



# ORTHODOX ENGLAND

*In this issue:*

*Ecclesioclasm and Salvation*

*From the Righteous:  
Abbot Ælfric of Eynsham writes of  
The Three Temptations of Christ  
in the Wilderness*

*Saint George and the Dragon*

*The Glory of Scotland*

*Orthodoxy Shines Through  
Western Myths*

*and much more . . .*

**Vol 14, Number 3**  
**March 2011**



ORTHODOX ENGLAND VOL. 14 NO. 3

[www.orthodoxengland.org.uk](http://www.orthodoxengland.org.uk)

A Quarterly Journal of English Orthodox Reading

March 2011

## CONTENTS

Editorial: Ecclesioclasm and Salvation .....	1
From the Righteous Abbot Ælfric of Eynsham: The Three Temptations of Christ in the Wilderness .....	3
St George and the Dragon .....	6
The Glory of Scotland .....	8
Questions and Answers .....	15
Orthodoxy Shines Through Western Myths (1) The Distorted Past: A Reconstruction of Europe .....	21
Facts .....	24
A List of Saints for National Veneration .....	25

© ORTHODOX ENGLAND

Published with the blessing of the Very Reverend Mark, Archbishop of the Diocese of Great Britain and Ireland of the Church Outside Russia.

Editor: Fr Andrew Phillips

Art Work: Edmund (Oasign).

Address: Seekings House, Garfield Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 7PU, England.

Publication dates: 1 September, 1 December, 1 March, 1 June.

## Editorial: EDITORIAL: ECCLESIOCLASM AND SALVATION

### Introduction

**T**ODAY, as ever, all ideologies are in some way opposed to the Church. Therefore we can call all these ideologies 'ecclesioclastic', that is, ideologies which 'break the Church'. These are ideologies which reject the Church and Her salvation, in particular they reject Her four vital characteristics. These are: Oneness, Holiness, Catholicity and Apostolicity. What are these 'ecclesioclastic' ideologies?

### Atheist Secularism

The first such 'ecclesioclastic' ideology is atheist secularism. Openly and consciously confessed by a rapidly growing minority, atheist secularism is today by far the most active and dangerous anti-Church ideology in all the countries of Western Europe and the Western immigration, especially in North America and Australia. Atheist secularism rejects any spiritual concept, considering it to be irrational and primitive. Deeply egoistic ('individualistic'), atheist secularism refuses any constraint on human behaviour or limit to its 'freedom', such as baptism or repentance, which would entail any effort at self-improvement. As time passes, atheist secularism, which is a degenerate form of agnostic secularism, becomes ever more militant. It uses as its excuse, the humanist, that is, man-worshipping, cry of freedom. Eventually, as we can see today, atheist secularism begins openly to persecute the Church, under the pretext of 'human rights'.

### Agnostic Secularism

Agnostic secularism is the humanistic ancestor and the less extreme form of atheist secularism. It is still very widespread in Western countries, despite the fact that it is rapidly degenerating into atheist secularism. Based on indifference, it considers the Church, which it confuses with all historical vestiges of corrupted Christianity, as a curious cultural and historical relic. Agnostic secularism, or indifferentism, considers that aspects of Christianity may be studied, but certainly not practised. In this it reveals that it is a degenerate form of mediæval humanism, which has its roots in a Christian heresy, the pagan ('classical') Greek and Roman rationalist concept

that we can solve all problems with our fallen reason. This heresy, known as scholasticism, first revealed itself in its fullness in the late eleventh century with the Italian religious philosopher known as Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109).

### Neither Orthodoxy, nor Christianity

Outside the Church, there are religions (e.g. Islam, Judaism, Hinduism) and to a lesser extent philosophies (e.g. Buddhism, Confucianism) which recognise the existence of some Divine Power. Although some of these religions and philosophies stand very far from any form of Christianity, others stand relatively closer. However, we should understand that there is great variation within each of these religions and philosophies and any generalisation is mistaken. Thus, within Islam, we can find extremely violent and politicised anti-Christian groups, preaching jihad, hatred and death to Non-Muslims, alongside groups, especially those in countries with Orthodox Christian presences, which venerate Orthodox saints. However, all of these religions and philosophies have one thing in common: at best, they are all ignorant of Christ, that is, the Resurrection; at worst, they consciously reject Christ, that is, the Resurrection. With all of them, therefore, it is clear that there is no escape from death.

### 'Christianity', but not Orthodoxy

Vestiges of Orthodox Christianity which are no longer Orthodox have to a greater or lesser degree lost all four qualities of the Church.

Thus, these Christian vestiges, often known as denominations, are not One with the Church, because they have by definition lost their Unity with Her. However, some of them regret this and search for Unity. On the other hand, others deny that the Church has ever existed and they have set up new 'Churches' which they claim to be 'true churches'. Most tragically, this can be seen with Uniatism, which preserves outward resemblances of Orthodox Christianity, but clearly rejects Orthodoxy in its confession of the Faith.

These denominations are not Holy, for Holiness is impossible outside the Church. On the other hand, some of these denominations have retained

forms of piety and sacrifice which resemble the initial stage of Holiness, that is, righteousness. Others of them are so much in the grip of demonic illusion that they make a mockery of Holiness.

These denominations are not Catholic, for they do not share in the same Faith that the Church has confessed at all times and in all places. They are at variance with the Catholicity of the Church and conform to the passing fads and fashions of men. However, it must be said that these fads and fashions are sometimes much longer-lasting than others. The fact that some denominations may have some sense of historic tradition is a sign that they have preserved greater vestiges of Orthodoxy than others.

These denominations are not Apostolic, for they have been altered or even invented by men since the times of the Apostles. Although some of them have preserved greater Apostolic vestiges than others, and hence we can call them 'Christian', none of them has preserved the fullness of Apostolic life, which we call 'Orthodox Christianity'.

#### 'Orthodoxy', but not Christianity.

It is also possible to be 'Orthodox', but not Christian. In other words, it is possible to keep an outward Orthodoxy, but not be inwardly Christian. This is possible in four different ways, specifically by denying each of the four defining characteristics of the Church.

Firstly, there is ecumenism. Ecumenists, by definition, reject the Oneness of the Church under the paradoxical pretext that they wish to make Her One. Ecumenists are defined not only by their ecumenism, but also by their modernism, or renovationism, and liberalism. This is logical, for if they deny the Oneness of the Orthodox Church, then automatically they can also claim the right to deny the Tradition of the Orthodox Church, asserting that only they can make the Church One. The sin here is pride, for ecumenists claim that they know better than the Church and are therefore superior to Christ, Who is the Head of the Orthodox Church. In history, some 'Orthodox' bishops and priests have fallen into the ecumenist error, which is a heresy, because it makes the wrong choice, dividing itself from the mainstream of the One Church.

Secondly, there is nominalism. Nominalists are those who only outwardly belong to the Church. Therefore, they deny Holiness, for Holiness is only

obtainable if we belong inwardly to the Church. The sin here is a lack of faith and therefore the sloth to do anything about it. Here there is also superficiality and selfish vanity, the search for idle amusement, 'fun'.

Thirdly, there is phariseeism. This is the spiritual disease of those who observe the outward forms of piety, but have no love in their hearts. In this way, they deny the Catholicity of the Church. In their narrowness, pharisees say that only they are right and that all others are wrong and so inferior. They fail to understand that we are not saved by our 'opinions' or because we are 'right', but because we have love for one another. The sin here is vain self-admiration, a lack of love for others and cold-heartedness. The pharisee's heart becomes stone, if he does not repent, that is, if he does not heed the inspirations of the Holy Spirit to open the heart to the mercy of grace.

Fourthly, there are false brethren, those who confess the Faith and the Church, but use it as a career for their ambition. They deny the Apostolicity of the Church, that is, the Apostolic fervour that we see, for example, in the first chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, which describes the Faith of the first Church in Jerusalem. The sin here is of jealousy and hatred of others and is coloured by the spirit of the slanderer, that is, in Greek, of the devil.

Together, these four sins constitute Ecclesioclasm, the Anti-Church, Anti-Salvation. The Anti-Church is that which is ecumenist, nominalist, pharisaic and full of false brethren. In other words, it will unite all in ecumenism, but such unity is only possible when all are only nominal members and therefore hypocrites (pharisees) and have no love for one another, using the 'Church' only for their own ambitions (false brethren). This is the 'Church' of Antichrist, that is, the synagogue of satan, which we shall see at the end of time.

#### Orthodox Christianity: the Church

Today, as ever, a minority of the world population is Orthodox Christian, that is, belongs to the Orthodox Church and has the sense of the Church. Strictly speaking, Christianity is impossible outside the Church. For Christianity, understood as Orthodox Christianity, is by definition impossible outside the Orthodox Church. Outside the Orthodox Church it is possible to be 'Christians', but only in the sense that people merely confess in

words teachings like the Holy Trinity and Christ as the Son of God, but fail to live them. To confess Orthodox Christianity we must confess in word and deed the four signs of the Church, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. We must confess that the Church is One, that She is Holy, that She is Catholic, and that She has the Apostolic Faith, and not some divisive, unholy, particular ideology invented within the last thousand years.

### Conclusion

Only a minority of humanity has ever lived in the Church. Given this, there are those who, recalling the Gospel words that 'many are called, but few are chosen', will conclude that at the Last Judgement only a minority will be saved. However, we must never make any judgement about the salvation of anyone. Even as regards ourselves, we cannot know whether we will be saved or condemned. We can only hope for salvation,

provided that we show constant repentance and humility, relying only on the Mercy of God for salvation.

