

Православното учение за митарствата The Orthodox Teaching of the Aerial Toll-Houses



Митарства. Стенопис в Рилския манастир. Снимка
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:: **Митарства**

:: **Православното учение за митарствата**
Архим. Серафим (Алексиев) 

:: **Митарствата.** Разказ за 20-те митарства о. Серафим Роуз, из "Душата след смъртта"

:: **Patristical and Liturgical evidence for the Tradition of the Toll Houses** 



:: **Преходът.** Последната болест, смъртта и после Пьотър Калиновски

:: Християнството и науката за началото на живота след смъртта. Първият съд.

:: Св. Писание и Християнските философи за живота в задгробния свят

:: **Свещеното Писание и Свещеното Предание за Частния Божи съд, митарствата и Всеобщия Божи съд в края на времената**

Митарства

Митарства - нещо от рода на застави или митници, които срещат по пътя си душите на починалите, възнасяйки се към престола на небесния Съдия. При тях стоят духовете на злобата и взимат от всяка душа, виновна в някакъв грях, своего рода данък или откуп, състоящ се в поставянето пред тях на противоположното на този грях добро дело.

Названията **митарства** и **митари** са взети от еврейската история. Митари у евреите се наричали лицата, назначени от римляните за събиране на данъците. Те обикновено взимали данъците чрез откуп и използвали всякакви средства, като не пренебрегвали даже изтезанията, за да извлекат най-голяма изгода за себе си. Митарите стояли при особени митници или застави, събирайки от

превозваните товари мито. Тези застави се наричали митници, митарства. Християнските писатели пренесли това название и върху местата на въздушните изтезания, при които възлизащите към престола на небесния Съдия души се задържали от злите духове, стараещи се да ги уличат във всевъзможни грехове и чрез това да ги отведат в ада.

Същността на учението за митарствата е изложена в словото на **свети Кирил Александрийски** († 444 г.) **за изхода на душата**, поместено обикновено в Следовния Псалтир.

“При раздялата на душата с тялото - се казва тук, - пред нас ще застанат, от една страна, небесните сили и войнства, а, от друга - властите на тъмнината, въздушните началници на митарите, изобличителите на нашите дела. Като ги види, душата ще се разтрепери и в смут и ужас ще търси за себе си защита от Божиите ангели; но и бидейки приета от ангелите и преминавайки под покроба им през въздушното пространство и възнасяйки се нагоре, тя ще среща различните митарства, които ще преграждат пътя ѝ към небесното Царство, ще я спират и задържат в стремежа ѝ към него. На всяко от тези митарства ще се изисква отчет за особени грехове...

Всяка страст, всеки грях има своите митари и изтезатели. При това ще присъстват и божествените сили, и сонм от нечисти духове; и както първите ще посочват добродетелите на душата, така вторите ще изобличават греховете ѝ...

И ако за своя благочестив и богоугоден живот тя се окаже достойна (за награда), то ще я приемат ангелите, и тогава тя вече без страх ще отиде в Царството. И обратното, ако се окаже, че тя е

прекарала живота си в нерадение и невъздържание, то ще чуе оня страшен глас: "да се махне нечестивият, да не види славата Господня" (Ис. 26:10, слав.), тогава Божиите ангели ще я оставят и ще я вземат страшните демони, и душата, свързана с неразкъсваеми вериги, ще бъде низвергната в адските тъмници".

В този смисъл митарствата не са нещо друго, а частен съд, който извършва Сам Господ над човешките души, невидимо, при посредничеството на ангелите, допускайки при това и "клеветникът на братята ни" (Откр. 12:10), злите духове - съд, на който на душата се припомнят и безпристрастно се оценяват всичките ѝ дела и след който ѝ се определя известна участ. Този съд се нарича **частен**, за разлика от всеобщия, който ще се извърши над всички хора при свършека на света, когато Син Божий отново ще дойде на земята, но вече в славата Си.

