

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE OFFICE OF CHRIST AS KING

As Orthodox Christians we confess that Christ is our Eternal King,¹ Who was raised on His Eternal Throne through His Sufferings on the Cross and His victory over Death and Satan. This Confession and recognition of the Lord Jesus Christ as our King is based on Holy Scripture and Apostolic Tradition from the time of the Apostolic Fathers throughout the entire life of the Orthodox Church.

The first actions of our Lord as King are found:

1) In the fulfillment of the Law and the new Institutions and Mysteries, **which as the Law-giver He instituted in order to be accomplished** within His One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

2) In the choosing of His Holy Apostles to whom He gave equivalent authority as that of His own.

3) Our Lord and Saviour Jesus **Christ appeared** as the Great and High King after His victory on the Cross. With His **Soul** He went down to Hades and became the Lord of all. Through His Resurrection He conquered and defeated **Death** and consequently He proclaimed that “...*all authority has been given to...*” Him “...*in Heaven and on earth.*”²

4) And finally, He ascended into Heaven and sat **at** the right hand of the Father.

Our Lord Jesus Christ will reign within His Church for all ages, leading His Faithful to victory over Satan and all His malicious foes, **by** protecting and guiding them to their Salvation and leading His Church to perfection. As the Eternal King, Christ takes care of each and everyone **separately**. He **Regenerates, Sanctifies, Nourishes** and gives **Life** to each one. The **Royal Authority** of Christ aims for the final victory and conquest over the world, in order that it **might** be incorporated into His Heavenly Kingdom **as well as** for the **Will** of God the Father to be “...*on earth as it is in Heaven.*”³

Thus Christ as King, as Head, as Leader and as Shepherd of His people becomes to all **Sanctification** from God, perfecting through Himself the **Work** of **Salvation**. Finally, the action of Christ as King will be manifested at His second and glorious Coming and Final Judgement, **after which** He will submit everything to God the Father with Whom, **together with** the Holy Spirit, He will reign for all Eternity.

1. The Relationship of Christ’s Office as King to the Two Other Offices

As **a direct and mutual relationship exists** between **Christ’s** Offices of Prophet and High Priest, likewise **is the relationship** between **His** Office of King and High Priest. Our Saviour Jesus Christ was elevated **to** His Throne as the Eternal King not simply **after** His Suffering on the Cross, but **because** of His Suffering. **Due to** His perfect obedience **that** was

¹ Cf. Frangopoulos, *Christian Faith*, pp. 149-150. Mitsopoulos, *Themata*, pp. 160.

² Matth. 28:18.

³ Matth. 6:10.

“... to the point of death, even the death of the Cross...” God “...highly exalted Him and (gave) Him the Name which is above every name.”⁴

It is also obvious that whatever Enlightenment we may enjoy from the Office of Christ as Prophet and no matter what we owe for His Sacrifice, which was offered by Him as High Priest on the Cross, our Salvation, Exaltation in Heaven and Restoration is perfected through the Action of Jesus Christ as King and Lord. Together with the Enlightenment from the Teachings of the Great Teacher and the Knowledge of the Truth that has set us free from the slavery of sin and death, and which gave peace to our conscious through the Atonement Sacrifice of the High Priest that vanquished the curse and enmity between man and God, it is essential and necessary that our whole inner existence be Regenerated and purified. It is also vital that the evil that exists within us be conquered and crushed. This is achieved through the Work of Christ as King. And truly, Christ in His extreme humbleness “...was delivered up because of our offences, and was raised because of our Justification...”⁵ as the High King Who conquered Death.

2. The Office of King According to Holy Scripture

Our Confession and recognition of Christ as our King and Lord is based on Holy Scripture. The Jews in the Old Testament awaited the Messiah as a powerful Ruler and King, Who would restore the ancient and glorious throne of His forefather, King David. However they misinterpreted the Messianic Prophecies, according to which the Messiah would be set as King on “...the Holy Hill of Zion...” proclaiming “...the Decree of the Lord...”⁶ and Whose “...Throne is forever and ever...”⁷ He would be sitting at the right hand of God until His enemies became His “...footstool.” He would rule over them with “...the rod...” of His “strength” and “...in the midst...” of His “...enemies.”⁸ He would enter Jerusalem⁹ according to the Prophet Zacharias who said: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; proclaim it aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, the King is coming to you, Just, and a Saviour; He is meek and riding on an ass, and a young foal. And He shall destroy the chariots out of Ephraim, and the horse out of Jerusalem, and the bow of war shall be utterly destroyed; and there shall be abundance and peace out of the nations; and He shall rule over the waters as far as the sea, and the rivers to the ends of the earth.”¹⁰ The Prophet Daniel declared: “...And to Him was given the Dominion, and the Honour, and the Kingdom; and all nations, tribes, and languages, shall serve Him: His Dominion is an Everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom shall not be destroyed.”¹¹