Only God judges. We must recall that we will be judged according to our consciences, according to what is in our hearts. And God is the Only Knower of Hearts. Thus, there are many who deny God in words, but when the moment of death comes to them, they call on God for help and confess Him. We are judged by what is in our hearts, either evil or goodness. Let us also recall that 'Many that are first will be last and many that are last will be first'. Thus, neither the extreme of despair, nor the extreme of proud assurance of salvation are at all appropriate. The Tradition of the Church has always been, as one twentieth-century saint, paraphrasing the Apostle Paul, put it 'Keep your mind in hell and despair not'.

*Fr Andrew*

## From The Righteous: ABBOT ÆLFRIC (c. 1000) OF EYN SHAM

### A Lenten Sermon

(On the Gospel concerning the three temptations of Christ in the wilderness).

... The Holy Spirit led the Saviour into the wilderness so that He could be tempted there. Now everyone will wonder how the devil dared approach the Saviour to tempt him. He would not have dared tempt the Saviour, if he had not been allowed to do so. The Saviour came to mankind because He wanted to overcome all our temptations by His temptations and our eternal death by His temporary death. Now He was so humble that He let the devil tempt Him and let the wicked kill Him. The devil is the head of all the unrighteous and the evil are his limbs. Now God let the head tempt Him and the limbs crucify Him.

The devil was in great doubt: Who was Christ? His life was not like that of others. Christ did not eat with greed, nor did he drink to excess, nor did his eyes wander amid various pleasures. So the devil mused on who He was, whether He was the Son of God, Who had been promised to mankind or not. He thought to find out who He was. The devil never told Christ to eat when He was fasting for forty days and forty nights, because he saw that He was not hungry. Afterwards when Christ was hungry after such a long time, the devil thought



*Icon from the Chora (Kariye) monastery church, Constantinople, rebuilt in AD 1313  
(church first mentioned AD 298)*

that He was not God and said to Him: 'Why art thou hungry? If thou art the Son of God, turn these stones into bread and eat'. God, Who turned water to wine and made all creation from nothing, could easily have turned the stones into bread. However, He refused to do anything at the devil's command and answered him: 'Man lives not by bread alone, but by the words which go forth from the mouth of God'. As man's body lives by bread, so his soul lives by the words of God, that is, by God's teaching, which the learned have set down in books. If the body receives no food or cannot eat, then it ails and dies. In the same way if the soul does not receive holy teaching, it will perish without strength. With holy teaching it will be strong and encouraged to do God's will.

The devil was immediately overcome by Christ. 'And then he took Him up onto the temple, set him on the summit and said to him: 'If thou art the Son of God, jump down; for it is commanded to angels concerning Thee that they shall raise Thee on their hands, that Thou may not dash Thy foot against a stone'. Here the devil began to explain the Holy Scriptures, but he lied in his explanation because he is false and there is no truth in him, for he is the father of all lies. What he said was not written about Christ, but about saints who need the support of angels in this life, so the devil should not tempt them as much as he wishes. So gracious is God to mankind that He has set his angels over us as guardians, so they will not let the fierce devils destroy us. They can tempt us but they cannot force us to do evil, unless we do it ourselves, of our own will, through the devil's evil suggestions. We shall not be perfect unless we are tempted: through temptations we grow, provided that we always resist the devil and all his precepts and we approach our Lord with faith, love, and good works. If at any point we begin to fall away, we must get up at once and earnestly correct what is in danger.

Christ said to the devil: 'No-one shall tempt his Lord'. It would have been a very proud act if Christ had cast Himself down, though He could easily have done so, without injury to his limbs, for it was He Who bowed the high arch of heaven. However, He would do nothing out of pride because pride is a deadly sin. Instead, He refused to cast Himself down because he avoided pride and said: 'No one shall tempt his Lord'. He who tempts his Lord is he who with foolish confidence and pride does something in the name of God or foolishly and needlessly prays to God for some miracle. Thus,

through Christ's patience, the devil was overcome a second time.

Again the devil took Christ up onto a mountain and showed Him all the riches of the world and its glory and said to Him: 'All these things I will give Thee, if Thou wilt fall at my feet and worship me'. The devil spoke presumptuously here, just as he had spoken before, when he had been in heaven and had wanted to share the heavenly kingdom with his Creator and be equal to God. Then his presumption cast him down into hell and now too his presumption humbled him, when, through Christ's passion, he lost his power over mankind. The devil said: 'These things I will give Thee'. It seemed to him that the whole world belonged to him, because no-one had resisted him until Christ, Who came and subdued him.

It is written in the Holy Scriptures: 'Earth and all its fullness and all the world and those who dwell therein all belong to God', and not to the devil. Nevertheless, Christ said of the devil in His Gospel that he is the prince of the world and should be driven out. He is the prince of those who love this world and set all their hope on this life and despise their Creator. All creation, the sun and the moon, all the stars, the land, the sea, the cattle, all serve their Creator, because they live their life at God's command. Wicked man alone, when he despises the commandments of God and does the devil's will, either through covetousness, lies, anger or other sins, is the servant of the devil, acceptable to the devil, despising Him Who created him.

So Christ said to the devil: 'Get thou behind me, Satan! It is written: "Man shall worship his Lord and serve Him alone"' ... He said to the devil: 'Get thou behind me'. Now, the word 'devil' can be translated as 'falling down'. For the devil fell down and went behind from the start of his enterprise, when he was cut off from heavenly bliss. He went behind again at Christ's coming and he shall go behind at doomsday, when he shall be shut up in hell in eternal fire, he and all his minions, and they will never break out again.

It is written in the old law that no-one shall worship any idol, nor anything, save God alone, because no creature is worthy of that honour, save Him alone Who is the Creator of all things. Him alone we should worship, He alone is true Lord and true God. We ask for the prayers of the saints, that they might remember us with their Lord and our Lord, but we do not worship them as we do God, nor would they allow it. As the angel said to John the Apostle, when he wanted to fall at his feet

'Do not bow down to me. I am God's servant, like thou and thy brethren: worship God alone'.

'Then the devil left Christ and angels came to him and ministered to him'. He was tempted as a man and after the temptation holy angels came to him and ministered to him as to their Creator. If the devil had not seen that Christ was a man, he would not have tempted Him. And if Christ had not been true God, the angels would not have ministered to Him. Great was our Saviour's meekness and his patience in this. With one word He could have cast the devil down into the deep abyss, but He did not show His might. Instead, He answered the devil quoting the Holy Scriptures and gave us an example by His patience that whenever we suffer from the perverse, we should turn our mind to the commandments of God rather than to any revenge.

The devil tempts in three ways, by suggestion, by pleasure and by consent. The devil suggests that we do evil, but we should avoid it and take no pleasure in the suggestion. However, if our mind takes pleasure then we should at least resist it, so that there is no consent to doing evil. Suggestion to do evil comes from the devil, but the human mind is often inclined to pleasure, sometimes it also falls into consent, since we are born from sinful flesh. The Saviour was not tempted in this way because He was born without sin of a Virgin, and there was nothing perverse in Him. He could have been tempted by suggestion, but no pleasure affected his mind. There was no consent either, because there was no pleasure. Therefore the devil's temptation was only outward, not at all inward. The devil came to Christ unsure and went away unsure, since the Saviour did not show him His power, but overcame him patiently with the Holy Scriptures.

The old devil tempted our father Adam in three ways, with greed, vainglory and covetousness. Adam was overcome because he consented to the devil in all three temptations. He was overcome with greed, when, on the devil's instructions, he ate the forbidden apple. He was overcome with vainglory, when he believed the devil's words, when he said: 'Ye shall be as great as angels, if ye eat of that tree'. And they believed his lie, that they would in their vainglory be better than when they had been created, but instead they became worse. Adam was overcome with covetousness, when the devil said to him: 'And ye shall have the power to discern good from evil'. Covetousness is not only in money, but is also in the desire for great dignity.

Christ overcame and laid the devil low with the same three things with which the devil had

overcome the first-created man. Through greed the devil tempted Christ, when he said: 'Say to these stones that they be turned to bread, and eat'. Through vainglory he tempted him, when he suggested to Him that He jump down from the summit of the temple. Through covetousness he tempted Him, when with lies he promised Him the riches of the whole world if He would fall down at his feet. The devil was overcome by Christ by the same means with which he had overcome Adam of old. Thus, he departed from our hearts, made captive by the entrance by which he had entered and made us captives.

We have heard in this Gospel that our Lord fasted for forty days and forty nights in all. When He had fasted for so long, He showed the great power of his Divinity, by which he could have lived all through this present life, without earthly food, if he had so wanted. Afterwards, when He was hungry, He showed that He was a true man and therefore needed food. Moses the leader also fasted for forty days and forty nights, so that he could receive God's law, but he did not fast through his own power, but through God's. The Prophet Elijah also fasted just as long through God's power, and afterwards, without dying, was taken from this life.

Now this fast is appointed to be kept by all Christians in the course of every year, but every day we must also eat our food with restraint and only those foods which are permitted. Why is this fast calculated as forty days? Every year has three hundred and sixty-five days. Now, if we take a tenth, then there are thirty-six days. From today to holy Easter Day there are forty-two days, but if we take the six Sundays away from that, then there are thirty-six days, one tenth of the year, counted out for our abstinence.

As God's law enjoins that we should give God a tithe, one tenth, of everything which comes to us from our work every year, likewise we should for one tenth of the year tithe our bodies with abstinence to the praise of God. We should preserve ourselves in all things as God's servants, according to the apostle's teaching, with great patience, holy vigils, fasts, chastity of mind and body, for it is less dangerous for a Christian man to eat meat than to have intercourse with woman on holy days. Set aside all quarrels and every dispute and keep this time with peace and true love, for no fast is acceptable to God without peace. And do as God taught, break your bread and give the second part to someone who is hungry and invite the poor

and miserable strangers into your home and comfort them with your possessions. When you see someone naked, clothe him, despising your own flesh. The man who fasts without alms does as though he saves his food and then eats what he had previously given up in his abstinence. God condemns such fasting. But if you wish to fast to please God, then help the poor with the part that you have given up, and also with more, if it pleases you. Avoid idle talk and foolish pleasures and bewail your sins, for Christ said: 'Woe unto you who laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep'. Again he said: 'Blessed are they who weep now, for they shall be comforted'.