Из "Жития на светиите" от св. Димитрий Ростовски, бележка към 21 юли



Православното учение за митарствата

Православното учение за митарствата е дошло до нас по пътя на Свещеното Предание. Апостолският му произход проличава ясно от факта, че го споменават св. Отци от IV век, а и по-раншните от тях. За участта на душата от смъртния час до 40-тия ден научаваме от св. Макарий Велики, св. Василий Велики, св. Иоан Златоуст, св. Григорий Богослов, блажени Августин, св. Киприан Картагенски, св. Кирил Александрийски, св. Ефрем Сирин, св. Григорий Двоеслов, св. Иоан Дамаскин,

блаж. Иоан Милостиви, св. Митрофан Воронежски, както и от житиетата на св. Василий Нови, св. Серафим Саровски и много други.

Макар в Библията то да не е изрично упоменато, учението за митарствата не само не противоречи на Св. Писание, а е в пълно съгласие с него. Ето на какво ни учи Свещеното Писание:

Още през тоя живот демоните се стремят да ни уловят в своите примки. Те са постоянните наши изкусители и съучастници във всички наши беззакония; стремят се да обладаят волята ни, за да ни лишат от вечното спасение. Затова и в смъртния час на човека те са там, за да грабнат душата му в своя власт.

"Бъдете трезвени, бъдете бодри, защото вашият противник, дяволът, като рикащ лъв обикаля и търси кого да глътне"
(1Петр. 5:8).

*"Поради това и аз, като не можех вече да търпя, пратих да узная за вярата ви, **да не би някак да ви е изкусил изкусителят**, та да отиде напразно нашият труд"* (1Сол. 3:5).

"Чеда, никой да ви не прельстява! ... Който прави грях, от дявола е, защото открай време дяволът съгрешава. Затова се и яви Син Божий, за да разруши делата на дявола" (1Иоан 3:8).

*"Семето е словото Божие; ... но отсетне дохожда при тях **дяволът и грабва словото от сърцето им, за да не повярват и се спасят...**"* (Лука 8:12).

*"Господният раб не бива да влиза в крамоли, но да бъде към всички кротък, поучлив и търпелив; с кротост да наставлява противниците, та дано Бог им даде покаяние, да познаят истината и да се освободят от примката на **дявола, който ги е живи уловил, за да***

изпълняват волята му" (2Тим. 2:24-26).

"Безумнико, нощес ще ти поискат (истяжуть - по славянския превод) душата" (Лука 12:20) (истяжуть - ще разследват, ще измъчват, ще разпитват).

При умирация се явяват ангели и демони, чрез които - като оръдие на Божието правосъдие, - Бог извършва Частния съд. Излязлата от тялото душа поема към небето през въздушните пространства, дето бива пресрещната от бесовете - "поднебесните духове на злобата".

*"И стана война на небето: Михаил и Ангелите му воюваха със змея, а змеят и ангелите му воюваха против тях, но не устояха, и за тях се не намери вече място на небето. И биде свален големият змей, древният змей, наричан дявол и сатана, който [след възгордяването си] **мами цялата вселена - свален на земята**, а заедно с него бидоха свалени и ангелите му" (Откр. 12:7-9).*

*"Нашата борба не е против кръв и плът, а против началствата, против властите, против светоуправниците на тъмнината от тоя век, против **поднебесните духове на злобата**" (Еф. 6:12).*

*"И вас, мъртвите поради вашите престъпления и грехове, в които живяхте някогаш според живота на тоя свят, съгласно с **княза на въздушната власт**" (Еф. 2:2).*

Добрите Ангели - нашите ръководители и наставници към вечното спасение, знаейки нашите добри дела и, съобразно с любовта си, съдействат за нашето оправдаване на Частния съд.

*"Умря сиромашът и занесоха го **Ангелите** в лоното Авраамоово" (Лука 16:22).*

"Бог е казал [на Ангела]: "седи от дясната Ми страна, докле туря Твоите врагове подножие на нозете Ти"? Нали те всички са духове служебни, **провождани да служат на ония, които ще наследят спасение?**" (Евр. 1:13-14)

"Тъй ще бъде и [преди Страшния съд] при свършека на тоя век: ще изпрати Син Човеческий Ангелите Си, и ще съберат от царството Му всички съблазни и ония, които вършат беззаконие, и ще ги хвърлят в огнената пещ; там ще бъде плач и скърцане със зъби; тогава праведните ще блеснат като слънце в царството на Отца си" (Мат. 13:40-42).



