach every Man, to take the death away from him and to pay his dues and remove his personal corruption whatever his state, image, time and place may be so he is a person who can collect in himself the whole creation as apostle Paul said:

"That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" (Eph. 1: 10)

4- Has a life in himself

This who bears the sentence of death must also bear life in an autonomous way so that life will be in his identity and that he will be the source of life so that death can not catch him.

For what is the benefit if the redeemer died instead if the whole humanity and fulfilled the punishment but He did not give humanity the capability of life. He should have to give life to humanity after he canceled the judgment of death and this will not happen unless He has life in Himself.

5- To return back to the humanity the capabilities of resembling God

This means that God's features are created again in humanity. It should have been that this who redeems Man must be able also to remove the traces of corruption that entered to him.

In order that human nature becomes able to enter into a fellowship with God holiness which was lost as result of sin should have a returned back to it also the internal human features should have been reshape as a new creation as the first creation that was resembling God as David says in psalm:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within" (Ps. 51: 10)

And by this way man can be restored into his first rank and he can get back his lost heritage and his image that was deformed by sin.

6- Has a power over the devil

One of the falling results is that man has become is the devil's grasp before and after the physical death so he uses his right to arrest his spirit and dominate over it in the hell.

Therefore the redeemer must have the power and ability to release the devil's captures and to break ramparts of the prison where the spirits were arrested and give them freedom.

He should have to give this authority to everyone who unities with Him in order that evil's soldiers can not near to him,

"behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurts you" (Luke 10: 19)

The redeemer must have a greater power than the devil to be able to restore the righteous souls that he has and to destroy his kingdom and remove the effects of human beings' slavery to him and here apostle Paul says about him:

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1: 13)

With a quick look to these conditions we find that they can not be existed except in God for the source of the first man is Adam but he is not righteous and the source prior to him is God because He is the creator.

Then God is the only righteous source who is unlimited in time, place and capabilities and who has life in Himself.

And He is the only one who can create a new heart or restore the lost likeness in humanity to give holiness again to man's nature and also he is the only one who has an absolute power over the devil so he can bind and break his power and slavery to man.

So we need the characteristics and capabilities of God in this redeemer but we need also a Man to redeem the human race in order to be able to bear the sentence of death and restore the nature into the first state.

So is it possible that God gives His theological capabilities that are mentioned previously and which are inevitable to the case of death to any Man to solve the case?

This solution is impossible because if God gives his theological capabilities to a man then we will have to God one God by nature and one God by capabilities (the Man who took God's characteristics).

The only solution is that God must unite with Man's nature i.e. God must incarnate and become a Man or God must unite with a perfect man and this does not mean that God has transferred to another nature into an image of its nature's images.

This is like the marvelous similarity of **Saint Kerolos the great** when he resembles this union with the union of the iron with fire and at the same time each of them kept its nature in spite of that we see them united together.

And this is the person of Jesus Christ who by His humanity (human nature) can die and redeem humanity and by His Divinity (Divine nature) He can make His power enough for all humanity in all times and ages.

Saint Helary says: *"All humanity was united with Him through His human nature"*.

Pope Athanasius says also: *"Salvation was not required to that who has no existence so it was enough just to issue an order but the Man was already exist and was deteriorated into corruption and destruction so it was just and normal that (The Word) uses a human tool to show Himself everywhere therefore it was reasonable that The Savior wears a body so that if the body united with life (Divinity) He will not stay in the dead death but will raise into the non-death state because He wore the non-death state. By God's union with our nature His righteousness could swallow the corruption of our nature as he is the righteous who bears the righteousness as a genuine nature in Him that covers the corruption of the whole humanity that is united with Him"*.

And **Saint Ambrosios** says: *"Christ's endurance to death made death die therefore God, the Incarnated Word or Christ The Lord is the one who is able to restore our nature into its first state by being united with Him"*.

Also **Saint Kerolos the great** says: *"A burning splinter that is hidden in a pile of straw keeps the nature of the original fire. By the same way Our Lord hides His life in us by His body and keeps*

it in us as a seed of eternity. And because God is the life so His union with our nature gave us the possibility of eternal life. A possibility has become available for our nature to return back to life again through the fellowship with His Humanity (Humanity of Christ) by which He resembles us together with His Divinity (the Divine nature of Christ).