We have lived loosely for twelve months, now we who at other times have lived for ourselves must make amends for our carelessness and live for God. And whatsoever good we do, let us do it without pride and vain praise. He who does any good out of pride, for his own praise, will have no reward with God, but will have his punishment. But let us do as God has taught, that our good works may be so known to men that they may see our goodness and glorify and praise our Heavenly Father, God Almighty, Who rewards a hundredfold whatever we do for the poor, for the love of Him Who lives and reigns without end unto eternity. Amen.

## ST GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

*Extract from a Speech given in New York on St George's Day, April 23rd, 1918  
by John Masefield*

**F**RIENDS, for a long time I did not know what to say to you in this my second speaking here. I could fill a speech with thanks and praise: thanks for the kindness and welcome which has met me up and down this land wherever I have gone, and praise for the great national effort which I have seen in so many places and felt everywhere. We, who, like you, have had to lay by our pleasant ways, and take up hard ones, and go up a bitter path to an end men cannot see, know how great your sacrifice and your effort are. But I could not thank you or praise you enough, and even if I could, the best praise and thanks are silent. If and when I return to England, I will speak your praise.

So, casting about for a theme, I thought, that to-day is St George's Day, the day of the Patron Saint of England, and that to-day, in the far past, that great knight of God rode out, in the Eastern country, and killed a dragon which had been devouring women, and that Englishmen had thought that deed a holy, and most beautiful and manly thing, and had chosen St George from among all saints to be their saint, and had taken his banner to be their banner, and called upon him, century after century, when they went into battle. For they felt that such a man lived on after death, and would surely help all holy and beautiful and manly men for ever and for ever.

And I thought, too, that on this day, 354 years ago, the child, William Shakespeare, was born, in that old house in Stratford which so many of you have gone to see. And that on this same day, after

he had done his day's work, he passed out of this life, into that Kingdom of England which is in the kindling mind, in all its moments of beauty, and that there he, too, lives for ever to give peace, even as St George gives a sword, to all who call upon him.

So, thinking these things, all the more keenly, because I am far from England, in this sweet season of April, when the apple blossom is beginning, I felt that I would talk of England. Not of any England of commerce or of history, nor of any state called England, but of that idea of England for which men are dying, as I speak, along 5,000 miles of war.

I believe that the people of a country build up a spirit of that country, build up a soul, which never dies, but lingers about the land for ever. I believe that every manly and beautiful and generous and kindling act is eternal, and makes that soul still greater and more living, till in the land where manly and kindling souls have lived, there is everywhere about the earth, present like beauty, like inspiration, this living gift of the dead, this soul. And nations are only great when they are true to that soul. Men can only be great when they are true to the best they have imagined. And I believe that in times of stress, in national danger, in calamity, the soul behind a nation kindles and quickens and is alive and enters into men, and the men of the nation secret strength and power from it.



I believe that that great soul, made by the courage and beauty and wisdom of the millions of the race, is the god of the race, to protect it and guide it and to lead it into safety. And men turning to it in time of trouble and calamity are helped and guarded by it, and brought out of the land of Egypt by it into their pleasant heritage.

Yet nations, like men, sometimes turn away from their true selves to follow false selves, and to serve false gods. All the old Bible is full of stories of a little nation sometimes true, sometimes false to its soul, and falling into calamity, and then being quickened and helped, and returning to the truth and coming to marvellous things, to the green pastures, where goodness and loving kindness follow men all the days of their life.

Understanding is the only thing worthwhile in this life. Art is nothing but complete understanding of something. All writers long to understand the spirit of their race.

Let me say now, that 25 years ago, it would have been difficult for an Englishman to speak here, about the spirit of England, and to claim that it is something of the spirit of St George, a manly and beautiful spirit, ready to help some one weaker, and something of the spirit of Shakespeare, a just and tender spirit, fond of fun and kindness and of the rough and busy life of men. That delicate, shy, gentle, humourous and most manly soul is the soul of England. It is in Chaucer, in Shakespeare, in Dickens. It is in the old ballads and tales of Robin Hood, who stood up for the poor, and was merry walking in the green forest. It is in the little villages of the land, in the old homes, in the churches, in countless old carvings, in old bridges, in old tunes, and in the old acts of the English, a shy, gentle, humourous and most manly soul, that stood up for the poor and cared for beauty. No finer thing can be said of men than that, that they stood up for the poor and cared for beauty; that they cared to be just and wise.

Nearly 300 years ago, the life of England suffered a rude change in seven years of civil war. The ways of life which had been settled for five generations were suddenly and completely changed. There followed a turbulent and unsettled century, during which, for reasons of party, a foreign king, and line of kings, with foreign interests, and foreign methods, came into our land.

And at the same time, something else came into our land. Industry and adventure had long been virtues of the English; but now the two together

began to create competitive commercialism. And just as competitive commercialism began, a small clique of corrupt politicians, gathered under the foreign king, and by bribery and iniquity of every kind, seized the common lands of the villages of England and enclosed them. Until then, the country folk in England had shared large tracts of land, so that, though they were poor, they still had grazing for cows and sheep and geese, and woodland for firing. Now by various acts of legal robbery these lands were taken from them, and they were reduced to an extreme poverty. They were forced into a position very like slavery. They had no possessions except their right hands. There was no St George to stand up for them, nor any Robin Hood, except that coarse and bitter truth-teller, William Cobbett. They had the choice to be the slaves of the landowners or of the factory-owners, and the great mass of the populace ceased to have any share of what life offers. The enclosing of the commons robbed them of leisure and independence, the coming of the factories took them from the fields and the old communities, and flung them into new ones, which were allowed to grow up anyhow, without art, without thought, without faith or hope or charity, till the face of the land was blackened, and the soul of the land under a cloud.

If you consider the thought and the voices of that time, you can see that the soul of the land was under a cloud. The thought and the voices of that time are things divorced from the body of the people. The thought is the possession of a few leisured men. It is not the joy of a great body of men. The voices are the voices of a few men crying in the wilderness that things are evil.

The thought of that time was the thought of Dr Johnson's Club, and of Joshua Reynolds' patrons. The voices are the voices of William Blake crying aloud that he would rebuild the city of God among those black Satanic mills, and of William Wordsworth, who saw that poetry, which should be the delight of all, was become an unknown tongue to the multitude. And later the voices become more passionate and wilder and bitterer. They are the voices of Byron, who saw the foreign king, that royal lunatic, and his drunken but jovial son, and the bought-and-sold politicians who ran the country, for what they were, and mocked them. And the voice of Shelley, who cried to the men of England to shake themselves free, and the voice of Carlyle, who saw no hope anywhere but in the drill sergeant, and the voice of Ruskin, who saw no

hope anywhere but in the coming back of St George.

There was only one question to those men, the condition-of-England question. Thinking men might justly be proud of certain achievements in those years, many things were invented, many things were thought out, great books were written, and the world was charted and navigated and exploited, but there was no peace in that England for the men with souls to be saved.

The machine worked, it did great things, men could point to its results, but the great men, the seeing men, were unanimous that England was not a merry England for rich or poor. It was still a land where there was kindness and manliness and a love of life and sport and country. But with this, there was an apathy to things which were vital and kindling. The nation was drunken, and that was looked on with apathy, the nation had ceased to care, as it once had cared, with a most noble, intense, and passionate pride, for things of beauty and of style, in life, and art and music and the

means of living. And this deadness and apathy and stupidity were become even matters of pride to some. Then the nation, with all its wealth, was an ill-taught, an ill-fed and an ill-clad nation, so that in every city in the land a vast number of souls were ignorant, and a vast number of bodies had not enough to eat nor enough to put on. And the rich, who owned the wealth, had lost the old English sense of splendour of life. They watched the beggary and the drunkenness with apathy. They watched the waste and the degradation of genius without lifting a finger. One of the most delicate silversmiths of our time died of consumption as a seller of cat's meat. One of our most delicate lyric poets died of consumption as a seller of matches in the street. Not all the efforts of all the writers of England could get a theatre for the fit and frequent playing of Shakespeare. Not all the wealth nor all the industry could reduce the paupers of England, the men and women who could not make a living, to less than a million in the year.

Then came 1914 ...

**O**N 7 June 1843, thousands of disciples of 'Father' William Miller, founder of the New York Second Advent Association, prepared to depart the Earth. From Illinois towns to the cities of New England, members of Miller's cult eagerly awaited the 'second coming', which he had announced would take place that day. Numbers of his followers settled their earthly accounts, bade farewell to their friends, put on their white 'ascension robes' and listened for the last trumpet. The highways and byways were thronged with anxious crowds of men and women, while the trees in the orchards and the roofs of houses were filled with the more impatient Millerites, who thus hoped to be nearer to their new home in heaven. After this event fizzled out, several recalculated 'ascensions' were proclaimed - with equally disappointing results.

## THE GLORY OF SCOTLAND

Forty-five years ago as a child I visited the Isle of Skye. There, in a quite ordinary café and quite spontaneously and unself-consciously, at the request of elderly local men, I heard a young woman singing a beautiful folk song in Gaelic. Though incomprehensible, its haunting beauty is still with me. It is with this memory that I write the following.

*Fr Andrew*

**A**LEXANDER CARMICHAEL was born on the island of Lismore in the western Highlands in 1832 and passed away in Edinburgh in

1912. A writer and collector of folklore, he is most famed for his six volumes entitled *Carmina Gadelica* or *The Songs of the Gaels*. This is a collection of ancient, pre-*filioque* prayers, in the form of hymns, blessings, poems, invocations, as well as pagan charms concerned with agriculture, which latter are of interest to the folklorist.

