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# An unknown post-Byzantine journey to the other world*

Sergey A. Ivanov
*Higher School of Economics, Moscow*

Lora Gerd
*St. Petersburg State University*

*This is the first publication of a tale about a journey to the other world from two seventeenth-century manuscripts kept in St.Petersburg. In the 1580s, the soul of a poor miner Nicholas from the Macedonian village of Izvor was mistakenly and prematurely snatched from his body by an angel who accompanied him through the heavens. After Nicholas' return to life, he described his adventures, which, although reminiscent of the famous Byzantine visions of the afterlife, still diverge from them in some important details. The tale not only helps to recreate the social life of the mining area of Siderokausia, but also portrays the infighting among the local Orthodox Christian clergy.*

The text we are publishing below has not, to the best of our knowledge, been published or mentioned elsewhere.[1] Although it is dated to the 1580s, the mental world of the author belongs almost completely to the Byzantine paradigm. The text survives in two seventeenth-century Greek manuscripts kept in the Library of the Academy of Sciences (BAN) in St. Petersburg. The first one, from Dmitrievskii's collection (Dmitr. N 23, f. 101r–116r),[2] is a *paterikon* copied by an accurate scribe in the first half of the seventeenth century. It has an owner's ex-libris of 1652: 'This *paterikon* belongs to me, the humble metropolitan of Philippi and Drama'.[3] This metropolitan see existed from 1617.[4] Therefore, the ex-libris could not have been written before this date but it does

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1 Not mentioned in S. Lampakes, *Οι καταβάσεις στον κάτω κόσμο στη Βυζαντινή και στη Μεταβυζαντινή λογοτεχνία* (Athens 1982).

2 I. N. Lebedeva, *Opisanie rukopisei biblioteki AN SSSR. T.5. Otdel grecheskikh rukopisei* (Leningrad 1973) 130–1.

3 Lebedeva, *Opisanie*, 131.

4 B. Feida, 'Ιστορικὴ ἐξέλιξη τῆς ὀργανώσεως τῆς ἐκκλησίας Μακεδονίας', *Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Θεολογικῆς σχολῆς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Ἀθηνῶν* 30 (1995) 67.

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not tell us much about the date of the actual manuscript. The text of the tale was copied diligently, but a later reader erased a few lines (see *infra*).

The second manuscript, from the collection of the Russian Archeological Institute in Constantinople, (RAIK, N 130, f. 36v–47r)[5] was copied in 1640 by two scribes, Makarios and the hieromonk Ioakeim.[6] It belonged to the monastery of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.[7] It is a collection of vitae of saints and edifying tales. The text of the tale in question breaks off closer to the end of the story; in general, this text is rendered with some lacunae and some errors, in a somewhat simplified way.

The main hero of the tale, Demetrios, was illiterate, as is openly stated at the very beginning of the text, yet, later in the story he turns out to be able to read. This miracle can be easily explained: the content of the tale has nothing to do with the revelations of this simple man. Nor was the 'humble hieromonk Laurentios' who rendered the story εἰς κοινὴν φράσιν, 'in the vernacular', its compiler; he merely 'metaphrased' it for an uneducated audience. Its real author, mentioned in the text, was 'the priest and rhetor, *kyr* Metrophanes (ὁ λογιώτατος παπᾶς κῦρ Μιτροφάνης καὶ ῥήτωρ), who wrote down this narrative and this vision'. Metrophanes' original text, composed soon after the event he describes, in the early 1580s, was probably written in a more elevated language. All the hidden and open polemics found in the tale (with one exception), its whole literary background, belongs to Metrophanes who comes across as a fierce critic of the ways of the clergy. Yet, it is hardly likely that Metrophanes would call himself λογιώτατος and later οὗτος ὁ σοφώτατος ἱερομόναχος καὶ πνευματικός. In all probability, the original text compiled by Metrophanes faced harsh opposition for its anticlerical bias and one of his defenders rewrote it, adding final explanations. It was this rewritten version that drew the attention of the hieromonk Laurentios. His metaphrasis was copied by someone else who mentions Laurentios with some aloofness: παρὰ τινὸς εὐτελοῦς Λαυρεντίου. This final version must have enjoyed a considerable popularity, since it constituted the archetype of both our manuscripts and found its way as far as Jerusalem.

The plot of the story is dated to the 'year 7088, the 8$^{th}$ indiction,' i.e. 1580. In Dmitr. 23 the date is accompanied by the words εἰς τοὺς χρόνους τοῦ παλαιοῦ ἔτους, whereas in the simpler RAIK 130 the indiction is missing and the respective line in this manuscript looks like εἰς τούταις ταῖς ἡμέραις. One can suggest that the author was familiar with the 'new calendar' of 'Anno Domini' but holds to the old one, Anno Mundi. Why? To answer this question we should turn to the location of the story. The plot develops in the other world, but it begins and ends in the village named Izvor, today's Stratonikeia,[8] not far from Ierissos in eastern Macedonia. The whereabouts of the village is given in the text in a double way: it is situated both εἰς τὴν ἐπαρχίαν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς Ἱερισσοῦ καὶ

5 I. N. Lebedeva, *Opisanie*, 119–20.

6 Ioakeim is believed to be the author of the poem about the Cretan war. See T.A. Kaplanis, *Ioakeim Kyprios' Struggle; a narrative poem on the 'Cretan War' of 1645-1669. Editio Princeps* [Texts and Studies in the History of Cyprus LXVII] (Nicosia 2012). This work was not available to us.

7 I. N. Lebedeva, *Opisanie*, 119.

8 It was renamed (because of its Slavic origin) only in the 1920s.

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Ἁγίου Ὄρους and εἰς τὰ Σιδηροκαύσια. These two ways of describing the location reflect two very different periods of life in the region. Athos monasteries used to have real estate in Siderokausia in general and in Isvoros in particular: the village figures in several Byzantine documents from the Holy Mountain.[9] Yet the Ottoman fiscal reforms of 1566–9 diminished the Athonite presence in the region.[10] This could explain why neither of the two manuscripts of our tale has anything to do with Mount Athos. Our tale can be dated by the reference in it to the Holy Mountain, the last vestige of the Athonite tradition.

On the other hand, the silver mines of Siderokausia, which were important for the Byzantine authorities, and later also for the Serbian,[11] acquired an enormous significance in the mid-sixteenth century, when Suleyman the Magnificent reorganized their work and brought in 6000 workers from all over; Slavs, Saxons, Vlachs, Jews, Gypsies, and others increased the output dramatically.[12] It is this 'Babylon' which probably explains the diversity of nations that our hero encounters in the other world: 'We ... found many generations of people; they were not all together, but members of each faith and heresy were sitting separately. ... my guide ... confessed to me each one's heresy and religion and the names which I do not remember how to pronounce as he told them to me, since I saw so many nations'. Jews played a prominent role in running the mines[13] and therefore they are punished separately in the vision, as the 'great crowds of people deep in ... darkness and filth; it seemed as if they were sunburnt and had suffered a lot'.

The main hero of the tale, Demetrios, was probably of Slavic origin himself: his occupation is designated by a local word «ρούπνικος» which may be the Hellenized adaptation of South-Slavic *rup(ь)nik*, 'miner'.[14] Among other contemporary *realia* we can mention the appellation Pharaonitai, dubbed in one of the manuscripts as Katsiveloi. The latter word as a designation for Gypsies is well attested in northern Greek dialects,[15] whereas the former occurs in Byzantine texts only with reference to the biblical warriors

9 G. Theocharidou, *Κατεπανίκια της Μακεδονίας* (Thessalonike 1954) 78; D. Papachrysanthou, *Ὁ Ἀθωνικὸς μοναχισμός* (Athens 1992) 124–26.

10 J. C. Alexander, 'The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away: Athos and the confiscation affair of 1566–1569', in K. Chrysochoides (ed.), *Mount Athos in the 14th-16th centuries* (Athens 1997) 163–64, 176.

11 A. T. Vacalopoulos, *History of Macedonia. 1354–1883* (Thessalonike 1973) 153, 552–3; G. Ostrogorsky, *Serska oblast posle Dushanove smerti* (Belgrade 1965) 69–79.

12 V. Dimitriades, 'Ottoman Chalkidiki: an area of transition', in A. Bryer, H. Lowry (eds.), *Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society* (Birmingham 1982) 46; N. Nerantzis, 'Pillars of power: silver and steel of the Ottoman empire', *Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry* 9/2 (2009) 75–76. The dissertation of I. Borbe, *Τα Μαδεμοχώρια Χαλκιδικῆς κατὰ τὴν Τουρκοκρατία: οἱ κοινότητες καὶ ἡ ὀργάνωση καὶ ἐκμετάλλευση τῶν μεταλλείων* (Thessalonike 2000), was not accessible to us.

13 M. Rozen, 'The corvée of operating the mines in Siderokapisi and its impact on the Jewish society of Salonika in the sixteenth century (in Hebrew)', in eadem, *The Days of the Crescent: Chapters in the History of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire* (Tel Aviv 1996) 13–38.

14 N. Radojčić (ed.), *Zakon o rudnicima despota Stefana Lazarevića* (Belgrade 1962) passim.

15 E. Zegkine, *Οι Μουσουλμάνοι Αθιγγάνοι της Θράκης* (Thessalonike 1994) 24–25.

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pursuing Israel.[16] Meanwhile, the expression 'Pharaoh's people' as an appellation of Gypsies exists in medieval Hungarian (Farao-nepe).[17] This is understandable since many miners were brought to Siderokausia from Hungary. The only ethnic group which is strikingly absent from the tale are the Ottomans. They must have been very visible in Sidre Qapsi (this is how they named Siderokausia) since the empire established a mint there. We also know of the presence of mullahs in Sidre Qapsi[18] and yet, there is nothing in the text reminiscent of Ottoman rule. The only group which may imply the Ottomans is a rather vague 'nation of all the godless and infidel Ishmaelites and heretics'. Interestingly, even the cruel punishments in the market square that Demetrios had witnessed while still among the living, though they must have been carried out by the Turks, were, in the author's view, approved by heavenly authorities.

In spite of the different circumstances in which both the author and the hero of the tale lived, the other world of the story is genuinely Byzantine.[19] For example, the idea that different categories of the dead are waiting for the Last Judgment in different conditions was widely popular in the Middle Ages.[20] That they 'wore' their sins on their bodies probably derives from the Vita of St. Basil the Younger which describes the sins as inscribed 'on their faces'.[21] That Vita could also be the origin of the 'wonderful roses and beautiful lilies'[22] which Demetrios saw in the other world. Fragrant roses, lilies and lovely trees are also mentioned in the Paradise depicted by Michael Psellos.[23]

Demetrios' return to life is explained in the tale by the mistake committed by his angel escort: the latter took Demetrios' soul instead of that of his neighbour Nikolaos for which he was castigated by God; and indeed, after Demetrios' awakening Nikolaos dies. Such a twist is probably taken from another popular Byzantine vision – that of Cosmas. This monk is also sent back to life from the other world under the condition that a certain monk Athanasios would be taken instead of him; and indeed, when Cosmas returns to life, Athanasios departs.[24]

Yet, 'the Byzantine church had no precise eschatology to be sure and, within certain limits, the individual was free to form his or her own opinions about death, judgment,

16 The authors are indebted to colleagues from the *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität* (Vienna) who kindly shared with us the not yet published entry on Pharaonitai.

17 A. Fraser, *The Gypsies* (Oxford 1992) 109.

18 D. Papachrysanthou, *Ὁ Ἀθωνικὸς μοναχισμός*, 125 n. 245.

19 For a general overview of the genre, see J. Baun, *Tales from Another Byzantium* (Cambridge 2007).

20 H.-G. Beck, *Die Byzantiner und Ihr Jenseit* (Munich 1979) 50–1.

21 *The Life of Saint Basil the Younger*, eds. D.F. Sullivan, A.-M.Talbot, S. McGrath (Washington, D. C. 2014) 518.

22 Ibid. 255, 263, 275 etc.

23 Michael Psellos, Funeral oration for his daughter Styliane, in K. Sathas (ed.), *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη* 5 (Athens 1876) 62–87, at 83.

24 H. Delehaye (ed.), *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* (Brussels 1902) 114.25–45; cf. Gregorii Papae I, cognomento Magni, *Dialogi*, Migne, *PL* 77 (1862) 381–88. The motif of the soul prematurely snatched by the messengers of the Other World was so popular in Byzantium that it was parodied in the satirical dialogue *Timarion* in the twelfth century.

