



*For heaven you  
are, and to heaven  
you return*

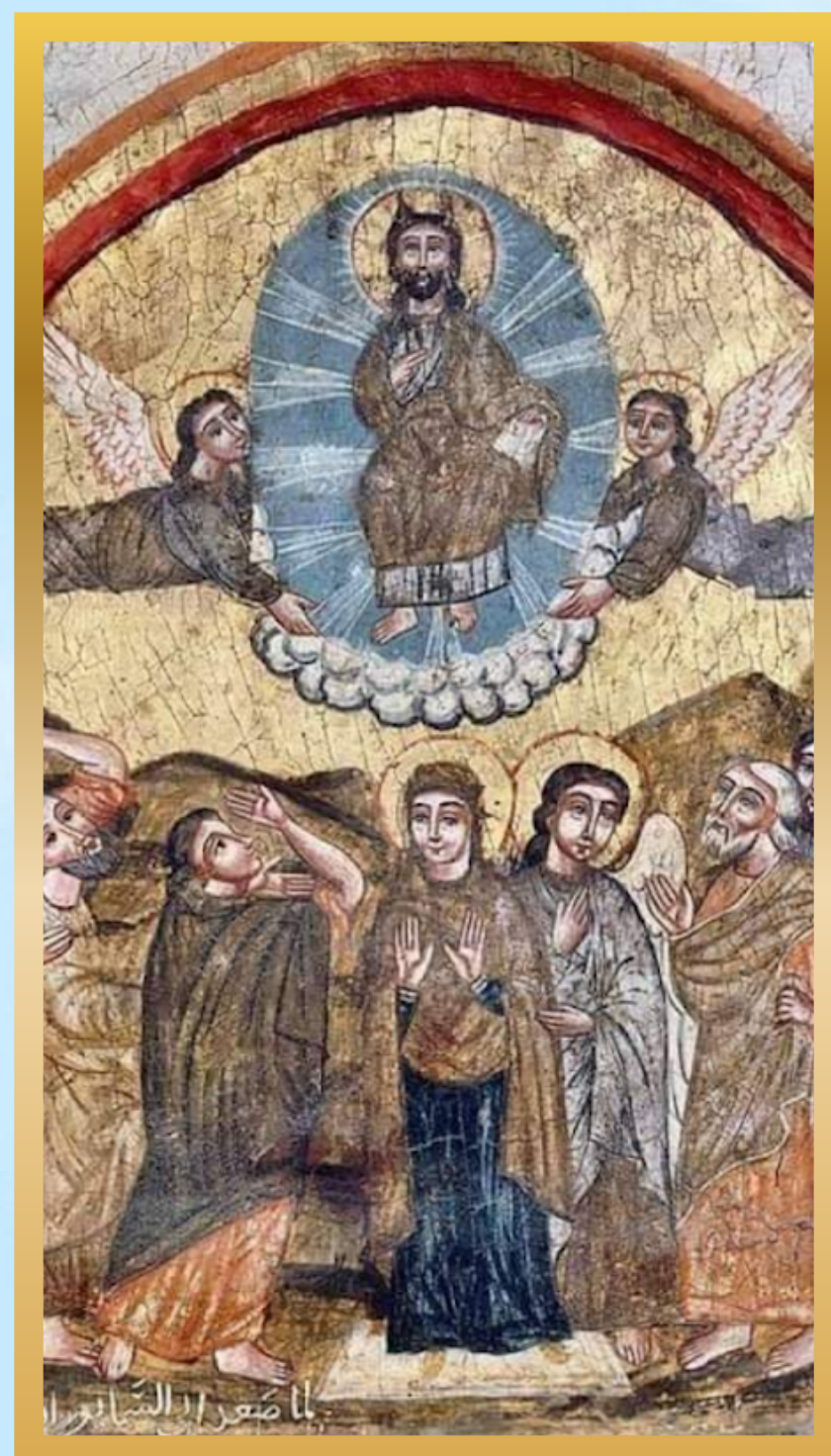
**Father**

**Tadros Y. Malaty**

St. John Chrysostom says in his commentary on the Ascension that our sins degraded and corrupted our nature to the extent that it sometimes become inferior to animals controlled by natural instincts. Our Saviour renewed it to enable us to be elevated with our nature to Heaven, to cross go the Father's bosom and to become partakers in eternal glory. He says [ look at our nature, how it derailed then rose. It is impossible to fall lower than where man has fallen, moreover it is impossible to arise higher than where Christ has risen]. He also said: [If angles rejoice at the sight of one repentant sinner returning to God, how much more joy would they feel when they witness the whole of humanity returning to its initial nature ascending to Heaven?!]