In the New Testament at the Annunciation of the Ever-Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, the Archangel Gabriel foretold that “...the Lord God will give Him the Throne of His father David. And He will reign over the House of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there will be no end.”¹² When the Messiah was born, the three kings “...from the East came to

⁴ Phil. 2:8, 9.

⁵ Rom. 4:25.

⁶ Psalm 2:6-7.

⁷ Psalm 44(45):6.

⁸ Psalm 109(110):1-2.

⁹ Matth. 21:1-11. Mark 11:1-10. Luke 19:28-44. John 12:12-19. Is. 62:11.

¹⁰ Zach. 9:9-10.

¹¹ Daniel 7:14.

¹² Luke 1:32-33.

Jerusalem...” and worshipped Him as King and said: “Where is He Who has been born King of the Jews?”¹³

It is true that Christ, during His life on earth, refused to accept the title of “King”¹⁴ and rebuked His Holy Disciples when they sought earthly glory and when they requested to be seated at His right and left hand in His Kingdom.¹⁵ He acknowledged the civil authorities of His time.¹⁶ Our Lord’s reluctance of earthly status can be understood when one considers that the Jews were awaiting an earthly Messiah who would deliver them from the humiliation of subjection to the Romans and who would restore the worldly Kingdom of King David.¹⁷ It was natural, however, during the four last days of His life on the earth that our Lord permitted the crowd to welcome Him to Jerusalem with accolades of “...the King of Israel!”¹⁸ Neither did He reject the title of King before Pontius Pilate but He tried to explain that His “...Kingdom is not of this world.”¹⁹ He assured us on numerous occasions that His Kingdom would not be established on earth as a visible Institution and that it does not have its foundation in this world. Neither is it based on violence. Instead it is the Kingdom of Truth, Justice and Sanctification, founded on the hearts of those who freely accept it.

The sign that Pontius Pilate had placed on the Cross is important and significant for it declares: “JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.”²⁰ It was written in three languages - Hebrew, Greek and Roman - in order that many Jews could read it. St John the Apostle, Evangelist and Theologian, saw that Christ had “...on His robe and on His thigh a Name written: ‘KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.’”²¹ The rest of the Holy Apostles call Christ “Lord” which expresses the meaning of Ruler and King. St Paul called Christ “Lord” proclaiming that “...He must reign until He has put all enemies under His Feet.”²²

3. The Office of Christ as King According to the Holy Fathers

In the “*Epistle of Barnabas*” one reads: “And then there is the matter of the wool on the tree: this signifies that the Kingdom of Jesus is on the Tree (Cross), and that those who hope in Him will live forever. But why the wool and the hyssop together? Because in His Kingdom there will be dark and evil days, in which we will be Saved, because the one who suffers in body is healed by means of the dark juice of the hyssop.”²³ The phrase “...the Kingdom of Jesus is on the tree...” signifies that the Sacrifice offered by Christ on the Cross depended directly on His Office as King.

St Justin the Philosopher and Martyr, in his introduction to the 10th verse of Psalm 95(96),: “Say among the nations, ‘The Lord reigns...’”²⁴ observed that the King Who is

¹³ Matth. 2:1-2, 11.

¹⁴ John 6:15.

¹⁵ Matth. 20:20-28. Mark 10:35-40.

¹⁶ Matth. 17:25-27; 22:21. Rom. 13:1-7. 1 Peter 2:13-14.

¹⁷ Acts 1:6.

¹⁸ John 12:13.

¹⁹ John 18:36.

²⁰ John 19:19. Matth. 27:37.

²¹ Rev. 19:16.

²² 1 Corinth. 15:25.

