

The Good Word

PUBLISHED WITH THE BLESSING OF BISHOP AUXENTIOS OF ETNA AND PORTLAND



HOMILY 45: ADAM AND THE FIRST CREATED WORLD¹

BY ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN (AD 949-1042)



ST. SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, AD 949-1022.

“Among the innumerable stars that shine in the spiritual firmament of the Church, only three have been judged worthy of the title of *Theologian*: Saint John the Evangelist, the Beloved Disciple, who leaning on the Lord’s breast, drew thence the living water of the knowledge of the Word of God; Saint Gregory (25 Jan), who, having contemplated with a purified inner eye the mystery of the Holy Trinity, proclaimed it, placing at its service the best of Hellenic eloquence; and lastly Saint Symeon the New Theologian, who, after having been

plunged in the light of the Holy Spirit, was sent by God as a new prophet into a very secure Byzantine society in which Christianity had become formal and *official*, to witness to it that every Christian worthy of the name is called to be illumined and to become a son of God in the Holy Spirit ...

After having glorified God in himself throughout his life, Saint Symeon was glorified by Him after his death by manifold miracles, but even more by the spiritual delights that his works, down to our own day, provide for those who thirst for the living God.”²

HOMILY 45: ADAM AND THE FIRST CREATED WORLD

1. ON THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND THE CREATION OF ADAM



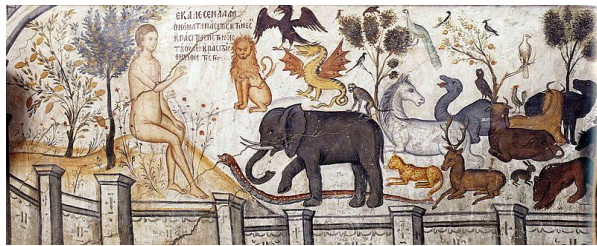
MOSAIC ICON OF THE CREATION OF THE SUN, EARTH, MOON, AND THE STARS, MONREALE CATHEDRAL, PALERMO, ITALY, C. AD 1180.

GOD IN THE BEGINNING, before He planted Paradise and gave it over to the first-created ones, in

1. St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Homily 45: Adam and the First Created World, The First Created Man*, St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, Platina, CA, 1979, pp. 86-95. This is Fr. Seraphim Rose’s translation of the Russian translation of St. Symeon’s homilies by Bishop Theophan the Recluse (Moscow, 1982). The English translation by Alexander Golitzin from the Greek text in *St. Symeon the New Theologian, On the Mystical Life: The Ethical Discourses, Vol. I, The Church and the Last Things*, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1995, pp. 21-42 is quite similar.

2. Hieromonk Makarios of Simonos Petra, *The Memory of Our Venerable and God-Bearing Father Symeon the New Theologian, The Synaxarion: The Lives of the Saints of the Orthodox Church*, Vol. 4, March, April, Holy Monastery of Simonos Petra, Mt. Athos, Greece, 2003, p. 115-116, 124.

five days set in order the earth and what is on it, and the heaven and what is in it. And on the sixth day He created Adam and placed him as lord and king of the whole visible creation. Then there was not yet Paradise. But this world was from God as a kind of Paradise, although it was material and sensuous. God gave it over to the authority of Adam and all his descendants, as the Divine Scripture says, *And God said, let us make man according to Our image and likeness, and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the flying creatures of heaven, and the beasts and cattle and all the earth, and all the reptiles that creep upon the earth. And God made man, according to the image of God He made him; male and female He made them. And God blessed them, saying Increase and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the seas, and the flying creatures of heaven, and all the cattle and all the earth.*



ADAM NAMING THE ANIMALS - MONI AYOU NIKOLAOU (METEORA), GREECE

Do you see how God gave over to man at the beginning this whole world as a kind of Paradise? Therefore, immediately after this He says also, *Behold I have given to you every seed-bearing herb with seed which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree which has in itself the fruit of the seed that is sown, to you it shall be for food. And to all the wild beasts of the earth, and to all the flying creatures of heaven, and to every reptile that crawls upon the earth, even every green plant for food* (Gen. 1:26-30).