Църковното учение за митарствата ни предупреждава да си представяме митарствата не в грубо материален смисъл, а доколкото ни е възможно - в духовен смисъл. То ни насочва към живот, чрез който да не дадем на демоните материал да ни обвиняват на Частния Божи съд. Затова подробното изучаване на митарствата е от голяма полза за нас: да избягваме греховете, които се изследват на всяко от тях или, ако сме ги вършили, да се покаем за тях, докато е време.

Св. Отци ни предупреждават за 20 митарства (виж [тук](#)). Ден след ден (до 40-тия ден от смъртта) всеки от неправедниците ще отговаря за: всички грехове на езика, лъжи, осъждания и клевети; за чревоугодието, леността, кражбите, сребролюбието, неправедното забогатяване и други извършени неправди; за всяка проявена злоба или завист, гордост, гняв, злопаметство, убийство и самоубийство (вкл. аборт), окултизъм и призоваване на тъмни духове; за блудство, прелюбодейство, содомия, ереси, неверие, съмнения и хула към светините, а също за всяка

проява на немилосърдието и жестокост.

Като израз не само на Божията строгост, но и на Божията милост, неокончателният Частен съд над душите на покойниците ни дава възможност също да облекчим задгробната участ на нашите починали близки. Заупокойните молитви и приношения на Църквата, както и милостините, правени в тяхна памет, подпомагат душите им да преминат след смъртта си безбедно покрай въздушните духове на злобата и като разкаялия се разбойник да се удостоят с влизане в Рая!

Архим. Серафим (Алексиев)

Из книгата "Беседи за живота след живота", втори том, изд. ЕТ Снежана Иванова, София, 1995 година

Evidence for the Tradition of the Toll Houses found in the Universally Received Tradition of the Church

- :: Patristic Evidence**
- :: Liturgical Evidence**

Patristic Evidence

St. Mark of Ephesus:

"But if souls have departed this life in faith and love, while nevertheless carrying away with themselves certain faults, whether small ones over which they have not repented at all, or great ones for which – even though they have repented over them – they did not undertake to show fruits of repentance: such souls, we believe, must be cleansed from this kind of sin, but not by means of some purgatorial

fire or a definite punishment in some place (for this, as we have said, has not been handed down to us). But some must be cleansed in they very departure from the body, thanks only to fear, as St. Gregory the Dialogist literally shows; while others must be cleansed after the departure from the body, either while remaining in the same earthly place, before they come to worship God and are honored with the lot of the blessed, or – if their sins were more serious and bind them, for a longer duration – they are kept in hell [i.e., Hades], but not in order to remain forever in fire and torment, but as it were in prison and confinement under guard" (First Homily: Refutation of the Latin Chapters concerning Purgatorial Fire, by St. Mark of Ephesus. Qtd. In "The Soul After Death, p 208f).

St. Athanasius the Great, in the Life of St. Anthony the Great:

"For once, when about to eat, having risen up to pray about the ninth hour, he perceived that he was caught up in the spirit, and, wonderful to tell, he stood and saw himself, as it were, from outside himself, and that he was led in the air by certain ones. Next certain bitter and terrible beings stood in the air and wished to hinder him from passing through. But when his conductors opposed them, they demanded whether he was not accountable to them. And when they wished to sum up the account from his birth, Antony's conductors stopped them, saying, 'The Lord hath wiped out the sins from his birth, but from the time he became a monk, and devoted himself to God, it is permitted you to make a reckoning.' Then when they accused him and could not convict him, his way was free and unhindered. And