²³ *Barnabas*, 8, 5-6, in Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, p. 172.

²⁴ Psalm 95(96):10.

proclaimed in this Psalm is “...*the crucified...*” Lord.²⁵ Elsewhere, St Justin referred to Christ as the Prophecy of Psalm 23(24):7, 8, according to which “...*the Lord of Hosts...*” is “...*our Christ...*” Who, when He was Risen from the dead and ascended into Heaven, the **Angelic Hosts** cried out one to the other to open their gates for Him “...*in order that He shall enter and sit on the right hand of the Father till He has put all enemies under His Feet.*”²⁶

Origen repeatedly referred to Christ as “*King of kings*” and “*Great King,*” explaining that He is the “...*Great King Whose city is the True Jerusalem...*”²⁷ and Who, according to the Parable in Luke 19:12, departed “...*into a far country to receive for Himself a Kingdom and to Return...*”²⁸ and Who said: “...*I have set My King on My Holy Hill of Zion. I will declare the decree...*” of the Lord.²⁹

St John Chrysostom emphasised the Kingship of Christ as God, **simultaneously** exalting His Kingship as the God-Man, when he proclaimed that “...*He is truly a Great King Who cleansed the world from error and brought back the Truth very quickly and destroyed the tyranny of the devil.*” “*It was not the achievement of the Apostles, but He Who went before them and moved their souls...*” Furthermore he saw Him sitting at the right hand of God as King, until His enemies are set before His Feet by the Father. “*Christ was dominating...*” through the Apostles and not only “*ruling*” in the midst of His enemies. Although it is said that the Heavenly Father placed His enemies at His Feet, it is the Work of the Only Begotten Son Who achieved everything.³⁰

St Ambrosios of Mediolan spoke of the peaceful Kingship of Christ that spread throughout the world.³¹

St Augustine, referring to the refusal of the Lord to consent to being proclaimed King by the Jews,³² remarked that “...*assuredly, the Lord was King, but not from those kings who are raised up to their thrones by men, but a King Who will give His Kingdom to men.*” “*One day His Kingdom will be manifested, when the glory of the Saints will be visible, when His Judgement takes place.*”³³

4. The First and Final Manifestations of Christ’s Office as King

The first manifestations of the Office of Christ as King³⁴ are manifested during the period of His humbleness. At first it was the giving of the Law that He realized by fulfilling the Mosaic Law³⁵ and giving the new Law of Love,³⁶ then establishing Institutions and

²⁵ St. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, *Dialogue*, 73, 1-2, in **B**, v. 3, p. 278. See also: *Ibid*, *I Apology*, 41, in **B**, v. 3, p. 183.

²⁶ *Ibid*, *I Apology*, 51, § 7, in **B**, v. 3, p. 188. See also: *Ibid*, *Dialogue*, 36, 5 and 34, 2, in **B**, v. 3, pp. 240 and 237.

²⁷ Origen, *To martyrdom*, 28, in **B**, v. 9, p. 51. *Ibid*, *Against Celsus*, VIII, 75, in **B**, v. 10, p. 230. *Ibid*, *To John*, v. XII, 57 (58), in **B**, v. 12, p. 170.

²⁸ Luke 19:12.

²⁹ Psalm 2: 6.

³⁰ St. John Chrysostom, *To Psalm 46(47)*, § 3, and *To Psalm 109(110)*, § 4, in Migne, *P.G.*, 55, 271.

³¹ St. Ambrosius, *To Psalm XL*, 37, in migne, *P.L.*, 14, 1138.

³² John 6:15.

³³ St. Augustine, *In Johannis evangelium. Tractatus XXV*, § 2, in migne, *P.L.*, 35, 1596-1597.

³⁴ Cf. Damalas, *Catechesis*, pp. 63-64.

³⁵ Matth. 5:17.

Mysteries, surrounded by Eternal Authority and which are to be used within His Orthodox Church. The choosing of His Apostles,³⁷ as well as the assurance that He **would** give them all the **Spiritual Authority** to forgive or to bind the sins of the people³⁸ in order to continue His **Work** as He was sent **to do** by His Father,³⁹ **manifests** His Office as King. After the Sacrifice on the Cross He ascended with glory to His Royal Throne; at His Resurrection, He **accomplished** His Eternal Victory and glorious Triumph; at His Ascension, He was crowned **at** the right hand of the Father as the **Eternal King**.

