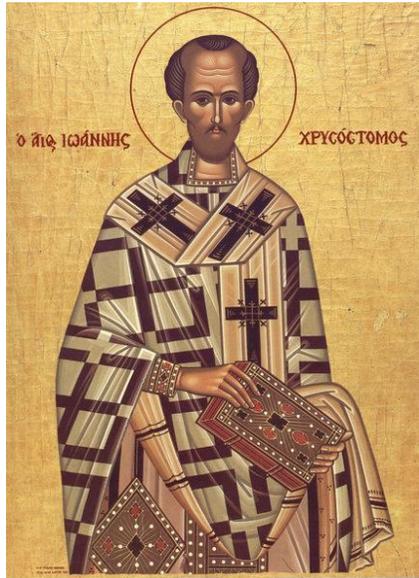


THE FIRST HOMILIES ON GENESIS

(Excerpts from the Book The former Homilies on Genesis by St. John Chrysostom)

Ro version: <http://www.hexaimeron.ro/Hexaimeron/SfloanGuradeAur.html>



In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.

You should stay on this foundation: let not someone drives you into the disorder of human thoughts – because the thoughts of mortals are afraid, and their minds with carelessness (Solomon Wisdom 9:14). So, do not abandon let the strong foundation to entrust the salvation of your soul to rottenness and inconstancy, but stay fast into ones you have learned and were convinced, and say: "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth." Even if the Manichaeans come to you, even if Marcion comes, even if those who suffer the disease of Valentin (Marcion and Valentin - outstanding figures of Gnosticism), if anyone would come, you should put this word against them; even if you see them laughing, you should weep for them, as for fools. They are yellow in color, have gone eyebrow (they are humble in appearance) and gentle in words. Run, but, far from bait and know the wolf in sheep's hide. Even more to be hated for you because to you, the fellow-servant with him, shows good and gentle, and to the Lord of us all, is more wild than rabid dogs, seeking to show that in heaven there is a merciless war and unrelenting struggle, and that the scales with God also draws some contrary power. Run away from the cunning poison, hate those dangerous cures; and if you received as inheritance from your parents and teaching the faith from the divine Scriptures, "observe the latter undamaged".

"In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth." "What do you mean? At first the heaven, then earth? First the roof, and then the floor? " God is not subject to any necessities (overriding any) of the flesh, nor is any ordinance slave trade: for the will of God is creator and craftsman of the nature and craftsmanship, and of all those who are.

And the earth was without form, and void

Why shows Moses us the heaven brought into being ready and complete, while about the earth he tells us how God created it gradually?" Because knowing His power from the sort committed with the better element to trust that He could also do the same with the earth: but for you and your salvation He did not do that. "How that, for me and for my salvation?" Table and home and community nourishing mother of all is the earth, and the city, and the tomb of the congregation: because from it are taken our bodies and our food, and we live on it, and after death we return back in it. So, lest you because the

land is so useful to get overly excited and the plenty of well dons to harm you to fall into heathendom, He shows it to you, before come into being, without image and void, so that seeing his inability to be amazed by the One who brought it into being and put in it all the power I have spoken – to glorify Him who has prepared so much to make us reliefs. And God is glorified not only by right dogmas but also by high behavior - because the Scripture says: "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16).

And God said: Let us make man in our image and after our likeness

The first thing that should be expounded here is why when the heaven came into being nowhere says: Let us make it, but: "Let there be heaven, Let there be light", and so on for each of the parts of creation; and here is used only the word: let us make, which shows an exhortation to someone of the same honor. So who is the one going to be made and enjoyed so much honor? The man, the great and wonderful and precious to God than all creation, for which are heaven and earth, the sea and the rest of the body (assembly) of creation; the man, for whose salvation God was so in love, so that He spare not even His One Begotten for him: that He did not cease, making and working all of them, until, ascending it, put him to His right side. And Paul cries, saying: "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6).

Counseling is not because God would need to advise – let not be so! - but to show by the way of speaking the honor given to us. "And why", ask some, "if he is more valuable than the whole world, was brought into being after the world?" Just because of this, that he is more valuable than the whole world: because, when the emperor has to go to a certain city, the army chiefs and princes and all the guardians and servants go before, preparing the royal house and all the service need to receive the emperor with great honor: that just as well here. Before the man that before an emperor went the sun, went the heaven, went the light, all were made and were adorned: and then was brought him with great honor. "Let us make man in our image". Let the Jew hear this. To whom says God: "Let us make man"? Moses wrote this - Moses, which they say, falsely, that they believe him. And to convince yourself that they lie and do not believe, listen to how Christ rebuked them and says: "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me" (John 5:46). Now, they have the books and we have the treasure of the books; they have the letters, we have both the letters and meanings. To whom, tell me, said He: "Let us make man"? "Towards an angel or an archangel" says the Jew. Like the slaves worthy of whips that master held accountable and, having no real justification as response, pour everything they think of, so you should spoke: "Towards the angel and archangel said you." Which angel? Which archangel? It is not to the angels to make nor to the archangels to think those. But why, then, when He made the heaven, He did not command to the angel and archangel, but brought him Himself into being, and when He brought into being the living one more precious than the heaven and the whole world – the man - takes the slaves as sharers to creation?

It is not so, not: for the angels deserve to be on there, not to make; the archangels ought to serve, not to take part in the mind and counsel of the Godhead. Listen to what Isaiah says about the powers of the seraphim, which are above the archangels: "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up... above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face" – i.e. they covered their views because they could not endure the radiance which started from His throne. What do you say? The seraphims stood around Him with such wonder and surprise, and that seeing an indulgence of God, and some angels are partakers both to His thought and advising? But what sense would it make?

And then, who is the one saying: "Let us make man"? The Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace: God's own Son begotten. So to Him it was said: "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness" – because He did not say: in My and Thy image, or: Thine and Ours, but: in Our image, thereby showing that it is same image and the same likeness: and God and angels do not have the same face, nor the same likeness. For how could the Lord and the servants have the same image and same likeness? So, anyway we take it, your words are ashamed. And here, moreover, it is about the image of the dominion, as shows following of the verse - for

saying: in the image and likeness, added: "have dominion over the fish of the sea", and God's dominion is not the same dominion as the angels': as such, how could the Master and the slaves have the same authority, the servants, and one who commands?

But there are also others that hit in us, saying that God has an image like ours, thinking their words in the wrong way: that here it not refers to the image of nature, but the image of domination, as we should show from the following of the verse. And to convince yourself that the divine has no human image, listen to what Paul says: "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels." (I Corinthians 11:7, 10). If he would called here image the lack of distinction between his appearance and God's, man is called the image of God because God would have human appearance. So, according to those, not only man had to be named image, but the woman too: because man and woman have the same appearance and same likeness. So, why man is called the image of God, and woman not?

Because it is not about the image of appearance, but the image of dominion - which is only of man, but not of woman: because the man is subject to nobody and the woman is below man, as God says: "And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Genesis 3:16). As such, man is the image of God because he has no one above, as God has no one above, for He rules over all; and the woman is the glory of man as his subject. And again elsewhere says: "We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." (Acts 17:29).

Here's what he means: "The Divine is above not only than the seen appearances, but no mind should be able to imagine what God is like." So, how could God have human appearance, since Paul says that is no mind in any condition to imagine the being of God? Since our appearance, we all could easily imagine with thought...