

St. Athanasius Academy of Orthodox Theology

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The Most Rev. Metropolitan JOSEPH, Primate

The V. Rev. Fr. Jon Braun, President

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Dear Friend of St. Athanasius Academy,

JESUS – THE WORD OF THE LORD – BECAME INCARNATE (GOSPEL OF JOHN 1:14)

Within the mystery of Great Lent, let's review the first half of John, Verse 14: *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us....* It speaks to the renewal and reconciliation of the once lost - even dead - relationship with Jesus – the promised Christ of the Old Testament – through His Incarnation.

The Word of the Lord, and His Spirit, makes Himself known to us. Why? So we might have the unspeakable privilege of becoming one of His adopted children. Yet several severe obstacles stood in the way of this process, things that could only be cleared away only by this great Mystery of Life.

One such obstacle was the fear and ignorance of death, decay and Hades.

In the Old Testament, such fears of ignorance gained dominion over man, after turning away from the Voice of their Lord God. This later became the poisonous fruit of the Law and its Judgement. To address this, and out of His profound love, the Word became Incarnate. In doing so, He wiped out this curse of the Law - this wisdom of man – while revealing Himself to be the true One Lawgiver. As He said, "The Son of Man came...to give His life a ransom for many." (Matt 20:28). This ransom, this pardon of mercy, wiped out man's debt, asking only we return to Him in faith, with a great love for Him and neighbor, as a fruit of seeking Him - His Word and Voice of His Wisdom.

What a great joy to share in this reconciliation with Jesus – our Christ and our Father; to celebrate the resurrecting of this wondrous relationship, clothed in a spirit of newness. For He alone tramples underfoot, the ignorant folly of man's wisdom; for only He is the Anointed Son of His eternal Fathers – the Messiah. He offers us the opportunity to once again become one of His His own. Thus, through repentance and the waters of His Baptism – though faith in Jesus and the fulness of His Incarnation – we no longer need to fear the falsehoods of death, devils, and demons. They cannot hurt or have dominion over us, again. *Look to His Wisdom in Luke 10: 17-25.*

This will help us better appreciate the activities of the Word, summarized in Heb. 2:14-15.

*"Inasmuch then, as the children have partaken of flesh and blood,
He Himself likewise, shared in the same,
that through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death,
that is, the devil; and deliver those who through fear of death,
were all their lifetime subject to bondage."*

Take a some time with the "OSB - Book of Job" - a worthy contemplation in the season of Great Lent.

To His glory and remembrance in all things.

Sincerely -



Paul - SAAOT

Please remember our prisoner-students who
come to us to know the One Who offers
them peace and salvation .