

# **KEEP THY MIND IN HELL AND DESPAIR NOT:** A Word of God for Our Generation

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Christ is the sign of God to men of every age, and his way is the only true one which leads to the eternal Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

When the Jews erroneously asked Jesus for a "sign from heaven" (Luke 11:16), He repeatedly spoke of "the sign of Jonas the prophet" which was given to the generation of the Ninevites (Luke 11:29-30), as being the only sign of God for the world. The sign of Jonas prophetically foreshadowed Christ's descent into the lower parts of the earth followed by His ascent above the heavens. In Christ's person, in His life and in His example, was given the answer to all of man's questions. He became the eternal sign of God for every age and generation. This event of His descent and ascent constitutes also the fount of every grace flowing from the Holy Spirit. A "friend" of God is one who receives this sign with faith, taking it as a model and pattern for his life: "but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15).

Moreover, as Jonas was a sign to the Ninevites, so also are the "friends" of Christ in every age a sign for their generation,

according to His unfeigned promise that "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). They are the sign of God for their generation because God speaks through them and by their words they provide an answer to all the problems of their own age. They become the sign of God when, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the way of Christ is revealed to them: descent (even unto hell), and ascent, according to the example and way which Christ showed. One cannot be holy, a friend and a disciple of the Teacher, that is to say of Christ, if one has not traversed this road to the end and "known the mysteries of the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:10). It is only on this condition that one may become a "light in the world" proclaiming "the word of life" (Phil. 2:15-16) for his generation. If, according to the word of the Apostle Paul, "the saints shall judge the world" (I Cor. 6:2), this is right simply because they first became the mouth of God the Word, and by their word gave light unto the world. Christ spoke through them and He Himself states: "the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). According to the spiritual law which we have set forth above, if the Church guided by the Holy Spirit "unto all truth" glorified Silouan as an "apostolic and prophetic teacher," what should we seek in his person, life and word as being the characteristics of one who is a sign of God for his generation? What is the "word of life" which God revealed to our generation through him?

If one has "ears to hear" and the "mind to understand" the "words of the unlettered" Silouan, he will recognize their divine origin, despite their simplicity. He will remember the answer St. Silouan gave to Father Stratonikos' question ❖ "How do the perfect speak?" ❖ that "The perfect never say anything of themselves... They only say what the Spirit inspires them to say." (1) He will see that his words are given by the Holy Spirit and that not even one of his words is a product of human reasoning, but all his words are born of a pure heart, one which is "enlarged" (II Cor. 6:11) according to the gift of Christ. In a short talk such as this it is not possible to examine all his words, which are offered as words of God for our generation. It is enough for us to hold on to one word only, and try to go to its very depth. Then this word may by God's grace become a lens through which we can gaze fixedly at the endless horizons of the great mystery of godliness which has been revealed to us. So, today the word under consideration is the word of Christ to Silouan: "Keep thy mind in hell, and do not despair."

Timewise, our generation is nearer to the second coming of Christ

than ever before. Christ's word, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8), implies moreover that our generation finds itself in greater want and tribulation, and has need of salvation, than ever before. What are the tribulations which emphatically constitute the common and distinctive mark of our generation? We can number a few, which, according to our poor opinion, are the chief ones: pride, the darkening of the mind and its captivity by the spirit of wickedness, despair and the multitude of involuntary afflictions which accompany it, and finally, despondency, the manifest lack of concern for that salvation which God offers every day to the world. This revealing word from Christ Himself, "keep thy mind in hell and do not despair," offered by St. Silouan to his contemporaries who are of like passions, provide the answer to these and many other symptoms.

After this brief introduction to the subject, and before proceeding to analyse it, I should like to briefly refer to some points in the Saint's life which preceded these revelatory words.

St. Silouan was born in a village in Russia in 1868. While still a young man, a series of intense and alternating states of the grace of God, and an acute sense of hell, gave birth to the desire for monasticism in him. He set out for Mount Athos at the age of twenty-six, and, after six months of even more intense struggle, he was deemed worthy to behold the living Christ before the icon of the Saviour. Although this event only lasted an instant, it had such an effect on him that from that moment his prayer embraced all the peoples of the earth. How did this happen to a simple villager, barely educated, who perhaps had never even seen a map of the world? It is because at the time of his vision of Christ, the same state of Christ Himself was transmitted to him, Who as the second Adam and the true High Priest of the New Testament carries in Himself the whole of mankind of every age. (The enlargement of Zacchaeus when he was counted worthy to see Christ, Luke 19:2-9.)