Working as an exciseman, in the course of his travels Carmichael was able to collect extensive folklore in the Western Isles, the Outer Hebrides. These were collected not only in Lewis and Harris, but above all in the still Roman Catholic areas of Uist. The material that he collected in the *Carmina*



*An Icon of All the Saints of Scotland*

*Gadelica* is noted for its preservation of the ancient spirituality of the Gaelic peoples of Scotland.

This was born of a world full of song and music, whether private or shared. 'The people of that day were full of hymns and prayers, full of music and songs, full of joy and melody and innocent merriment', as one reciter in Uist told him. Music and song were part of work and of leisure. Those who had worked together during the day met in the evenings, crowding into one another's houses, 'telling tales and histories, invocations and prayers, singing hymns and songs, runes and lays, sweet, beautiful and soft'. These were the *ceilidh*, entertainments with story-telling, heroic ballads, long enough to occupy several evenings.

Some have suggested that the spirituality in the prayers could be due to Catholic missionary work after the Reformation. However, although these prayers were saved mainly from among the Roman Catholics and in the islands, they were also to be found among Protestants and on the mainland. This proves that they came from outside the Counter-Reformation. In reality, in spirit the prayers reflect the ancient spirituality of the Egyptian and Syrian deserts brought through Gaul to Ireland and not the much later mediæval or Counter-Reformation Catholicism. Rather they mirror the lives of the Christian smallholders, crofters and fishermen of the Outer Islands.

This we can say on account of the very close resemblance of the unsentimental, unpietistic and completely natural spirit of these prayers to that in the lives and writings of ancient and universal Orthodox saints, for example St Basil the Great in his eucharistic canon, St Patrick of Ireland in his *Breastplate* and St Isaac the Syrian in his hymns. For them, as for all Orthodox, God is close and present in all His wondrous Creation, providing that we cleanse ourselves, as in Vol. III:

And as the mist scatters on the crest of the hills,  
May each ill haze clear from my soul, O God.

Thus, the people of the Isles gave Carmichael prayers whose daily and yearly rhythms marked their lives: prayers from birth to death, from dawn to dusk, from milking and herding, from weaving to butter-churning, from the start of the year to its close. The islanders lived quite naturally in a state of prayer. It was prayer which responded to and grew out of their way of life, not one imposed on it from outside by a distant institution.

What the islanders said and sung grew out of the typically Orthodox Christian sense of the

presence of God and His invisible saints and angels as the most immediate reality in our lives. In the Songs of the Gaels the veil between this world and the real world is very thin. Faith permeated everything the islanders did. As Orthodox, they made no pietistic distinctions between the secular and the sacred. They did not see where faith began and ended and thus they found it natural to assume that God was lovingly concerned in everything they did. They felt totally at home with God, as do practising Orthodox.

Carmichael was struck on going into the islanders' homes to hear how they addressed, 'the great God of life, the Father of all living. They press upon Him their needs and their desires fully and familiarly, but with all the awe and deference due to the Great Chief whom they wish to approach and to attract... And all this in language so homely yet so eloquent, so simple and yet so dignified, that the impressiveness could not be greater'. A contributor called Catherine Maclennan told him:

'My mother would be asking us to sing our morning song to God down in the back-house, as Mary's lark was singing it up in the clouds and as Christ's mavis (song-thrush) was singing it yonder in the tree, giving glory to the God of the creatures for the repose of the night, for the light of the day, and for the joy of life. She would tell us that every creature on the earth here below and in the ocean beneath and in the air above was giving glory to the great God of the creatures and the worlds, of the virtues and the blessings, and would we be dumb'.

This was how children were taught to start each day. It told them that they were part of the cosmic worship of the Holy Trinity by the whole universe. Again and again the Songs of the Gaels echo the sense of completeness of the whole universe and the integration of body and soul, heart and mind into the worship of 'the Three'. Catherine Maclennan added: 'My mother taught us what we should ask for in the prayer, and as she again heard it from her own mother, and as she again heard it from the one who was before her'.

There is here no modern, 'Celtic' New Age, sentimental and romantic pantheism. It is a recognition that everything good comes from God, as it says in the Book of Genesis, is to be enjoyed for itself and as a reflection of its Creator. For example, from Vol. I we have:

There is no bird on the wing,  
 There is no star in the sky,  
 There is nothing beneath the sun,  
 But proclaims His Goodness

How far we are here from the much later dour  
 killjoys, Calvin and Knox!

The closeness of God to His Creation brings a strong sense that the heavenly powers are not far away and surround us day and night. It seems natural to turn to the Holy Trinity and to Mary the Mother of God, to the saints and angels, for support and for practical help in everything that happens in our lives. Everything is the occasion to pray and involve the heavenly hosts. There is no divide between this world and the next. Heaven, the community of the saints, and earth, the community of people, are interconnected and interacting. So Mother Mary is there at the start of the day, when the peats have to be lifted from the hearth. St Brigid helps with the making of the butter. Gabriel and the angels can be called on for the sowing of the seed. St Columba protects the cattle on the way to the fields. The 'white' Archangel Michael shields us.

The prominence given to the Holy Trinity conveys to us something of how the islanders felt about themselves and their world. The Trinitarian God in unity is alien to modern, self-centred, individualised isolation and points to community: we are saved together. In a society in which household, family and kin are central, men and women feel at home with the Trinity whose very essence is a harmonious relationship of Persons. This relationship however is not simply applied to the Godhead and to human persons, it embraces the whole of Creation. There is a sense of unity which includes family, birds and animals, material things, the whole of Creation. God is at work making his world whole. This is the message of *Carmina Gadelica*: All things are under God Who is close to us. 'I believe in One God, Maker of all things, visible and invisible', proclaim the Songs of the Gaels.

Some have suggested that Alexander Carmichael embellished or Victorianised the English translations of the Gaelic songs that he heard. This is only true of the form of English he used for translation. Essentially he wrote down what he heard – an oral tradition going back to the times of the great Apostle of Scotland, St Columba, working from his base in Iona. This we can say on account of the original Gaelic and also of the

frequent mention of St Columba in these hymns and blessings.

Apart from the Holy Trinity, Christ and Mary the Mother of God, there are saints and the nine orders of the 'white' angels, spiritual friends and very close to the daily round. Often mentioned in the prayers are: the Twelve Apostles, especially Sts Peter and Paul and Sts John and James, the 'white' Archangel Michael and the Archangels Gabriel and Raphael, the Irish St Brigid (Bridget), St Brendan, the later St Maolruain, St Cormac, the friend of St Columba, and even the pre-Columban St Ternan of Scotland. The emphasis on St Columba and the Irish proves the Ionian origins of this spirituality of the Western Isles, for the glory of the Scotland of the Highlands and the Islands is its Christian roots, brought to it, like the Gaelic language itself, from Ireland.

Below we present just a few extracts from the *Songs of the Gaels*, with our own titles. However, many more examples can be found on the Internet, at

<http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/gaidhlig/corpus/Carmina/>

For the wonderful singing of psalms in Gaelic, surely in the ancient traditions of St Columba, see:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k3MzZgPBL3Q&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMqKxpq6QAE&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txlx9b07RhY&feature=related>

#### Credo (Extract, Vol. III, 41)

I believe, O God of all gods,  
 That Thou art the eternal Father of life;  
 I believe, O God of all gods,  
 That Thou art the eternal Father of love.

I believe, O God of all gods,  
 That Thou art the eternal Father of the saints;  
 I believe, O God of all gods,  
 That Thou art the eternal Father of each one.

I believe, O God of all gods,  
 That Thou art the eternal Father of mankind;  
 I believe, O God of all gods,  
 That Thou art the eternal Father of the world.

I believe, O Lord and God of the peoples,  
That Thou art the creator of the high heavens,  
That Thou art the creator of the skies above,  
That Thou art the creator of the oceans below.

To the Three (Vol. III, 63)

In name of Father,  
In name of Son,  
In name of Spirit,  
Three in One:

Father cherish me,  
Son cherish me,  
Spirit cherish me,  
Three all-kindly.

God make me holy,  
Christ make me holy,  
Spirit make me holy,  
Three all-holy.

Three aid my hope,  
Three aid my love,  
Three aid mine eye,  
And my knee from stumbling,  
My knee from stumbling.

A Morning Prayer (Vol. III, 29)

Thou King of moon and sun,  
Thou King of stars beloved,  
Thou Thyself knowest our need,  
O Thou merciful God of life.

Each day that we move,  
Each time that we awaken,  
Causing vexation and gloom  
To the King of hosts Who loved us.

Be with us through each day,  
Be with us through each night,  
Be with us each night and day,  
Be with us each day and night.

An Evening Prayer (Vol. I, 73)

I am placing my soul and my body  
On Thy sanctuary this night, O God,  
On Thy sanctuary, O Jesus Christ,  
On Thy sanctuary, O Spirit of perfect truth,  
The Three who would defend my cause,  
Nor turn Their backs upon me.

Thou, Father, who art kind and just,  
Thou, Son, who didst overcome death,  
Thou, Holy Spirit of power,  
Be keeping me this night from harm;  
The Three who would justify me  
Keeping me this night and always.

An Evening Prayer (Extract, Vol. I, 81)

I lie down tonight  
With fair Mary and with her Son,  
With pure-white Michael,  
And with Bride beneath her mantle.

I lie down with God,  
And God will lie down with me,  
I will not lie down with Satan,  
Nor shall Satan lie down with me.

O God of the poor,  
Help me this night,  
Omit me not entirely  
From Thy treasure-house.

