



St Ephraim the Syrian - the time is near !

Categories : [Holy Fathers](#)

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"Lift your eyes to heaven when it, like a clean mirror, gloriously illumines the earth with its stars, and say in awe: if the stars shine with such glory, then how much more so will the righteous and the saints who have done the holy will of God shine with the inexpressible light of saving glory when the Lord comes?"

Having called to remembrance that awesome coming, shudder in body and soul, and with heartfelt agony say to yourself: what sort of person will I, a sinner, show myself to be in that terrible hour? How will I stand before the throne of the awesome Judge? How could I who am dissolute have a place among those who are perfect? Or how could I, who am a goat, stand among the sheep at Christ's right hand? Or how could I, who am fruitless, be numbered among the saints, who have here brought forth the fruits of truth?

The martyrs will show their torments, the ascetics their good works; but what will I have to show but my apathy and my incessant indulgence?

O sinful soul, shameless soul, O soul which has always hated the God-pleasing way of life! How long will you delight in your wretched addiction to evil thoughts? What do you wait for in your apathy?

Do you think that the Judge will be late in coming? He will not tarry, rather, His coming will be like terrible lightning from the heavens. Try to be prepared for that terrible hour, that you might not then weep unto the ages."

St Ephraim warns us - the time is near - it is the time to do the work of God and to turn away from sin. When will even we Christians start to listen? We can see the signs of the times - but we still do not want to change our habits. We still want to live for the body, instead of for the soul. We still are more interested in preserving our wealth than in almsgiving, in furthering our career than in learning prayer. We are more interested in entertaining ourselves than in studying the Law of God. We would rather fill our stomachs and laugh loudly at meaningless shows than see His wisdom, see the noble beauty of all He has given us. From where do we image these i-Pads, mobile phones and TVs have come? Who inspired them?

The world demands much of us, and it is true - we are obliged to give it something...but let us give Ceasar no more than what is necessary, and let us understand at which point Ceasar's demands become unreasonable! He has no right to have our soul, our heart! Let us be zealous, let us struggle to give this part to God only - save it, unadulterated - and offer it to the Bridegroom of our



soul!