The grace he received during his vision was great, and filled not only Silouan's soul, but even his body which, as he said, longed to suffer for Christ. This grace diminished, however, and Silouan was attacked by thoughts from the enemy. He lost that indescribable peace which he had felt with the grace of the vision. But it was not possible that he could accept this change in himself passively. From the lives of the saints we see that when man has known such

a measure of grace, he remains inconsolable after the loss or diminution of such grace. At that moment, Silouan was ready to endure every sacrifice for the sake of re-acquiring that lost treasure. Like the Apostle who says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12), so Silouan could not have resumed a normal way of life after the vision.

Silouan went to seek help from an experienced spiritual father of the Monastery, Father Anatoly, to whom he told all that had happened to him. This spiritual father helped him by his advice, but did not hide his amazement for the young novice and said to him: "If you are like this now, what will you be by the time you are an old man!" (2) These words gave Silouan over to a delicate and difficult war with vainglory, something complicated and dangerous for the young novice. The desert fathers used to say that praise to our brother without discernment can deliver him into the hands of the enemy, that is to say, can make him a victim of conceited self-love.

In this way, by God's permission, Silouan was engaged in a titanic war against vainglory and pride. This episode is described by his biographer vividly and with understanding as follows: "At all events, the young and still inexperienced monk Silouan set out on the most difficult, complex, subtle battle against conceit. Pride and vainglory entail every disaster and downfall - grace de-parts, the heart grows cold, prayer feeble. The mind is distracted, and wrong thoughts set to work. The soul contemplating another life, the heart that has savoured the grace of the Holy Spirit, the mind that has known purity are unwilling to accept the base thoughts that at-tack. But how is this to be managed?" (3) This is our question now.

This difficult period of alternating states and vacillations lasted fifteen years. During this time, Fr. Silouan tried every form of asceticism and way of life he could think of, which might restore him to the grace which he had known. He would sleep on a stool for only one and a half to two hours in the night, and this only in snatches of about fifteen to twenty minutes. As far as his prayer of repentance is concerned we can catch a glimpse of it from these words of Adam's Lament, in which he speaks of himself:

"Adam, father of all mankind, in paradise knew the sweetness of the love of God; and so when for his sin he was driven forth from

the garden of Eden, and was widowed of the love of God, he suffered grievously and lamented with a mighty moan. And the whole desert rang with his lamentations. His soul was racked as he thought: 'I have grieved my beloved Lord.' He sorrowed less after paradise and the beauty thereof ❖ he sorrowed that he was bereft of the love of God, which insatiably, at every instant, draws the soul to Him.

"In the same way the soul which has known God through the Holy Spirit but has afterwards lost grace experiences the torment that Adam suffered. There is an aching and a deep regret in the soul that has grieved the beloved Lord.

"Adam pined on earth, and wept bitterly, and the earth was not pleasing to him. He was heartsick for God, and this was his cry:

"My soul wearies for the Lord, and I seek Him in tears.

"How should I not seek Him?

"When I was with Him my soul was glad and at rest, and the enemy could not come nigh me" (4).

In St. John of the Ladder's wonderful description of those living in repentance in the prison outside a Monastery in Alexandria, it is clear that all who have known the Light of the grace of Christ, and then lost it, are ready to give themselves over to death at any moment in order to regain with knowledge the first grace of their calling and not be shut out of the bridal chamber of Christ. As St. John of the Ladder says, their repentance takes on the form of those lamenting over their dead (Step 5,5) (5). (See also the Life of St. Bessarion.)

In Adam's Lament, St. Silouan says the following:

"Adam wept:

"The desert cannot pleasure me; nor the high mountains, nor the meadow nor forest,

"nor the singing of birds. "I have no pleasure in any thing. "My soul sorrows with a great sorrow:

"I have grieved God. "And were the Lord to set me down in paradise again, there, too, would I sorrow and weep ❖

"O why did I grieve my beloved God?" (6).

Living like this and passing the nights with the tormenting thought, "Why did I grieve my beloved God," and not departing from the love he felt for God at the time of the vision, he would come to the point of asking: "Where art Thou, O Lord ... Why hast Thou forsaken me?" (7) The Saint's biographer mentions the following explanation in the words of the Saint, "If in the beginning the Lord had not given me to know how much He loves man, I could not have survived one of those nights, and yet they were legion" (8).