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heavenly rewards, and infernal punishments'.[25] There are at least two details which clearly distinguish Demetrios' vision from his model.

First, the main conflict of the vision concerns future fates of unworthy clerics. The author, though a cleric himself, insists that the 'sinful bishops, priests and monks' will be the first to go to Gehenna. At the same time he admits that this part of the vision ignited indignation and mistrust among local clerics. This order of precedence in eternal punishment disagrees with the Vita of Basil the Younger which names undeserving clerics as eleventh in the queue to Hell.[26] One of the owners of the Dmitr. 23 was so outraged by this anti-clerical stance that he consistently scratched off from the paper all the pertinent passages (in our edition we reconstruct them from RAIK 130). It was probably the 'humble metropolitan' of Philippi and Drama, the owner of the manuscript.

The second deviation of Demetrios' vision from the Vita of Basil the Younger is even more serious: the miner on his way to the other world did not see the toll booths with their demon-inquisitors, the famous '*teloneia*' so vividly described by the Theodora of the Vita. Metrophanes was so amazed by the lack of '*teloneia*' that he repeated his questions many times. His amazement is understandable: the vision of the other world as a bureaucratic police-state where all the sins are carefully registered and classified by special booths – so that each dead person would be indicted with his own sin – was so widespread that they were mentioned as a proof that Eastern Christianity also knew Purgatory until the last days of Byzantium.[27] The disappearance of the *teloneia* may be the last farewell to the memory of the great Byzantine bureaucracy.

The text is published from the more accurate Dmitr. 23, with the essentially different readings of RAIK130 added as footnotes. The spelling is, as a rule, not corrected. The translation is also made from Dmitr. 23, with additions from RAIK130 in italics. Any readings of the latter that compete with those of the former are put in parentheses.

f. 101r **Διήγησις ὠφέλιμος εἰς ὀπτασίαν ὀρθοδόξου τινὸς Δημητρίου τεθεῖσα δὲ εἰς κοινὴν φράσιν παρὰ τινὸς εὐτελοῦς Λαυρεντίου ἱερομονάχου, εὐλόγησον.**

Ἀδελφοὶ καὶ πατέρες, ἐλᾶτε νὰ ἀκούσετε φοβερὰ καὶ θαυμαστὰ μυστήρια, τὰ ὁποῖα ὁ φιλάνθρωπος Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὁ ἀγαπὼν τὴν ἐδικήν μας σωτηρίαν, εἰς ἐτούτας τὰς ὑστερινὰς ἡμέρας ἐφανέρωσεν· καὶ ἀκούσατε παρακαλῶ νὰ σᾶς διηγηθῶ ἄνωθεν καὶ ἐξ ἀρχῆς πῶς ἔγινε τὸ θαῦμα τοῦτο. Μία χῶρα εἶναι σημᾶ εἰς τὰ Σιδηροκαύσια, τὴν ὁποίαν λέγουν Ἴσβορον· εἶναι δὲ μεγάλη καὶ πολλοὶ ἄνθρωποι κατοικοῦν εἰς αὐτὴν. Αὕτη λοιπὸν ἡ χῶρα εἶναι εἰς τὴν ἐπαρχίαν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς Ἱερισσοῦ καὶ Ἁγίου Ὄρους· εἰς αὐτὴν γοῦν τὴν χώραν ἦτον ἕνας χριστιανὸς τὸν ὁποῖον ἔλεγαν Δημήτριον· ἦτον δὲ εἰς τοὺς χρόνους τοῦ παλαιοῦ ἔτους·[28] ἤγουν εἰς τοὺς ἑπταχιλιάδα ὀγδοήκοντα ὀκτὼ ἰνδικτιῶνος ὀγδόης.

25 J. Wortley, 'Death, judgment, heaven, and hell in Byzantine "Beneficial Tales"', *DOP* 55 (2001) 56.

26 *The Life of Saint Basil the Younger,* 516–42.

27 N. Constas, ' "To sleep, perchance to dream": the middle state of souls in Patristic and Byzantine literature', *DOP* 55 (2001) 108–9.

28 εἰς τοῦταις ταῖς ἡμέραις

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/f. 101$^{v}$ Οὗτος γοῦν ὁ Δημήτριος δὲν ἦτον τόσον ἄνθρωπος παιδευμένος εἰς γράμματα ἢ εἰς τέχνας καὶ πραγματίας· ἀμὴ ἦτον, καθὼς τὸ λέγουν εἰς αὐτὸν τὸν τόπον, ῥούπνικος· ἤγουν ὁποῦ σκάπτουν καὶ εὐγάζουν τὸ ἀσιμόχωμα.[29] Με τοιοῦτον μέγαν καὶ πολλὴν κόπον ἐδούλευε καὶ ἐπόρευε τὸ σπίτι του·[30] ἦτον δὲ ἁπλὸς κατὰ πολλὰ καὶ ἀπονήρευτος· καὶ ἀπὸ ὅλα τὰ κακὰ[31] καὶ ἁμαρτήματα ἔλιπεν· τὰ δὲ καλὰ ὅσα ἐδύνετον ἐσπούδαζεν καὶ τὰ ἔκαμνεν·[32] ἂν καλὰ εἶχε καὶ γυναῖκα καὶ παιδία καὶ σπήτι καὶ πτωχὸς ἦτον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς του ἐσπούδαζε. Τὸ δὲ περισσότερον, ὅ δὲν ἐπέρασε τὴν ζωήν του με ἀνθρώπους ἐναρέτους ὁποῦ νὰ φοβούνταν τὸν θεόν[33] ἢ νὰ ἠξεύρουν γράμμα[34] νὰ διαβάζουν ταῖς θείαις γραφαῖς νὰ ὠφελείται καλὰ. Καὶ ἔτζη ἐπέραζεν τὴν ζωήν του, ἀλλὰ δὲν τον ἀνίκησεν ποτὲ ὁ λογισμός του νὰ γένη κακὸς ἄνθρωπος· ἀμὴ διὰ νὰ παρακαλῆ καὶ νὰ ἔχει καλὴν γνώμην, νομίζω ὅτι, ὡς καθὼς /f. 102 φαίνεται ἡ ὑπόθεσις, ἄρεσκεν τοῦ θεοῦ· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τοῦ ἀποκάλυψεν καὶ του ἔδειξεν αὐτὸ ὁποῦ θέλεται ἀκοῦσαι.

Λοιπὸν οὗτος ὁ Δημήτριος εἶχεν ἕναν υἱὸν καὶ τὸν ἀνάθρεψεν, ἕως ἔγινεν δώδεκα χρονῶν, καὶ πολλὰ τὸν ἀγάπαν. Καλὰ τὸ ἠξεύρουν ἐκεῖνοι ὁποῦ ἔχουν τοιαύτης ἡλικίας πόσον τὸ ἀγαπᾶ καὶ ὁ πατέρας του καὶ ἡ μητέρα του. Ὅμως οὐ γινώσκομεν τὴν κρίσιν τοῦ θεοῦ. Ἠθέλησεν ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῦ τοῦ παιδίου θάνατον·[35] καὶ ὡς πατέρας ὁποῦ ἦτον, τὸ ἐλυπήθη πολλὰ καὶ πολλὰ τὸν ἔκλαιεν· καὶ ἀπὸ πολλὴν του λύπην καὶ τὰ πολλὰ δάκρυα[36] ἔπεσεν εἰς μεγάλην ἀσθένειαν, καὶ ἐκειτετον δεκαπέντε ἡμέραις εἰς τὸ κρεβάτην του με πολλοὺς πόνους καὶ ἀναστεναγμούς. Καὶ τὸν ἐκείταζεν εἰς τὴν ἀσθένειαν του ἡ γυναῖκα του καὶ ἡ πενθερά του καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς του καὶ οἱ γείτονές του. Καὶ μετὰ δεκαπέντε ἡμέρας, μία ἡμέρα ὁποῦ ἔδυσεν ὁ ἥλιος, καὶ ἔγινεν μία ὥρα τῆς νυκτός /f. 102$^{v}$ ὁποῦ ἦτον οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ ἐδειπνοῦσαν, ἐφαίνετο αὐτὸς ὁ Δημήτριος πῶς ὀλιγοψύχησεν, καὶ παρευθὺς εὑρέθη ἀποθαμένος. Καὶ βλέποντας ἡ ταλαιπορός του γυναῖκα καὶ ἡ γραῖα ἡ πενθερά του, ὁποῦ ἐπαρακάθουνταν καὶ τὸν ἐφύλαγαν πῶς ἀπέθανεν, ἄρχισαν νὰ κλαίουν καὶ νὰ φωνάζουν φωναῖς μεγάλαις, καθῶς ἠξεύρεται καὶ τὸ ἔχει ὁ κόσμος συνήθεια.[37] Καὶ ὡς ἤκουσαν οἱ συγγενεῖς[38] του τοῦ κλαθμοῦ καὶ τῆς φωνῆς, ἔδραμαν ὅλοι νὰ ἰδοῦν τὸν ἀποθαμένον· καὶ οὕτως ἐσυνάχθησαν καὶ ἔκλαυσαν πολλά· καὶ τὶ ἄλλο εἶχαν νὰ κάμνουν. Χρεῖα ἦτον νὰ τὸν σαβανώσουν καὶ ἄλλοι ἐπῆγαν νὰ φέρουν κηρία, ἄλλοι θυμιάματα, ἄλλοι ἐκαθάριζαν σιτάριν νὰ κάμουν κόλυβα, ἄλλοι ἄρχισαν νὰ τὸν πλένουν,[39] καθὼς τὸ ἔχει συνήθεια ὁ κόσμος ἐκεῖνος. Καὶ ὅταν ἄρχισαν νὰ εὐγάλουν τὰ ροῦχα του ὁποῦ ἐβάστα νὰ τὸν φορέσουν ἄλλα, ηὗραν τὰ χέρια /f. 103 του καὶ τὰ ποδάρια του καὶ τὰ μερία του καὶ τὴν κεφαλήν του καὶ ὅλα του

29 ἤγουν ἀπαυτουνοὺς ὁποῦ σκάπτουν καὶ εὐγάζουν τὸ χῶμα ὁποῦ εὐγαίναι τὸ ἀσίμι καὶ τὸ χρυσάφι
30 ἔζουσε
31 κακὰ ὁποῦ βλάβουν τὴν ψυχὴν
32 καὶ δὲν ἔβλαβε τίποτε
33 ἢ πῶς δὲν ἐπέρνα τὴν ζωὴν του ἐναρέτους καὶ καλοὺς ἀνθρώπους
34 πῶς εἶχε γυναῖκα καὶ δὲν ἤξευρε μηδὲ γράμματα
35 ἐπῆρε τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ παιδίου
36 ὁποῦ ἔκαμεν εἰς αὐτὸν τὸν υἱόν του
37 καθῶς τὸ ἔχει ὁ κα[θ'ἡ]μᾶς συνήθειαν
38 οἱ γείτονες
39 ἄλλοι ἑτοίμαζαν τὰ πρὸς τὴν ταφὴν