From the time that He “...cried out with a loud voice...”⁴⁰ “... ‘it is finished!’ And bowing His Head, He gave up His **Spirit...**”⁴¹ His **Glorification** and Exaltation began. The “...**Blood and the Water...**”⁴² that came out of the Lord’s **Side** when He was pierced by the soldier, proved that He was above man because the blood of others **would have been** thick and clear water **would not have flowed from their wounds**, whereas the marvellous thing about Christ’s dead Body was that Blood and Water **issued forth from His Side**. The laws of nature with **regard to** Christ’s Body diverted from their **usual** course. **While** bodies of dead men **always begin to** decompose immediately **after** death occurs, Christ’s Body entered the **Path of Glory** and immediately began **to fulfil** King David’s Prophecy: “*For **Thou** will not leave My Soul in Sheol, nor will **Thou** allow **Thy** Holy One to see corruption.*”⁴³ St Peter wrote: “*For Christ also suffered once for sins, the **Just** for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the **Flesh** but made alive by the **Spirit.**”⁴⁴ **Furthermore, Christ** “... went and preached to the spirits in prison.”⁴⁵ Ammonios the Presbyter of Alexandria noted: “...He takes the journey to Hades, in order to **retrieve** the souls of the dead which were there.”⁴⁶*

Our Lord and Saviour, **practised** His Office as King **with** “...His Soul stripped from its Body, **(He)** preached to the souls which were stripped from their bodies...” **thereby** achieving His first conquest of those who were in the infernal **Hades**.⁴⁷ This triumphal descent of our Lord into Hades **was mentioned by Him when He said**: “...For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth...”⁴⁸ “...Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise...”⁴⁹ “...And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one Shepherd...”⁵⁰ as well as His **reference to the** Resurrection: “...many bodies of the Saints who fallen asleep...” “... coming out of the graves after His Resurrection, they went into the Holy City and appeared to many.”⁵¹ St Paul **also said**: “... ‘He ascended’ – what does it means but that He also first

³⁶ John 13:34.

³⁷ Matth. 10:1-4. Mark 3:13-19. Luke 6:12-16.

³⁸ Matth. 16:19; 18:18. John 20:23.

³⁹ John 20:21.

⁴⁰ Matth. 27:50.

⁴¹ John 19:30.

⁴² John 19:34.

⁴³ Psalm 15(16):10. Acts 2:31.

⁴⁴ 1 Peter 3:18.

⁴⁵ 1 Peter 3:19.

⁴⁶ Ammonius, *Fragments to the 1 Peter*, in Migne, P.G., 85, 1608.

⁴⁷ Origen, *Against Celsus*, II, 42, in **B**, v. 9, p. 154.

⁴⁸ Matth. 12:40.

⁴⁹ Luke 23:43.

⁵⁰ John 10:16.

⁵¹ Matth. 27:52, 53.

descended into the lower parts of the earth? He Who descended is also the One Who ascended far above all the Heavens, that He might fill all things.”⁵²

The event of Christ’s descent into Hades was clarified by the Holy Fathers and Ecclesiastic Writers⁵³ such as St Ignatios the Theophoros who referred to “...the Prophets, who were His Disciples in the Spirit, were expecting as their Teacher...” and “...because of this He for Whom they rightly waite,d raised them from the dead when He came.”⁵⁴

St Justin the Philosopher and Martyr, as well as St Irenaeos referred to a verse that the Jews removed from the Book of Jeremiah or Isaiah: “The Lord, the Holy God of Israel, remembered His dead, those who are asleep in the ground of the land and He descended to them to preach them His Salvation.”⁵⁵

St Irenaeos also referred to this event⁵⁶as did Tertullian.⁵⁷

St Hippolytos literally declared that “...the Only Begotten entered as a Soul with the souls...” in Hades and “...wanting, He was separated from the Body, in order that with His own Soul to go to Hades...” “...to preach to souls of the Saints...” where the Forerunner first preached, saying “...that the Saviour will also come there, to free the souls of the Saints from the hand of death.”⁵⁸

