14/02/2021

Uganda: Celebration of Holy Liturgy on the Sunday of the Canaanite Woman presided over by Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga



After the Liturgy, a thanksgiving services was conducted in celebration of the graduation victory of Anna (Aidah) Nantambi who graduated from the School of Law Nkumba Universty . Anna thanked her Mother Church for all the love and care extended to her since her childhood that has seen finally victorious. Glory to God.

THE GREAT FAITH OF A CANAANITE WOMAN – Homily by Metropolitan

Jonah Lwanga

We have come to the Lord's Sunday of the Canaanite woman, appraised by Christ as who held great faith in her soul! (Mt 15:28). It is the 44th Lord's Sunday, in the lessons of the year. Therefore now, we are very close to the period of Triodion, the great Lent. The same passage of today can be studied in connection with that of Evangelist Mark 7:24-30. Evangelist Luke does not save the passage. But Evangelist John has saved a passage (2:1-12, the wedding gospel), which can assist to understand the mystery taking place in that territory of the Canaanite people (Gn 10:15-19). Personally, I relate this lesson always to our obligatory cultivation of Orthodoxy among the African people, as a sharp problem to the Greeks, who are the traditional carriers of Orthodoxy!

As far as we know, the two cities Tyre and Sidon, where Christ the Lord went to rest (for a while), were at the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, Northwest and beyond Cana/an from Nazareth. The Phoenician people in this territory (the Canaanites) originally were Gentiles, but for centuries mixed with the people of Israel. Greeks adopted their Alphabet (11th century BC) from Phoenician people, who were then the most famous navigators on the Mediterranean Sea. Compare Mt 15:22 with Mk 7:26. The Canaanite woman, though of Gentile origin, had received and accepted the faith in Jesus Christ, not frivolous but reasonable faith.

The entire scenario of this Canaanite woman is addressed to us all as believers, and disciples of Christ the Lord. Carefully read again the prayers of the lady and the statements of the Lord. "Master! Son of David! Have mercy upon me! Help me! My daughter (at home) is a demon -possessed and suffering terribly!" (I believe, you have the power to heal her).... But the Lord, although was ready to respond positively to the prayers, wanting to educate us all as believers, He said: "I was sent only to the lost sheep (flock) of Israel... It is not right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs"! (Mt 15:24,26). The Gentile lady spiritually understood the reasoning of the Lord, and instead of being offended unreasonably, she reacted faithfully. "Master! Even the dogs eat crumbs that fall from the table of their master"!

A deep meaning of the above parabolic saying of the Lord must be educed from the Spirit of Christ (2 Cor 3:17-18. Gal 4:6), in the mission of saving the whole human face, through the people of Israel. For the gifts of grace, that brought on earth through the enfleshment of the Word of God in Jesus Christ, are destined not only for Old Israel, but also for the New Israel that comes from the Gentiles! (Gal 3:28. Col 3:11). Certainly, the Gentiles (Africans too) can share and participate in the

Kingdom of God, but under presupposition of faith, beyond idols! (2 Cor 6:16-7:1).

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