

Three mighty destroyers: Envy, Jealousy and Bitterness

Through bitter envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars of the Church have been persecuted. They endured many indignities, sufferings and even death and therefore provide us examples of persevering in Faith through trials and suffering.

Through envy, Peter endured many hardships and suffered martyrdom according to the prophecy foretold by our Lord. Departing to the place of Glory that was due him, he thus fulfilled the words of our Lord "Follow me" which He spoke signifying by what death he should Glorify God. And now is fulfilled that which Isaiah prophesied: He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.

Because of envy, the Apostle Paul Likewise endured many persecutions and was compelled to flee from City to City. And when he was stoned and thought to be dead, he yet preached again in the east and the west before obtaining the final reward of his faith. After teaching righteousness to the whole world he suffered martyrdom at Rome and was thus removed from the world as the Scriptures say: The righteous perish, and no man lays it to heart.

Envy and strife have overthrown great cities and brought down many mighty Nations. Envy and jealousy has alienated husbands wives and changed the saying of Adam – "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." And, regarding Christ; did Pilate not know that it was for envy the Chief Priests had delivered Jesus up to him? For the Scriptures testify, Pilate knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. Do you see Brethren how envy destroys? Who is able to stand before envy?

Do you see how envy and jealousy separated two brothers and led to the murder of the one? For it is written: And it came to pass after certain days that Cain brought of the fruits of the earth a sacrifice unto God; and Abel also brought of the firstlings of his sheep, and of the fat thereof. And God had respect to Abel and to his offerings, but Cain and his sacrifices He did not regard. And Cain said to Abel his brother; Let us go into the field. And it came to pass, while they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

Through envy Jacob fled from the face of Esau his brother. And yet again Jacob fled from Laban who harbored bitterness and envy toward him. Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before but God was with Jacob and blessed all that he had. For God had taken away the cattle of Laban and given them to Jacob.

Envy caused Joseph to be persecuted by his brothers and sold into bondage. Envy compelled Moses to flee from the face of Pharaoh King of Egypt when he heard these words from his fellow-countryman: Who made thee a judge or a ruler over us? wilt thou kill me, as thou didst kill the Egyptian yesterday?

Because of envy, Aaron and Miriam had to make their abode outside the camp. Moreover, envy brought down Dathan and Abiram alive to the pit. Through envy, David himself endured much persecution from King Saul.

Where there is envy and strife; every kind of evil exists so that the worthless rise up against the honored; those of no reputation rise against the renown. The foolish rise against the wise, the young against those advanced in years. For where there is envy and strife exists Righteousness and Peace departs. Those given over to it abandon the fear of God and become blind in their faith. And thus it is fulfilled: Look diligently lest any man fail of the Grace of God; and the root of bitterness spring up, trouble you, and thereby defile. Who is able to stand before envy?

Therefore, I urge you Brethren let all envy, bitterness, jealousy, anger, and evil speaking, be put away from you; And be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ's has forgiven you. Be diligent to walk in the fear of God and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. For where there is envying, and strife every kind of evil is there. Be Holy for He is Holy. Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.