

14th Sunday of Matthew

21. Whenever unclean thoughts have been driven off quickly, we should try to find out why this has happened. Did the enemy fail to overpower us because there was no possibility of the thought idea of bread persists in a hungry man because of his hunger, and the idea of water in a thirsty man because of his thirst, so ideas of material things and of the shameful thoughts that follow a surfeit of food and drink persist in us because of the passions. The same is true about thoughts of self-esteem and other ideas. It is not possible for an intellect choked by such ideas to appear before God and receive the crown of righteousness. It is through being dragged down by such thoughts that the wretched intellect, like the man in the Gospels, declines the invitation to the supper of the knowledge of God (cf. Luke 14:18); and the man who was bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness (cf. Matt. 22:13) was clothed in a garment woven of these thoughts, and so was judged by the Lord, who had invited him, not to be worthy of the wedding feast. For the true wedding garment is the **dispassion** of the **deiform** soul which has renounced worldly desires.

In the texts On *Prayer* it is explained why dwelling on ideas of sensory objects destroys true knowledge of God.

[V1] 52 **Evagrius the Solitary Texts on Discrimination in Respect of Passions and Thoughts**

64. **Dispassion** is the wedding garment of the **deiform** soul that is separated from worldly pleasures, has renounced misdirected **desires**, and is occupied with devout thoughts and the practice of **contemplation** in its purest form. But through intercourse with its shameful passions the soul discards its robe of self-restraint and debases itself by wearing filthy rags and tatters. The man in the Gospels who was bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness was clothed in a garment woven out of such thoughts and acts; and so the Logos declared him to be unworthy of the divine and **immortal** wedding-feast (cf. Matt. 22:11-13).

[V2] 27 **St Theodoros the Great Ascetic A Century of Spiritual Texts**

54. If like someone with gonorrhoea you lack the strength to break with your impassioned state because it has become chronic, how can you dare, wretched as you are, to touch what even to angels is untouchable? Either shudder with awe and renounce the sacred ministry, in this way propitiating God; or else, obdurate and incorrigible, expect to fall into the hands of the living God and to experience His wrath. God will not spare you out of compassion, but will punish you mercilessly for daring to come to the royal wedding feast with both soul and garment denied, unworthy even of entry, much less of joining in the celebration (cf. Matt. 22 : i2).

[V2] 372 **St Theognostos On the Practice of the Virtues, Contemplation and the Priesthood**

44. He who is afraid of being cast out of the bridal chamber as an interloper (cf. Matt. 22:11-13) should either carry out all God's commandments, or else should strive to fulfill just one of them - **humility**.

[V3] 39 **Ilias the Presbyter A Gnostic Anthology Part 1**

98. The wedding garment about which Christ speaks (cf. Matt. 22:11-12) signifies the grace of the Holy Spirit: the man who is not worthy of wearing it has no part in the celestial marriage and in the spiritual wedding-feast.

[V3] 329 **St Symeon Metaphrastis Paraphrase of the Homilies of St Makarios of Egypt v Love**

St Symeon the New Theologian tells us, 'Restrain the **drawing-in** of breath through your nostrils, so as not to breathe easily'; St John Klimakos says, 'Let mindfulness of Jesus be united to your breathing, and then you will know the blessings of stillness.' St Paul affirms that it is not he who lives but Christ in him (cf. Gal. 2:20), activating him and inspiring him with divine life. And the Lord, taking as an example the blowing of the physical wind, says, 'The Spirit blows where He wishes' (John 3:8). For when we were cleansed through baptism we received in seed-like form the foretaste of the Spirit (cf. 2 Cor. 1:22) and what St James calls the 'implanted Logos' (Jas. 1:21), embedded and as it were consolidated in us through an **unparticipable** participation; and, while keeping Himself inviolate and **undiminished**. He deifies us in His superabundant bounty. But then we neglected the commandments, the guardians of grace, and through this negligence we again fell into the clutches of the passions, filled with the afflatus of the evil spirits instead of the breath of the Holy Spirit.

[V4] 266 **St Gregory of Sinai On Stillness: Fifteen Texts The Beginning of Watchfulness**

When the intellect has been freed in **this** way from the passions we have described and been raised up to God, it will henceforth **live** the life of blessedness, receiving the pledge of the Holy Spirit (cf. 2 Cor. 1:22). And when it departs this life, dispassionate and full of true knowledge, it will stand before the light of the Holy Trinity and with the divine angels will shine in glory through all eternity.

[V2] 339 **St John of Damaskos On the Virtues and the Vices**

78. God, who has promised you eternal blessings (cf. Tit. 1:2) and has given you the pledge of the Spirit in your hearts (cf. 2 Cor. 1:22), has commanded you to pay attention to how you live, so that the inner man may be freed from the passions and begin here and now to enjoy these blessings.

[V2] 110 **St Maximos the Confessor Four Hundred Texts on Love Fourth Century**