

Romanos Melodos Kontakion 26 On the Resurrection of Lazarus (I)

You stood at the tomb of Lazarus, Lord
and him four days [dead] from the dead you raised up,
enchaining Hades, mighty one;
Mary's and Martha's tears you pitied,
you said to them, "He will arise,
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

1 Gazing at the tomb and those in the tomb we weep,
but we ought not; for we know both whence they have gone
and where they are going now and who holds them.
They have gone from their temporary life, shedding its toils;
they are going to their rest, expecting divine illumination;
the lover of mankind holds them after stripping off their temporary garment,
that he may put on their eternal body.
Why then in vain do we mourn?
Why do we not believe in Christ saying
"He who believes in me will not die
even if he sees decay, but after decay he will arise,
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

2 He who believes always can accomplish what he wishes,
when he possesses faith having power over all things
through which from Christ he has power over what he seeks.
For faith is a great possession, having which a man is powerful over everything;
both Mary and Martha had this and boasted of it,
and when they saw their faithful brother Lazarus ailing,
they sent this [message] to the creator:
"Hurry, they said, master,
behind he whom you love is ill,
but come quickly and he will be saved
for if you show your face, he will arise,
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

3 By the faith of the women summoned, he comes
the voluntary physician of souls and of bodies
calling right away to his friends,
"Get up, let us go to Judaea where we were before;
for I have received a letter which I read with joy;
for faith dictated it, and infallible faith wrote it,
and love sealed it.
Why do I conceal what has happened?
Martha and Mary faithfully
have asked me [a favor] on account of Lazarus
because now he is weak; if, then, I stand over him, he will arise
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

4 Having said these things he who understands all
thoughts then waited two days
in the place where he was, as the scripture says.
He waited so that the belief of those who loved him would be made plain,
for Martha, Lazarus, and Mary loved the lord
not at some times and not at other times, but always, they all abided
in quiet times and in distress.
Seeing, therefore, their disposition thus
growing stronger Christ
saved one of the women and crowned the other;
for concerning Lazarus he had said to them "He will arise,
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

5 But perhaps you say, "Reveal which he crowned
and which he saved; for we know that Lazarus
from the hand of Hades Christ snatched away."
Mary it was, as scripture says, whom he saved from seven demons,
the one who also anointed with myrrh the giver of spices,
and wiped off with her hair the feet that cleanse the whole person
from the stain of the trickster.
At that time he crowned Martha
when with love she served them,
her weeping he also encouraged
about her brother, saying to her, "He will arise,
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

6 Again the Lord to his disciples said:
Behold now Lazarus our friend has gone to sleep,
and I want to go back to wake him up."
But they did not know that the redeemer was calling death sleep;
then if indeed Paul were there, he would have understand the Word's word;
for having been taught by him, he sent to his churches
saying the dead were sleeping.
For who dies who loves Christ?
How does the one who partakes of him fall?
The mystery has a phylactery
in the spirit. Therefore if he does decay, he will arise
he will rise saying "You are life and resurrection."

7 So when they knew that the Lord called
death sleep for he had spoken to them openly
"I am going hereafter to wake him up,"
they likely nodded at each other conversing with their hands and head:
"Wonder before wonder we are seeing, because of this we are also afraid;
for he did not learn what he said, that Lazarus has died, but [that] he was ill,
and he says in advance what we are going to see."
Fear, amazement, and consternation.
Some said that he was a mere man,
and did not feel shame before his power,

because he will say the word and at once the spoiled will arise,
he will rise saying "You are life and resurrection."

8 Jesus goes to Judaea now in body
for in divinity he embraces always and occupies
the world and those of the world like poor little locusts.
He has come, then, he who fills all, into Bethany to accomplish divine things;
then, when he heard the sound of his feet
to Death whispered: "What feet are these, Death,
that trample on my head?
Oh my, probably Jesus is approaching,
he has come back to demand payment of us;
he is escaping then, just as before
the widow's son, and now Lazarus. He will arise
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection.

