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‘Every act of violence, religious intolerance or injustice is not merely an insult to humanity, but a sin against our Creator’

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



Address at the start of proceedings at the 10th Dialogue, organized jointly in Jerusalem by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, on the occasion of the 40 years of dialogue between Orthodoxy and Judaism.

Tuesday 5 December 2017

Today, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew opened the proceedings of the 10th Meeting of Dialogue called by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and organized jointly with the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations in the Holy City of Jerusalem. The 10th dialogue is being held on the occasion of the 40 years of dialogue between Orthodoxy and Judaism and has as its theme ‘The Significance of Jerusalem in the Tradition of the Two Religions’.



In his address, the Ecumenical Patriarch noted that Jerusalem 'was, is and will always be more than a city. It is a place of revelation, blessing and inspiration. God chose this blessed city'.

At another point in his speech, the Ecumenical Patriarch noted: 'Since Jerusalem is a locus of divine revelation, a place where the mystery of Christ is witnessed spiritually every day, Christians are linked to this region and, especially, to the Church of the Resurrection. The All-Holy Sepulchre calls upon us to cast off a fear which is perhaps the most widespread in today's world: fear of the other, fear of the different, fear of the supporters of other faiths, other religions or other confessions. In the face of these conditions, the message of this holy place is urgent and clear: love the other, the different, the believers in other religions and confessions. Love them as your brothers and sisters. Hatred leads to death, but 'love casts out fear' (I Jn. 4, 18) and leads to life. This is why everyone should love and respect the sacred places of pilgrimage of this holy city, as a heritage from our ancestors in humanity. We would also like to recognize today the crucial mission of the three largest Christian confessions which are protectors of the All-Holy Tomb, as well as their genuine and fruitful collaboration'.

The Ecumenical Patriarch referred to the importance of the scholarly dialogue which has been taking place over the last 40 years between Orthodoxy and Judaism and which has contributed to mutual respect and common understanding.

'Our dialogue has acquired added significance in a world in which, instead of being recognized as the crown of creation, our brothers and sisters experience the inhuman stigma of discrimination, marginalization and isolation. In such times, as the psalm tells us, God orders us to raise the gates of the Jerusalem of our hearts and to allow the 'King of Glory' to enter. When we fail to see the image of God in our neighbour, we tarnish the image which God bequeathed to us [...]. We've met in Jerusalem in order to bring Jerusalem to the world and to show that humanity really is in the image and likeness of God and that every act of violence, religious intolerance or injustice is not merely an insult to humanity, but a sin against our Creator. On the contrary, this conference demonstrates that our ancient and venerable religions, which have their roots in this land, have committed to a dialogue of love, mercy and justice, all of which are properties of the living God, before Whom we hope to present ourselves. For us today, the dialogue and meeting are the real meaning of Jerusalem'.

At the beginning of the proceedings of the inter-religious meeting, those taking part in the conference were welcomed by Patriarch Theofilos of Jerusalem in a short address. Rabbi Daniel Polish, the head of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, also welcomed the attendees, as did representatives of the Ministries of the Interior of both Israel and Greece.

Earlier, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, accompanied by Metropolitans Emmanuel of France, Cleopas of Sweden and Archimandrite Agathangelos Siskos, the Librarian of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, visited the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, where they were received by Patriarch Theofilos and the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre. Thereafter, accompanied by Patriarch Theofilos, they went on to the Church of the Resurrection, where Patriarch Bartholomew venerated Christ's All-Holy Sepulchre.