The Cross of the Saints and the Angels  
(Extract, Vol. I, 47)

The cross of the saints and of the angels  
with me  
From the top of my face to the edge of my  
soles.

O Michael mild, O Mary of glory,  
O gentle Bride of the locks of gold,  
Preserve ye me in the weakly body,  
The three preserve me on the just path.  
Oh! three preserve me on the just path.

An Evening Prayer (Vol. I, 83)

I am lying down to-night as beseems  
In the fellowship of Christ, Son of the Virgin  
of ringlets.  
In the fellowship of the gracious Father of  
glory,  
In the fellowship of the Spirit of powerful  
aid.

I am lying down to-night with God,  
And God tonight will lie down with me,  
I will not lie down tonight with sin, nor shall  
Sin nor sin's shadow lie down with me.



The God of the elements' guarding,  
 The loving Christ's guarding,  
 The Holy Spirit's guarding,  
 Be cherishing me, be aiding me.

Seeking Protection (Vol. III, 175)

May Brigit shield me,  
 May Mary shield me,  
 May Michael shield me,  
 On sea and on land:  
 To shield me from all anguish  
 On sea and on land,  
 To shield me from all anguish.

May Father aid me,  
 May Son aid me,  
 May Spirit aid me,

On sea and on land:  
 In the shielding of the City everlasting  
 On sea and on land,  
 In the shielding of the City everlasting.

May the Three succour me,  
 May the Three follow me,  
 May the Three guide me,  
 On sea and on land,  
 To the Vine-garden of the godlike  
 On sea and on land,  
 To the Vine-garden of the godlike.

In Praise of the Mother of God (Extract, Vol.  
 III, 128-31)

Thou art the Queen-maiden of the sea,  
 Thou art the Queen-maiden of the kingdom,  
 Thou art the Queen-maiden of the angels  
 In effulgence.

Thou art the temple of the God of life,  
 Thou art the tabernacle of the God of life,  
 Thou art the mansion of the God of life  
 And of the forlorn.

Thou art the river of grace,  
 Thou art the well-spring of salvation,  
 Thou art the garden and the paradise  
 Of the virgins.

Thou art the star of morning,  
 Thou art the star of watching,  
 Thou art the star of the ocean  
 Great

Thou art the star of the earth,  
 Thou art the star of the kingdom,  
 Thou art the star of the Son of the Father  
 Of glory.

Thou art the corn of the land,  
 Thou art the treasury of the sea,  
 The wished-for visitant of the homes  
 Of the world.

Thou art the vessel of fullness,  
 Thou art the cup of wisdom,  
 Thou art the well-spring of health  
 Of mankind.

Thou art the garden of virtues,  
 Thou art the mansion of gladness,  
 Thou art the Mother of sadness  
 And of clemency.

Thou art the garden of apples,  
 Thou art the lull-song of the great folks,  
 Thou art the fulfilment of the world's desire  
 In loveliness.

Thou art the sun of the heavens,  
 Thou art the moon of the skies,  
 Thou art the star and the path  
 Of the wanderers.

To the Guardian Angel (Vol. III, 151)

Thou angel of God who hast charge of me  
 From the dear Father of mercifulness,  
 The shepherding kind of the fold of the saints  
 To make round about me this night

Drive from me every temptation and danger,  
 Surround me on the sea of unrighteousness,  
 And in the narrows, crooks, and straits,  
 Keep thou my coracle, keep it always

Be thou a bright flame before me,  
 Be thou a guiding star above me,  
 Be thou a smooth path below me,  
 And be a kindly shepherd behind me,  
 Today, tonight, and for ever.

I am tired and I a stranger,  
 Lead thou me to the land of angels;  
 For me it is time to go home  
 To the court of Christ, to the peace of heaven.

Blessing for a Journey (Vol. III, 203)

May God make safe to you every steep,  
 May God make open to you each pass,  
 May God make clear to you each road,  
 And may He take you in the clasp of His  
 own two hands.



## A Blessing (Vol. III, 243)

The love of the Mary Mother be thine,  
The love of Brigit of flocks be thine,  
The love of Michael victorious be thine,  
With their arm each hour surrounding thee.

The great bounty of the sea be thine,  
The great bounty of earth be thine,  
The great bounty of heaven be thine,  
Thy life be hale and fruitful.

The mild grace of the Father be thine,  
The loving grace of the Son be thine,  
The loving grace of the Spirit be thine,  
Laving (Washing) thee with the graces

## A Blessing (Vol. III, 203)

Be each saint in heaven,  
Each sainted woman in heaven,  
Each angel in heaven  
Stretching their arms for you,  
Smoothing the way for you,  
When you go thither  
Over the river hard to see;  
Oh when you go thither home  
Over the river hard to see.

## A Blessing (Vol. III, 21)

The grace of God be with you,  
The grace of Christ be with you,  
The grace of Spirit be with you  
And with your children,  
For an hour, for ever, for eternity.

## A Blessing (Vol. III, 209)

May the King shield you in the valleys,  
May Christ aid you in the mountains,  
May Spirit bathe you on the slopes,  
In hollow, on hill, on plain,  
Mountain, valley and plain.

## A Parting Blessing (Vol. 111, 209)

The peace of God be with you,  
The peace of Christ be with you,  
The peace of Spirit be with you  
And with your children,  
From the day that we have here today  
To the day of the end of your lives,  
Until the day of the end of your lives.

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



Why in the Russian Church do Patriarchs wear green mantles, Metropolitans and Archbishops blue mantles and ordinary bishops wear purple mantles?

*A. P., Felixstowe*

Bishops wear purple mantles because this is the royal colour and bishops are princes of the Church. I had to ask around to answer the rest of the question, because I had no idea. Here is the answer: It seems that since green is the colour of the Holy Spirit and therefore of prophets and since prophets are associated with the Old Testament Patriarchs, green is used to denote the prophetic aspect of the office of the Patriarch. Blue is the colour of the heavenly and it is worn by Metropolitans and Archbishops to show that they should be above worldly things and represent heavenly authority on earth.



Is Fanny an Orthodox name?

*A. T., Colchester*

Yes. It is a shortening of Stephanie.



Is Ava an Orthodox name?

*R. T., Colorado*

Yes. As far as I know it is a form of Eve.



What exactly is an Archimandrite?

*P. B., Leeds*

Originally it meant the head of a monastery ('mandra'). Therefore, the original meaning was an Abbot, a man of mature years and spiritual depth. Unfortunately, the term has been devalued in recent centuries and I have met 22-year old Greek priests with the title! In the Russian Church it tends to have kept the original meaning, as taken to Russia by Greeks in the tenth century. However, it is true that in all the Local Orthodox Churches

titles (Metropolitan, Archbishop, Protopresbyter, Archpriest etc) and awards (the mitre etc) seem to have been inflated and devalued.

The exception is the term 'papa' or 'pope'. Originally, this was used for any priest or bishop. Currently, in the Orthodox Churches it is still used for any priest (the Greek 'papas', the Slav 'pop', which in Russian is contemptuous, in Serb respectful), but only for one bishop – the Patriarch of Alexandria. In the West, the term soon became restricted to use for any bishop. Since the eleventh century it became even more restricted and by canon law – to use only for the Pope of Rome.



How do you know when someone is in a state of prelest (delusion) or not?

*P. A., California*

Here is a much better answer than I can give, It is taken from the 1991 book, *Contemporary Ascetics of Mount Athos* by Archimandrite Cherubim, Vol 1, pp. 265–268.

'The higher a man ascends, the greater are the dangers to which he is exposed, especially when he is deprived of an experienced spiritual guide able to "discern the spirits" (1 John 4, 1).

'This is what happened to a monk of St Sabbas' Monastery named Callistratus. For forty years he had struggled in asceticism, full of divine zeal, both in the Monastery of St Sabbas and in other desert regions of Palestine, such as a cave in the "Koraki" near Mount Nebo, the mountain where Moses is buried. In spite of his many victories and conquests over the unseen enemy, towards the end of his life he fell into delusion. He accepted as coming from God a demonic activity which visited him at the time of prayer and brought certain disturbance to his being.

Let us say, for example, that Matins was being served, when suddenly the other monks saw Fr Callistratus trembling and shaking. In remarks and discussions about this, he was prepared to defend himself and maintain that these manifestations were due to abundant visitations of divine grace. He even quoted the verse of John 11, 33: "When Jesus therefore saw her weeping (Mary), and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled".

It is a custom of those who are deceived to defend their delusion or heresy by means of scriptural quotations. The same thing is done by the heretical Pentecostals, who shake violently in their

bodies and fall down and roll on the floor, believing that the "Holy Spirit" is visiting them with power.

'The fathers of the Monastery were greatly scandalised by this happening. They admonished him and asked him to correct himself, but they did not have the spiritual power to convince him that delusion was involved. He, although believing that the quaking came from the action of divine grace, was not immune to occasional doubts. Having heard of the perspicacity of the Athonite Elder Daniel, he decided to ask his opinion.

'On March 28 1911, he prepared an extensive letter and sent it to Katounakia. In it he described his situation in detail, and he also described the scandalised state of the brethren, who were unable to discern the signs of Grace ... Finally, he asked him to indicate a way to avoid this scandal.

'On April 2, the wise Elder of Katounakia prepared his answer. In it he speaks at length about the leapings which are due to divine grace and the unreasonable movements and disturbance that come from delusion. With powerful arguments he showed him that his "strange movements and wrenchings of the body" were not of divine origin. He also explained to him the prerequisites for the "undeceived communion of grace" – genuine renunciation of the world, perfect submission and devotion to an experienced elder, complete cutting off of one's own will; uncomplaining endurance of all natural temptations, unfailing fulfilment of the daily monastic rule, pure confession ... He reminded him of the counsels of the great ascetic fathers, and especially of St Gregory the Sinaite: At the time of prayer do not accept any light or fire or form of Christ or angel, but preserve the mind colourless, formless, free of imaginings. The appearing of divine grace as a "dawning light" or "trembling exultation" is known to the evil demons, who present to "those not wholly pure" close imitations, leading them astray without them perceiving it. Where there is no undeceived guide, the presence of genuine signs of grace in a struggler can lead later to delusion. The enemy knows how to mislead one and steal one away "secretly". The arch-evil serpent is in a position to distort the lofty work of mental prayer. It is possible to think that one has become a hesychast when one has actually become a fantasist and a sport of the evil spirits.

