

GOSPEL OF JOHN 14 A (14:1-3)

Great & Holy Thursday (12 Passion Gospels)

“The foot-washing which is necessary if his disciples are to have a ‘part’ in Him, cleanses them for entry into the new Temple, the Temple which is Jesus Himself, and so to be part of the Temple and all that entails, including laying down one’s life, as Peter eventually does even if he first denies Him three times. (Fr. Behr, John the Theologian and His Paschal Gospel, pg. 172).”

1. John 13:31 -18:1 (1st Reading)

1st“Let not your hearts be troubled; keep on believing in God, and believing in Me.

Faith as a weapon against distress and anxiety

Bishop Gerasimos: “The fear and anxiety that the disciples are experiencing is caused by the conflict with faith and the spirit of this world, which often impairs and weakens the faith...In such a critical time the believer needs spiritual strength and composure and especially greater and stronger faith and prayer in order to prevail over the spirit of the world and to ease his distress. Faith is that inner certainty and assurance that distress and fear will be temporary and will be overcome ... the world brings spiritual distress to the heart of the believer. We have already seen this in the person of Christ (Now My soul hath been troubled; and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’; but on this account I came to this hour. [Jn. 12:27]) ... We do not overcome our distress by ourselves, for we are weak. Trouble, which often appears in the believer, is overcome only with greater and stronger faith – faith in God and faith in Jesus Christ.”

Cyril of Alexandria: “...he commands them to cling to the intense power of faith. Faith is a weapon whose blade is stout and broad; it drives away all cowardice that may spring from the expectation of coming suffering and renders the darts of evil doers utterly void of effect and makes their temptations utterly profitless.”

1. The Temple is alluded to with three words.

2nd“In My Father’s house (oikia) are many abodes (monai); otherwise I would have told you. I go to prepare a place (topon) for you. 3rd“And if I go and prepare a place (topon) for you, again I am coming, and will receive you to Myself, that where I am you may be also.

- ❖ He is not speaking of heaven...In the Hebrew texts of the scriptures, the Temple was in fact far more spoken of as the ‘house of the Lord.’ (Fr. Behr, pg 172)
- ❖ The movement from the *temple* as a physical building to the Person of Christ Himself (John chapter 2) and finally (in John 14) it is extended to a group of people in a household, **oikia** has a wide range of meanings not just a physical building but also a *household* (John 4:53,8:35).

HOUSEHOLD – THE CHURCH

¹⁴And He found in the temple (iero – Holy Place) those who sell oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers sitting ... Cease making the house (oikon) of My Father a house of merchandise ... ¹⁹Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple (naou), and in three days I will raise it.” ²⁰Then the Jews said, “In forty and six years was this temple built, and wilt Thou raise it up in three days?” ²¹But He was speaking about the temple of His body. [Jn. 2:13-21]

THE MARRIGE OF THE BRIDEGROOM TO THE BRIDE – A UNION RESULTS

- ❖ These allusions (to *household*, *abode*: *dwelling place & place*) are meant to convey not a physical place but describe the New Relationship to the Father being given through Christ that the believer enters into. ‘The Father’s house is no longer heaven, but God’s household or family’. (Fr. Behr, pg. 173)

DWELLING PLACE – THE BELIVER BECOMES THE TEMPLE OF GOD

“The action therefore is not the believers coming to dwell in God’s heavenly abode, but the *Father*, the *Paraclete* (Holy Spirit), and Jesus coming *to dwell with believers* ... It is the community of believers, with the Spirit of God dwelling in them so that **they become the dwelling place** of the Father and the Son, that is now the household of God.” (Fr Behr, pg. 173)

THE *PLACE* – SPECIFICALLY BEING PREPARED FOR US IS CHRST HIMSELF

“Finally, the place of the skull’ that Jesus was taken, bearing His own cross (19:17). Bearing the wood upon which he would be sacrificed, Jesus fulfills the aborted sacrifice of Isaac, the beloved son of his father (Gen 22:2, 12), who bore the wood upon which he would be sacrificed to the ***place*** specified by God (“Take your son,” God said, “your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. Offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you ... He split the wood for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had designated. Gen 22L3, 9,14,) which became identified as the very spot upon which the Temple in Jerusalem was built.” (Fr, Behr, g 175).”