

How to deal with the crisis in a spiritual manner- 2 (Metropolitan Athanasios of Lemessos)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



Therefore, the prophets were advocating repentance and a return to the Lord's path. When all is said and done, everything is futile; both our well being and our wealth, even the accomplishment of our country's liberation (translator's note: from Turkish occupation) is a secular event. The Lord wishes people firstly to be liberated in themselves and then to live in a liberated country. He wishes to see us being free from sin, passions, apostasy and the darkness which descends on us when He is absent from our lives. Only then will truly liberated people manage to acquire a liberated country. If your country is free, yet you are slave to sin and your passions, then you will cause your country's enslavement and make it as useless as your inner self.



Therefore, we, who are living through this crisis and are experiencing people's anxiety and fear, ought to squeeze the pressure of these events inside our soul and

let it gash out in prayer. The Three Holy Men who found themselves in the furnace of Babylon prayed thus: "We have sinned, we have broken the law, we have done wrong before You". They have taken the blame upon themselves and said that they were worthy of the punishment because they had indeed committed sins, broken the law and did not walk the path which the Lord had shown them. They said that they were responsible for the plight that befell on them. Yet, they prayed: You, who are the Lord of our Fathers and the Lord who loves man and does not wish for his perdition and misery, we beg You to come to our rescue. If You decide to rightly destroy us because of our sins at least spare your people and lead them onto salvation. By praying in this way the Three Holy Men not only survived the furnace but also saved the people.

Therefore, this is the hour of the people of prayer. Thank God, there are numerous such people in the Church. Not only there are people of prayer who are alive nowadays but also people who have passed away. Even the latter pray for us; our Saints, our forefathers, our Fathers who have slept in Christ, are praying so that these hardships come to pass. But most of all they are praying that we come to our senses, correcting our ways and rectifying all the mistakes we have made.

The heart of the one who places his hope on the Lord is not distressed and neither does it panic. Jesus said: *"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me" (John 14, 1)*. Jesus cautions us not to get distressed and feel fear but to have faith in Him, not because nothing bad will happen to us. All designs against us may materialize and even worse ones; even things we cannot imagine possible. Eventually the situation may even get a lot worse. Yet this does not have any impact on the person who believes in God, even though he does feel the pain, he does suffer and feels anxious, because his heart is not troubled. He places his hope on the Lord and is certain that the Lord is watching. Whatever He permits is received with trust and hope in the Almighty Providence of His love. He is not afraid of death since he wins over it through Jesus Christ.

What else are they going to do to us? Will they exterminate us, raising the country to the ground? Let them do what they wish and let them implement their schemes. If the Lord permits it, then so be it. We, as children of God, ought to learn to rise above our fears. Fear is the offspring of faithlessness. Why should we be scared? Let us leave everything unto the hands of the Lord. Will they take all our money, our jobs, our cars, everything we own? This is unpleasant but truth be told it is not important. Can they take over our soul? No. Our soul is our most valuable asset. Everything else is inferior.

Our ancestors have proven this when they had abandoned everything and run for

their lives during the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. Everybody lost everything except for their souls. Thus they were able to rebuild everything from scratch. If one safeguards his soul he is not damaged in any way. Jesus said: *'What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?'* (Matthew 16, 26)

Thus, let us do what we can, without using empty rhetoric but realizing the seriousness of the current situation. We will walk this path, wherever it takes us, placing our faith in the Lord and immersed in fervent prayer. We ought to rise above material things, even above the very same death. No matter how threatened we feel we ought to safeguard the calmness of our souls. In his psalms David says: *'Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God'* (Psalm 42, 5). You ought to believe in God. If God has no power to save you, will you be saved by your money, by your friends in high places, by the banks, by the high and mighty of this world? If God is with you, if He is your recourse and your hope, do not be afraid. No matter what happens the Lord says: "I am with you". If the Lord is with us, who can be against us? No one can take our souls away.

St Kosmas Aitolos was telling the Greeks: "Have faith and do not be afraid. When the Turk asks you to hand over your money, your animals, your houses, your land, do it. But, you must never give away your soul". This is what matters most. When one understands this, then his life gains a new meaning. Sooner or later this life is going to end. It is only a matter of time. We ought to be concerned about the condition of our souls when we hand them over to the hands of the Lord. Will they be free from wrongdoing, or at least cleansed through repentance?

If we live through this present crisis immersed in prayer, placing our hopes in the Lord and giving thanks to Him, then we are optimistic that we will manage to sail through it. No matter what happens we will sail through it. Whatever the Lord permits to happen, not because He is the one who causes it, but because of our sins, we will sail through. This is what the Saints did. As soon as they put their fingers on the cause of the problem they immediately started the treatment. We ought to do what the Saints did rather than blame others and committing the same mistakes.

Let us therefore, support each other in a spirit of love and almsgiving. This is the way to sail through this difficult period. We place our hopes in our Most Holy Lady, our Saints and the prayers of our Fathers. Everything will come to pass and we, more prudent than before, will start on a new path.

(Excerpts from a homily)

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