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τὰ μέλη ψυχρὰ καὶ νεκρωμένα, καθὼς εὑρίσκονται ὅλων τῶν ἀποθαμένων. Τὸ δὲ στῆθος αὐτοῦ σημᾶ εἰς τὴν κλείδοσιν ὀλίγον τίποτε ἦτον ζεστόν καὶ ὀλίγον ἐσάλευεν ὁ σφιγμός του. Καὶ ὡς εἶδαν ἔτζη, εἶπαν ἀναμεσά τους· ἂς τὸν ἀφήσωμεν ἀκόμη ὀλίγαν ὥραν νὰ ἀποθάνει[40] τελείως, καὶ τότε θέλομεν τὸν λοῦσαι. Ἐκαρτέρησαν δύο καὶ τρεῖς ὥρας καὶ πάλιν τὸν ἐγύρευσαν· καὶ πάλιν ἔτζη τὸν ηὗραν· καὶ ὁ σφιγμός του ἐσάλευεν εἰς τὸ στῆθος του, ὡς προείπαμεν· ἐπειδὴ δὲ καὶ ἐπέρασεν πολλὴ ὥρα καὶ ὁ ὕπνος ἐνίκα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἐπῆγαν πολλοὶ νὰ ἀναπαυτοῦν. Ἡ δὲ ταλαιπωρός του γυναῖκα[41] μὲ ὀλίγους συγγενεῖς του ἐπαρακάθουντο καὶ ἐφύλαγαν τὸν Δημήτριον ὡς νεκρὸν πολλὰ λυπημένοι. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἐπέρασε πολλὴ ὥρα, /f. 103$^{v}$ ἀνάγκη ἦτον νὰ τοὺς νικήση ὁ ὕπνος. Λοιπὸν ἐπλαγίασαν καὶ αὐτοὶ καὶ ἐκείτοντο καθ'ἕνας εἰς τὸν τόπον ὁποῦ ἔλαχεν. Ἐπέρασε καὶ ἡ νύκτα, ἄρχισε νὰ φέγγει καὶ ὁ ἀσθενημένος, ἤγουν ὁ Δημήτριος, ἐκείτετον εἰς τὸ στρῶμα του· καὶ ἐξαίφνης ἀναστέναξε μεγάλως· καὶ παρευθὺς ἐσυκώθη καὶ ἐκάθησεν. Οἱ δὲ ἐκεῖνοι ὁποῦ τὸν ἐφύλαγαν, ἤγουν ἡ γυναῖκα του[42] καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι, ὡς ἤκουσαν τὸν ἀναστεναγμὸν, παρευθὺς ἐξύπνησαν. Καὶ ὡς εἶδαν τὸν ἀσθενημένον Δημήτριον ζωντανὸν καὶ ἐκάθετον, ἐθαύμαζαν· καὶ πάντες ἐχαίροντο· καὶ ἄρχισαν νὰ τὸν ἐρωτοῦν τί ἦτον αὐτὸ καὶ πῶς ἀπέθανεν καὶ πάλιν ἀναστήθη. Ὁ δὲ Δημήτριος βλέποντας κάτω ἔχων τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πρόσωπόν του ἐσιῶπα καὶ δὲν ἔλεγεν τίποτες·[43] οὐδὲ ποσὸς τινὰς ἡμέρας[44] μήτε ἔτρωγεν, μήτε ἔπινεν, οὐδὲ ἐκοιμήθη παντελῶς. Καὶ αὐταῖς ταῖς ἡμέραις ἡ ταλαίπωρός του /f. 104 γυναῖκα μέσα εἰς τὰ πολλὰ ἐνθυμήθη καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ της ὁποῦ ἐπροείπαμεν ὅτι ἀπέθανεν δώδεκα χρονῶν· καὶ ἐκάθετον εἰς τὴν πόρταν καὶ ἔκλαιεν· καὶ ἔβλεπε τοὺς συνομίλικους τοῦ υἱοῦ της εἰς τὴν ῥούγαν[45] καὶ ἔπαιζαν καὶ ἐκαίετο ἡ καρδία της·[46] καὶ ἄρχισαν νὰ τρέχουν ἀπὸ τὰ μάτια της θερμὰ δάκρυα. Ὁ δὲ Δημήτριος ἐκεῖ ὁποῦ εὑρίσκετον, ὡς προείπαμεν, ἀκούσας τὴν ἐλεεινὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ κλαίοντας Θεοῦ θέλοντος ἄνοιξε τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ χείλη καὶ λέγει πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκαν του· τί κλαίεις, ἀθλία, καὶ ἔχασες τὸν νοῦν σου; Ἀμὴ ἐσὺ ἂν τύχη βάνεις εἰς τὸν νοῦν σου ὅτι πῶς ὁ υἱός μας ἀπέθανεν;[47] Ἀλλὰ δὲν ἀπέθανεν, οὐδὲ ἐσάπη, καθὼς θαρρεῖς ἐσύ·[48] μόνον ζῆ καὶ εἶναι εἰς τόπον ὁποῦ ἔχει μεγάλην χαρὰν καὶ εὐφροσύνην πολλὴν καὶ ἀπλήρωτον. Καὶ εἶναι ὁ υἱός μας εἰς ἄλλον τόπον ἔκλαμπρον καὶ φωτεινὸν καὶ ὑψηλὸν καὶ εὔμορφον· ἄμποτε νὰ ἀξιωθοῦμεν καὶ ἡμεῖς νὰ ἐπηγέναμεν[49] ἐκεῖ ὁποῦ εἶναι τὰ παιδία μας· καὶ νὰ ζούσαμεν εἰς ἐκείνην τὴν μακαρίαν[50] ζωήν ὁποῦ θλίψιν δὲν ἔχει·[51] καὶ νὰ βλέπαμεν ἐκεῖνο τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀχόρταστον καὶ χαρούμενον. Τούτους τοὺς λόγους ἤκουσεν ἡ γυναῖκα του, ἀλλὰ

40 κριώση
41 καὶ ἡ πενθερά του
42 καὶ ἡ πενθερά του
43 ὡσὰν συγχυσμένος πολλὰ
44 ἕως ἡμέρας γ΄
45 εἰς τὴν γειτονία
46 καὶ εἶχεν πολλὴν πόνον
47 καὶ θαρρεῖς ὅτι ἐσάπη εἰς τὸν τάφον
48 ἐγνώρισε καλὰ γυναῖκα μου ὅτι αὐτὸς
49 μακάρι παντέρημα νὰ ἤμασθαν
50 καὶ αἰώνιον ὁποῦ ποτὲ δὲν ἔχει τέλος
51 ἢ στενοχωρίαν, ἀλλὰ ἔχει ἀνάπαυσιν πολλὴν καὶ ζωὴν χαρᾶς μεγάλης

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ἀπὸ τὸ πολὺν κλάμμα καὶ τὸ δάκρυον δὲν τὴν ἔμελεν νὰ τὸν ἐρωτήση καὶ νὰ μάθη καλὰ τί εἶναι τὰ λόγια ὁποῦ λέγει. Ἡ δὲ γραῖα ἡ πενθερά του, ὁποῦ ἦτον σημᾶ του, ἠρώτησε καταλεπτῶς καὶ εἶπεν τον· καὶ πόθεν ἐσὺ γινώσκεις ὅτι ζῇ ὁ υἱός σου καὶ εἶναι εἰς μεγάλην χαρὰν καὶ μακαρίαν ζωήν;[52] Ἐκεῖνος τὴν εἶπεν· εἶδα ἐγὼ[53] καὶ ἠξεύρω καλὰ καὶ ἀληθεινά καὶ δὲν μου τὸ εἶπεν ἄλλος τινὰς. ἀμὴ ἐγὼ εἶδα με τὰ μάτιά μου εἰς ποῖαν εὐφροσύνην καὶ χαρὰν[54] καὶ εἰς ποῖον γλυκύτατον καὶ χαρούμενον φῶς εἶναι τὰ παιδία μου. Ἐκείνη[55] δὲ ὡς ἤκουσε τὰ λόγια του ἀγάπησεν νὰ μάθη καλιώτερα καὶ /f. 105 λέγει του· εἰπέ μου, ἠγαπημένε μου Δημήτριε,[56] ἐκεῖνα ὁποῦ εἶδες καὶ ἠξεύρης.[57]

Ἐκεῖνος ἔσεισε τὴν κεφαλήν του καὶ λέγει[58] την· ἐγὼ ὡς ἐκοίτομουν εἰς τὸ κρεβάτη ἀσθενημένος ἄνοιξα τὰ μάτια μου καὶ εἶδα ἕναν ἄνθρωπον[59] καὶ ὁμοίαζεν ὡσὰν ἀστραπή· καὶ ἦτον πολλὰ εὔμορφος καὶ ἐστάθη ἀπάνωθέν μου· καὶ ἐφοροῦσε χρυσὰ με πολλῶν λογιῶν βαφαίς· καὶ ἔφεγγαν τὰ φορέματά του, ὅτι ἦτον πλουμιστὰ, τόσον, ὅτι δὲν ἐμπορῶ νὰ τὰ εἰπῶ με λόγον τὴν εὐμορφάδα ὁποῦ εἶχεν ἡ φορεσία του. Λοιπὸν ἐγὼ ὡσὰν τὸν εἶδα, ἄλλαξεν ὁ νοῦς μου καὶ ἀστόχησα τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον.[60] Καὶ ὅλον ἐκεῖνον τὸν εὔμορφον ἔβλεπα· καὶ δὲν ἤθελα νὰ τοῦ ἀποχωρισθῶ.[61] Ὅμως[62] ἐφάνη μου ὅτι ἐχωρίσθηκα ἀπὸ ἐσὰς καὶ εὑρήθηκα εἰς τὰς ἁγίας χείρας ἐκείνου καὶ ἐκεῖνος κρατόντα με εἰς τὰ / f. 105$^{v}$ χέρια του ἐπετάσαμεν καὶ ἐφαίνετον πῶς ὑπήγενεν ὑψηλά· καὶ ἐμένα μου ἐφάνη ὅτι ἐπεράσαμεν ἕως ἑπτὰ οὐρανούς· καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ πολὺ ὕψος[63] ὁποῦ ἐπήγαμεν ἀστόχησα πόσους οὐρανοὺς[64] ἐπεράσαμεν, ὅτι ὡσὰν κύκλους μου ἐφαίνετον καὶ ἐπερνούσαμεν ἀπὸ τὸν κάτω εἰς τὸν ἀπάνου. Καὶ πάλιν ἀπὸ ἐκείνον εἰς τὸν ὑψιλότερον, ἕως ἐπεράσαμεν ὅλους. Εἰς δὲ τὴν στράταν ὁποῦ ἀναβαίναμεν δὲν ἦτον φῶς καθαρὸν, ἀμὴ ἦτον ὡσὰν ἀντάρα. Καὶ ὡσὰν ἐπεράσαμεν ἐκείνους τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ὁποῦ σου προεῖπα, παρευθὺς μου ἐφά[νετο] ὅτι ἐφθάσαμεν εἰς ἄλλον κόσμον καὶ τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου ἦτον ἀλλέος, ὅτι ἦτον πολλὰ λαμπρότερον καὶ φωτεινότερον ἀπὸ τοῦτον· Ὁμοίως καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐκείνη ἦτον πολλὰ θαυμαστὴ καὶ ὑψηλή, ὅτι δὲν ἦτον ὡσὰν ἐτούτην τὴν γὴν νὰ ἔχει ξύλα[65] καὶ χορτάρια καὶ πέτρας καὶ ῥέματα·[66] ἀμὴ ἦτον ὡσὰν νὰ ἤθελε τὸν ἰσάση τινὰς, ὡς διὰ νὰ πηλαλοῦν ἄλογα. Ὁ δὲ / f. 106 κάμπος τῆς θαυμαστῆς γῆς ἐκείνης ἦτον ὅλος πλουμισμένος με τρεῖς γενεαῖς δένδρα ἀνθισμένα, πολλὰ, εὔμορφα· τῶν ὁποίον δένδρων καὶ ἀνθῶν τὴν

52 καὶ ἀνάπαυσιν
53 ὦ γερόντισσα
54 καὶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον
55 Ἡ δὲ πενθερά του
56 καὶ μὴ κρύψης τίποτε ἀπὸ ἐμένα
57 καὶ ἐγνώριζεις
58 ἄρχισε καὶ ἔλεγε
59 εὔμορφον καὶ ἔκλαμπον ὅτι δὲν ἠμπορῶ νὰ εἰπῶ τὴν εὐμορφίαν ὁποῦ εἶχε
60 πάντα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου
61 νὰ χωρήσω τὰ μάτια μου ἀπ' ἐκεῖνον
62 Ὁμοίως
63 ἀπὸ ὕψος καὶ τὸ τριγύρισμα τὸ συχνὸ δὲν θυμοῦμαι καλὰ πόσοι νὰ ἦσαν
64 ἢ καὶ περισσοτέρους
65 στραβὰ
66 βουνὰ