The 9th Canon of the 5th Ecumenical Council stated that “...the Word of God was Incarnated in Flesh with a Soul, with His intellectual Soul He descended into Hades and again the same ascended into Heaven.”⁵⁹ Also the 7th Ecumenical Council proclaimed that “...this (Christ) we confess ... the One Who conquered Hades and freed those who were bound from old times.”⁶⁰

Finally, St John of Damascus observed that “...into Hades descended the Deified Soul; in order that the Sun of Righteousness rise to those who were in the earth, likewise for those who were under the earth in darkness and the shadow Light shined...” “...and thus freeing those who were bounded from old times, immediately raised from the dead, making the path to the Resurrection.”⁶¹

The importance of the descent of Christ into Hades is that our Lord Jesus is revealed as the Saviour of all souls, proving that He is indeed King and that His Kingdom differs from any other earthly kingdom. No power of nature or other force in the universe could prevent the Saviour from finding the way for the souls.⁶² He is the Redeemer of all human

⁵² Ephes. 4:9-10.

⁵³ Karmeris, *The descent of Christ into Hades from an Orthodox view*, Athens, 1939. See also: Mogilas, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, pp. 617, 519-520. St. Symeon, *Euriskomena*, Homily XLV, p. 211.

⁵⁴ St. Ignatius, *To Magnesians*, 9, 2, in Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, p. 95.

⁵⁵ St. Justin, the philosopher and martyr, *Dialogue*, 72, 4, **B**, v. 4, p. 277. St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book III, ch. 20, § 4 and book IV, ch. 22, §§ 1, 2, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 945 and 1046.

⁵⁶ St. Irenaeus, *Heresies*, book IV, ch. 22, § 2, in Migne, *P.G.*, 7, 1047. Cf. *Ibid*, in Hadjephraimides, p. 312.

⁵⁷ Tertullian, *De anima*, 7 and 55, in migne, *P.L.*, 2, 608 and 788.

⁵⁸ St. Hippolytus, *About the holy Pascha*, III, in **B**, v. 6, p. 195. *Ibid*, *About Christ and Anti-Christ*, 26 and 45, in **B**, v. 6, pp. 206 and 212.

⁵⁹ Mansi, IX, p. 397.

⁶⁰ Mansi, XII, p. 1138.

⁶¹ St. John of Damascus, *Exposition. About the after the resurrection*, IV, 74, 29, in Migne, *P.G.*, 94, 1101.

⁶² Martensen, *Dogmatique*, p. 483.

generations, even those who were before His Epiphany, and there is no “... *Salvation in any other, for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be Saved*”⁶³ **except** in Him **alone Who** has no need “...*to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the Sacrifice of Himself.*”⁶⁴

5. Christ’s **T**riumph **A**fter His **G**lorious Resurrection and Ascension

The Resurrection of **our Lord Jesus Christ** was revealed **as was His triumphant Entrance** into His Glory. “*For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.*”⁶⁵ Conquering Death, He took up in His own Authority “...*the keys of Hades and of Death.*”⁶⁶

*“Christ our God is True Man, He died a full and genuine human death upon the Cross. Because He is not only True Man but True God, because He is Life itself and the Source of Life, His Death was not and could not be the final conclusion. Christ rises from the dead and by His Rising He delivers us from anxiety and terror: the Victory of the Cross is confirmed, Love is openly shown to be stronger than Death. God Himself has died and Risen from the dead and there is no more death; even Death is filled with God. Because Christ is Risen, we need no longer be afraid of any dark or evil force in the Universe.”*⁶⁷

Christ’s Resurrection **proved** that His Sacrifice on the Cross was accepted by the **Heavenly Father**. Our **Redemption** was accomplished by the destruction of Death and mortality, which was enforced because of the **Fall of Adam** was corrected. “*Christ through His Resurrection assured us fully that He conquered Death, that He is the True Saviour sent by God to us and that the hope in Him is not in vain but secure and undoubted.*”⁶⁸ In the Lord’s Resurrection we greet the **Glory** of His Kingdom. His Resurrection is a **Vision** of the **Glory** in which the present world will end at its final stage when, at the General Resurrection, the whole world will be **Regenerated**⁶⁹ as St Paul **taught** that “...*the Creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God...*”⁷⁰ “...*because the Creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*”⁷¹ This is understandable when one takes into consideration that the Lord’s Resurrection is not simply the point and fore-announcer of this “**Regeneration**” but **is** itself the **Regeneration** in its living principal **whereby** Death was **triumphantly** conquered in **God’s Creation**. From the moment that Christ was **Raised**, our **Spiritual Resurrection** began in order **that the Resurrection** of the bodies of all men **would follow** at the appointed time.⁷² He **Who** was delivered to **Death** “...*because of our offences...*” “...*was Raised because of our Justification.*”⁷³ The General Resurrection of all **is made possible** through our Justification and **will be accomplished and**

⁶³ Acts 4:12.