'He again emphasises that by the action of grace a man becomes sober, peaceful, undisturbed in soul and body and reverent. Often the body will be completely motionless, while the mind is caught away in divine ascents and contemplation. "For

during the time of prayer, the bodies of many Saints, when seen by other virtuous men, appeared as though dead and motionless, and when this divine action ceased, they came to themselves". Never did the Saints display movements such as his, which only cause scandal and not profit

'In one paragraph of the letter, Elder Daniel makes an amusing observation: "If you think, Fr Callistratus, that your behaviour is correct and irreproachable, then let the other sixty fathers of your Monastery imitate it and begin to tremble and shake during the services and Liturgies, and imagine what would happen!"

'He emphasised another rule also, that the divine grace which abides in the heart of a God-bearing man usually visits and acts in him not when he is among men, but in solitude, in the cell or the desert

'After the God-enlightened Elder by means of many arguments had exposed his delusion, he finally, so as not to subject him to the dangerous spirit of sorrow, furnished him with the balsam of consolation.

'Do not be astonished at your mistake', he writes to him. 'Beloved, I do not reprehend you for it. Only God is infallible and unconquerable. We see that even many of the Saints fell into such aberrations, but the man-loving Jesus did not abandon them in such delusion, but saved them in a wonderful manner.

"Was not, your honour, St Cyril of Phileotes a most holy and experienced Father? Yet at the end of his earthly life did he not fall into a frightful deception? But the All-good God did not abandon him to the end, but saved him in a wonderful manner.

"Did not Abba Gerasim, St Ioannicius the Great, and St Augustine fall from ignorance into wrong-believing heresy? God's providence delivered them, however, and today they are honoured and glorified by the Church. Just as they were not forsaken, as they had other marvellous virtues, so will you, my beloved Elder, come out a victor."



Is it true that baptism can be administered outside the church building?

*S. T., London*

Of course, it is true. Indeed, five of the main sacraments can be administered outside the church building. Baptism and chrismation can take place at rivers, by the sea, in people's homes, in hospitals, on the battlefield etc; unction takes place regularly in hospitals and hospices; confession can

take place anywhere (I have done it in the back of a taxi); and marriage can take place outside a church building (I know priests who in Soviet Russia did it regularly in houses and in forests).

However, the other two main sacraments are linked with the altar, that is ordination, and its result, the eucharist (though of course communion is often given to the sick in homes and hospitals etc). This fact is reflected in liturgical practice: all the sacraments, except the eucharist and ordination, normally take place in the body or nave of the church, the other two take place inside the iconostasis, because they are linked with the holy table in the altar.



Why don't Orthodox study the Fathers? They talk about them a lot but do not seem to read them. And all the best books on the Fathers seem to have been written by Anglicans and Catholics.

*J. E., Oxford*

Orthodox do not study, we live. The Tradition expressed by the Fathers is that of the Church and because the Church is living new Holy Fathers are still appearing and being canonised. You only study things when they are dead and dusty in museums. We live them. For example, I know an Orthodox who has two doctorates, but he is one of the coldest and most discouraging people I have ever met. I would much rather be one of the young mothers among our parishioners. They have no pretensions, little book knowledge, but they are 1,000% warmer and more Orthodox, more Christian, than the convert with his two doctorates.



I have been to an Orthodox liturgy locally and, though I saw much that was positive, I found it was not at all interactive. I mean apart from the priest and a choir of one, the other dozen people had nothing to do. Is this normal?

*W. L., Norfolk*

I think your question indicates that you come from an Anglican or other Protestant background. In your churches, you are used to an 'interactive', happy-clappy approach or at least one of standing up, sitting down and singing hymns. Therefore, for you, Orthodox worship must seem quite dull and passive. The reason for this is that Orthodox behave as in the early Church, which began over nineteen centuries before the late twentieth century 'fun-culture' began. This means that when Orthodox come to church, they come to pray, in sobriety, without emotionalism. And praying is the

most difficult thing of all. That is why, sadly, many Orthodox come late to church or just come for a short time, light a candle, say a prayer and leave. On the other hand, the Protestant ethos is one of being entertained, as we can see most clearly in US tele-evangelism. So they come on time and leave on time, as for the theatre or the cinema. This ethos is foreign to the Orthodox Church. In Orthodoxy, if we do not come to church to pray, then we do not come at all.

So, to answer your question, if the dozen people in the group you visited had 'nothing' to do, that is not normal. They should have been praying!



Is Ancient Faith Radio good?

*T. N., Seattle*

Since it seems to be done by converts for converts (all of a Protestant background) I think it is excellent if you are from a Protestant background and interested in the Orthodox Church and Faith. However, I think for Orthodox who are already living inside the Orthodox Church, it is of less value.



Which Local Orthodox Churches have left the World Council of Churches?

*A. L., London*

The Bulgarian (in 1998), the Georgian (in 1997) and, since last year, the Czechoslovak (although the last remains an associate member). However, it should be noted that all the Slav Churches which are still members are now members on a different, more reserved, basis than before.



Spiritually speaking, what is dementia?

*S. C., Felixstowe*

I am sure that there are many causes, but, from personal experience, I think that one of the causes can be a lack of repentance. Dementia is sometimes allowed so that its victim and those around him/her can repent for unrepented sin. It is an opportunity of extra time granted for repentance. Of course, there are many other causes too and I accuse no-one.



Are there any types of converts who have particular problems integrating the Orthodox Church?

*L. K., Brighton*

In my experience, it is people who come from sectarian (Protestant) backgrounds who have the greatest difficulty. Roman Catholics tend to

integrate more easily. Sadly, Protestants often, but not always, bring a sectarian mentality with themselves into the Church. This is why convert groups in Protestant countries like the UK and the USA tend to be very divisive, always arguing with each other (on the internet, for instance) and splitting up, as we have seen in recent years, into different newly-founded groupings. Clearly, a Local Church cannot be built on such fringe phenomena as sectarian divisiveness.

I think the origin of all this is in the fact that Protestants (including Anglicans, who are Protestants) do not acknowledge genuine episcopal authority. They do not understand that the Church is a hierarchy. Their idea is: 'I don't agree with X, therefore I will go off and start my own church'. This is also why they are obsessed with 'parishes' and 'parish meetings' (in the Protestant 'democratic' sense, not in the Orthodox hierarchical sense of the word parish). It is vital therefore that convert groups have a permanent, canonical, episcopal presence in the country in which they live and a sense of loyalty and obedience to the Local Church to which they belong and its traditions. Otherwise, convert groups fall apart, as we saw in the case of the old Sourozh Diocese.



Why is the Table of Preparation always on the left-hand side of the altar and not, for example, on the right-hand side?

*D. W., Canada*

This is because the left-hand side, as viewed from in front of the holy table, is the side of the Mother of God. It was in her body that the Body of Christ, indeed His whole human nature, was 'prepared' for sacrifice.



What would you say to a young Orthodox couple who are living together and not getting married in church?

*S. B., London*

Among other things, I might say:

'You know how very different, almost incompatible, the psychologies and expectations of us men and women are. Do you seriously think that we can manage to live together, getting on together without disastrous arguments, work, pay the bills and even bring up children, without the strength given to us by the grace of God in the sacrament of marriage? For centuries grace is the

main reason why most couples have managed to stay together and bring up their children. Don't make something already as hard as marriage even harder for yourselves. Don't deprive yourselves of support. That would be like self-punishment.



How did the fruit mentioned in Genesis, which caused the fall of Adam and Eve, come to be identified with an apple?

*D. L., Suffolk*

I have read that it is due to a mistranslation. It seems that the Greek word for fruit (and the Latin one) can mean, among other things, an apple, also the Latin words for 'evil' and 'apple' are very similar. Apparently, however, apples originated in what is now Kazakhstan. I have also read that the original fruit may have been a peach – but that is simply another translation of another Greek word. Perhaps a more likely original fruit is the fig – hence the use of fig leaves for cover.



Why did the Emperor Constantine move the Roman Capital to Byzantium?

*A. P., Felixstowe*

Rome was far too provincial, too isolated from the centre of Christendom. It was too far out in the West and had already lost much of its power before Constantine. From the reign of Diocletian in 284 Milan and the tetrarchy Milan had already become far more important than Rome in Italy. Trier had assumed the greater importance in northern Europe. Constantine, who was a uniter, needed to find somewhere more central, near where the centres of culture and trade were. Latin was only the language of administration, Greek was the language of culture and thought – it was the English of the period. Greek-speaking Alexandria was the cultural capital of the Roman world and certainly not Rome.

Therefore, Constantine looked to Asia Minor, in fact to the much more central Troy – as Caesar had already done before him. He was also interested in Asia because Christianity is Asian, not European. The problem with Troy was that although it was a port, it did not have good transport connections to Europe. Therefore he looked to the port of Byzantium, on the very edge of Europe, commanding the Bosphorus entrance to the Black Sea. It had a strategic inlet called the Golden Horn, good transport connections to all Europe and was only minutes away by boat from Asia. This is why the double-headed eagle, looking east and west,

was adopted as the symbol of the Orthodox Christian Empire.