Do you see how everything visible which is on the earth, and that is in the sea -- everything God gave over into the authority of Adam and his descendants. For what He said to Adam He said to all of us, just as to the Apostles He said, *What I say unto you I say unto all* (Mark 13:37), because He knew that our race was to increase and that there was to be an innumerable multitude of men.

If now, after we transgressed the commandment and were condemned to die, people have so multiplied, then just imagine how many there would have been if all those born from the creation of the world had not died! And what kind of life they would have lived, being immortal and incorrupt, strangers to sin, sorrows, cares,

and difficult necessities! And how, prospering in the keeping of the commandments and the good ordering of the dispositions of the heart, in time they would have ascended into the most perfect glory, and being changed, would have drawn near to God; and the soul of each one would have become light-bearing by reason of the illuminations which would have been poured out upon it from the Divinity! And this sensuous and crudely material body would have become as it were immaterial and spiritual, above all senses; and the joy and rejoicing with which we then would have been filled by fellowship one with the other, in truth would have been unutterable and beyond human thought. But let us return again to our subject.

And thus God gave over to Adam this whole world which had been created by Him in six days, concerning which creation listen to what the Divine Scripture says: *And God say all the things that He had made, and behold, they were very good. ... And God finished on the sixth day His works which He made, and He rested on the seventh day from all His works which He made* (Gen. 1:31-2:2). And further the same Scripture, desiring to instruct us as to how God made man, says: *And God made man of the dust of the earth, and breathed upon his face the breath of life, and the man became a living soul* (Gen. 2:7).

Then He does as some king or prince or rich man who, possessing any kind of place, does not assign it all for one and the same use, but divides it into many parts, and assigns one part for sowing, on another plants vineyards, and another left untilled so that it might be overgrown with grass and give pasture, but the best and most beautiful he chooses for the building of his palace, near which he plants flower beds and gardens, and he devises much else and arranges what can give satisfaction. And his place and all the rooms in it he arranges in the best fashion, so that it might be distinct from the dwellings of other men. All this he surrounds with a wall, with gates and locks, and next to them he places guards so that evil men might not be let in, but that entrance might be given only to good men, acquaintances and friends. So also did God, in similar fashion arrange for the first-created man. For after He had created everything else, and made man also, and rested on the seventh day from all the works which He had begun to do, He planted Paradise in Eden in the East as a royal dwelling, and led into it as king the man whom He had made.

But why did not God put in order Paradise on the seventh day, but planted it in the East only after He had finished all the rest of creation? Because He, as the

Foreknower of everything, arranged the whole creation in order and in an orderly sequence, and He assigned seven days that they might be an image of the ages which were subsequently to pass in time. But Paradise He planted after those seven days, that it might be an image of the future age. But why did the Holy Spirit not place the eighth day together with the seven days in the count? Because it was unfitting to place within the count the eighth together with the seven, for they, moving cyclicly, produce so many weeks, years, and centuries, but it was proper that the eight day be placed outside the seven since it does not have any cyclic movement.

Behold yet more: The Divine Scripture does not say that God created Paradise, nor that He said "Let it be," but rather that He "planted" it: *And God planted Paradise in Eden in the East. ...And God made to spring up also out of the earth every tree beautiful to the eye and good for food* (Gen. 2:8-9), with various fruits which never spoiled and never ceased, but were always fresh and sweet and furnished for the first-created ones great satisfaction and pleasantness. For it was fitting to furnish also an incorruptible enjoyment for these bodies of the first-created ones, which were incorrupt. Therefore their life also in Paradise was not burdened with labors, and not weighed down with misfortunes. Adam was made with a body that was incorrupt, although material and not yet spiritual, and was placed by the Creator God as an immortal king over an incorrupt world, not only over Paradise, but also over the whole of creation which was under the heavens.