immediately he saw himself, as it were, coming and standing by himself, and again he was Antony as before. Then forgetful of eating, he remained the rest of the day and through the whole of the night groaning and praying. For he was astonished when he saw against what mighty opponents our wrestling is, and by what labours we have to pass through the air. And he remembered that this is what the Apostle said, 'according to the prince of the power of the air [10].' For in it the enemy hath power to fight and to attempt to hinder those who pass through. Wherefore most earnestly he exhorted, 'Take up the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day [11],' that the enemy, 'having no evil thing to say against us, may be ashamed [12].' And we who have learned this, let us be mindful of the Apostle when he says, 'whether in the body I know not, or whether out of the body I know not; God knoweth [13].' But Paul was caught up unto the third heaven, and having heard things unspeakable he came down; while Antony saw that he had come to the air, and contended until he was free. . And he had also this favour granted him. For as he was sitting alone on the mountain, if ever he was in perplexity in his meditations, this was revealed to him by Providence in prayer. And the happy man, as it is written, was taught of God [14]. After this, when he once had a discussion with certain men who had come to him concerning the state of the soul and of what nature its place will be after this life, the following night one from above called him, saying, 'Antony, rise, go out and look.' Having gone out therefore (for he knew whom he ought to obey) looking up, he beheld one standing and reaching to the clouds, tall, hideous, and fearful, and others ascending as though they were winged.

And the figure stretched forth his hands, and some of those who were ascending were stayed by him, while others flew above, and having escaped heavenward, were borne aloft free from care. At such, therefore, the giant gnashed his teeth, but rejoiced over those who fell back. And forthwith a voice came to Antony, 'Understandest thou what thou seest?' And his understanding was opened, and he understood that it was the passing of souls, and that the tall being who stood was the enemy who envies the faithful. And those whom he caught and stopped from passing through are accountable to him, while those whom he was unable to hold as they passed upwards had not been subservient to him. So having seen this, and as it were being reminded, he struggled the more daily to advance towards those things which were before. And these visions he was unwilling to tell, but as he spent much time in prayer, and was amazed, when those who were with him pressed him with questions and forced him, he was compelled to speak, as a father who cannot withhold ought from his children. And he thought that as his conscience was clear, the account would be beneficial for them, that they might learn that discipline bore good fruit, and that visions were oftentimes the solace of their labours" (Chapters 65-66).
<http://orthodoxinfo.com/death/vita-antony.htm>

St Adamnan (Eunan) who recorded the life of St. Columba:

"AT another time while the holy man was tarrying in the Iouan island (Hy, now Iona), one of his monks called Brito, a person given to all good works, being seized with bodily illness, was reduced to the last

extremity. When the venerable man went to visit him at the hour of his departure, he stood for a few moments at his bedside, and after giving him his blessing, retired quickly from the house, not wishing to see him die, and the very moment after the holy man left the house the monk closed this present life. Then the eminent man walking in the little court of his monastery, with his eyes upraised to heaven, was for a long time lost in wonder and admiration. But a certain brother named Aidan, the son of Libir, a truly virtuous and religious man, who was the only one of the brethren present at the time, fell upon his knees and asked the saint to tell him the reason of so great astonishment. The saint said to him in reply: "I have this moment seen the holy angels contending in the air against the hostile powers; and I return thanks to Christ, the Judge, because the victorious angels have carried off to the joys of our heavenly country the soul of this stranger, who is the first person that hath died among us in this island. But I beseech thee not to reveal this secret to any one during my life."

<http://www.usu.edu/history/norm/bk3ch7.html>

St. Diadochos of Photiki (ca 400 – 486 a.d.) from the Philokalia:

"If we do not confess our involuntary sins as we should, we shall discover and ill-defined fear in ourselves at the hour of our death. We who love the Lord should pray that we may be without fear at that time; for if we are afraid then, we will not be able freely to pass by the rulers of the nether world. They will have as their advocate to plead against us the fear which our soul experiences because of its own wickedness. But the soul which rejoices in

the love of God, at the hour of its departure, is lifted with the angels of peace above all the hosts of darkness. For it is given wings by spiritual love, since it ceaselessly carries within itself the love which 'is the fulfilling of the law' (Rom. 13:10)" (Philokalia, Volume I, p. 295).