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καλλὴν μυροδίαν καὶ τὸ κάλλος δὲν εἶναι νὰ τὸ εἰπῆ κανεὶς με λόγον·[67] τὰ ὁποία δένδρα τὸ ἕνα μου φαίνετον καὶ ἦτον ὡσὰν ἀνθισμένη ἀμυγδαλαία· τὰ δὲ ἄλλα δύο, τὸ ἕνα μου ἐφαίνετον ὡσὰν κόκκινον τριαντάφυλλον, ὁποῦ μυρίζει εὔμορφα· τὸ δὲ ἄλλον, ὡσὰν καλοκαιρινὸν κρίνον· ἀπὸ τοῦτα ἦτον γεμάτη ἡ γῆ ἐκείνη. Περιπατοῦντες λοιπὸν ἐκεῖ εὑρέθημεν καὶ ἐβλέπομεν ἔμπροσθεν μας δύο θύρας κλεισμένας με σιδηριὰς πόρτας καὶ καλὰ βουλομένας· καὶ εἰς μὲν τὴν δεξιὰν πόρταν ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῆς ἐστέκοντο κάποιοι πολλοὶ νέοι ἄνδρες ἀσπροφορεμένοι καὶ ἐφύλαγαν· εἰς δὲ τὴν ἀριστερὰν πάλιν ἐστέκοντο ἄλλοι μεγάλοι ἄνδρες μαῦροι καὶ ἐφύλαγαν αὐτὴν. Ὡς δὲ ἔφθασα /f. 106$^{v}$ μεν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν θυρῶν ἐκείνων, λέγει ἐκεῖνος ὁ θαυμαστὸς ἄνθρωπος ὁποῦ με κράτειεν καὶ ὁδήγαν με· τὸ γληγορότερον σκύψε κάτω καὶ προσκύνησον. Καὶ ἐγὼ παρευθὺς ἔσκυψα κάτω καὶ ἐπροσκύνησα. Καὶ με πολλὴν φόβον καὶ τρόμον εὑρίσκομουν προύμιτα εἰς τὴν γήν. Καὶ ἐκεῖ ἤκουσα φωνὴν ὡσὰν ἀπάνωθέν μου καὶ ἔρχετον ἀπὸ μακρὰν καὶ ἔλεγε· διατὶ ἔφερες τοῦτον ὁποῦ δὲν σε εἶπα, ἀλλὰ τὸν γείτονά του τὸν Νικόλαιον φέρε, αὐτὸς ἀκόμη ἔχει[68] νὰ ζήση ἐν τῆ γῆ. Τούτης τῆς φωνῆς ὡς ἤκουσεν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος ὁποῦ με ἐκράτει, ἐν τὸ ἅμα ἐσύκωσεν με ἀπὸ τὴν γὴν καὶ λέγει μοι· ἀκολούθη μου. Καὶ με τὸ γοργὸν ἀρχίσαμεν καὶ περιπατούσαμε ὡς πρὸς ἀνατολὰς· καὶ περάσαντες ἐκεῖθεν ὀλίγον εὑρέθημεν εἰς ἕνα μεγάλον καὶ θαυ[μα]στὸν κάμπον. Καὶ εἶχεν ἐκεῖνος ὁ κάμπος πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ καὶ εὔμορφα καὶ ἀνθισμένα δένδρα. Τὰ δὲ δένδρα ἐκεῖνα εἶ /f. 107χαν μίαν φύσιν μόνον, ἀλλὰ πᾶσα δένδρον ἐφαίνετον καὶ εἶχε τρεῖς εὐμορφάδες καὶ νομίζω ὅτι ἦτον ἀπὸ ἐκεῖνα τὰ τρία φυτὰ ὁποῦ ἐπροείπαμεν. Καὶ εἰς καθένα δένδρον ἦτον ἀπὸ κάτω ἕν[ας] ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἐκάθετον[69] καὶ ἐκεῖνοι οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἦτον κατὰ τὸ μάκρος καὶ ὕψος τῆς ἡλικίας[70] αὐτῶν ὅμοιοι. Εἰς δὲ τὴν ὄψιν τοῦ προσώπου τους δὲν ἦτον ὅμοιοι, ἀλλὰ ἄλλοι· οἱ μὲν ἦτον λαμπροὶ καὶ εὔμορφοι, ἄλλοι δὲ καὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ἔφευγαν· ἕτεροι δὲ ἦσαν παρακάτω, ὡσὰν νὰ εἰποῦμεν, μελαχρινοὶ· ἄλλοι δὲ πάλιν ἦσαν μαῦροι καὶ δὲν ἦτον εὔμορφοι. Καὶ τῶν μὲν πρώτων τὰ πρόσωπα ὁποῦ ἦτον λαμπρὰ καὶ φωτεινὰ ἔδειχναν ὡσὰν νὰ ἦτον πολλὰ χαρούμενα· τῶν δὲ μελανῶν τὰ πρόσωπα ἐφαίνοντο στυγνὰ καὶ λυπούμενα. Καὶ ἐγνωρίζετον πᾶσα ἕνας ἀπὸ τούτων ἀπὸ τὰ ἔργα ὁποῦ ἐφόρει, τὰ ὁποία εἶχε κάνει εἰς ἐτοῦτον /f. 107$^{v}$ τὸν κόσμον· εἴτε πονηρὰ ἦτον εἴτε καλὰ· ἀπὸ μικροῦ ἕως μεγάλου· ὅτι εἶχεν ἀπάνου του κάποια σημάδια τῆς ἐργασίας του καὶ τῆς πολιτείας του·[71] καὶ καθ'ἕνας τὸν ἐγνώριζεν ποῖος εἶναι, ἤγουν ἢ γεωργὸς ἦτον ἢ λευτουργὸς, ἢ χαλκεὺς, ἢ πόρνος, ἢ κλέπτης, ἢ φονεὺς,[72] ἢ ἄλλο ὁποῦ ἔπαθεν, ἢ ἔπραξεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ὅλα φαίνοντο ἀπάνου του καθ'ἑνός. Καὶ ὅλοι βλέποντες ἕνας τὸν ἄλλον ἐγνώριζαν ποῖος εἶναι καθ'ἕνας· καὶ οὐ χρείαν εἶχεν νὰ ἐρωτᾶ τὸν ἄλλον ποῖος εἶναι, ἢ πόθεν εἶναι, ἢ τὶ ἔπραξεν, ὅτι φανερὰ ἦτον τοῖς πᾶσιν. Ταύτην λοιπὸν τὴν θαυμαστὴν καὶ πολλὴν πεδιάδα περιπατοῦντες ἡμεῖς, ἐγὼ οὐχ'ἁπλῶς καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν ἐπέρνουν, ἀλλὰ ἔβλεπα καὶ εἰς τὴν μίαν μερίαν καὶ εἰς

67 κατὰ λεπτὸν διότι ἦταν θαυμαστά.
68 ἔχει καιρὸν ἀκόμι
69 εἰς τὸν ἴσκιον αὐτοῦ
70 καὶ σχῆμα τοῦ κορμίου ἦταν ὅοι
71 καὶ τῆς καλοσύνης καὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας
72 ἢ μέθης ἢ ἄλλης τινὸς ἁμαρτίας

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τὴν ἄλλην, εἶδα καὶ ἐγνώρισα πολλοὺς, παλαιοὺς ἀνθρώπους, καὶ τῶρα εἶναι ἀποθαμένοι· ἐγνώρισα λοιπὸν γυναῖκες καὶ παιδία· καὶ ἐκεῖ ἦτον καὶ ὁ πενθερός μου. Ἐκεῖ εἶδα καὶ μία γυναῖκα πόρνη, τὴν ὁποίαν /f. 108 εἶδα μίαν φορὰν ὁποῦ τὴν ἐπόμπευαν εἰς τὸ παζάρι, καὶ τὴν εἶχαν καὶ ἐκάθετον εἰς ἕνα γαιδούριον, καὶ ἐκράτει ἕνα παιδὶ ὁποῦ ἔκαμε μπαστάρδικον, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπόν της τὸ εἶχαν ἀλειμένον με κοπρίαν. Εἶδα καὶ τὰ σημάδια τῶν πράξεων αὐτῆς, ὅτι ἐφαίνοντο ἀπάνω τῆς φανερᾶ. Καὶ ἄλλους πάλιν κακοὺς ἀνθρώπους εἶδα, τοὺς ὁποίους εἶδα καὶ[73] εἰς τὸ παζάρι κρεμαμμένους καὶ πνιγμένους καὶ φουρκισμένους καὶ παλουκομένους· καὶ τους ἔγνώρισα ὅσα ἔπραξαν διότι ἔδειχναν τὰ σημάδια τους. Εἶδα καὶ ἄλλους τινὰς ἀπὸ τοὺς συγγενεῖς μου καὶ φίλους μου ὁποῦ τοὺς ἐγνώριζα, ὅταν ἦτον ζωντανοὶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐτοῦτον. Τὸ λοιπὸν ὅσον καιρὸν ἐπερνούσαμεν ἐκεῖνον τὸν τόπον τὸν καλὸν καὶ ἀνθηρὸν, ἐκοίταξα πολλὰ μη νὰ ἰδῶ καὶ ἄλλους ὁποῦ ἐγνώριζα εἰς τὸν κόσμον· καὶ βλέπω εἰς ἕνα λιβάδι τέσσαρα παιδία /f. 108$^{v}$ λαμπρὰ καὶ ἔμορφα· καὶ ἐκάθοντο ἀντάμα ἀπὸ κάτω εἰς ἕνα δένδρον ἀνθισμένον ἔμορφον. Καὶ ὡσὰν εἶδα ἐγὼ τὰ παιδία ἐκεῖνα εἰς μεγάλην δόξαν καὶ λαμπρότητα, ἐκάθησα καμπόσην ὥραν νὰ ἀπολαύσω καὶ νὰ χορτάσω τὴν ἐμορφίαν τῶν παιδιῶν ἐκείνων. Περιεργαζόμενος καὶ βλέποντάς τα, ἐγνώρισα ὅτι αὐτὰ εἶναι τὰ παιδία μου ὁποῦ ἔχασα· ἀντάμα ἦτον καὶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁποῦ ἀπέθανεν δώδεκα χρονῶν, ὁ πολλά μου ἀγαπημένος. Ὡς δὲ ἐγνώρισα τὰ παιδία μου, μεγάλην χαρὰν ἐγέμησεν ἡ καρδία μου καὶ ἐθαύμαζα. Ὁ δὲ ἐκεῖνος ὁποῦ με ὁδῆγα, ἰδόντα με ὅτι ἔχω τόσην χαρὰν, λέγει μοι· τάχα ἠξεύρης τίνος εἶναι τὰ παιδία; Ἐγὼ δὲ εἶπα· ναὶ, κύριε ἐμοῦ, ἐδικοί μου εἶναι οὗτοι οἱ παῖδες οἱ χαριέστατοι καὶ ὡραιώτατοι,[74] καὶ ἀπὸ πολλὴν καιρὸν ἀπέθαναν, καὶ εἶχα πολλὴν λύπην δι' αὐτὰ· ἀλλὰ τώρα βλέποντας /f. 109 αὐτὰ πῶς εὑρίσκονται εἰς τόσην χαρὰν καὶ λαμπρότητα, χαίρομαι καὶ ἐγώ· καὶ ἀγαπῶ πολλὰ νὰ εἶμαι ἐδῶ μαζὶ μετ' αὐτὰ. Καὶ ἐκεῖνος με εἶπε· δὲν εἶναι καιρὸς τῶρα, καὶ πάραυθα ἐχωρίσθηκα ἀπ' ἐκεῖνα, καὶ ἐγυρίσαμεν ὀπίσω, ἐγὼ δὲ ὁλοένα ἐγύριζα καὶ ἔβλεπα τὴν εὐμορφίαν τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου· καὶ χορτασμὸν δὲν εἶχα, ἀλλὰ μου ἐφαίνετον καὶ ἔτρωγα ἀπὸ ἐκείνην τὴν χαρὰν καὶ πολλὴν εὐωδίαν τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου· καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐκεῖνο τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ ἔκλαμπρον ἀχορτάστως ἔβλεπον, διότι ἡ λάμψης καὶ ἡ λαμπρότης ἐκείνου τοῦ φωτὸς δὲν ἦτον νὰ τὴν ὁμομιάση κανένας εἰς τὴν εὐμορφάδα. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ πολλὴν χαρὰν ἔδειχνεν εἰς ἐκείνους ὁποῦ τὸ ἔβλεπαν· καὶ δὲν ἔρχετον τὸ φῶς ἐκεῖνο ἀπὸ ἕναν ἥλιον,[75] ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ πολλὰς μερίας τῶν ἀνατολῶν· καὶ τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου ἔβγενε φῶς· καὶ κατὰ ἀλήθειαν ἀπανωθὲν τοῦ /f. 109$^{v}$ ἐκείνου ἐφαίνετον ὡσὰν, νὰ εἴπης, οὐρανός πολλὰ κόκκινος καὶ ὡς νὰ ἔκαιεν μεγάλη φωτία, οὕτως ἔφεγγεν. Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο εἶχεν καὶ πολὺ φῶς, ὅτι ὡσὰν ἀστραπῆ ἐφαίνετον καὶ εὔγενεν.