2. ON THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE COMMANDMENT AND THE BANISHMENT FROM PARADISE

God gave the first-created ones a commandment, and commanded them not to taste of the tree of knowledge alone; but Adam disdained this commandment of God, not believing the words of the Creator and Master, Who said, *In whatsoever day ye eat of it, ye shall surely die*, but respected as more true the word of the evil devil who said, *Ye shall not surely die. But in whatsoever day ye eat of it, ye shall become as gods, knowing good and evil*, and he tasted of that tree. Therefore, he was immediately stripped of that incorrupt garment and glory, and was clothed in the nakedness of corruption; and seeing himself naked, he hid himself, and sewing together fig leaves he girded himself so as to cover his shame. Therefore, when God called out to him, *Adam, where art thou?* He replied, *I heard Thy voice and I feared because I was naked, and I hid myself*. God, calling him to repentance, said to

him, *Who told thee that thou was naked, unless thou hast eaten of the tree concerning which I charged thee of it alone not to eat?* But Adam did not wish to say, "I sinned," but said rather the contrary of this and placed the blame for the transgression upon God Who created everything "very good," saying to Him, *The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I ate*. And after him she also placed the blame upon the serpent, and they did not wish at all to repent and, falling down before the Lord God, beg forgiveness of Him. For this God banished them from Paradise, as from a royal palace, to live in this world as exiles. At



MOSAIC ICON, EXPELLING OF ADAM AND EVE FROM EDEN, PALATINE CHAPEL, CAPPELLA PALATINA, PALERMO, ITALY

that time also He decreed that a flaming sword should be turned and should guard the entrance into Paradise. And God did not curse Paradise, since it was the image of the future unending life of the eternal Kingdom of Heaven. If it were not for this reason, it would have been fitting to curse it most of all, since within it was performed the transgression of Adam. But God did not do this, but cursed only the whole rest of the earth, which also was incorrupt and brought forth everything by itself; and this was in order that Adam might not have any longer a life free from exhausting labors and sweat. *Cursed is the ground in thy labors*, said the Lord to Adam; *In pain shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread until thou return to the earth out of which thou wast taken; for earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt return* (Gen. 3:17-19).

And thus it was fitting in all justice for the one who had become corruptible and mortal by reason of the transgression of the commandment, to live upon the corruptible earth and be nourished with corruptible food; for since a life without labor and an abundant food which grew by itself had caused him to forget God and the good things which He had given him and to disdain His commandment, he was therefore justly

condemned to work the earth in the sweat of labor and in this way receive from it food little by little as from some kind of steward. Do you see how then the earth received the criminal after it had been cursed and been deprived of its original productivity by which fruits were produced from it by themselves without labor? And why was this? In order that it might be worked by him in sweat and labors and thus give him that little which it grows for his need, for the support of life, and if it will not be worked, to remain fruitless and to grow only thorns and thistles.

Then also all creatures, when they saw that Adam had been banished from Paradise, no longer wished to submit to him, the criminal: the sun did not wish to shine for him, nor did the moon and the other stars wish to show themselves to him; the springs did not wish to gush forth water, and the rivers to continue their course; the air thought no longer to blow so as not to allow Adam, the sinner, to breathe; the beasts and all the other animals of the earth, when they saw that he had been stripped of his first glory, began to despise him, and all immediately were ready to fall upon him. The heaven, in a certain fashion, was about to strive to fall upon him, and the earth did not wish to bear him any longer. But God, Who created everything and made man -- what did He do? Knowing before the creation of the world that Adam would transgress His commandment, and having foreordained for him a new life and a re-creation, which things he was to receive in rebirth in Holy Baptism by virtue of the economy of the Incarnation of His only-begotten Son and our God, He restrained all these creatures by His power, and in His compassion and goodness did not allow them immediately to strive against man, and commanded that the creation should remain in submission to him, and having become corrupt, should serve corrupt man for whom it had been created, with the aim that when man again should be renewed and become spiritual, incorrupt and immortal, then also the whole creation, which had been subjected by God to man to serve him, might be delivered from this servitude, might be renewed together with him, and become incorrupt and as it were spiritual. All this the All-Merciful God foreordained before the creation of the world.