⁶⁴ Heb. 9:26.

⁶⁵ Rom. 14:9.

⁶⁶ Rev. 1:18.

⁶⁷ Ware, *Way*, pp. 110-111.

⁶⁸ Plato of Moscow, *Orthodox Teaching*, p. 125.

⁶⁹ Martensen, *Dogmatique*, p. 485.

⁷⁰ Rom. 8:19.

⁷¹ Rom. 8:21.

⁷² St. Symeon, *Euriskomena*, Homily XLII, pp. 193-195.

⁷³ Rom. 4:25.

assured by our Saviour and Redeemer Who is the Leader, Lord and Head of His Orthodox Church.

Between the Lord's Resurrection and our Justification as well as between the Resurrection of each individual who believes in Him, there exists an unbreakable relationship. The same relationship exists between the Resurrection of the Head of the Church and the final triumph of His Church, which is His Mystical Body consisting of all those who are Regenerated. The future of the Church, its final Glorious Destination towards which it is guided and the Faithful can be seen in the Resurrection of our Lord.⁷⁴ St Paul taught that God "...even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by Grace you have been Saved), and Raised us up together, and made us sit together in the Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His Grace in His Kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by Grace you have been Saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the Gift of God..."⁷⁵ "The Head was Raised and we were Raised and because the Head sat and the Body sat..." in the Heavenly Places.⁷⁶ With His Mystical Body, His Church, Christ sat in the Heavenly Places at His Ascension, which was the result of His Resurrection, being the manner through which the human Nature of the Lord was Raised to the utmost height of its Deification and Glorification.

In the Communion of human nature with Divine Nature, the Lord's human Nature and its attributes were not rejected but raised to become the Living Holy Temple of the Deity and to be the King seated on the Throne of the Heavenly Father. These results are extended to all generations submitting His enemies and those who resist His Work of Salvation.

This Heavenly Glory of Christ is described by Holy Scripture as His Enthronement "...at the right hand of the Majesty on High."⁷⁷ The expression "...at the right hand..." is not a specific place "...for the Divine is indescribable..." although it is expressed as "Deified Glory."⁷⁸ In the Person of the God-Man all human nature was raised to Himself as its Head. Furthermore, at the time of His Ascension the "...Archangels saw, from a Lightening Royal Throne, shining in an Eternal Glory and beauty..." "...which was brought to Heaven..." and surpassing the Cherubim It rose "...higher than the Seraphim, until It took the Despotism Throne."⁷⁹

6. The Manifestation of the Royal Power of Christ Within the Church

The "right hand of the Father" reminds us of His Strength and the position of honour that explains the declaration of Christ after His Glorious Resurrection when He said: "All Authority has been given to Me in Heaven and on earth."⁸⁰ The God-Man was vested with Royal Power. This Power is distinguished from His Creative Almighty, which as Co-eternal to the Father, He always had. He perfects the first Creation in all spiritual and natural spheres, in which fallen man moves and thus established the "New Creation"⁸¹ in Christ. On

⁷⁴ St. Symeon, *Euriskomena*, Homily XXIX, p. 148.

⁷⁵ Ephes. 2:5-8.

⁷⁶ St. John Chrysostom, in Migne, *P.G.*, 62, 32.

⁷⁷ Heb. 1:3.

⁷⁸ St. John of Damascus, *To Hebrews 1:3*, in Migne, *P.G.*, 95, 932.

⁷⁹ St. John Chrysostom, *To the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ*, §§ 33 and 4, in Migne, *P.G.*, 50, 446.

Mogilas, in Karmeris, *The dogmatics*, v. II, pp. 619.

⁸⁰ Matth. 28:18.

⁸¹ Gal. 6:15.