I cite now the description of the last night, which is also the most dramatic of his fifteen years of martyrdom, where God intervened and gave the solution:

"It was fifteen years after the Lord had appeared to him, and Silouan was engaged in one of these nocturnal struggles with devils which so tormented him. No matter how he tried, he could not pray with a pure mind. At last he rose from his stool, intending to bow down and worship, when he saw a gigantic devil standing in front of the ikon, waiting to be worshipped. Meanwhile, the cell filled with evil spirits. Father Silouan sat down again, and with bowed head and aching heart he prayed,

"Lord, Thou seest that I desire to pray to Thee with a pure mind but the devils will not let me. Instruct me, what must I do to stop them hindering me?"

"And his soul heard,

"The proud always suffer from devils."

"Lord," said Silouan, "teach me what I must do that my soul may become humble."

"Once more, his heart heard God's answer,

*"Keep thy mind in hell, and despair not"* (9).

Strange and incomprehensible is God's word to Silouan. Strange and incomprehensible moreover is Silouan's reaction to the word which he heard in his heart. "Thenceforth I began to do this, and my soul found rest in God" (10). This grace realised his passing over from death to life, and rejoicing, Silouan sings a song of

victory, echoing the just men of all ages:

"O the compassion of God! I am an abomination to God and man, yet the Lord so loveth me, giveth me understanding and healeth me, and Himself doth teach my soul humility and love, patience and obedience, and hath poured out the fulness of His mercy upon me ... O wonder! ...

"As soon as the Lord lays His hand upon the soul, she becomes a new being ...

"Who shall describe the joy of knowing the Lord and reaching out toward Him day and night, insatiable? O how blessed and happy are we Christians!" (11).

The Lord spoke the words in Silouan's heart, offering him the vision of hell, and amazingly, he immediately emerges possessing great knowledge and his life is restored with a wealth of grace and of the love of God.

What is, I wonder, the mystery of God which is enclosed in the words:

"Keep thy mind in hell and do not despair"? It is evident that knowledge of this mystery brought Silouan victory over the power of the enemy and a perfect likeness to his Master, our Lord Jesus Christ. This is what Silouan witnesses to in another part of his writings:

"He who has humbled himself has conquered the enemy. *No enemy can come near* the man who in his heart esteems himself deserving of eternal fire. No earthly thoughts find place in his soul  heart and mind, he lives entirely in God. And the man who has come to know the Holy Spirit, and learned humility of Him, has become like to his Teacher, Jesus Christ, Son of God, and resembles Him" (12).

Why did this word of the Lord free Silouan from the fight with the enemy and add to his stature strength of spirit and stability of life?

This happened because the word of the Lord placed Silouan on the very way of the Lord Himself. By following the way of the Lord one's heart is enlarged and man becomes unapproachable to his enemies.

As we said in the beginning of the talk, the sign of Jonas represents the way the Lord walked, and the apostle says that victory came into the world by Christ's descent into hell and His ascent which followed (see Eph. 4). Hence, when the Lord proposes hell to Silouan (and through Silouan to our despairing generation), the Lord is offering him the possibility for descent, for going down. This is a spiritual journey and St. Silouan's biographer, Archimandrite Sophrony, says that "those led by the Holy Spirit do not cease condemning themselves in their journey downwards" towards Christ, Who is the head of the inverted pyramid, and Who holds all the weight of the pyramid on His shoulders, and takes away the sin of the world. Christ said once and for all time, "Ye know not what ye ask" (Mark 10:38) to those who think themselves worthy of ascent without drinking the cup of descent. As for Capernaum which arrogantly "sought after a sign" (Matt. 12:39) the Lord said, "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell" (Luke 10:15). However, He raised and justified the publican who "would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven," but fulfilled Christ's law, which says, "He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:13 and 14).

When the Lord was praised by men for His miracles. He immediately directed his gaze prophetically to His coming cross and death, but also to His resurrection "on the third day" (Luke 13:32 and 18:33). And in doing this He gave us an example.

The way of the Lord stretches out, therefore, through the death on the cross to the infernal regions of hell. It is like descending into the water of Baptism: we meet Christ and put Him on and ascend reborn and with newness of life, since He has first descended into the waters and blessed them. So in like manner, when we are commanded to descend into hell, it is not in order that we may perish, but so that we may explore even there the unspeakable mystery of the divine and humble love which reaches down even to that dreadful place. It is so that we may humble ourselves unto the end before the greatness of this love, and in our turn reply with gratitude to Christ so perfectly and powerfully, that nothing and no place, not even hell, can separate us from God the Saviour.