And thus when all had been set in order by God; as has been said, Adam was banished from Paradise, lived, begat children and died. And this was the way it was with all those also who came from him. The people of that time, finding out from Adam and Eve about all that had happened, remembered the fall of Adam and bowed down to God and worshipped Him as their Master.

Therefore, Abel together with Cain offered God sacrifices, each one from his own possessions. And the Scripture says that God accepted the offering and the sacrifice of Abel, but the sacrifice of Cain He did not accept, which when Cain found out he was sorrowed unto death began to envy his brother Abel, and killed him. But after this Enoch, having pleased God, was translated (Gen. 5:24), as Elias (Elijah) also later was taken into heaven in a fiery chariot. By this God wished to show that if, after the sentence pronounced on Adam and his descendants, and after his banishment, He was pleased to honor Enoch and Elias, the descendants of Adam who had pleased Him, by translating them and granting them long life, and to deliver them from death and from entering hell -- would He not have glorified and honored all the more first-created Adam himself if he had not transgressed the commandment given him, or after the transgression had repented, and would He not have had mercy upon him and left him to live in Paradise?



PANEL ICON OF THE ASCENSION OF THE PROPHET ELIJAH IN THE FIERY CHARIOT, NORTHERN RUSSIA CIRCA 1700

Thus the men of antiquity, for the course of many years, learned one from the other by tradition, and knew their Creator and God. But later, when people had multiplied and began to give their mind over from their youth into evil thoughts, they forgot God and no longer knew their Creator, and began not only to worship demons, but to deify even such creatures as had been

given them by God to serve them. From this they gave themselves over into every impurity and defiled by their unclean works the earth, the air, the heaven, and everything under the heaven. For nothing so defiles and so makes impure the pure works of the hands of God as when someone begins to deify it and worship it like God, Who created the universe. And when finally the whole creation, being thus deified, became impure, and all men had fallen into the extreme abyss of evil -- then the Son of God and God came down to earth so as to re-create man who had become so low, to give life to him who had become dead, and to call him from deception and error.

3. ON THE ECONOMY OF THE INCARNATION OF THE LORD, AND OF HOW HE WAS INCARNATE FOR OUR SAKE

But I beg you to heed my words, because they begin now to touch upon a great mystery, the explanation of which is soul profiting both for us and for those who will live after us. It befits us now to ascent to the contemplation of the Incarnation of the Son and Word of God, and His unutterable birth from the Ever-Virgin Mother of God, Mary. We must do this by means of some kind of image, and through it draw near to the understanding of the mystery hidden from the ages of the economy of the Incarnation, for the salvation of our race. Just as then, at the creation of our ancestor Eve, God took the rib of Adam and made the woman from it, in the same way now also our Maker and creator God took flesh from the Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary, as a kind of leaven and a certain beginning from the dough of our nature, and united it with His Divinity, which is unattainable and unapproachable -- or, to say it better, He united His whole Divine Hypostasis essentially with our nature, and this human nature He joined without confusion to His essence and made it His own, so that the very Creator of Adam became unchangingly and unalterably perfect man.