Καὶ ἐγὼ θαυμάζοντας εἰς τὰ τοιοῦτα πράγματα ὁποῦ ἔβλεπα, ἐτόλμησα καὶ ἐρώτησα ἐκεῖνον ὁποῦ με ὁδήγαν καὶ εἶπα τον· αὐθέντι θειότατε, ἡλιόμορφε, τάχα αὐτὸς νὰ εἶναι ὁ παράδεισος ὁποῦ ἐφύτευσεν ὁ θεός; ἢ μὴ νὰ εἶναι αὕτη ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν ὁποῦ ἀκούομεν;[76] Και ἐκεῖνος μου εἶπον· δὲν εἶναι αὐτὸς ὁ παράδεισος, οὐδὲ ἡ βασιλεία τῶν

73 ὁτοὺς ἔβλεπα ἐδῶ

74 ἐγὼ ἤμουν πατέρας τους

75 ἀπὸ ἕνα τόπον καθῶς εἶναι ἐδῶ

76 εἰς τὴν γραφὴν

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οὐρανῶν· ἀμὴ ἐτούτη ἡ γῆ εἶναι τῶν πραέων καὶ ὁ τόπος τῆς ἀναπαύσεως τῶν ψυχῶν τῶν δικαίων καὶ ὁλονῶν τῶν ὀρθοδόξων χριστιανῶν. Εἰς αὐτὸν γοῦν τὸν τόπον ὅρισεν ὁ Θεὸς καὶ εὑρίσκονται αἱ τῶν δικαίων ψυχαὶ, ἕως οὗ νὰ ἔλθη εἰς τὴν δευτέραν παρουσίαν τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, νὰ δώση ἑνὸς ἑκάστου καθὼς ἔπραξεν· /f. 110 διὰ τοῦτο λέγει ἡ γραφὴ, πολλαὶ μοναὶ παρὰ σοι, πάτερ, πεφύκασι κατ' ἀξίαν πᾶσι μεριζόμεναι κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς ἀρετῆς. Ἡ δὲ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἐκείνα ὁποῦ θέλουν νὰ ἀπολαύσουν οἱ δίκαιοι διὰ νὰ χαίρονται αἰῶνα αἰῶνος· ὁμοίως καὶ ἡτοιμασμένα κολαστήρια ὁποῦ θέλουν νὰ κολάζονται οἱ ἁμαρτολοὶ αἰῶνα αἰῶνος εἶναι ὀπίσω ἐκεῖ ὁποῦ εἶδες τὰς θύρας κεκλεισμένας. Ἐκεῖναι γοῦν αἱ θύραι αἱ μεγάλαι ὁποῦ εἶδες ἡ μία μὲν ὁποῦ εἶναι δεξιὰ εἶναι στράτα ὁποῦ ὑπάγη εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν· ἡ δὲ ἄλλη ὁποῦ εἶναι ἄλλη πάλιν στράτα ὁποῦ ὑπάγη εἰς τὴν Ἅδην καὶ εἰς τὴν γεέναν τοῦ πυρὸς. Ἐγὼ δὲ πάλιν τὸν ἐρώτησα καὶ εἶπα· ἀμὴ ποῖοι εἶναι τῶρα εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν ἢ εἰς τὴν γεέναν τοῦ πυρός; ἐκεῖνος μου λέγει· δὲν εἶναι τῶρα κανένας νὰ κατοικεῖ ἐκεῖ· ἀμὴ εἶναι καὶ αἱ δύο εὔκαιραι, κεκλεισμέναι / f. 110$^{v}$ καθὼς τὰς εἶδες, ἕως νὰ γένη ἡ συντέλεια τοῦ κόσμου ἤγουν τῆς φοβερᾶς κρίσεως τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ·[77] τότε ἀλήθεια χωρίζονται οἱ δίκαιοι ἀπὸ τοὺς ἁμαρτολοὺς· καὶ οἱ μὲν δίκαιοι ὑπᾶν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν ουρανῶν· οἱ δὲ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ὑπάγουν εἰς τὴν γεέναν τοῦ πυρός. Εἰ δὲ ἀγαπᾶς νὰ μάθης ποῦ εἶναι αἱ ψυχαὶ τῶν μεγάλων ἁγίων, γίνωσκε ὅτι εἶναι εἰς ὑψιλότερον τόπον[78] καὶ εἰς μέγα φῶς πολλὰ φωτεινώτερον τούτου τοῦ φωτὸς καὶ ἀπάνωθεν ἐξαστράπτη καὶ ὡς φαίνεται ἀπ' ἐκεῖ ἔρχονται αἱ ἀκτῖνες καὶ ἐπέρνει καὶ φαίγγει ἐτοῦτο τὸ φῶς ὁποῦ βλέπεις· ἢ νὰ εἰπῶ καὶ καλύτερα ὅτι εἶναι εἰς ὕψος πολὺ καὶ ἀπ'ἐκεῖ εὐγένουν αἱ ἀκτίνες καὶ φέγγει ἐδώ. Ταῦτα ἤκουσα ἀπ' ἐκείνου τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

Καὶ παρευθὺς ἀρχήσαμεν νὰ περιπατοῦμεν ἔμπροσθεν, ὡσὰν νὰ πηγέναμεν πρὸς τὴν μεσεμβρίαν. Καὶ ὀλίγον περιπατήσαντες, ἐφθάσαμεν εἰς ἄλλον τόπον σκοτεινόν· καὶ ὅλος ὁ τόπος /f. 111 ἐκεῖνος ἦτον σκεπασμένος με πολλὴν ἀντάρα καὶ πολλὰ ἄσχημος ἐφαίνετον καὶ βρομερός· καὶ εὑρήκαμεν πολλὰ πλήθη ἀνθρώπων μέσα εἰς τὸ σκότος ἐκεῖνος καὶ εἰς τὴν βρόμαν καὶ ἐφαίνοντο πῶς ἦτον ὡσὰν ἡλιοκαυμένοι καὶ ἔχουν πολλὴν λύπην. Καὶ εἶπα πρὸς τὸν ὁδηγοῦντα με· ποῖοι εἶναι ἐτοῦτοι ὁποῦ κείτονται εἰς τὸ σκότος; Καὶ ἐκεῖνος με εἶπεν· ἐτοῦτοι εἶναι τὸ ἔθνος τῶν παρανόμων Ἰουδαίων, ὁποῦ δὲν ἐπίστευσαν εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ θεὸν ἡμῶν. Καὶ πάλιν εὐγήκαμεν ἀπ'ἐκεῖ καὶ περιπατήσαντες καμπόσον, πάλιν ἐφθάσαμεν εἰς κάποιον τόπον κατὰ πολλὰ σκοτεινόν, καὶ εἶχε λάσπας πολλὰς καὶ κόπρια. Καὶ ἐκεῖ πάλιν εἴδαμεν πολλὰ καὶ ἀναρίθμητα πλήθη[79] ὡσὰν κουτάβια σκυλία τυφλά. Καὶ ὡσὰν σκουλίκια καὶ ἐκυλίονταν μέσα εἰς τὴν βρόμαν· καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ σκότος δὲν οἶδα καθαρὰ νὰ μάθω τί /f. 111$^{v}$ ἦτον ἐκεῖνα. Καὶ πάλιν ἠρώτησα ἐκεῖνον· ποῖοι εἶναι τοῦτοι ὁποῦ κυλίονται μέσα εἰς τὰ βόρβορα; τάχα νὰ εἶναι ἄνθρωποι; Ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ἐτοῦτοι εἶναι τὸ ἔθνος πάντων τῶν ἀθέων καὶ ἀπίστων Ἰσμαιλιτῶν καὶ αἱρετικῶν. Καὶ

77 ἡ δευτέρα παρουσία τοῦ Κυρίου· τότε γὰρ ἐν τῇ φοβερᾷ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς κρίσεως

78 καὶ εὐμορφώτερον τόπον ἀπὸ τοῦτον ὁποῦ βλέπεις

79 ὡσὰν μικρὰ παιδία καὶ

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περάσαντες ἐκεῖνον τὸν τόπον ὀλῖγον, εὕραμεν καὶ τὸ γένος τῶν Φαραονιτῶν, ἤγουν Κατζηβέλων· καὶ ἦτον εἰς ἕναν τόπον σκοτεινὸν ὁποῦ ὁ ἥλιος δὲν τοὺς ἔβλεπε· καὶ ἐκάθοντο σκοτεινοὶ· ἦτον καὶ αὐτοὶ πολλοὶ καὶ εἶχαν καὶ τὰ πρόσωπα μαῦρα· καὶ ἀπ'ἐκείνους τοὺς γύφτους ἐγνώρισα μερικούς.[80] Καὶ πάλιν εὐγήκαμεν ἀπ'ἐκεῖ καὶ γυρίσαμεν πολλοὺς τόπους καὶ εὑρήκαμεν πολλὰς γενεὰς ἀνθρώπων, καὶ δὲν ἦτον ἀντάμα ὅλοι, ἀμή πᾶσα πίστις καὶ αἵρεσις ἐκάθετον χωριστά· καὶ ἐγὼ ἐρώτουν τὸν ὁδηγόν μου, καὶ ἐκεῖνος μου ἐξομόλογα καθ' ἑνὸς τὴν αἵρεσιν καὶ τὴν θρησκείαν· καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα τὰ ὁποῖα δὲν ἐνθυμοῦμαι νὰ τὰ εἰπῶ καθῶς μου τὰ ἔλεγεν, ὅτι εἶδα πολλὰ /f. 112 ἔθνη. Ὅταν δὲ περάσαμεν ὅλον τὸν σκοτεινὸν ἐκεῖνον τόπον καὶ τὰς αἱρέσεις ὅλων τῶν φυλῶν καὶ τῶν θρησκειῶν, πάλιν ἠρώτησα ἐκεῖνον τὸν φωτεινὸν ἄνδρα· τάχα ἐτοῦτοι εἶναι ἡ αἰώνιος κόλασις; Καὶ ὁ Ἅδης ὁποῦ ἀκούομεν; Ἐκεῖνος μοι εἶπε· δὲν σε προεῖπα ὅτι ἀκόμη δὲν εἶναι καιρὸς οὔτε τῆς βασιλείας οὔτε τῆς κολάσεως; Καὶ διὰ τὰς πόρτας ἐκεῖνας τὰς δύο; Ὅτι ἡ μία εἶναι τῆς βασιλείας καὶ ἡ ἄλλη εἶναι τῆς κολάσεως; Καὶ τώρα δὲν εἶναι κανένας οὔτε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν οὔτε εἰς τὴν κόλασιν· ἀμὴ τοῦτος ὁ τόπος ὁποῦ βλέπεις τῶρα εἶναι ὡσὰν σκιὰ καὶ προοίμιον τῆς φοβερᾶς ἐκείνης κολάσεως καὶ τιμωρίας, ὁποῦ μέλλει νὰ δεχθῆ τότε τοὺς ἁμαρτωλοὺς, ὅταν ποιήση ὁ δίκαιος κριτὴς τὴν δικαῖαν του κρίσιν καὶ νὰ ἀποδώση καθ' ἑνὸς καθὼς ἔπραξε· τότε ἀληθῶς ἔχει νὰ /f. 112$^{v}$ ἀπολαύση καθένας πρεπόντως κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν πληρωμὴν τῆς πίστεώς του. Ἄκουε δι'ἐτοῦτο, ὅτι καλὰ καὶ ἂν εἴπαμεν ὅτι ἕνας τόπος εἶναι τῆς κολάσεως, ἀλλὰ ἔχει πολλὰς καὶ διάφορας κολάσεις καὶ τιμωρίας. Ἔτζη εἶναι καὶ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν· ἂν καλὰ καὶ αὐτὴ μία λέγεται, ἀλλὰ ἔχει καὶ αὐτὴ πολλὰς καὶ διάφορας τὰς ἀναπαύσεις καὶ τὰς κατοικίας τῶν δικαίων· καὶ κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς ἀρετῆς καὶ τοῦ κόπου ὁποῦ ἔκαμε ζῶντας του, οὕτως ἀπολαμβάνει καὶ τὴν ἀνάπαυσιν παρὰ τοῦ δικαίου κριτοῦ.

