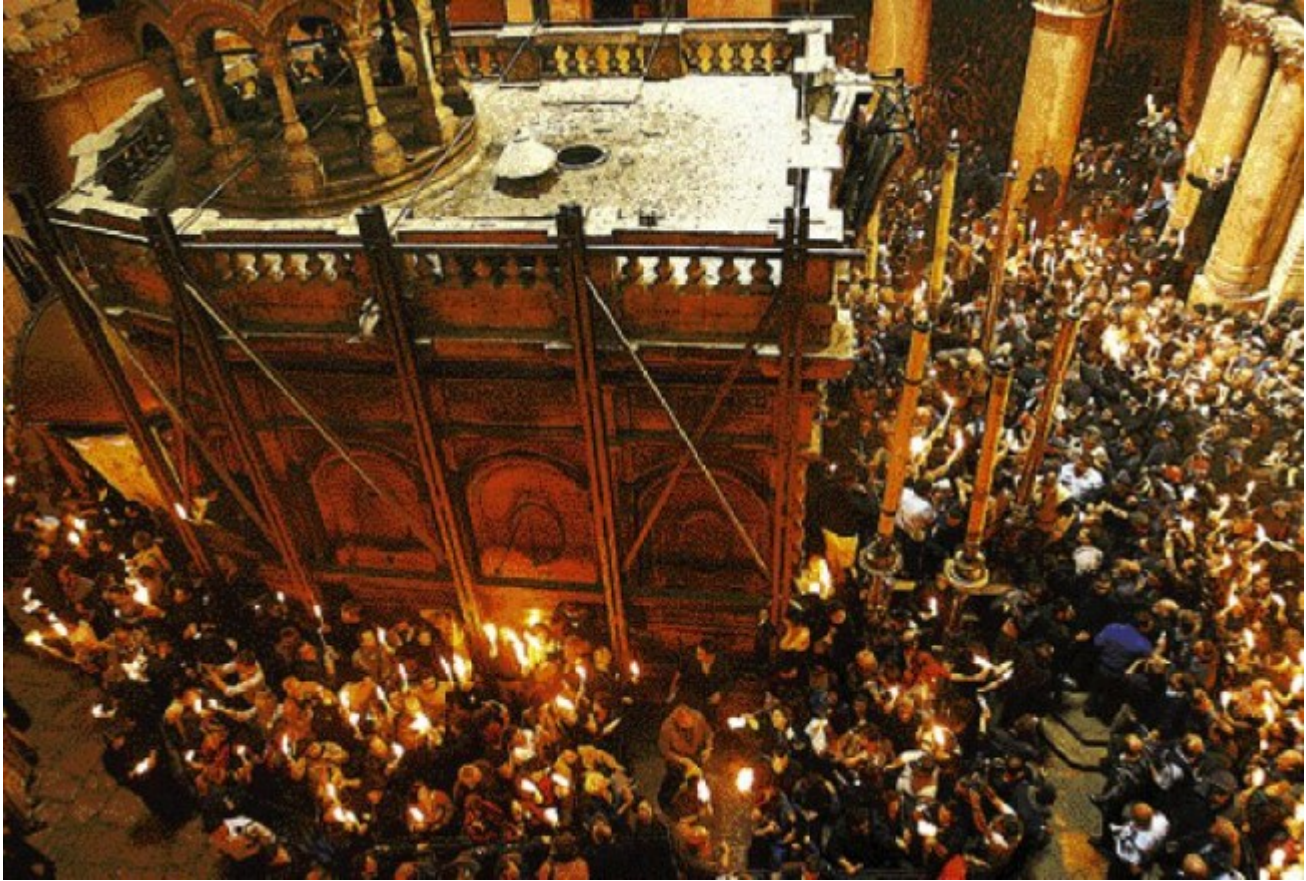


The Holy Flame: the Greatness of the Miracle, and the Helplessness of the Skeptics

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The Holy Edicule after the descent of the Holy Fire

Why do atheists and skeptics want to destroy faith?

During the long history of Christianity, there has never been a single miracle that skeptics and atheists have not tried to disprove. They have used and still use every possible means in this battle. Even St. John Chrysostom talked about those [the chief priests and Pharisees] who denied the miracle of the Resurrection, saying, “But note, I pray thee, their plotting, how ridiculous it is. They [the chief priests and Pharisees] say, ‘Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, “After three days I will rise again”’ (Matthew 27:63). Yet if He were a deceiver, and boastfully spoke falsehood, why are ye afraid, and why do ye rush about, and make such a commotion? They reply, ‘We are afraid that the disciples might steal Him away, and deceive the multitude.’ And yet it has been proved [in the previous paragraph of his homily] that this could in no way happen. Malice, however, is a thing obstinate and shameless, and attempts to do what is foolish” (The Homilies of

St. John Chrysostom on the Gospel of St. Matthew. Homily LXXXIX 2).

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