Theophilus of Antioch (reposed 412 a.d.) recorded in the Alphabetical Sayings of the Desert Fathers:

"The same Abba Theophilus said, "What fear, what trembling, what uneasiness will there be for us when our soul is separated from the body. Then indeed the force and strength of the adverse powers come against us, the rulers of darkness, those who command the world of evil, the principalities, the powers, the spirits of evil. They accuse our souls as in a lawsuit, bringing before it all the sins it has committed, whether deliberately or through ignorance, from its youth until the time when it has been taken away. So they stand accusing it of all it has done. Furthermore, what anxiety do you suppose the soul will have at that hour, until sentence is pronounced and it gains its liberty. That is its hour of affliction, until it sees what will happen to it. On the other hand, the divine powers stand on the opposite side, and they present the good deeds of the soul. Consider the fear and trembling of the soul standing between them until in judgment it receives the sentence of the righteous judge. If it is judged worthy, the demons will receive their punishment, and it will be carried away by the angels. Then thereafter you will be without disquiet, or rather you will live according to that which is written: "Even as the habitation of those who rejoice is in you." (Ps. 87.7) Then will the Scripture be fulfilled: "Sorrow and sighing

shall flee away." (Isaiah 35.10).

"Then your liberated soul will go on to that joy and ineffable glory in which it will be established. But if it is found to have lived carelessly, it will hear that terrible voice: "Take away the ungodly, that he may not see the glory of the Lord." (cf. Isaiah 26.10) Then the day of anger, the day of affliction, the day of darkness and shadow seizes upon it. Abandoned to outer darkness and condemned to everlasting fire it will be punished through the ages without end. Where then is the vanity of the world? Where is the vain-glory? Where is carnal life? Where is enjoyment? Where is imagination? Where is ease? Where is boasting? Riches? Nobility? Father, mother, brother? Who could take the soul out of its pains when it is burning in the fire, and remove it from bitter torments? (The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection, translated by Benedicta Ward, p. 81-82).

St. John Climacus:

In Step 7, section 50 of the Ladder of Divine Ascent, St. John gives the account of a monastic who was dying, and who had begun to pass from this life to the next, and to experience the accusations of the demons. The account ends with statement:

"And while, thus being called to account he was parted from his body, leaving us in uncertainty as to his judgment, or end, or sentence, or how the trial ended."

St. John Maximovich (+1966)

"Many appearances of the dead have given us to know in part what happens with the soul when it leaves the body. When it no longer sees with its bodily eyes, its spiritual

vision is opened. This frequently occurs even before actual death; while seeing and even conversing with those around them, the dying see that which others do not. Leaving the body, the soul finds itself among other spirits, good and evil. Usually it strives towards those which are more akin to it, but if while still in the body it was under the influence of certain spirits, it remains dependent upon them when it leaves the body, no matter how unpleasant they might prove to be at the encounter. . .

For two days the soul enjoys relative freedom and can visit its favourite places on earth, but on the third day it makes its way towards other realms. At this time it passes through a horde of wicked spirits, who obstruct its path and accuse the soul of various sins by which they themselves had deceived it. According to revelations, there are twenty such barriers, so-called 'tollhouses'. At each stop the soul is tested as to a particular sin. Passing through one, the soul comes upon the next, and only after successfully passing through them all can the soul continue its way, and not be thrown straightway into hell. These demons and their trials are so horrendous that the Mother of God herself, when informed by Archangel Gabriel of her imminent repose, entreated her Son to deliver her from those demons and, in fulfillment of her prayer, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself appeared from Heaven to take the soul of His Most Pure Mother and carry it up to Heaven. The third day is terrifying for the soul, and it is especially in need of prayer. . .

Once having safely passed through the toll-houses and having bowed down before God, the soul spends the next thirty-seven days visiting the heavenly habitations and

the chasms of hades, not knowing where it will find itself, and only on the fortieth day is it assigned its place of waiting until the resurrection of the dead. Some souls find themselves with a foretaste of eternal joy and blessedness, while others – in fear of eternal torments, which will begin in earnest after the Dread Judgement. Until that time, changes in the state of the soul are still possible, especially through offering for their sake the Bloodless Sacrifice (commemoration at the Divine Liturgy), and likewise through other prayers.”