Εἰς ὅσον ἔλεγε ταῦτα ἐκεῖνος ὁ θαυμαστὸς ἄνθρωπος, ἀκούω καὶ εὔγηκεν ἀπὸ κάτωθεν μία βροντὴ μεγάλη καὶ φοβερά· καὶ βοὴ μεγάλη καὶ βρομερὴ, ὡσὰν νὰ ἐκαίετον ἕνας λόγγος μεγάλος ἢ νὰ εἶναι ἕνας ποταμὸς μέγας καὶ νὰ κοχλάζη τὸ νερὸν ἐκεῖνο τοῦ ποταμοῦ· ἔτζη εὔγενεν ἡ βοὴ ἐκείνη καὶ κτύπος φοβερὸς ἀκούετον. Καὶ ἀντάμα μετ'ἐκείνην τὴν φοβερὰν βοὴν εὔγενεν ἄλλη μία πικρὰ καὶ θλιβερὴ· καὶ ὡσὰν νὰ ἦτον ἕνας μέγας δράκων[81] νὰ λακτίζει καὶ νὰ /f. 113 συρίζη καὶ νὰ ἀναστενάζη συχνὰ· ἔτζη ἠκούετον καὶ εὐλόγενεν ἀπὸ κάτω τῆς γῆς. Λοιπὸν ταύτης τῆς φοβερᾶς καὶ ἀνυπομονήτου φωνῆς ἀκούσας ἐγὼ, ἐξαίφνης ἐσάλευσε καὶ ἐτρόμαξεν ὁ νοῦς μου καὶ ἐγύρευα νὰ κρυπτῶ εἰς τὸν κόρφον τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ νεανίου ὁποῦ με ὁδῆγα, διὰ νὰ μὴν ἀκούω ἐκείνην τὴν φοβερὴν βοήν. Καὶ με πολλὴν φόβον καὶ τρόμον ἠρώτησα τὸν νεανίαν· κύριε μου, τί εἶναι ἐτούτοι ἡ φοβερὰ καὶ βρομερὴ φωνὴ, ὁποῦ ἀκούεται; Ἐκεῖνος με εἶπον· ἐτοῦτος εἶναι ὁ πάμφαγος Ἅδης, ὁποῦ τρώγει τὸν περισσότερον κόσμον,[82] καὶ χορτασμὸν δὲν ἔχει. Καὶ πάλιν ἤκουσα ἄλλην φωνὴν ὡσὰν νὰ ἔρχετον ἀπὸ πάνω πολλὰ ψηλὰ, καὶ ἔλεγεν ἡ φωνὴ ἐκείνη· τί φωνάζεις; Τί κλάεις; Τί στενοχωράσαι; Καρτέρισον ὀλίγον καὶ

80 ὁποῦ ἔβλεπα ἐδῶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον

81 καὶ ἀγριώτατον θήριον

82 ὁποῦ δέχεται ὅλους τοὺς ἁμαρτωλοὺς καὶ τοὺς ἀπίστους ἐκείνους ὁποῦ δὲν ἐπίστευσαν εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν

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ἔχεις [two lines are wiped out, their content can be easily restored from RAIK 130, 46: *ἀπὸ πολλῶν ἐπισκόπων ἀναξιῶν καὶ ἱερέων καὶ καλογέρων.*] τούτης τῆς φωνῆς ἀκόμη ἐφαίνετό μοι ὅτι /f. 113$^{v}$ ἦτον εἰς τὰ αὐτία μου· καὶ παρευθὺς εὑρέθηκα εἰς τὸ σπίτι μου, καὶ βλέποντας τὸ κορμί μου πολλὰ ἄσχιμον, καὶ δὲν ἤθελα νὰ ἐμπῶ μέσα εἰς αὐτό. Ὁ δὲ θεῖος καὶ ἡλιόμορφος ἐκεῖνος νεανίας ὁποῦ με ἐβάστα, ἤγουν ὁ ἄγγελος τῆς ψυχῆς μου, με ἔσπρωξε με πολλὴν δύναμην νὰ ἐμπῶ εἰς τὸ σῶμα μου. Ὅμως θέλων καὶ μὴ θέλων ἐσήβηκα· καὶ τόσον με ἐπόνεσεν ὅλον τὸ κορμὶ,[83] ὡσὰν νὰ ἤθελε σέβη ἕνα δένδρον μέγα με τὰ κλαδία· καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς πολλῆς σπρόξεως καὶ βίας τὰ μέλη καὶ αἱ κλείδοστες μου ἐσάλευσαν.

Τέλος τὸ λοιπὸν ἡ πενθερά[84] του καὶ ἡ γυναῖκα του ὡσὰν ἤκουσαν τοιαῦτα θαυμαστὰ καὶ παράδοξα λόγια, εὐγῆκαν ἔξω καὶ ἔλεγον τὰ, ὅσα ἤκουσαν ἀπὸ τὸν Δημήτριον, ἄλλων γυναικῶν καὶ συγγενῶν αὐτῶν· καὶ ἐκείναι πάλιν τὰ ἔλεγαν ἄλλαις· καὶ ἔτζη εἰς ὀλίγην ὥραν τὰ ἤκουσαν ὄχι μόνον ὅσοι ἐκατοικοῦσαν εἰς τὸν Ἴσβορον, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς αυτὰ τὰ Σιδεροκαύσια, ὥστε σχεδὸν ἔδραμαν μικροὶ τε καὶ μεγάλοι νὰ ἰδοῦν τοῦ /f. 114 Δημητρίου τὴν μετανάστασιν καὶ νὰ ἀκούσουν καὶ τὰ παράδοξα ὁποῦ εἶδε καὶ ἔλεγε. Τότε δὴ τότε καὶ ὁ λογιώτατος παπᾶ κῦρ Μιτροφάνης καὶ ῥήτωρ, ὁ ὁποῖος ἔγραψεν αὐτὴν τὴν διήγησιν καὶ τὴν ὀπτασίαν, καὶ παρευθὺς ἔδραμεν καὶ αὐτὸς· καὶ εὗρε τὸν Δημήτριον καὶ ἄρχισε καὶ τὸν ἐρώτα καταλεπτῶς με πολλὴν ἀκρίβειαν ἐὰν εἶναι ἀλήθεια ἐκεῖνα ὁποῦ ἤκουσε καὶ εἶδεν εἰς τὴν ὀπτασίαν του; Ὁ δὲ Δημήτριος ἄρχισε καὶ τοῦ ἔλεγεν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὅλα ὅσα ἠκούσατε ὁποῦ ἐγράψαμεν. Καὶ πάλιν ἠρώτησεν αὐτὸν ἐὰν εἶδεν ἐκεῖ ὁποῦ ἀνέβαινεν εἰς τοὺς ουρανοὺς ἄλλο τίποτες· ἢ ἂν ἐσυναπάντησαν δαίμονας νὰ τὸν ἐξετάσουν, ὡς καθὼς εὑρίσκομεν καὶ ἄλλους ὁποῦ εἶδαν τοιαύτας ὀπτασίας· ἢ ἐὰν εἶδε τάγματα ἀγγέλων καὶ ἁγίων,[85] ἢ ἄλλο τί περισσότερον. Αὐτὸς δὲ ἔλεγεν ὅτι οὐδὲ εἶδα οὔτε ἤκουσα ἄλλα ἀπ'αὐτὰ ὁποῦ εἶπα. Ἔλεγε δὲ /f. 114$^{v}$ οὗτος ὁ σοφώτατος ἱερομόναχος καὶ πνευματικὸς ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐπῆγα εἰς αὐτὸν, τὸν Δημήτριον, ὄχι μία καὶ δύο φορὰς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τρεῖς, καὶ ἐξέταξα αὐτὸν ὅλα καὶ καλῶς ἔμαθα τὴν ἀλήθειαν. Καὶ ἄλλο[86] ὅτι ἡ φωνὴ ἐκείνη ἡ λέγουσα πρὸς τὸν νεανίσκον ἐκεῖνον ὁποῦ ὁδῆγα τὸν Δημήτριον δὲν ὅρισα νὰ φέρης τοῦτον ἐδῶ, ἀλλὰ τὸν γείτονα του τὸν Νικόλαον, ὅτι ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτὸς ὁ γείτονάς του ἦτον καλά· καὶ μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας αὐτὸς εἶδεν τὴν ὀπτασίαν ὁ Δημήτριος ἀσθήνησεν, ὁ Νικόλαος καὶ ἀπέθανεν· καὶ ὅσα ἡτοίμασαν δι'αὐτὴν ταφὴν καὶ μνημόσυνον τοῦ Δημητρίου, τὰ ἐξοδίασαν εἰς τὴν ταφὴν τοῦ Νικολάου.

Καὶ ταῦτα ἠκούσαμεν ἐν ἀληθεία καὶ ἐγράψαμεν εἰς ὠφέλεια τῶν πιστῶν ἀνθρώπων. Ἀλλὰ ὁ ἀρχέκακος[87] διάβολος ὁποῦ μισᾶ τὴν σωτηρίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, τί ἐποίησεν; Ἐπαρακίνησεν τινὰς ἀναξίους τῆς μοναδικῆς πολιτείας,[88] καὶ ἀπιστοῦσι καὶ λέγουσι διατὶ δὲν ἤκουσεν τῆς φωνῆς λέγει ὅτι νὰ χορτάση ὁ Ἅδης ἀπὸ ὅλους τοὺς ἀνθρώπους

83 ὅτι ὅλα μου τὰ κόκαλα καὶ τὰ νεῦρα καὶ αἱ κλείδοσεις ἐσάλευσαν.