NATIVITY FRESCO, CHURCH OF CHRIST PANTOKRATOR, DECANI
MONASTERY, KOSOVO, SERBIA

For just as from the rib of Adam He made woman,

so from the daughter of Adam, the Ever-Virgin Mother of God Mary, He borrowed the virginal flesh without seed, and being clothed in it, became man like unto the first-created Adam, so as to accomplish this work, namely: just as Adam, through the transgression of the commandment of God was the cause of the fact that all men became corruptible and mortal, so also Christ, the new Adam, through the fulfillment of all justice, became the first-fruit of our rebirth into incorruption and immortality. This the divine Paul explains in the place where he says, *The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly* (1 Cor. 15:47-48). And inasmuch as our Lord Jesus Christ became perfect man in soul and body, like us in everything except sin, so He gives of His Divinity to us also who believe in Him, and makes us like to Him in the nature and essence of His Divinity. Reflect on this most wondrous mystery: the Son of God received from us flesh, which He did not have by nature, and became man, which He was not, and to those who believe in Him He communicates of His Divinity, which no man ever had in any way -- and these believers are gods by grace. For Christ gives to them to be *the sons of God*, as John the Theologian says (John 1:12, 1 John 3:2. As a result of this they become and forever afterwards remain gods by grace, and never will they cease to be such. Hear what the Apostle Paul says to us when he says, *As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly* 1 Cor. 15:49. What we have said about this is sufficient. Now let us return again to our subject.

Inasmuch as the God of everything existing, our Lord Jesus Christ, came down to earth and became man in order to re-create and renew man and to bring down blessing upon the whole creation which had been subjected to the curse for the sake of man, therefore, first of all He brought to life the soul which He had received, and deified it, while His most pure and divine body, although He made it divine, nevertheless He bore corruptible and crudely material. For the body which eats food, drinks, is labored, sheds sweat, is bound, is beaten, is nailed to the Cross, is evidently corruptible and material, because everything that has been mentioned is the property of a corruptible body. Therefore also it died, and was placed in the grave as dead; and after the Lord's third-day Resurrection, His body also was resurrected incorruptible and divine. Therefore, when He came out of the tomb He did not violate the seals which were on the tomb, and later He



came in and went out through closed doors.

But why, together with His soul, did He not immediately make His body incorruptible and spiritual? Because Adam, after transgressing the commandment of God, in soul died immediately, but in body he died only after so many years. Corresponding with this, the Lord and Saviour also first resurrected, brought to life, and deified the soul which immediately after the transgression of the commandment had borne the penance of death; and afterwards God was pleased to arrange that His body also might receive the incorruptibility of resurrection, just as in Adam after many years it had received the penance of death. But Christ did not do only this; He also descended even to hell, delivered from eternal bonds and brought to life the souls of the saints who were confined there; but their bodies He did not resurrect then, but left them in the tombs until the general resurrection of all.

And this mystery, made evident for the whole world in the way we have related, which occurred at the time of the economy of the Incarnation of Christ, afterwards also was accomplished and is accomplished in every Christian in the same way. For when we receive the grace of Jesus Christ our God, we become participants of His Divinity (2 Peter 1:4), and when we eat His most pure Body, that is, when we receive communion of the Holy Mysteries, we are of one body with Him, and in truth akin to Him, as also the divine Paul says, *For we are member of his body*, of His flesh and of His bones (Eph. 5:30), and as again the Evangelist John says, *that of His fullness we have all received* (John 1:16). Thus by grace we become like unto Him, our man-loving God and Lord, and in soul are renewed from being old, and brought to life from being dead as we were.

Thus every saint is as we have said; but their bodies do not become immediately incorruptible and spiritual. Rather, just as iron which has been ignited by fire becomes a partaker of the brightness of the fire, putting aside its natural darkness, and as soon as the fire goes out of it and it grows cold, it becomes again dark, so it is also with the bodies of the saints: when they are partakers of that Divine fire, that is, the grace of the Holy Spirit which fills their souls, they are sanctified, and being penetrated with that Divine fire, they are bright, distinct from all other bodies and more honorable than they; but when the soul goes out of the body, then their bodies are given over to corruption, and some decay little by little and become dust, while others do not decay for the course of many years; and are not either completely incorrupt or again completely corrupt, but preserve in themselves the traces both of corruption


and incorruption, until they receive perfect incorruption and are renewed by the perfect resurrection at the time of the general resurrection of the dead.