9 Victorious Death, unconquerable, listen to
Hades your friend, and give up those toils;
do not bring me sustenance, for I cannot digest it.
you bring me bound corpses, and as soon as I gulp them down I vomit.
I rejoice and take up the buried, but I do not keep the rotted;
I pay back those within me and am robbed of those you have prepared for me,
so why are you disturbing yourself in vain?
Stop, hold back, Death;
make the one from Nazareth your friend,
subject yourself thinking carefully
that the four days dead man in a short while will arise
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

10 When he heard these things, Death gnashed his teeth,
then he screamed and angrily said to Hades,
"As if without share of evils you advise me well,
admonish your belly which you have not filled up until now;
for I am worn out carrying for you, and you never said 'I have enough,'
but you stretch out like the sea, receiving rivers of the dying
and not ever getting your fill.
So why do you say these things to me?
First learn what you are teaching me
both keep quiet and behave yourself;
for he whom you have within in one moment will arise
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection.

11 The life of mortals seemed water to you always,
therefore you widened yourself out and did not stop always drinking;
be satisfied then, do not make yourself full.
For the feet whose sound you hear, as I see it, are of one threatening,
the strides of one rebuking, very angry with you,
approaching the tomb, kicking down your gates
and searching through your innards.

What's more he has come to clean you out;
you have need of him because you are all swelled out.
You will be lightened if Lazarus,
emptied out from your insides, will arise
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

12 "You speak filthy shameful words to me
Hades your friend, and seeing these evils you rejoice;
but I weep for myself because of them,
I see the limbs of Lazarus - the very ones that decay had sundered -
expecting to arise. They practice being fitted together,
because they creep like ants, since the worms have departed
and the foul odor has left them.

Oh my, truly Jesus has come,
he who, sending the stench towards us,
has made the stinking one smell fragrant,
and in future the one who was rotted and ashen will arise,
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

13 So when Death heard these things he screamed,
and then he ran, grabbing Hades by the hand,
and together they gaze upon monstrous and horrible things:
the odor of the son of God passes through his friend,
making his body ready for the summons of the giver of life
arranging his hair, weaving his membranes,
and putting together his viscera,
extending all his veins,
sending blood into them again,
mending his arteries,
so that Lazarus, ready when he is called, will arise
he will rise saying "You are life and resurrection."

14 As soon as Hades and Death see all
these things happening, in suffering they say to each other,
"No longer will our affairs be evident or prevail;
the tomb has become like a dye changing decay into life;
the tomb is reckoned a thread and whoever wants cuts it without tiring,
and takes away whomever he wants: brother, son or daughter,
and the earthlings laugh at us.
Slave together with free,
if someone wants, he plunders us;
whether from heaven or from earth,
he will speak one word and straightway the decayed will arise,
he will arise saying You are life and resurrection.

15 From earth once came Elijah, a man,
and as he wanted to raise up the widow's son,
he offered through us payment for what he ate.
He used up the poor woman's sustenance, but we paid the price.

The prophet was fed, but Death was twisted up
with Hades when asked to return the little boy that
the weeping and prayers of the hungry had sent to death.
Because all the land had been destroyed
by hunger, by thirst, for there was no rain.
The unmarried man bringing joy
to the widow says: "You seek your son? He will arise,
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

16 The new defeat made us forget our ancient calamity,
and henceforth Elijah as nothing
along with Elisha has gone from us.
The welts of the injuries they inflicted are found on our skin,
especially those of Elisha who accomplished great works;
when alive he raised up a dead person and after he died he snatched from death
the corpse thrown on top of him.
This confirmed for everyone
that of the faithful not one dies,
but he will live, especially when
he is attached to the bodies of the holy, he will arise
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

17 So they spoke all these things, sighing
and in distress over the raising of the dead man,
wailing over each other and all their possessions.
But the creator took hold of the tomb of the dead man on whose behalf he was present,
after having asked - as if he needed to - where Lazarus had been laid.
He asked in pretend ignorance, he who made mankind with his hand,
"Where does Lazarus lie?" he said;
He wants to learn what he knows,
just as he said before, "Where are you, Adam?"
thus he said, "Where is Lazarus?"
he who a little before said to Martha "He will arise,
he will rise saying You are life and resurrection."

18 Lord on high, compassionate father of the humble,
who from the tomb as from a seat raised up
Lazarus once bringing to life with your voice,
allow those who were before us to see your joyful face,
grant also to us to live through present time in peace
and an end that is pleasing to you, so that both living and dying
we may be guided by your will.
Nod, command, lord,
speak, be willing to save us.
For you will not destroy the one who loves you,
but you rule him living and summon him dead, and he will arise,
he will rise saying "You are life and resurrection."