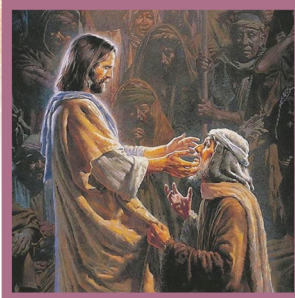


Our Spiritual Passover & Our Christ, the Joy of Hearts



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✠ *Our Spiritual Passover and Our Christ, the Joy of Hearts* ✠

General Overview of the Sundays of the Christian Passover Lent

The purpose of the rites of the church during the Christian Passover starting from the fast of Jonah until the glorious feast of Resurrection (the feast of the Christian Passover) is to enjoy the daily fellowship with our Risen Bridegroom from the dead, chanting and saying: "He raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"

(Eph 2: 6). Therefore, the readings of these Sundays and the special events of the Savior of the world reveal the following:

- **How to practice the law or divine commandments with an enlightened spiritual mind.**
- **How to have a relationship with the Holy Trinity and get to know our Good Savior, the lover of mankind.**
- **How to live the joyful resurrected life.**
- **Our role in preaching the kingdom of God?**

The Spiritual Passover and the Mid- Lent Sunday

The church used to call the fourth Sunday of Lent «The Samaritan Woman Sunday» the mid-lent Sunday, as if the church is calling upon us during the first half of Lent to get to know the law through the divine love.

The Law through the Divine Love:

- 1• On the **Pre-Lent Sunday**, it is appropriate for us to ensure that our practice of charity, prayer, fasting, and all our worship in the churches, homes, and bedrooms are not just literal routine or obligations that we adhere to, but rather as a meeting with the Heavenly Father who sees what is hidden in the hearts and rewards us by settling us in His embrace forever. "... in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly." (Matthew 6:4).
- 2• On the **Sunday of Treasures**, we are not preoccupied with earthly blessings, but rather we raise our hearts to heaven, where our treasure is found, our hearts will also be. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matthew 6:21).
- 3• On the **Sunday of Temptation**, we direct our enmity not against a human being, but against the devil, realizing that those forces of darkness are under our feet, making what is said about the Lord Christ be fulfilled in us: "And behold angels came and ministered to Him" (Matthew 4:11).
- 4• On the **Sunday of the returning son to his father** or the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32), our Heavenly Bridegroom, our Lord Jesus, opens through this parable the doors of hope for all. If we have wasted the natural gifts, sinned against the commandment or defiled the free grace, God is still waiting for us with His arms open to accept us just like a retuning bride to her matrimonial house of on a heavenly level.

5• On the **Sunday of the Samaritan woman**, the mid-lent Sunday among the Christian Passover Sundays, we invite our Christ to enter into a dialogue with us, just like the Samaritan woman. He sat at the well most probably on the sixth day on which Adam and Eve were created, who fell into sin and lost the image of God. The Lord Christ (the second Adam) sat on the well at the time of the sixth hour (The Lord was crucified on the sixth day and in the sixth hour) and He rested. We also sit with Him, so that we might rest with our crucified Christ and be relieved from the sufferings which befell us as a result of the first Adam's breaking of the divine commandment.

The Samaritan woman confessed that she failed in her marital life despite marrying five men, and despite the fact that he who was living with her in her house was not her husband. May we accept with her our Heavenly Bridegroom, the Lord of Glory Jesus, and get to know Him, so that we may not lack anything.

So, let us leave the earthly jar as the Samaritan woman did, and go to our relatives in humanity to say with her: "If the five men were referring to the five books of Moses that the Samaritans had accepted, but they did not experience how to keep the law in the spirit, but rather they practiced them literally. I have finally found the heavenly groom who told me everything I did, Is the long-awaited Messiah ?!" He is the heavenly Bridegroom of the Church, Whom we get to know and Who allows us to enter into Paradise as our matrimonial home.

Getting to know the heavenly groom

The role of the Sundays from the Pre-Lent Sunday to the Sunday of Resurrection is for the Church to know her Heavenly Bridegroom.

1• The Fifth Sunday (The Healing of the sick man of Bethesda who had infirmity);

Our Christ, the heavenly physician, is He who removed the infirmity (paralysis) from the paralytic of Bethesda (John 5). All our capabilities are set out to work for the account of the kingdom of heaven that is within us. He is a unique Bridegroom Who is able to heal the spirit, soul and body, preparing them for the heavenly house of matrimony.

2• The Sixth Sunday: The Grantor of inner understanding by the healing of the born blind (John 9) gives us to grow in the knowledge of the Savior and His divine mysteries without ceasing. The believer does not know complaining amid trials for he, as a heavenly bride, has her eyes focused on the divine Bridegroom, who is all-loving, full of wisdom and almighty. His heart is open to understand the Bridegroom's plan towards him.

Therefore, the believer does not stop offering the sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise to God. This is reflected in his heart that rejoices unceasingly. He does not know the falling into a state of grumbling no matter how hard he suffers from tribulations or falls in physical trials or has hardships in his relationship with others, whoever they are.

3• The Seventh Sunday: The Groom of our souls, our Christ, the King of Kings, enters Jerusalem, which is in our hearts, and establishes His kingdom in it.

Our lives will then turn into joyous processions, and our hearts become the new Jerusalem, enjoying the words of the Apostle: "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16).

During each Pascha (Passion) Week, the human soul comes into contact with its Christ, who is the desire of its heart, establishing in it a new divine city and a new temple. In Him they will find life, satisfaction, joy, resurrection, and glory.

4• On the Monday of Passion Week, the Church sees her Christ, the Vinedresser, setting up His paradise within it instead of the unfruitful fig tree! He restores the heart of the believer that was previously corrupted by sin and was cast out of the first paradise. The heavenly Groom has now established a new paradise in its depths.

- **On the Tuesday of Passion Week**, the human soul throws itself into His bosom as a heavenly bridegroom, as He prepared His heavens for it a wedding chamber. Therefore, the readings of this day focus on the parables of the kingdom of heavens as a heavenly wedding.

- **On the Wednesday of Passion Week**, the bride sees Him as her guardian who defends her, enduring the resistance of the wicked and traitors, so that she can enjoy the splendor of His faithful nature reflected on her.

- **On Maundy (Covenant) Thursday**, she sees her Bridegroom as a servant to her, who offers her His body and blood given completely to sanctify her.

- **On Good Friday**, He is seen by her as the intercessor who extends His hands, in order to embrace her with all the believers throughout all ages, bringing them into the bosom of His Father. He reconciles the peoples, as He reconciles them with the Heavenly Father, uniting the earthly with the heavenly.

- **On the Sabbath of Light**, the commander Bridegroom set out to break the barricades of hades and carry the spoils on his shoulders. These spoils are the souls of those who died in the hope of His salvation. These souls have joyfully set to rejoice in paradise, whose doors were opened with the blood of the crucified.

- And **On the Eighth Sunday**, the Sunday of the Resurrection, the bride (the church) enjoys the Bridegroom as the leader of her battle against darkness and grave, granting her victory over death.

We will rise with Him: "He raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2: 6).

Please refer to: Joyful Moments with the Glorious Lamb of God (Selections of Notes on the Holy Week 1990-2016).

Translated by:

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