This humble journey downwards is also the way that the Holy Church shows us. If we carefully examine her thought expressed in her prayers, we shall again see this twofold movement. Before the service of Baptism, or of the Divine Liturgy, we see the

celebrant humbling himself in spirit, and descending so that he may be clothed with strength to perform the service of God, and thereby be raised on high together with the faithful whom the Spirit of the Lord has entrusted to him. Almost every significant prayer of the Church is divided into two parts. The first part is the descent of the spirit, and the second the ascent with the cry of faith trusting in the boundless mercy of our Bountiful God. To confirm this truth, it is sufficient for one to read the prayers before Holy Communion. The life of the faithful is a life of repentance. Through repentance we have the descent in humility "beneath the strong hand of God that he may raise us in time." That wonderful teacher of the Ladder, St. John, says at the end of the chapter *On Repentance* that, "by voluntarily accepting retribution and punishment, we escape the punishment which is everlasting" (Step 5, 30) (13).

So, by descending into hell, we do nothing other than follow the Lord. This is the way of the Lord Himself. However, the way of the Lord leads to life, and for this reason we should not despair.

Having now spoken about the theological basis of the Lord's word to Silouan, "Keep thy mind in hell, and do not despair," it remains for us to explain how to carry this out in practice.

Before continuing, we should clearly stress that all the power of the mystery hidden within the word is due to the fact that the descent of the Lord into hell was voluntary and sinless, due only to his obedience and love for His Father and for the desire of salvation for fallen man. For this reason in order that our descent be blessed and bear fruit it must be voluntary and by the commandment of the Lord.

St. Silouan's experience of hell was a charismatic one ♦ full of grace ♦ and that is why the Lord's revealing word corresponded perfectly to his state. It is difficult for us to conceive its depth, without having had a similar experience. However, since it expresses the tradition of the Church's ascetic life, we shall try, by referring to the Holy Fathers, to go to its root, and comprehend its power ♦ even if only in part.

### **Contrition and Spiritual Poverty**

This word, "keep thy mind in hell and do not despair," is a commandment from the Lord with the intention that we might imitate Him in his descent, whilst at the same time trusting in His

mercy and the eternal salvation which He obtained for us by His ascent. The mere disposition in us to receive this word and fulfill it in our life attracts the grace of God. Being a divine light, this grace discloses and confirms this truth: Hell is where man finds himself separated from the God of Love. It also discloses sin, injustice and spiritual poverty. This knowledge brings contrition to the soul. This contrition is a precious gift from God to man. This is the beginning of humility and it (that is, contrition) prepares a dwelling-place for God in us.

As a property of grace, this contrition gives birth to spiritual courage. St. Symeon the New Theologian says:

"What is more courageous than a humble and contrite heart, which without difficulty routs the massed troops of devils and pursues them to their end?" (14) This contrition is spiritual courage since it is the only state in which man, inspired by the grace of God, dares to stare at his spiritual poverty without despairing, whilst hoping that He Who revealed to him the depth of his desolation is also able to carry him across unharmed to the other bank, where God is. He achieves this through self-condemnation and the following prophetic attitude: he attributes every justice to God, whereas his face is covered with shame (see Daniel 9:7). It is for this reason that St. John of the Ladder says that spiritual courage is victory (Step 14, 32) (15). It is victory because without the courage born of contrition, it is impossible for us to behold clearly our spiritual poverty. Then spiritual poverty becomes a gift, which lays the foundation for our spiritual ascent. "What is more glorious than spiritual poverty, which is the means of obtaining the kingdom of heaven?" (16)

Saint Silouan knew the power of this spiritual phenomenon ❖ contrition ❖ through Christ's word to him: "Keep thy mind in hell and do not despair." He would find it by taking refuge, as he says, in his beloved song:

"Soon I shall die, and my accursed soul will descend into the blackness of hell. I shall languish alone in the sombre flames, weeping for my Lord. 'Where art Thou, O Light of my soul? Why hast Thou forsaken me? I cannot live without Thee.'" (17).

And in another place he says:

"Though our sins be forgiven, we must remember them and grieve over them all our lives, so as to remain contrite. I did not do this,

and ceased to feel contrite, and suffered greatly from evil spirits. And I was perplexed by what was happening to me, and said to myself, 'My soul knows the Lord and His love. How is it that evil thoughts come to me?' And the Lord had pity on me, and Himself taught me the way to humble myself ♦ 'Keep thy mind in hell, and despair not.' Thus is the enemy vanquished" (18).