The other problem with Rome was its essentially pagan, idolatrous character. Every building had an idolatrous connection and nothing could be touched, since it was all considered historic. Moreover, this mentality was strong among its citizens. So strong was Roman paganism that until the end of the second century Roman Christians were mainly Greek-speaking immigrants. This is a bit like in Western Europe today, where most Christians are either immigrants from Eastern Europe or else from Africa. Arguably, it was this local paganism that finally and much later brought down the Roman papacy and caused it to abandon the Church through its ideology of *Roman Catholicism*.

Orthodox do not use the academic term of Byzantium. That was a small pagan port town, with a maximum population of 30,000. Within a hundred years of the foundation of the new Capital and its renaming, its population had risen to 500,000. Until the fifteenth century, the usual name for the Christian Capital was not even Constantinople, but New Rome.



What is the authority of the spiritual father in contemporary Orthodoxy?

*E. J., London*

I am not keen on this term of 'spiritual father' outside the monastic context. It seems to be used in this country by converts in the sense that they use the heterodox term 'spiritual director'. We would be better to use the term 'confessor'. Also, I find it disturbing that here and in the USA especially, there are some people who set themselves up as 'spiritual fathers', in fact 'gurus', and use this as an excuse to bully others into their very proud, self-worshipping cults. You will generally find that they have a Non-Orthodox background and that their victims are all converts too. It is yet another classic case of a heterodox error being dragged into the Church from outside.

I have come across several cases of such cultish bullying in all jurisdictions, both canonical and uncanonical, both here and in the USA. The bullying often consists of making others feel guilty. This is the classic Protestant (High Church Anglican, Evangelical and Charismatic) and also Roman Catholic technique of guilt, mind control and manipulation. In real Orthodoxy we experience freedom. Obedience to the confessor is always purely voluntary. We are sons and

daughters of God, not slaves (although one translator in America always mistranslates 'servant of God' as 'slave of God' – an indication of his state of illusion). The authentic confessor advises and makes suggestions, he does not impose, but waits until the heart is ready. Those who seek gurus generally abandon their confessors because they seek to enslave themselves to a guru, leaving and running away from the Orthodox Church, as does happen.



What is the origin of the Wednesday and Friday fasts?

*T. L., Colchester*

Devout Jews (Lk. 18, 12) fasted twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with their 'holy day' on Saturdays. The Christian holy day is the day after this, the day of the Resurrection, Sunday. Similarly, the fasting days are distinct from the old Jewish ones. Fridays are kept because this is the day of the crucifixion and Wednesdays because is the day when Judas betrayed Christ, as is recorded by Blessed Augustine and many other Church Fathers. The custom of Wednesday and Friday fasting is recorded in Chapter VIII of the *Didache*, 'The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles', probably written in the late first century.



When did low masses begin?

*D. P., Colchester*

According to Professor Colin Morris, in his book *The Papal Monarchy* (p. 299), the first recorded date of such 'low masses' is 1140.



I have been told that Communism would never have come to Russia if it had not been for Orthodoxy. Do you think this is true?

*N. S., Portugal*

This sounds like typical anti-Orthodox propaganda. You have to look at such statements in the general context. For example, it could be said that Fascism could only have arisen in Roman Catholic countries with the concept of infallible papism. Both Napoleon and Hitler were Catholics – they both tried to invade Russia – and were destroyed by it. Therefore, it could be said that Catholicism breeds Fascism.

As regards Protestantism, it could be said that it has bred the genocide by Western imperialism of Non-European native peoples, for example the 'Indians' of North America who, if they survived massacres at all, were herded at gunpoint into

'reservations' (in fact, concentration camps). Modern Protestantism could also be said to be behind the new puritanism of fanatical feminism, neo-pagan ecology, political correctness, modern surveillance capitalism, the busyboding in and exploitation of other countries. Ultimately, it will lead to the end of the world.

The fact that Westernised and lapsed Orthodox introduced Communism to Russia and Eastern Europe says only that the concept of paradise on earth is Orthodox. Communism was Christianity without Christ, God without love, that is to say, hell on earth, in other words, the opposite of Orthodoxy, Orthodoxy turned upside down. The Western ideology of Communism only came to Russia, because Western and Westernised (lapsed Orthodox) people took it there. If Russia had been Orthodox, as it had been before the Westernisation of Peter I, it would never have become Communist. Communism came to Russia despite Orthodoxy, not because of it. That is why a violent Revolution, Civil War, the exile of the élite and Western financing were necessary for Communism to triumph.



Do you think that many Anglicans will become Orthodox in the years to come?

*N. W., Bury St Edmunds*

No.

First of all, our mission is to Orthodox, whatever their nationality. Inevitably, of course, our mission will also attract a few of the 95% of the local population who have no religious affiliation. With certain exceptions, most of the 5% of Anglicans and Catholics will remain what they are. Generally speaking, the majority of Anglicans and Catholics who are attracted to Orthodoxy tend to be attracted for the wrong reasons, that is, for negative reasons, because they are disgruntled with what they have. This is not at all a good reason to join the Orthodox Church. Such people often do not make good Orthodox, but are rather unstable, continually harking back to their pre-Orthodox days and do not pass on the Faith to their children. As we can see from some very small groups of such people who have entered Orthodox Churches in this country, they tend not to become Orthodox, but remain ex-Anglicans or ex-Catholics, rather than actually being Orthodox and living Orthodoxy.

# Orthodoxy Shines Through Western Myths (1)

## THE DISTORTED PAST: A REINTERPRETATION OF EUROPE

### Introduction

**O**LDER Western scholarship on Church history is not generally of much use to Orthodox. Most of it is simply anti-Orthodox and therefore anti-authentic Christianity, even openly boasting of its 'Judeo-Christian' and not Christian civilization. The anti-Orthodox prejudices of such scholarship, when it mentions Orthodoxy at all, come simply from the fact that history is 'written by the winners', and even despite the First World War, up until the Second World War most Western scholars thought that the West had won.

It is different today, when the near-millennial crimes of the West are visible to all and nobody any longer listens to the voices of ecclesiastical institutions which moulded the last thousand years of Western history – they are clearly compromised. Interestingly, contemporary secular scholarship, which in its ignorance of Orthodoxy cannot in any way be accused of being pro-Orthodox, is an excellent source for Orthodox to understand what went wrong with the West. We can understand how, by renouncing the Orthodox Christian Faith in its anti-Trinitarian and anti-Christic *filioque* heresy, its former Church became a series of -isms, Catholicism, Protestantism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, Anglicanism etc, which have bred modern-day secularism and will eventually lead to the end of the world.

In the following article, the first in a series of extracts taken from various works of secular scholarship, we have selected a few passages from Colin Smith's translation of *The Distorted Past: a Reinterpretation of Europe* (Blackwell, London, 1995) by the well-known Spanish historian Josep Fontana. These illustrate some modern Western propaganda myths and illusions.

### On the Western Myths of Pagan ('Classical') Greece

*From pages 4–5:*

The image of a Greek polis inhabited by free citizens who collectively participated in government is a mirage. It hides the burden of slavery, the relegation of the peasant to a marginal existence (masked by a false opposition between the 'cultured' city and the 'backward' countryside),

the subordination of women (considered inferior to the point that Aristotle, convinced that they had fewer teeth than men, assigned them a purely passive role in conception as incubators for the reproductive power of men), and marked divisions between rich and poor citizens.

Athenian democracy never claimed to be egalitarian. Solon had been concerned to 'leave, as before, all the magistracies in the hands of the wealthy', and did not grant the people any more power than the minimum that was strictly necessary. The democracy for which the Athenians strove signified little more than the privilege which allowed a small group with full political rights – perhaps a tenth part of the Attic population – 'to debate matters of state in their assembly and to choose the magistrates by lot, with the aim that each one should have, at the proper time, a share in power'. (Herodotus himself was a foreigner in Athens and had no such rights). Words such as 'liberty' and 'democracy' did not have the same meaning for the Greeks as they have for us.

### On the Roman Continuity of the Greek Myth

*From page 11:*

From Alexander onward, the Greek myth changed character and took on a new dimension. Political needs inseparable from the founding of an empire made it necessary to give a strictly cultural dimension to 'the Hellenic', in order to incorporate the barbarian who wished to become part of it. Plutarch relates that Aristotle advised Alexander to treat the Greeks as friends and the barbarians 'as if they were plants and animals' ...

Rome, which became master of the Hellenistic world by force of arms, proclaimed itself the continuer of that world, with arguments which included the affirmation that Latin was a Greek dialect, fitting Aeneas into Romulus' genealogy, and taking over the Homeric tradition, suitably adapted by Virgil, as its own history. Yet what really continued was Alexander's imperial programme, and, if Rome assimilated Greek language and culture, it was above all in order to manage the administration of that with its own Hellenized cadres, topping off the making of a legalized authoritarian society with the ancient rhetoric of

Athenian democracy. For empire and democracy were incompatible terms.

On Commercial Greed, the West, Islam, Orthodoxy and Oriental forms of Christianity

*From page 58:*

Neither papal bans nor crusades put these relations (with Muslims) in jeopardy. The trading peoples of the Christian Mediterranean – Genoese, Venetians, and Catalans – went on buying and selling in Muslim harbours, and were well received there as suppliers of wood and iron, little attention being paid to what the pope might think.

Although it cannot be said that the crusaders undertook their adventure with material gains in mind, it is certain that, once they had them in their grasp, they did not scorn them and kept up commercial activities which were vital for the survival of the Latin states in the East. In his travels through these lands Ibn Jubayr was amazed to see war and business existing side by side: 'At times the two armies face up to each other and form up in battle order; but caravans of Muslims and Christians come and go among them without being stopped'.