And for what reason is this? For this reason: it is not fitting for the bodies of men to be clothed in the glory of the resurrection and to become incorrupt before the renewal of all creatures. But just as in the beginning, first the whole creation was created incorrupt, and then from it man was taken and made, so also it is fitting that again first of all the creation should become incorrupt, and then the corruptible bodies of men also should be renewed and become incorrupt, so that once more the whole man might be incorrupt and spiritual and might dwell in an incorruptible, eternal, and spiritual dwelling.

And that this is true, listen to what the Apostle Peter says: *The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up* (2 Pet. 3:13). This does not mean that the heavens and the elements will disappear, but that they will be reordered and renewed, and will come into a better and an incorruptible condition. And this I say is again evident from the words of the same Apostle Peter, who says. *We look for new heavens and a new earth, according to His promise* (2 Pet. 3:13), that is, according to the promise of Christ and our God Who said, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away* (Matt. 24:35) --by the passing away of heaven signifying its change, that is, the heaven will be changed, but My words will never be changed, but all will remain forever unchanged. And the holy Prophet David prophesied the same thing where he says, *And as a vesture shalt Thou fold them, and they shall be changed, but Thou art the same, and Thy years not fail* (Ps. 101:27). From such word what else is evident than what I have said?

4. HOW IS THE WHOLE CREATION AGAIN TO BE RENEWED

But let us see how the creation is to be renewed and come again into the condition of its original beauty. I suppose that there is not a single Christian who will think to disbelieve the words of the Lord Who gave the promise to make the heaven new and the earth new, that is, that just as our own bodies, which are now dissolved into the elements but still are not turned into nothingness, again are to be renewed through the resurrection -- so also the heaven and the earth with all that is in them, that is, the whole creation, is to be renewed and to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and these elements together with us will



become partakers of the brightness proceeding from the Divine fire. Just as a bronze vessel that has become old and useless, becomes new again when a metalworker melts it in the fire and recasts it, in the same way also the creation, having become old and useless because of our sins, will be as it were melted in the fire by God the Creator and recast, and will appear new, incomparably brighter than it is now. Do you see how all creatures are to be renewed by fire?

This is why the divine Peter says: *Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy living and godliness?* And a little later he says: *Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in His sight. And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given to him wrote unto you, as also in his Epistles, speaking in them of these things, wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures unto their own destruction* (2 Pet. 3:11, 14-16). And this was done not only then, but in the present time also; very many, or almost all of us do it, in our ignorance constantly corrupting and reinterpreting the words of the Divine Scripture, and by all means striving to make them a cooperator in our passions and in our ruinous lusts. But let us see what the divine Paul says about the creation and its renewal.

Having said that *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*, right after this he says: *For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God* (Rom. 8:18-19). He calls "expectation" the mighty desire of the creation that there might be fulfilled more quickly the revelation or the manifestation in glory of the sons of God which is to occur in the general resurrection. For then, in the general resurrection, with the coming of the Son of God, the sons of God are to be revealed, their beauty are to be manifest, and they will become entirely, that is, in soul and body, light bearing and most glorious, as has been written: *Then the righteous, that is, the sons of the righteous God, will shine forth like the sun* (Matt. 13:43).

But lest someone should think that what has been said by the Apostle refers to some other kind of creation, he adds: *For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it in hope* (Rom. 8:20). Do you see that the creation did not wish to be subject to and serve Adam

after he had transgressed the commandment of God, because it saw that he had fallen from divine glory? It was for this that God, before the creation of the world, foreordained that the salvation of mankind should be through the rebirth which he was to receive by power of the economy of the Incarnation of Christ, and in this hope He subjected the creation to man, and subjected it to corruption, since the man for who it had been created had become corrupt -- so that the creation might every year furnish him a corruptible food, presuming that when He should renew man and make him incorrupt, immortal, and spiritual, then, together with him, He would renew also the whole creation and make it eternal and incorrupt. Here is what the apostle has revealed with the above-cited words: *The creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it in hope*. That the creation was subjected to men not by itself, and not by its own will did it become corruptible, give corruptible fruits, and produce thorns and thistles, rather, it submitted to the commandment of God Who ordained this for it in the hope that He would again renew it. So as the more fully to confirm this the Apostle says finally: *That the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God* (Rom. 8:21). Do you see that this whole creation in the beginning was incorrupt and was created by God in the manner of Paradise? But later it was subjected by God to corruption, and submitted to the vanity of men.