84 ἡ γρία ἡ πενθερὰ

85 τάγματα καὶ στρατιὰς αγγέλλων ἢ χωροὺς ἁγίων

86 ταῦτα μάλιστα ἐπιστώθηκαν καὶ ἀπὸ τὴν φωνὴν

87 σκανδαλοῦργος καὶ φθονερὸς

88 ἀρχιερεῖς ὁμοίως καὶ μοναχοὺς ἀναξίους τοῦ μοναχικοῦ σχήματος

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[*ἀμὴ μόνον ἀπὸ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ μοναχοὺς ἀναξίους*...]. Λέγομεν καὶ ἡμεῖς /f. 115 ὅτι, ἐπειδὴ καὶ δίκαια κρίσις γίνεται ὑπὸ Θεοῦ, ἀνάγκη εἶναι πρῶτον νὰ [*ὑπᾶν πρῶτα αὐτοὶ οἱ ἀνάξιοι καὶ κακοὶ ὁδηγοὶ εἰς τὴν κόλασιν. ἔπειτα ὁ λαὸς*...] ἀνάξιοι τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν νὰ τοὺς ἀκολουθοῦσιν, νὰ ὑπᾶν καὶ αὐτοὶ μετ' αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν γεέναν τοῦ πυρός· καθὼς πάλιν ἐκεῖνοι [*οἱ καλοὶ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ ἱερεῖς καὶ μοναχοὶ*] ὠφέλεισαν πολλοὺς με ταῖς καλαῖς τους ἀρεταῖς, πρέπον εἶναι καὶ αὐτοὶ πρῶτοι νὰ ὑπᾶν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, εἰς τὴν χαρὰν ἐκείνην τὴν ἀνεκδιήγητην. Καὶ κατόπιν αὐτοὺς νὰ ἀκολουθήσουν καὶ ὅσοι ἐσώθησαν απ' αὐτούς· ἔτζη πάλιν εἶναι πρέπον καὶ δίκαιον οἱ κακοὶ ὁδηγοὶ[89] νὰ ὑπᾶν πρῶτον εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον κόλασιν, ἔπειτα ἐκεῖνοι ὁποῦ τοὺς ἀκολουθοῦσιν. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ, /f. 115$^{v}$ ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοὶ,[90] ἡμεῖς λεγόμεσθεν φῶς καὶ ζωὴ καὶ ἄλλας, εἴτε ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ μοναχοὶ,[91] πρέπον εἶναι τοὺς ἐσκοτισμένους ὁποῦ εἶναι εἰς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἡμεῖς νὰ τοὺς φωτίσωμεν·[92] τοὺς νενεκρωμένους εἰς τὰ πάθη νὰ τοὺς ἀναστήσωμεν με τὰς καλὰς μας καθοδηγίας καὶ ἀρετὰς· τοὺς πληγομένους ἀπὸ τὰ σαπήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν νὰ τοὺς ἰατρεύομεν με τὰς καλάς μας διδασκαλίας. Ἡμεῖς δὲ ἀλλάξαμεν τὴν τάξιν μας καὶ ἐγίναμεν ἀντὶ φῶς, σκότος εἰς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους· καὶ ἀντὶ ζωῆς[93] αἴτιοι θανάτου καὶ πρόξενοι τῆς ἀπογνώσεως· καὶ ἀντὶ ἅλατος νὰ ξηραίνομεν ταῖς βρομεραῖς ἁμαρτίαις.[94] Ἡμεῖς δὲ με τὰς κακάς μας ὁμιλίας καὶ πράξεις παρακινοῦμεν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους εἰς τὰ κακά. Ἐπειδὴ ἔτζη κάμνομεν, πῶς δὲν εἶναι δίχως πρῶτα νὰ δωθοῦμεν ἡμεῖς φαγεῖν τοῦ παμφάγου καὶ πικροῦ καὶ ἀχορτάστου Ἅδου; Ἐκ /f. 116 τούτων τῶν ἀναξίων ὑπάρχομεν καὶ ἡμεῖς οἱ ταλαίπωροι καὶ διὰ τοῦτο γράφομεν χωρὶς κανένα δισταγμὸν καὶ καρτεροῦμεν τὰς ἀθανάτους κολάσεις. Ἀλλὰ σὺ, Χριστὲ βασίλευ,[95] εὔσπλαχγνε καὶ μακρόθυμε, ὁποῦ δὲν θέλεις τινὰ νὰ χαθῇ· σὺ, Θέε καὶ Κύριε, δὸς μοι γνῶσιν νὰ καταλάβω ἐκείνας τὰς πικρὰς καὶ ἀνυπομονήτους κολάσεις πρωτήτερα παρὰ νὰ ἀποθάνω, ἴσως νὰ μετανοήσω καὶ νὰ μεταστρέψω ἀπὸ ταῖς κακαῖς μου πράξεσιν ἐκείναις ὁποῦ ἐσυνήθησα καὶ κάμνα ἀπὸ νηπιόθεν μου. Καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν καὶ αἰσχρὰν τῶν παθῶν ἀμορφίαν ἄμποτε νὰ ἐκδυθῶ καὶ νὰ ἐνδυθῶ ἐκείνην τὴν λαμπρὰν στολὴν διὰ τῆς φωταγωγῆς μετάνοιας· ὡσὰν ἐνθάδε χαρούμενος ἀείποτε με τὴν ἀγάπην Σου παρακινούμενος νὰ βλέπω διὰ παντὸς τὸ Σὸν κάλλος· καὶ εἰς τὸ τέλος φθάσω τῆς μακαρίας ἀγάπης σου, εἰς τὴν ὁποίαν Σου /f. 116$^{v}$ ἀγάπην δὲν κατοικᾶ κανένας φόβος· ἵνα δόξαν Σοι ἀναπέμπω σὺν τῶ Πατρὶ καὶ τῶ Ἁγίω Πνεύματι νῦν καὶ ἀεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς ἀτελευτήτους αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν.

89 ὅτι ἐκεῖνοι οἱ πρῶτοι ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ μοναχοὶ ὁποῦ ἔβλαψαν πολλοὺς με τὰ κακὰ λόγια καὶ με τὰ κακὰ ἔργα τους, ὅτι νὰ πηγαίνουν αὐτοὶ μπροστὰ

90 ἀδερφοὶ καὶ πατέρες ὠνομάσθημεν

91 φῶς καὶ ἅλας ἡμεῖς οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ ἱερεῖς καὶ μοναχοὶ

92 ὅσοι εἶναι ἐσκοτισμένοι νὰ τοὺς φωτίζομεν ἡμεῖς καὶ νὰ τοὺς γυρίζωμεν εἰς μετάνοιαν με καλαῖς διδαχαῖς καὶ με τὰ καλὰ μας ἔργα, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ μετ' ἐμῶν συνέλθωσιν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν /φ. 48$^{v}$ τῶν οὐρανῶν

93 αἴτιοι ὁποῦ μέλει νὰ εἴμασθεν

94 καὶ νὰ ταῖς ἀφανιζόμεν με καλαῖς διδαχαῖς καὶ με καλῆ ἔργα, ἡμεῖς τὸ ἀνὰ πάλιν ὅλον εἰς τὸ ἐνάντιον στεκόμεθα.

95 Here RAIK 130 breaks off.

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## Translation

Beneficial narration of the vision of a certain Orthodox Christian Demetrios, written in the vernacular by the humble hieromonk Laurentios. May he be blessed.

Brethren and fathers, come here to hear about awe-inspiring and wonderful mysteries that our benevolent God who wishes salvation for us has revealed in these recent days. Please listen to me as I tell you from the very beginning how this miracle happened. There is a place near Siderokausia which they call Isvoros. It is a large place and many people live there. This place then is in the district of the bishopric of Hierissos and the Holy Mountain. In the year of the old reckoning, that is, seven thousand eighty-eight, in the eighth indiction, there was a Christian named Demetrios who lived in this place. This Demetrios was not a man trained in letters or crafts or trades but rather he was a 'rupnik', which is a local word for those who dig and unearth silver-bearing soil (*that is one of those who digs and unearths the soil where silver and gold rest).* It was with such a great effort that he worked and provided for his household (*lived off it*). He was simple for the most part and humble. He lacked any wrong doings or sins (*that harm the soul*) and sought as much as he could to do good and did so *and did not harm anybody*. Although he had a wife and children and a house and was poor, nevertheless he looked after his soul. What is more, he did not spend his life with virtuous people who have the fear of God or know letters to be able to read the Holy Writ to benefit (*although he had a wife and didn't learn any letters).* And in this way he lived his life, but he never experienced any temptation to become a bad person. But because he entreated Him and had good thoughts, I think that, as the story shows, he pleased God. And for this reason He revealed to him and showed him what you are about to hear.

So this Demetrios had a child whom he raised until he turned twelve, and he loved him dearly. It is obvious to those who have (a child) of this age how much he is loved by his father and his mother. Yet we do not know God's judgment. Jesus Christ, our Lord, willed it and gave his child death (*to take his soul*). (Demetrios) as the father he was, he grieved greatly and wept greatly, and because of his enormous grief and profuse tears (*that he shed over his son*), he fell gravely ill and lay in his bed for fifteen days suffering and groaning. In his illness he was taken care of by his wife, his mother-in-law, his relatives, and his neighbours. After fifteen days, one evening, when the sun was setting and it was a time of night when people were having supper, this Demetrios, it seemed, fell unconscious and was instantly found dead. When his long-suffering wife and his old mother-in-law, who were sitting by his bedside and watching over him, saw that he had died, they began to weep and to cry loudly, as is known and as custom has it. And when his relatives (*neighbours*) heard their wailing and weeping, all of them rushed to see the dead, and so they gathered and cried a lot. What else could they do? It was necessary to wrap him in a shroud. Some of them went to bring candles, others incense, others were cleaning wheat to make kolyva, others began to wash him, still *others prepared everything for the funeral*, as was the custom of those people. When they began to take off the clothes that he was wearing to dress him in another, they

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saw that his hands and his feet and his thighs and his head and all his limbs were cold and dead just as are those of all deceased people. Only his chest near the clavicle was a bit warm, and his pulse was beating, albeit weakly. When they saw it was so, they said among themselves: 'Let's leave him for a little while, for him to die (*congeal*) completely, and then we will wash him'. They waited two or three hours and inspected him again and found him again in the same condition, and his pulse was beating in his chest, as we mentioned earlier. A long time passed, sleep overwhelmed them, and many of them went to rest. But his long-suffering wife *and his mother-in-law* and some of his relatives kept sitting and guarding Demetrios, mourning him as dead. And since a long time passed, they were inevitably overpowered by sleep: finally many went to rest and lay in whatever place they found themselves.

The night passed and it started to grow light and the sick one, that is, Demetrios, was lying on his mattress; all of a sudden, he sighed loudly and immediately afterwards he rose and sat up. Those who were watching over him, that is, his wife (*his mother-in-law*) and the others, woke up the moment they heard his sigh. And as they saw the ailing Demetrios alive and sitting up, they were stunned; everybody rejoiced and began asking him what had happened, and how he died and then came back to life. But Demetrios, with his eyes lowered, keeping his hands on his face, remained silent and did not say anything, *as if in great confusion.* For several (*three*) days he neither ate nor drank nor slept at all. In the midst of all this, his long-suffering wife remembered her son, about whom we already said that he had died at the age of twelve; she was sitting at the door and crying. She was looking at the children of her son's age who were playing in the street (*neighbourhood*), and her heart burned, *she suffered greatly* and hot tears started streaming from her eyes. Demetrios, who was sitting in the place we have already mentioned, heard his pitiful wife weeping. By the will of God, he opened his mouth and lips and said to his wife: 'Why are you weeping, O wretched one? Have you lost your mind? Have you by chance remembered that our son died? Yet he did not die and did not rot, as you assume. *Be absolutely sure, my wife, that* he is completely alive and lives in a place where he has great joy, full and endless delight. Our son is in another place [than this] luminous and bright, high and beautiful. May we be deemed worthy to go there where our children are and to live the same blessed *and ever-lasting* life which has no *end or* sadness *or encumbrance, but has much rest and great joy* and see that joyful light, of which one can never have enough.' These were the words that his wife heard, but because of her bitter crying and weeping she did not think to ask him and to learn what his words meant. Yet his old mother-in-law who was sitting close to him began asking detailed questions and said to him: 'And how do you know that your son is alive and lives a blessed life in great joy *and rest?*' And he answered her: '*Old woman*, I saw and I know well and truly, and no one told me, but I saw with my own eyes in what joy and happiness *and eternal life* and what most sweet and pleasing light my children live.' When she heard his words, *his mother-in-law* wanted to learn more and said to him: 'Tell me, my beloved Demetrios, *and do not conceal from me* what you saw and learned.' Then he shook his head and said to her (*began to tell*) : 'As I

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was lying ill in my bed, I opened my eyes and saw a man, *good-looking and shining*, who was like a flash of lightning. He was very handsome. He stood over me and he was clad in gold and with many colours, and his garments were radiant; they were so highly adorned, that I cannot find words to express the beauty of his clothes. So, as I saw him, my mind transformed, and I forgot *everything that belongs to* this world, and I kept my eyes fixed on that handsome one and did not want *to take my eyes off him*. But (*similarly*) it became clear to me that I had parted from you and found myself in the holy hands of that one and, holding me with his hands, we flew and it seemed to me that he went up high, and it seemed to me that we passed through seven heavens *or even more*: because of the great height which we reached, I failed to count the number of heavens that we passed through; *because of the swiftness of the rotation, I do not remember well how many there were*. It seemed to me like circles that we were passing, from the lower to the higher, and from that one again to the higher still until we passed them all. On the path that we were climbing the light was not pure but it was like a mist. And as soon as we passed through all these heavens which I mentioned, it immediately seemed to me that we reached an other world and the light in the world was different since it was much brighter and more luminous than this one. Similarly, the land there was wonderful and high, that it was not like the land here which has trees (*ship timber*)[96] and grasses, rocks and rivers (*mountains*). That land looked as if somebody decided to level it for horses to prance on it. The meadow of that wonderful land was all adorned with three kinds of blooming and beautiful trees; it is impossible to express in words the wondrous fragrance and beauty of those trees and flowers. Of these trees, one looked to me like a blooming almond, of the two others, one resembled a red rose, which smells beautiful; the other was like a summer lily. That land was filled with these.

So as we were walking we found ourselves there and saw in front of us two closed gates with iron doors well sealed; at the right door, many young men in white robes were standing in front of it and were guarding it; at the left door, again, others, older black men were standing on guard. When I reached those doors, that wonderful man who was holding and leading me, said to me: 'As quickly as possible bow and prostrate yourself!' And I immediately bowed down and prostrated myself and with great fear and trembling I lay prostrate on the ground. There I heard a voice as if from above me and it came from far away, and said: 'Why did you bring this man whom I did not tell you [to bring]? Bring his neighbour Nikolaos. This man still has (*some time*) to live on earth.' As the man who held me heard this voice, he immediately raised me from the ground and said to me: 'Follow me!'

Swiftly we set off, walking eastwards, and moving away from there a little way we found ourselves in a large and wonderful plain. This plain had many good and beautiful blooming trees. Those trees were all one type, but every tree had three kinds of beauty

96 We take the meaning from a passage in the chrysobull of Alexios I Komnenos, a. 1102: στραβοξυλῆς τῆς πρὸς τὰ κάτεργα καὶ πλοῖα ἐπιτηδείας. See *Actes de Lavra, Première partie. Des origines à 1204*, ed. A. Guillou et al. (Archives de l'Athos V) (Paris 1970) 286.