With His word, the Lord revealed to Silouan the way to acquire contrition and humility and in this way to defeat the enemy.

(Another great teacher of spiritual science, St. Barsanuphius, says that without the pain of a contrite heart it is impossible for us to discern the thoughts which come to us (19)).

We said that contrition is spiritual courage and light for the soul. It leads to humility which is victory over the enemies and prepares the soul to become God's dwelling-place. It is a precious gift of grace, and is accomplished by self-condemnation, the extreme form of which is self-condemnation to hell. St. John of the Ladder verifies this when he says that the following prayer of prisoners: "We know, we know that we deserve every punishment and torment" ♦ hell, "was able to move to contrition even the very hardness of stones" (Step 5, 5) (20). In another place he again says that condemning one's self to hell preserves "the mind unruffled." We see, therefore, that putting into practice the words of the Lord, "Keep thy mind in hell and do not despair," bears the fruit of humility and purity of mind, which is a vital condition for freedom from passions and union with our Holy God. St. Silouan was taught this science by this word of the Lord. As he himself writes: "I began to do as the Lord taught me, and my soul was rejoiced by rest in God" (21). In another place he says, "He who has humbled himself has conquered the enemy. *No enemy can come near* the man who in his heart esteems himself deserving of eternal fire. No earthly thoughts find place in his soul ♦ heart and mind he lives entirely in God" (22). "But when my mind emerges from the fire, suggestions of passion gather strength again" (23).

We notice with sadness that nowadays men suffer dreadfully because their mind is fragmented. Imagination, which is only one of the mind's activities, is over-indulged and dominates men's lives. It leads some to a hard heart due to pride, and others to mental illness. According to the teaching of the Gospel and all of Scripture, the mind works naturally only when it is united with the heart. Mind and heart are naturally joined together when the fire of contrition is in the heart. That is why St. Silouan recommends

the following therapy for the soul: "Keep your mind in your heart and in hell. The more you humble yourself, the greater the gifts you will receive from God" (24).

Which are the "greater gifts from God"?

From the words of St. Silouan it is clear that self-condemnation to hell is not only harmless, but also becomes a fount of great gifts. As he says, it gives birth to repentance "unto the remission of sins" in the soul and brings the joy of salvation to the heart.

Moreover, the Saint witnesses that the Lord gives the Holy Spirit to those who work at condemning themselves. This should not be at all surprising, since self-condemnation to hell can only take place in a spirit of humility. The Saint writes:

"I was thinking to myself, I am an abomination and deserving of every punishment; but instead of punishment the Lord gave me the Holy Spirit. O sweet is the Holy Spirit above all earthly things!" (25) These words of St. Silouan are in accordance with the spirit of the New Testament. The Lord tells His disciples that when they are persecuted and brought before the judges: "Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" (Luke 21:14-15). The Lord gives this wisdom of the Holy Spirit to all who willingly place themselves before the judgment seat of God and anticipate his judgment by their voluntary self-condemnation to hell.

God does not judge twice. As the Apostle Paul says: "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor. 11:31). And in another place he says, "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. 14:10) ♦ but we shall not all be condemned. It is possible, by willingly condemning one's self even unto hell, to anticipate God's judgment, and by this to be justified even in this life, and become a partaker of God's word and wisdom. And this is the grace of, and betrothal with, the Holy Spirit.

Archimandrite Sophrony writes. God does not judge twice, and St. John of the Ladder says that "by voluntarily accepting retribution and punishment, we escape the punishment which is everlasting" (Step 5, 30) (26), and elsewhere he says, "By present shame we are delivered from future shame" (Step 4, 15) (27).

We see the same golden thread of tradition unceasingly unfolding in the teaching of all the ascetic Fathers. Self-condemnation to hell is the most powerful means for one to be delivered from hell. It is inspired by the grace of the Holy Spirit. It brings contrition, cleanses the mind, leads to humility, defeats the enemies, gives freedom from sins, and makes man a participant of the Holy Spirit. I shall pass over the words of the desert fathers which are well-known to many, and just quote a short extract from St. Gregory Palamas where he expresses the same science which we have seen in St. Silouan: "If someone really accounts himself guilty of eternal punishment, he will courageously endure not just dishonour but also harm, disease and, in fact, every kind of misfortune and ill-treatment. He who shows such patience, as though in debt and guilty, is delivered by a very light condemnation, temporary and annulled, saved from truly grievous, unbearable and unending punishment. Sometimes he may even be delivered from dangers threatening him now, because God's kindness begins from that point, due to his patience. Someone chastised by God said, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him" (Micah 7:9) (28).