Saint Kerolos the great says also: *"He in Himself and by Himself unites human race with God as He has become a connection link because He collects in Himself the two parties who seek for unity and love i.e. God and human race.*

The leaven that leavens the lump: In order to complete the union between the nature of the leaven and the nature of the lump a piece of the lump must be taken and be united with the leaven apart from the lump then it is put into it and the lump must be left so the union takes place between the leaven that dealt with the small piece of lump and the whole lump through the nature of the lump from which it was taken.

In the same way God has taken a human nature but without sin from Virgin Mary and united with it to complete in it the work of redemption and righteousness and the changing of the human image then He gave freely everyone who unites with Him to become like Him and also to live in Him".

Saint Kerolos the great says: *"God's Son has become a man so that people may become, in Him and by Him, God's children by adoption. Christ suffered pain and entered into the willingly fellowship of death to remove Satan's authority and to break the sting of death and to bring the humanity victorious over Satan in His person so that we may live with a new image apart from evil's bondage".*

Saint Peter the apostle says:

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1Peter 2: 24)

Pope Athanasius says: *"As He suffered pain through His union with Him (i.e. with His human nature), as a substitute for all, through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage".*

So, my dear reader; Christ has taken our death and raised to give us freely a new life, a new image and a new identity to open the horizons of eternity to everyone who unites with Him, to open His pierced side as a spring of healing and salvation to everyone who comes to Him.

So redemption is the secret of Christian life

Therefore the word redemption in Greek is translated Apolutrosis which means set free and also Letrosithia i.e. to obtain.

The work of redemption is to set free the slave who was in the grasp of the evils and Christ paid the price of his slavery so that we may become God's children and so we have had the new life in Him and our value has become as high as the value of the image of Christ Himself. His death as a price for our freedom and life as apostle Paul says:

"For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1Cor. 6: 20)

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I

live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2: 20)

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3: 13)

And as the apostle Peter says:

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1Pet. 1: 18-19)

So, my beloved brother, your life you live now and that will extend to eternity is the life of Christ Himself as its price is really paid by Christ's blood so that you will become a holy child of Him.

You no longer for yourself or for tis evanescent and futile of life. Because your old life apart from Christ is a life which is sentenced to death and is in a state of enmity to God but when your life us united with Christ through Baptism as a permanent effect,

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3: 27)

To live with His image in the world and in Him the reconciliation with God takes place so you live in eternity,

"to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2Cor. 5: 19)

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2: 13)

Union with Christ on a personal and temporal level takes place through Eucharist communion when we unite with His body and blood so we dwell in Him and our sins are forgiven and in baptism we unite with His death and raise with Him,

"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him" (John 6: 56)

Eucharist Communion bears permanent capabilities of the cross as His broken body and shedding blood are presented on the altar, as the sacrifice that Christ presented on the cross will never end and will not be limited by time but as John the apostle saw it:

**"Stood a lamb as it had been slain"
(Rev. 5: 6)**

He presented Himself once on the cross and as He is God so this sacrifice is eternal.

We can enter into it and unite with it so that our sins will be covered and this happens on the altar through the Eucharist Communion (Partaking Communion and thanksgiving) and this is the secret of our steadiness, safety and uniting in Him.

Father Methodosius the Olympic: *"The church grows up day by day in stature and beauty through her purity and union with Logos who descends to us till now and His descending continues in the memorial of His pains (Eucharist Communion)".*

Saint John of Golden Mouth describes the scared body on the altar saying: *"For the sake of His body I will not return back to be dust and ashes and I will not be a prisoner but for the sake*

of this body I look forward to glories and I receive heavenly good, eternal life, share of the angels and confidential talks with Christ.

This body was nailed to cross by nails and whipped and death will not overcome Him. This is the body that was stained with blood and was pierced and out of it came the spring of salvation for the world a spring of blood and a spring of water".

Dearest reader,

And this is the secret of incarnation and redemption

That has given value for all humanity.

This is the secret of love that gave us freely the eternal life.

This is the secret of our existence in Christ

And the spring of divinely gifts

This is the secret of our joy and pleasure

This is the power of our life and praise

So, our Father

Who has loved us till death,

We too love you till death.

We are longing to be united with you

In order that ourselves will be melted in you

We are longing to disappear

So that you will shine in us

We are longing that we will not exist

And that all what inside us is you

You are our strength and joy
Our visible and hidden treasure and all our life
We cry and praise together with Pope Athanasius:
"Now my beloved,
Satan has been bruised
This tyrant who is against the whole world.
Death will not reign
But life will prevail instead of death.
As the Lord says: "I am the life"
Now as death was abolished
And the kingdom of Satan was destroyed
All were filled with joy and happiness".