



St. Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Cathedral

5th Sunday of Pascha. Samaritan Woman.
Epistle: Acts 11:19-26, 29-30
Gospel: St. John 4:5-42
St. Athanasius the Great, Patriarch of Alexandria.

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Today's bulletin has been sponsored by Eileen and Roy Glisan
In loving remembrance of Elaine and Sophie Wydo. May their memory be eternal!

Sunday, May 2, 2010

This Week's Announcements

Thursday – May 6

- Book Discussion Group – 7 pm at the home of Sylvia Hanna. We will be finishing our discussion of The Shack.

Saturday – May 8

- NO Vespers

Next Sunday – May 9

- Church School – 9:00 am. This is the final day for Church School classes until September.
- Divine Liturgy – 10:00 am
- This will be the last day to drop off clothing for the Romanian Clothing Drive. If you haven't been able to donate, please consider making a monetary donation to help with the shipping costs. Please see Carol Namisnak, Debra Boehm, or Donna Katrych for further details.

Coming Events – Mark Your Calendar!

- Women's Association Meeting – May 11 – 7 pm at the home of Sophia Radinsky. Please note change from previously-announced date.
- Women's Association Tea Party – May 22
- Church School Summer Camp – July 26-30
- Women's Association Golf Classic – July 30

Fundability Tip of the Week: Now that Spring is upon us, it's time to do some of those indoor and outdoor chores. Remember, whatever supplies you need, you can purchase them with gift cards from St. Alexander Fundability. For example, if you need to replace that hard-to-start lawnmower, use Fundability cards to buy one from Sears, Lowe's, Home Depot, Kmart, or Wal-Mart. You'll also need a card from your favorite gas station or that new mower will be as hard to start as the old one! And pick up a restaurant card to use when the job's done!

Today's Dynamis Meditation: Choosing to Possess: Deuteronomy 1:26-46 SAAS, especially vs. 26: "Nevertheless you would not go up, but disobeyed the word of the Lord your God" The choice to possess the Kingdom of God with unwavering trust when He calls us to the struggle is never forced on any one of us, neither under the Old Covenant nor under the New. There were Disciples of Christ who traveled with the Lord in the flesh, saw, touched, heard - but only for a time. Then, at a certain point some "...did not believe" when they found His words "too hard." And, as the Evangelist John records, many of them "...went back and walked with Him no more" (Jn. 6:64,60,66).

In this part of Deuteronomy, the righteous Moses reveals that without God's grace no one *can* possess the promised Land, but the Prophet also reveals that each one is responsible to take up the struggle. Tragically, a great many ignore God's leadership, and that is rebellion. Of course, some expect Him to bless them without their struggling. But it is each one's choice.

Do notice that, in terms of *real time*: Moses gave this teaching to the children of those who forty years earlier had refused God's promise and His command to possess the land (Dt. 1:3). Every generation of the People of God and individual must decide for himself. Caleb and Joshua believed the Lord and they showed themselves willing to struggle and, as a result, they outlived the generation that rebelled and made "...excuse with excuses in sins" (Ps. 140:4).

Rebellion is marked by excuses. Notice the murmuring: "...the Lord hates us" (Dt. 1:27). "He brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us"(vs. 27). They allowed their brethren to draw away their hearts (vs. 28). The excuses, the pleadings, the shifting of blame are well-worn. We have heard it all, perhaps spoken by our own lips - God forbid! "Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth..." (Ps. 140:3).

As Moses told them after much reassurance (Dt. 1:29-31), and still they rebelled, "...you did not believe the Lord your God (vs. 32). The Gospel is set before us in its radiance in every Divine Liturgy and the promise is there, yet, too often, we turn back and fail to believe in the Lord our God. Yet He assures us. The choice is up to us. Always, the issue is trust.

Tragically, the People's mistrust even corrupted Moses (vs. 37). See chapter twenty of Numbers for the details: the community lacked water and God directed Moses to take his staff and *speak* to the rock, but, in his anger, he *struck* the rock. God gave them water, but He told Moses: "Because you did not believe Me, to sanctify Me before the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I am giving them" (Nm. 20:12).

Often mistrust is attended by presumptuous self-reliance. Commanded not to go up on their own against the Amorites, they "...went up into the mountain" (vs. 40); the People thought they could fight and take the mountain of the Amorites, but God withdrew saying, "...I am not with you..." (vss. 41,42). Of course they were defeated (vs. 44). Thus, "...the Lord would not listen to [their] voice nor pay attention..." to their weeping and pouting in defeat (vs. 45). How worldly their repentance was manifest even as they sat in their tents: once again, in rebellion to the direct command of God, they did not journey on through the wilderness from the Red Sea, but "...encamped in Kadesh many days, according to the days [they] spent there" (vs. 46).

As the Apostle Paul teaches us, "...godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death" (2 Cor. 7:10). Beloved of the Lord, heed God's warning against rebellion, murmuring, mistrusting, and presuming. Rather, may we humble ourselves before God so that He may help us to possess His Kingdom within us.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin. O Lord, teach me Thy statutes!