When the involuntary cross of the grateful thief became voluntary by his good confession and self-condemnation, this made the thief a saint and participant in the love of Paradise  that very same day.

The three children in the fiery furnace showed their love for God to be stronger than death, rendering justice to Him, and reproaching themselves. So also the faithful in the fire of self-condemnation, bearing within them the same spirit, offer an acceptable thanksgiving to God and attract the dewy coolness of the Spirit to their hearts (St. John Chrysostom).

We have hardly said anything about the words "and do not despair." It is enough, however, to say the following:

In the same way in which the Saint remembered the humble and boundless love of Christ which he had known at the beginning of his monastic life, and did not despair, remaining faithful to the vision, so too must the faithful remember that God freely saves by His grace, when we humble ourselves. "But we must count ourselves the worst of all men, and then the Lord by the Holy Spirit will give us to know the humility of Christ" (29).

We could summarise the great science of the Spirit, which we tried to describe above, with the words of St. Silouan himself:

"The Saints all said, 'I shall suffer torments in hell' even though they performed great miracles. They had learned by experience that if the soul condemns herself to hell but trusts the while in God's compassion, the strength of God enters into her, and the Holy Spirit bears witness of salvation. The soul grows humble through self-condemnation, and there is then no place in her for intrusive thoughts, and she stands before God with a pure mind.

*"This is the wisdom of the spirit. "* (30)

As the time has passed and I must end the talk, I should just like to close the subject with the words of Saint Silouan's disciple, Staretz Sophrony, in which he expresses the science of the Spirit, which is truly great:

"We must overcome all earthly suffering by immersing ourselves in even more profound suffering. 'Keep thy mind in hell.' We must condemn ourselves to hell as unworthy of God but we must 'despair not'.

"This ascetic effort will lead to victory over the world. It will bring us to the 'kingdom which cannot be moved.'

"Is there a limit to this noble science on earth? We have the answer in Christ Who 'conquered death by death.'

"Blessed be the Name of the Lord from this day forth and for ever more." (31)

## NOTES

1) Archimandrite Sophrony (Sakharov), *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, translated by Rosemary Edmonds (Essex: Patriarchal and Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, 1991), p. 57.

2) Ibid., p. 36.

3) Ibid., pp. 36-7.

4) Ibid., p. 448.

5) References in the main text are made to the Greek edition of the *Ladder*. This corresponds to Step 5, 9, in the English translation by Archimandrite Lazarus Moore, *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, (Willits, CA; Eastern Orthodox Books, 1959), p. 100.

6) Ibid., p. 450.

7) Ibid., p. 41.

8) Ibid., pp. 41-2.

9) Ibid., p. 42.

10) Ibid., p. 460.

11) Ibid., pp. 430-1.

12) Ibid., p. 411.

13) English translation, Step 5, 42, op. cit., p. 109.

14) *Catechesis ii*. Archbishop Basil Krivocheine, ed., *Sources Chretiennes* 96 (Paris 1963), p. 244, 42-44.

15) English translation, Step 14, 36, on. cit.. p. 145.

16) *Catecheses II*, op. cit., p. 244, 44-45

17) *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 46.

18) Ibid., p. 298.

19) See Answer no. 265 in the *Erolapokriseis* of *Barsanuphius and John*, Greek text, edited by Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain, reissued by B. Regopoulos (Thessalonica, 1974), p. 163.

20) Cf. English translation, Step 5, 12, op. cit., p. 100.

21) *Saint Silouan the Athonite*, p. 431.

22) Ibid., p. 411.

23) Ibid., p. 298.

24) Ibid., p. 497.

25) Ibid., p. 435.

26) English translation, Step 5, 42, op. cit., p. 109.

27) Cf. *ibid.*, Step 4, 12, p. 70.

28) Homily II, On *the Lord's Parable of the Publican and the Pharisee*, 23. Quotation taken from *the Homilies of Saint Gregory Palamas*, edited with an introduction and notes by Christopher Veniamin, and translated by Christie Seife (forthcoming: Saint Tikhon's Seminary Press).

29) *Saint Silouan the Alhonlte*, p. 277.

30) *Ibid.*, p. 169.

31) *We Shall See Him As He Is*, translated by Rosemary Edmonds (Tolleshunt Knights, Essex: Patriarchal and Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, 1988), p. 94.

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