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and I think they were the same three plants that we mentioned earlier. Under each tree there was a man sitting *in its shadow*, and those people were similar in their height and age. In the appearance of their faces, they were not the same but different: some were bright and beautiful, others had shining faces,[97] still others further on were, as it were, swarthy, others were black and not handsome. The faces of the first, which were bright and shining, revealed that they were happy, whereas the faces of the black ones looked bleak and sad. Every one of them could be recognized from the deeds he wore, which he had done in this world, whether they were bad or good, from small to great, because each had on him some signs of his deeds and his behaviour. Each one recognized who he was: that is whether a farmer or serviceman,[98] or coppersmith, or lecher, or thief, or murderer, *or guilty of drunkenness or of other sins* or anything else he suffered or perpetrated in this world, everything appeared on each of them. And all of them, looking the one at the other, recognized who each one is and he had no need to ask the other who he was or where from, or what he had done, since it was obvious to everyone. While we were moving through this wonderful and huge plain, I walked neither mindlessly nor without purpose, but I looked in one direction and then another. I saw and recognized many people of old who are now dead; in this way, I recognized women and children, and my father-in-law was also there. There I saw a prostitute whom I had seen paraded through the market place, and they had her sitting on a donkey, and she was holding a bastard child she had had, her face they had smeared with dung. I saw also the signs of her deeds because they were clearly displayed on her. I also saw other bad people whom I had seen *here* in the market place hanged, or strangled, or gibbeted, or impaled — and I learnt what they had done since their signs showed it.

I also saw other people, members of my family or friends whom I knew when they were alive in this world. For as long as we were crossing that beautiful and blooming place I watched out intensely in case I should see also others whom I knew in the world. And I see in a meadow four children, radiant and beautiful who were sitting together under a beautiful blooming tree. And when I saw those children in great glory and radiance, I sat down for a long time to enjoy and have my fill of the beauty of those children. As I looked closely, I realized that they were my own children whom I lost; together with them was my son who died at the age of twelve, my very beloved one. As I recognized my children, my heart was filled with great joy and I marvelled. That one who was leading me, seeing that I was so joyful, says to me: 'Do you know whose children these are?' I said: 'Yes, my lord, these are my children, these most full of grace and beautiful *and I was their father*; they died a long time ago, and I have been mourning them for a long time. But now, seeing them, as they are in such joy and brightness, I am also rejoicing, and I am very happy to be here with them.' But he said to me: 'It's not the time (for this).' And I instantly parted from them and we turned back, but I kept turning my head and looking at the beauty of that place and

97 Instead of ἔφευγαν, we adopt the conjecture ἔφεγγαν.

98 With the conjecture λεπτουργὸς instead of λευτουργὸς the word would mean craftsman/carpenter.

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could not have enough, but it seemed to me that I was fed by the joy and great fragrance of that place. I gazed insatiably at that clean and shining light because the glow and radiance of that light could not be compared in beauty to any other. Because of this, it gave great happiness to those who saw it. This light did not come from *one place, as here*, from one sun, but from many parts of the East; the light came out of that place, and, indeed, above it there appeared what one would call the sky. It was very red and it shone as if a great fire was burning. That is why there was a lot of light. It looked like and gleamed like lightning.

Marvelling at the things that I saw, I took the liberty of asking the man who was leading me and said to him: 'O sacred Lord, you who look like the sun, could this be Paradise that God has planted? Or is it the Kingdom of Heaven of which we hear *in the Scripture*?' He replied: 'This is not Paradise, nor is it the Kingdom of Heaven. But this is the land of the meek, a place of rest for the souls of the righteous and of all the Orthodox Christians. God commanded that in this place be placed the souls of the righteous, and they will stay here until he comes to the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ who will give each one his due according to his deeds. This is why the Scripture says: 'Many are the mansions allotted by you, Father, to everyone according to the measure of their virtue'.[99] As for the Kingdom of Heaven and those good things which the righteous will enjoy forever and ever and likewise the tortures that are prepared for the sinners who will be tortured forever and ever, they all are there behind the closed gates that you saw. These enormous gates that you saw – the one to the right is the road leading to the Kingdom of Heaven, the other is the road leading to Hades and the Gehenna of fire.' I asked him again and said: 'And who is now in the Kingdom of Heaven or in the Gehenna of fire?' And he replied: 'Now there is no one who lives there, but both are empty, locked, as you saw them, until the end of the world happens, that is the frightful Judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ (*the second coming of the Lord*). Then *on this frightful Day of Judgment* the righteous will indeed be separated from the sinners, and the righteous will proceed to the Kingdom of Heaven while the sinners will proceed to the Gehenna of fire. If you want to learn where the souls of the great saints are, know that they are in a more elevated place and in a great light much brighter than this light; it flashed from above, and it appears that it is from there that the rays come and it takes [from it] and shines and the light that you see comes from there; or, to say it better, it is very high and from there the rays emerge and it is bright there.' This is what I heard from this wonderful man.

We immediately started to move forward, as if heading south. Having walked a short distance, we found ourselves in another place, a dark one. The whole space was covered with a great mist and looked very ugly and filthy. There we found great crowds of people deep in this darkness and filth; it seemed as if they were sunburnt and had great sadness. I asked my guide: 'Who are these who lie in darkness?' and he told me: 'This is the nation of lawless Jews who did not believe in Christ, our Lord.'

99 John 14:2: 'In my Father's house are many mansions'.

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Again we left from there and, walking a considerable distance, we reached again a certain place which was extremely dark and abounded in filth and dung. There again we saw great and innumerable crowds, *like small children and* like blind cubs, and they were like worms, and were creeping in the mud, and because of darkness I could not see clearly to learn what they were. And again I asked that one: 'Who are those that are creeping in the mud? Can they be human beings?' He replied: 'These are the nation of all the godless and infidel Ishmaelites and heretics.' Passing that place a little way, we found the race of the Pharaonites or Katziveloi. They were in a dark place where the sun did not see them. They were sitting in the dark and they, too, were many, and they had black faces. Among those Gypsies I recognized a few *whom I had known in this world.* We departed from there and passed through many places and found many generations of people; they were not all together, but members of each faith and heresy were sitting separately. I asked my guide and he confessed to me each one's heresy and religion and the names which I do not remember how to pronounce as he told them to me, since I saw so many nations. When we finished crossing this dark place and the heresies of all tribes and religions, I asked him again, this shining man: 'Can this be the eternal punishment and the Hades about which we have heard?' He replied: 'Have I not told you already that it is not yet time either for the Kingdom or for punishment? And about those two doors, one is the Kingdom's, the other, the Punishment's? For now, there is no one either in the Kingdom of Heaven or in the Punishments. But this place which you see now, is like a shadow of and prelude to the terrifying punishment and penalty which will receive the sinners when the True Judge pronounces his just verdict and rewards each according to his deeds; then everyone will receive what he deserves, according to his works, and will get compensated for his faith. Know also that although we said that there is one place for punishment, it has numerous and different punishments and tortures. The same is true of the Kingdom of Heaven: even though it also is said to be one, it contains numerous and various places of rest and abodes for the righteous; one receives repose from the Righteous Judge according to the degree of virtue and of toil that he performed while alive.'

While that wonderful man was saying these things, I heard a mighty and awful thundering coming from underneath, and a great roar, as if a large forest was on fire or as if it was a great river and the water of the river was boiling. That is how this noise was coming out and a mighty blow was heard; and together with that horrific sound there came another, bitter and sad, as if a huge dragon *and the wildest beast* was kicking, hissing and constantly sighing – that is how it was heard and came from under the earth. Hearing this terrifying and unbearable noise, I suddenly trembled and my mind was shattered and I sought to hide myself in the bosom of the wondrous young man who was leading me, so as not to hear that terrifying cry. With great fear and tremor, I asked this young man: 'My lord, what is this terrifying and disgusting cry that we hear?' He replied: 'This is the omnivorous Hades who swallows the whole world *receives all the sinners and faithless and those who did not believe in Christ* — and does not know any satiation.' And then I heard another voice as if it came from very high above and that

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voice was saying: 'Why are you bawling, crying and suffering? Be patient for a while, and you will get *many unworthy bishops, priests and monks.*' It still seemed to me that this voice was in my ears. Immediately I found myself in my house and seeing how ugly my body was, I did not want to enter it. This divine young man shining like the sun, the one who was guiding me, the angel of my soul, pushed me with great force into my body. Willy-nilly I entered, and my whole body hurt me, *all my bones and nerves and joints*, as if a big tree with branches; because of the great push and stress my limbs and joints quaked.

So, as his *old* mother-in-law and wife finally heard these marvellous and strange words, they went out and were saying what they had heard from Demetrios, to other women and relatives, and the latter told others, and thus in no time it was heard not only by the inhabitants of Isvoros but even in Siderokausia itself; consequently, nearly everybody, great and small, rushed to see the return of Demetrios and to listen to all the extraordinary things that he saw and told. At the same time the most learned priest and rhetor, *kyr* Metrophanes, who wrote down this narrative and this vision, immediately rushed there. He found Demetrios and began to question him in great detail, if it was true – everything that he heard and saw in his vision. Demetrios began to tell from the very beginning what you already heard and what we wrote down. He [Metrophanes] asked him again if he saw anything else there as he was ascending the heavens; or if he encountered demons who would interrogate him, as we hear from (the cases of) other people who had the same visions; or whether he saw the cohorts *and troops* of angels and *choirs* of saints, or anything else. But he replied: 'I have not seen or heard anything besides what I have said.' This most wise hieromonk and confessor said [afterwards]: 'I approached this Demetrios not once or twice but thrice, and I examined him in everything, and I learnt the complete truth.' The other *convincing proof thereof* was the voice that addressed that young man who was guiding Demetrios: 'I did not order you to bring this one but his neighbour Nikolaos' since in those days that neighbour was still in good health but two days after Demetrios saw his vision, Nikolaos fell ill and died. Everything that was prepared for the funeral and commemoration of Demetrios was spent for the funeral of Nikolaos.

This we heard and wrote down in all truthfulness for the benefit of the faithful. Yet the malicious, *tricky, and envious* Devil who hates human salvation – what did he invent! He incited some *bishops and* the unworthy from among the monkish rank, and so they disbelieved and said: 'Why didn't this voice say that Hades would devour all the people *but only bishops and priests and unworthy monks?*" To this we answer that since the judgment of God is fair, it is necessary that *the unworthy and wicked leaders proceed to the punishment first; then the flock* unworthy of the Kingdom of Heaven will follow – the latter will also go to the Gehenna of fire after the former. By the same token, good bishops, priests and monks will benefit from their great virtue: they will be the first to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and this indescribable joy. They will be followed by those who were saved through them. It is fitting and fair that the bad guides, *those first bishops and monks that harmed many people with their bad words and bad deeds*

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*should go in front and* be the first to enter the eternal punishment, and then those who follow them.

And since, my beloved brethren, (*we are called brethren and fathers*) we are named 'light and life and salt,' or bishops and *priests and* monks, it is right that we should enlighten those who live in the darkness of sin *and turn them to repentance with good teachings and good deeds, so that they go to the Kingdom of Heaven together with us*; we should revive with our good admonitions and virtues those who are deadened by passions; we should heal with our good teachings those who are afflicted by ulcers of sins and lust. Yet we have changed our proper order and became instead of the light *that we should cause* darkness to the people; instead of life, we became the causes of death and agents of despair; instead of salt, we wither with filthy sins. *We should annihilate sins with good teachings and virtuous deeds, but we act to the contrary:* with our bad talk and deeds we push people toward evil. Since we act in this way, how can we not be the first to be given over to be eaten by the omnivorous, bitter, and insatiable Hades? Among these unworthy are also we, the wretched; this is why we write this without any hesitation and await the endless tortures. But you, Christ the King, merciful and magnanimous, who do not want anybody to be lost, you, God and Lord, give me knowledge so that I could get a feel of these bitter and unbearable tortures before I die: maybe I will repent and distance myself from my bad deeds, those I got used to and committed since my childhood. If only I could divest myself from this disgusting ugliness of passions and clothe myself in that shining garment through the light-bearing repentance, so that, eternally joyful, because of Your love, I could always contemplate Your beauty; so that finally I could reach Your blessed love, love in which no fear can dwell; so that I might remit glory to You and to the Father and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and to endless ages of ages Amen!

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