The crusading spirit has distorted our view not only of Islam, but of eastern (*sic*) Christianity too, and has led us to exclude Byzantium from the history of Europe (we see Byzantium as a decadent civilization, with oriental features *Byzantinus est, non legitur*), and to exclude Russia born of the amazing fusion of Scandinavians, Slavs, and Mongols, and, worse, to exclude Asiatic Christianity. What we call 'the Byzantine Empire' never existed. The Byzantines called their state 'the Roman Empire' as they had every right to do, since imperial history there suffered no break with the past. In Byzantium people went on studying and glossing Homer's poems at times when in the European West ignorance of classical culture was such that somebody thought Venus a man, and Francois Villon included Alcibiades among the 'women of yesteryear'. Byzantium kept a notable interest in scientific knowledge going too Alexis I frightened off the Scythians by knowing beforehand that an eclipse of the sun was going to occur.

The fact that the Byzantines were Romans and Christians was not enough to persuade western Christians to give them any help. First there was the Fourth Crusade, which captured Constantinople in 1204 and shared its wealth and lands out among

those taking part. The crusaders, said Condorcet, 'amused themselves by taking Constantinople and sacking it, as they were allowed to do, since its inhabitants did not believe in the pope's infallibility'. Later when the final campaign by the Turks began, and even though the Churches of East and West were reconciled by then (*sic*), Latin Christianity had no qualms about accepting that an Ottoman sultan could become legitimate heir to the imperial throne of Constantine – as it showed by hastening to appoint a new patriarch of the Church in the East. The price paid for this was that 'Europe lived under fear of the Turk' for the next two and a half centuries.

Furthermore we have forgotten even the memory of that Asiatic Christianity which in the thirteenth century extended from Egypt as far as the China Sea, with ancient and well-rooted nuclei in Mesopotamia, Armenia, the Caucasus and Syria, and with more recent converts in central Asia among Turkic and Mongol peoples. To attribute the disappearance of these Christian communities to the triumph of Islam is to confuse the result with the cause. The religious situation of central Asia went on being unstable up the fourteenth century at least. The nomadic Asian peoples were tolerant or indifferent in religious matters and distrusted both the Chinese Empire and the expansionist tendencies of Islam, which led them to consider Christianity as a religion that helped them to civilize themselves without expecting them to renounce their own personalities.

The first Christian expansion into Asia was carried out by the Manichaeans, reaching its most brilliant point with the conversion of the Uighur people. These established an empire, maintained active trade with China, and had their capital at Karabalghasun with its twelve iron gates and a large royal palace.

The Uighur people collapsed in the middle of the ninth century, but Manichaeism survived: in the tenth century there was still a Manichaean monastery in Samarkand, and the faith seems to have survived into the thirteenth century in some of the small Turkic states.



On the Western élites, who cunningly oppose us ordinary Western people in order to manipulate us, making us into the first victims of 'the West':

*From pages 158-159:*

'Philistines' (a term which German students applied to the non-university person) were not to be allowed access to 'great' art. Artists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries wrote, painted, and composed for cultivated minorities. Later, their agents and dealers discovered that the vanguard was something that would fetch a good price from bourgeois suckers. They described themselves as '*poetes maudits*', thought themselves above the morality of the masses, and took refuge in esoteric cults reserved for select initiates.

'Intellectuals' despised the masses and at the same time feared them. Like Niebuhr, they thought that if one day the masses woke up to the deception on which their submissiveness was based, they would rebel and destroy the intellectuals' world. If not all of them felt, like Nietzsche, able to make publicly 'a declaration of war against the masses', there were many who abominated that democracy which placed political decisions in the hands of a majority of the least suitable people. 'The great game' – said Ernst Juenger – 'is the one played between the demos with its plebiscites and what remains of the aristocracy'.

This led the intellectuals to dream of new Cæsars, and some thought they had found them in Mussolini and Hitler, who had many more admirers among the European intelligentsia than is often believed, since few remained consistent in their views after the defeat. Most of them managed to get their adhesion forgotten, like Juenger (who in any case thought Hitler too plebeian), or like Heidegger, who had demanded that research and teaching should be devoted to the service of the National Socialist revolution (but the Nazis found him too 'metaphysical').

This struggle against the plebeian masses is never open warfare. Enemies to be fought would be too numerous, and in any case they have to be kept alive and deceived so that they go on working to provide for the expensive needs of their 'betters'. Internal enemies are invented in order to segregate certain human groups as inferiors or even as enemies: Jews, tramps, strikers and foreign immigrants (when they have ceased to be needed). In this way a double aim is achieved: to strengthen

the illusion that a community of interests exists between the un-segregated masses – the good citizens – and their rulers, and to have someone who can be loaded with blame for problems

On the theft of history by the élite, especially of our own Western history

*From page 159:*

It is not enough to attack these facts because of their injustice, claiming equal treatment for those excluded. That would be a pointless undertaking, unless at the same time we were to dismantle the framework of ideas that justifies the exclusion. In this framework an essential component is the view of history which legitimizes the superiority of Europeans because of their role in fomenting universal progress, and which seeks to convert us all into born accomplices of all their abuses by hiding from us the fact that that progress has been achieved at a cost to the greater part of those same Europeans too. For it is not a case of this Eurocentric view depriving non-Europeans of their history (though it does this). Its most important aim is surely to snatch their history away from great parts of European peoples themselves, concealing from them the fact that there are pasts other than that which has been canonized as official history. It hides from them also the fact that they can find a wealth of hopes and un-realized possibilities in those pasts, and that much of what has been presented to them as progress is only a mask to cover various forms of economic appropriation and social control. When we take their history and their consciousness away from the lower classes, we reduce them to the role of savages in their own countries.

This happened in the past to the countryfolk who tried to look for progress within the framework of their communally-based agriculture, and to the craftsmen who wanted machines put to the service of mankind.

**O**N 31 March 1930, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America adopted a code of ethics to govern filmmaking that included the following provisions: 'Obscenity in word, gesture, reference, song, joke, or by suggestion, is forbidden ... scenes of passion should not be introduced when not essential to the plot. In general, passion should be so treated that these scenes do not stimulate the lower and baser element ... No film may throw ridicule on any religious faith, Ministers of religion, in their character as such, should not be used as comic characters or as villains. Ceremonies of any definite religion should be carefully and respectfully handled'.

## FACTS

**A**PPARENTLY, some people in England in fairly recent times actually believed that the world was flat. And yet in ancient and mediæval times people knew that it was spherical. Any sailor who sailed over the horizon knew it. Indeed, in Isaiah 40, 22 it states, 'It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth'. The word translated as 'circle' is in Hebrew 'khug' which means 'sphere'. The Book of Isaiah was written in about 700bc. Some people clearly did not read their Bibles.

Again in Job 26, 7 it states, '... and hangeth the earth upon nothing', a clear reference to the planet being suspended in space. The Book of Job was written in about 1500bc. It was not until the seventeenth century that Galileo and Newton confirmed the fact. How backward were the scientists?

Ecclesiastes 1, 7 explains that rain is caused by the evaporation and condensation of water – again a discovery only understood in recent centuries. 'All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come,

thither they return again'. This was written around 970bc.

In Ecclesiastes 12, 7 we are taught that God created the human race out of the dust of the ground. Verse 7 declares that when we die, 'the dust returns to the earth as it was and the spirit shall return unto God'. Science has confirmed that there is not one single chemical element contained in the human body, which is not found in the dust of the ground. When you think of the complexity of the human brain, DNA, the ear, eye or the human body in general, this fact is remarkable.

One third of the Bible is narrative, one third is history and one third is composed of prophecies and predictions. There are around 300 prophecies in the Old Testament which predict the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

Sadly, there is one prophecy which appears to be being fulfilled in our generation. In Jude verse 18 and II Timothy 4, 3-4, the Apostle predicts an age when the Holy Scriptures will no longer be taken seriously and will be derided and ignored.

**L**ENIN'S successor, Stalin, felt that Russians needed a modern, secular saint to revere. As the Soviet-oppressed Orthodox Church venerates saints' relics, Stalin convened a 'Committee for Immortalisation' in Moscow to preserve the corpse. Morticians worked diligently for six months and by August the job was complete; the body was enshrined in a crystal casket in a Red Square mausoleum, remaining on view through the Soviet era. The embalmers were retained to keep Lenin's skin from turning ashen and his eyes from receding with special annual treatments, which continued into the twenty-first century. His brain, removed in 1924 by those wishing to prove that it was extraordinary, was exhaustively examined and in 1994 pronounced to be entirely 'normal'.

## A LIST OF SAINTS FOR NATIONAL VENERATION IN ENGLAND

16 September St Edith of Wilton

19 September St Theodore of Tarsus

10 October St Paulinus of York

12 October St Edwin the Martyr

12 October St Wilfrid of York

17 November St Hilda of Whitby

20 November St Edmund the Martyr

3 December St Birinus of Wessex

12 January St Benedict of Wearmouth

25 February St Ethelbert of Kent

28 February St Oswald of Worcester

2 March St Chad of Lichfield

8 March St Felix of Dunwich

12 March St Gregory the Great

18 March St Edward the Martyr

20 March St Cuthbert of Lindisfarne

11 April St Guthlac of Crowland

19 April St Alphege the Martyr

30 April St Erconwald of London

7 May St John of Beverley

19 May St Dunstan of Canterbury

25 May St Aldhelm of Sherborne

26 May St Augustine of Canterbury

26 May St Bede the Venerable

5 June St Boniface of Crediton

22 June St Alban of Verulamium

23 June St Audrey of Ely

2 July St Swithun of Winchester

8 July St Edgar the Peaceful

13 July St Mildred of Thanet

1 August St Ethelwold of Winchester

5 August St Oswald the Martyr

31 August St Aidan of Lindisfarne

(Saints whose names are printed in bold have full services to them, as given on the Orthodox England website)



*Icon of the Saints of the Isles*