His Royal Throne the Most High King and Eternal High Priest does not rest but continues to work: *“My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.”*⁸²

The Church is the sphere in which Christ’s Royal Power and Authority is manifested. He continues even in Heaven to practice this Authority. All those who are Called⁸³ and who believe in the Son, are transmitted from the authority of darkness to the Kingdom of the Son, making them citizens of His Heavenly Kingdom. The Work of Christ as King is to gather His Flock throughout all generations - those who have accepted and believe in Him - awaking them through the Divine Grace of the Holy Spirit, the outpouring of which is from the Heavenly Throne and which unites them to Himself and to one another. The High King rules the Church, which is His Mystical Body, through His Word and His Spirit, being Himself the Head from which Life issues forth to each member according to their needs and ability to receive.

Christ being the Head of whole Body of the Church in which each member has its position and is familiar with how it is joined to the other members, being at peace with God, they grow. They receive the Holy Spirit Who is richly bestowed upon them from Above, touching all and being given to all. Christ excludes anyone from entering as Co-ruler or from be called “Rabbi” or “Teachers” for only One is the “Teacher, the Christ.”⁸⁴ The Holy Apostles presented Him as “...purchasing the Church through His own Blood...”⁸⁵ as “...Chief Shepherd...”⁸⁶ and Bridegroom, Who loved and gave Himself for the Church “...that He might present Her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that She should be Holy and without blemish.”⁸⁷

Ruling the Church as One Lord and King, He protects Her against any enemy, according to His Promise that “... the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”⁸⁸ Finally, Christ leads His Church to perfection, cleansing the whole Body and each member individually from any “...spot or wrinkle or any such thing...” in order that they “...should be Holy.”⁸⁹

That the Work of Christ as King is extended and achieved within the Church, does not mean that each member of the Church is not in a direct relationship with the Great King. Since the Church consists of each and every individual member and in order for them to be united as one, they need to be overseen and taught by the Lord. The assurance was given by our Risen Lord to His Holy Apostles that He would be with them “... always, even to the end of the age...”⁹⁰ and this is accomplished by all Faithful according to His Promise that He and His Father “...will come ... and make...” their “...home with ...”⁹¹ all who love Him.

In the internal Regeneration of each individual member of the Church, it is the Holy Spirit Who acts. Christ requested the Heavenly Father to give us “the Helper”⁹² and not only

⁸² John 5:17.

⁸³ John 6:44.

⁸⁴ Matth. 23:8.

⁸⁵ Acts 20:28.

⁸⁶ 1 Peter 5:4.

⁸⁷ Ephes. 5:27.

⁸⁸ Matth. 16:18.

⁸⁹ Ephes. 5:27.

⁹⁰ Matth. 28:20.

⁹¹ John 14:23.

⁹² John 14:16.

was the Holy Spirit sent by the Father into the world in His Name⁹³ but He **also sent** Him to His Holy Disciples who bear witness **to** the Christ⁹⁴ **and** glorify Him.⁹⁵ He promised that whatever they **asked of the Father** in His Name, they **would** receive.⁹⁶ **Furthermore,** He **would** “*manifest*” Himself to all those who love Him.⁹⁷ He is the “*Source of Life*” to Whom the Father “...*granted the Son to have Life in Himself...*”⁹⁸ in order “...*to give Life to whom He Wills...*”⁹⁹ and that whoever “...*believes in Him may have Eternal Life*” and “... *raise him up at the Last Day.*”¹⁰⁰ **Christ possesses and bestows** this Source of Life upon all Faithful whom He protects and nourishes as His own sheep **and by granting** “...*them Eternal Life ... they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of...*” His Hands.¹⁰¹

Christ **does not simply live** in the memories of each Faithful but **also** in the heart and will of each **individual who has Christ “formed” in him**¹⁰² **and no** longer do the Faithful live for themselves but **instead** “...*Christ lives in...*” them.¹⁰³

7. Christ as King of the World

Whatever the **Great King** of God’s Kingdom **generally** achieves in His Church and **separately** in each individual, **He aims for** the final **Victory** and conquest of the world. The Authority of Christ has an individual and universal meaning. The **Work** of King Christ does not aim to gain victory **only** over sin within **either one** person or many, but to **completely** destroy evil in such a way that the Will of God is “...*on earth as it is in Heaven.*”¹⁰⁴