God's divinity cannot be limited; thus the incarnation of the Word of God does not mean that His divinity is limited but in fact fills both the Heaven and earth. Our Christ Jesus, the Word of God, ascended into Heaven, giving us the right to enter Heaven as well. Thus with His ascension into heaven, His divinity did not part our Earth, rather, the Church became the Heavenly body of Christ which through His Holy Spirit became a partaker of the divine nature (2Peter 1:4). As she is still struggling on Earth, her heart is lifted daily towards her head Christ who is in Heaven! As if she has nothing here on Earth, this she unites with the wondrous and Heavenly Maker of Heaven and Earth!

This is the Church's heavenly balance, every member harmoniously plays a note through the Holy Spirit and thus blessed with joy carrying within him the Giver of Joy. Each member expresses their heavenly joy according to the gift given to them. Through this the ascension of the God of Glory Jesus Christ becomes a spiritual joy which we experience in our depths. You imagine Him carrying you to His heavens, after your heart ignites longing for it preparing you to enjoy it. You see Him entering into your depths as if in a heavenly royal procession to establish His Kingdom and His Heavens in you. The gates of Heaven are open before you every day, and the gates of your heart are open to your Christ as His throne.



## *The Return of the Lost Gem*

In great ingenuity, Mar Jacob illustrates the Person of Jesus Christ and His work as a Saviour. The Word of God *bowed the heavens and came down* (Ps 18:9), and He dwelt among us as one of us, and He laid in the grave as if asleep among the dead. He further dove into the depths of hades to *preach to the spirits in prison* (1Peter 3:19) where He captured the lost gem, the image of God which the first Adam and his children lost. The Second Adam returned it as the Apostle says, *“and as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man”* (1Cor 15:49).

The second Adam, *“the Lord from heaven”* (1 Cor 15:47) set out to present the lost jewel to the Father. Now we will not hear again, just as the first Adam did *“for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.”* (Gen 3:19). Rather if we hide in the second Adam we will hear, as the Origen scholars say, ‘for heaven you are, and to heaven you return’.

## *Your Heart and the Eternal Gates*

As Christ hid us within Him as He ascended to heaven, and the eternal gates have opened before Him, hence your heart would not be able to enjoy the open eternal gates if it does not open up to Jesus Christ first. Do not apologise, my dear, for your sins no matter how heavy they are, and no matter how enslaved you are to them, for Christ has come to enter the heart which has succumbed to corruption for a long time, for He is the saving physician and deliverer. He strips you from the authority of sin and its deadly sweetness, causing it to be bitter in your mouth, offering you His life the secret of sweetness within you. He destroys ego and opens the gates of your heart for you to enjoy divine love, acting as if you were wholly love. Loving God your Father and His kingdom with all the heavenly orders; loving the saints and loving your brethren and the whole of humanity no matter how they shut doors before you. You only know how to love, finding all sweetness in wise sacrificial love. With this your heart ascends with your Bridegroom enjoying this as a daily experience.

## *The Open Heavens*

- ❖ **With your ascension O Lord You attained our salvation;  
You came down to our world, to carry us within You to Your Heavens!**
- ❖ **Open the closed gates of my heart with Your cross,  
So I am not enclosed in my ego,  
And not trample in the anguish of selfishness,  
But walk in Your vast Paradise,  
Thus I offer myself daily for Your sake and my brethren!**
- ❖ **Enter into my inner hades and transform it into your Kingdom!  
Destroy the barricades of my depths and grant me open gates!  
Carrying me to the paradise of Your love like the 'right thief'**
- ❖ **You resurrected from the closed tomb,  
To enter into my upper room through the locked doors,  
To reassure us that no closed door can stand in Your way or ours!**
- ❖ **You ascended to the heavens to carry us with You to Your glory!  
The eternal gates were lifted before You because You are the King of Glory,  
And they are lifted before us because we are hidden within You!**



*Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty*  
**Holy Feast of Ascension**

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