5. WHAT IS THE BRIGHT CONDITION THE WHOLE CREATION IS AGAIN TO RECEIVE

You should know likewise what is to be the glory and the brightly shining state of the creation in the future age. For when it will be renewed, it will not again be the same as it was when it was created in the beginning. But it will be such as, according to the world of the divine Paul, our body will also be. Concerning our body the Apostle says: *It is sown a natural [body], but is raised not as the body of the first-created one was before the transgression of the commandment, that is, material, sensuous, changeable, having need of sensuous food, but it is raised a spiritual body* (1 Cor. 15:44) and unchanging, such as was the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, the second Adam, after the Resurrection. He being the first-born from among the dead, which body was incomparably superior to the body of first-created Adam. In the same way also the whole creation, according to the commandment of God, is to be, after the general resurrection, not such as it was created, material and



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sensuous, but it is to be re-created with and to become a certain immaterial and spiritual dwelling, surpassing every sense, and as the Apostle says of us, *We shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye* (1 Cor. 15:51). Thus also the whole creation after it shall burn up in the Divine fire, is to be changed, that there may be fulfilled also the prophecy of David who says that *the righteous shall inherit the earth* (Ps. 36:29) -- of course, not the sensuous earth. For how is it possible that those who have become spiritual will inherit a sensuous earth? No, they will inherit a spiritual and immaterial earth, so as to have on it a dwelling worthy of their glory after they shall be vouchsafed to receive bodies that are bodiless and above every sense.

Thus the whole creation, after it will be renewed and become spiritual, will become a dwelling which is immaterial, incorruptible, unchanging, and eternal. The heaven will become incomparably more brilliant and bright than it appears now; it will become completely new. The earth will receive a new, unutterable beauty, being clothed in many-formed, unfading flowers, bright and spiritual. The sun will shine seven times more powerfully than now, and the whole world will become more perfect than any word can describe. Having become spiritual and divine, it will become united with the noetic world; it will be a certain mental Paradise, a heavenly Jerusalem, the inalienable inheritance of the sons of God. Such an earth has not been inherited as yet by a single man; we are all strangers and foreigners. But when the earthly will be united with the heavenly, then also the righteous will inherit the already-renewed earth whose inheritor are to be those meek ones who are

blessed by the Lord.

Now, for the time being, some of the earthly is being united with heavenly, and some is yet to be united with it. The souls of the saints, as we have said, even though they are still united with the body in this world are united with the grace of the Holy Spirit, are renewed, are changed for the better and resurrected from mental death. Later, after separation from the body, they will depart into glory and into the unsetting, brightly shining light. Their bodies, however, are not yet vouchsafed this, but remain in the tombs and in corruption. But they also are to become incorruptible during the general resurrection, when also all this visible and sensuous creation will become incorruptible, and will be united with the heavenly and invisible. This must happen first, and then there will come with power and great glory the most desired and sweetest Jesus Christ, our King and God, to judge the world and to give to each according to his deeds. For this He will divide the renewed creation into many mansions and abodes, as if it were a great or some kind of royal palace with a multitude of various apartments, and He will give glory acquired by the virtues. Thus, the Kingdom of Heaven will be one, will have a single King overall, Who will be visible from everywhere to all the righteous. He will remain with each of the righteous, and each of the righteous will remain with Him; He will brightly shine in each one, and each one will brightly shine in Him. But woe to those who then will be seen to be outside that heavenly dwelling. ❖ ❖ ❖

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