“I Believe in the Resurrection of the Dead”, in *Man of God: Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco*, Redding, Ca.: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 1991, pp. 143-144)

Liturgical Evidence

In both the Greek and Slavonic Euchologion, in the canon for the departure of the soul by St. Andrew , we find in Ode 7:

"All holy angels of the Almighty God, have mercy upon me and save me from all the evil toll-houses [telonion poneron]."

For an English translation of this canon, see page 90, vol 3, of "The Book of Needs" published by St. Tikhon Seminary.

Also in the Greek Euchologion, in the same canon, we find in the first Ode:

"Behold a crowd of evil spirits has gathered bearing the record of my sins, and they are shouting aloud and demanding shamelessly my humble soul" (Quoted in the *Mystery of Death*, p. 391, by Nikolaos P. Vassiliadis).

Also in the Slavonic Euchologion:

"O thou that gavest birth to the Lord Almighty, when I come to die, do thou banish from me the commander of the bitter toll-gatherers and ruler of the earth, that I may glorify thee unto the ages, O holy Theotokos."

From Ode 8, of The Canon of Supplication to our lord Jesus Christ and the Most Holy Theotokos, the Mother of the Lord, at the Parting of the Soul from the body of any Orthodox, page 81, vol 3, Book of Needs, Published by St. Tikhon's Monastery.

The prayer to the Theotokos at small compline:

".at the time of my departure taking care of my miserable soul, and driving far away from it the dark countenances of the evil demons."

The Octoechos:

"When my soul is about to be forcibly parted from my body's limbs, then stand by my side and scatter the counsels of my bodiless foes and smash the teeth of those who implacably seek to swallow me down, so that I may pass unhindered through the rulers of darkness who wait in the air, O Bride of God." Octoechos, Tone Two, Friday Vespers.

http://www.anastasis.org.uk/weekday_espers1.htm

"Pilot my wretched soul, pure Virgin, and have compassion on it, as it slides under a multitude of offences into the deep of destruction; and at the fearful hour of death snatch me from the accusing demons and from every punishment." Ode 6, Tone 1 Midnight Office for Sunday.

http://www.anastasis.org.uk/weekday_espers1.htm

The prayer of St. Eustratius, which is said in the

Midnight Office for Saturdays:

"And now, O Master, let Thy hand shelter me and let Thy mercy descend upon me, for my soul is distracted and pained at its departure from this my wretched and filthy body, lest the evil design of the adversary overtake it and make it stumble into the darkness for the unknown and known sins amassed by me in this life. Be merciful unto me, O Master, and let not my soul see the dark countenances of the evil spirits, but let it be received by Thine Angels bright and shining. Glorify Thy holy name and by Thy might set me before Thy divine judgment seat. When I am being judged, suffer not that the hand of the prince of this world should take hold of me to throw me, a sinner, into the depths of hades, but stand by me and be unto me a savior and mediator..."

From the Pre-Nikonian Slavonic Texts

In the second Canon to the Guardian Angel, found in the "Old Orthodox Prayer book", one finds the following:.

In Ode 5: "Foreseeing all the tortures and torments that await me, and my blindness, distance and the darkness of my passions, thou groanest with pity; thou art mournful and downcast, O my deliverer",

In Ode 6: "Let shame and disgrace cover the dark, foul and fetid faces of the enemy when my poor soul is separated from the body. Let thy most sacred wings then protect my soul, O my guide."

In Ode 7 verse: "O my helper, with thy fiery lance cease not from dispelling the myriads of invisible robbers who attack me round about, seeking to seize and steal my soul."

"As a mind beautiful in goodness, sweet and happy, and bright like the sun, stand before me with smiling face and merry glance, when I shall be taken from the earth, O my guide."

"In thy mercy, loving-kindness and the exceeding copiousness of thy love toward man, O my guardian, protect me under the shelter of thy wings when I depart from the body, that I may not see the hideous faces of the demons."

In Ode 9 verse: "When my spirit is forcibly parted from me, may I see thee, my defender and guardian, calm and radiant, standing at the right of my passionate soul and driving away the bitter demons who seek to seize me."

"My whole life have I spent in great vanity, and my end draweth nigh. I beseech thee, my guardian: be my merciful champion and defender when I pass through the toll houses of the evil world ruler."

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