The word of God’s Kingdom has influenced the moral world. As a rock falls into a lake **and** creates **ripples that spread across the water**, likewise **is** the **Holy Gospel** of Christ spread throughout the world. The fact that the world hates¹⁰⁵ the **Message** of the **Gospel** **proves** Its Life-giving **Power**. **Victory** over the **adverse** reactions of the sinful world will end with God’s Kingdom prevailing: “*And this is the Victory that has overcome the world – our Faith.*”¹⁰⁶ St Paul thanked God “...*Who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the Fragrance of His Knowledge in every place.*”¹⁰⁷

This type of **Triumph** will be the end of the struggle of the Church and is assured by the character of Christ the King as the Head of His Church **and** as Leader and Chief Shepherd of His people. “*And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He Who sat on it had a bow; and a Crown was given to Him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.*”¹⁰⁸ Christ, as the Head of the Church, is not just her Lord and Ruler but **also** the **Fountain** of **Life** and the

⁹³ John 14:26.

⁹⁴ John 15:26-27.

⁹⁵ John 16:14

⁹⁶ John 14:13-14; 16:23.

⁹⁷ John 14:21.

⁹⁸ John 5:26.

⁹⁹ John 5:21.

¹⁰⁰ John 6:39, 40.

¹⁰¹ John 10:28.

¹⁰² Gal. 4:19.

¹⁰³ Gal. 2:20.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Kefalas, *Catechesis*, pp. 83-84.

¹⁰⁵ John 15:18-20.

¹⁰⁶ 1 John 5:4.

¹⁰⁷ 2 Corinth. 2:14.

¹⁰⁸ Rev. 6:2.

Centre of her unity. Consequently, anyone who is in Communion with Him through the Living Faith, receives from Him Eternal Life and Power of Sanctification through which every worldly force is conquered. As “...the Author and Finisher of our Faith...”¹⁰⁹ He appears to the people as the Leader of the utmost Moral Perfection. The Holy Apostles invite everyone to become imitators of Christ and “...to walk just as He walked...”¹¹⁰ “...because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.”¹¹¹ Faith and Love in Christ keeps our minds and hearts with Him, “...with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the Glory of the Lord ... being transformed into the same image from glory to glory.”¹¹² As High Priest and Chief Shepherd of His people, He perfects His Work that He began in the Church by leading us to Perfection and Sanctification and by pursuing “...peace with all people, and Holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.”¹¹³

8. The Last Act of Christ as King

The last Act of Christ as King will be His Second Glorious Coming and the Judgement of the world.¹¹⁴ Our Lord foretold that He would return with Glory and Power to Judge the living and the dead. After this Judgement each man will receive his Eternal Condition and will enter either “...into Everlasting Punishment...” or “... into Eternal Life.”¹¹⁵

Christ will return, accompanied by all His Angels, not to add anything to the Work of Salvation but to Judge each and every man for his deeds. He will demand an accounting from every human being on how His Grace that He offered on the Cross was used. After this, He will present all those who followed Him to His Father and “...then comes the end, when He delivers the Kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power...”¹¹⁶ being subject to God the Father “...that God may be all in all.”¹¹⁷

Christ as the King of the Church, will reign forever as the Head of the Church, “...as Firstborn among many brethren...”¹¹⁸ transforming “...our lowly body that it may be conformed to His Glorious Body.”¹¹⁹ Consequently, “...He will reign over the House of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there will be no end...”¹²⁰ for His “...Throne, O God, is forever and ever.”¹²¹

¹⁰⁹ Heb. 12:2.

¹¹⁰ 1 John 2:6.

¹¹¹ 1 Peter 2:21.

¹¹² 2 Corinth. 3:18.

¹¹³ Heb. 12:14.

¹¹⁴ Matth. 24:29-31; 25:31-46. Mark 13:24-27. Luke 21:25-28. 1 Thess. 4:15-17.

¹¹⁵ Matth. 25:46.

¹¹⁶ 1 Corinth. 15:24.

¹¹⁷ 1 Corinth. 15:28.

¹¹⁸ Rom. 8:29. Psalm 44(45):6.

¹¹⁹ Phil. 3:21.

¹²⁰ Luke 1:33.

¹²¹ Heb. 1:8.