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The Family of Alexandria Seminary College Graduates
Pope Cyril The Pillar of Faith Center for Theological Studies

In the Name of the Holy Trinity, One God Amen.

“Certainty of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection” Course

The fourth lecture

Why crucifixion and redemption? - Father Marcos Daoud

Why Crucifixion and Redemption?

By the grace of God, we will speak today about why crucifixion and redemption. We can't start our talk without mentioning the beginning of the story and realizing that man was afflicted by a kind of corruption or a problem. When man fell, he died. Hence, death and corruption entered into the world and to the human nature, and no one can deny this fact. I remember a conversation that took place between me and a non-Christian person in certain circumstances, but he was a good scholar and researcher. We talked about the fall of man and his need for salvation. He told me the story was different in his book (his religion). I said, "Let aside this story for me and you. Do you deny that man dies and that he sins?" He replied, "No." I asked, "Did God create us in this state? If He created us this way, then it is His problem." When we buy a new device, it is supposed to work in a specific way. However, if it worked in a different way, we say it is not good for use and send it back to the warranty, either to be repaired or to be replaced. Otherwise, we look for a different type without a manufacturing defect, so to speak. Hence, there was the salvation plan. The Old Testament was a preparation for salvation to end up with the incarnation and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Today, we will focus more on why crucifixion, the Holy Cross, and redemption?

First: “Why the Redemption?”

1) For His Love for His Creation (Mankind):

* The Holy Cross is a pinnacle demonstration of God’s love to mankind. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* (John 3:16) This verse refers to the Holy Cross and the whole redemptive work. Yet, its summit is that the Lord accepts to suffer and die. He is Life, yet He accepts to die in order to give us life.

St. Paul, the apostle, says in his epistle to the Romans, *“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* (Romans 5:6-8) The summit of God’s demonstration of His love for mankind is that He accepts to die for the sake of His creation. Therefore, the spiritual implementing of this talk is that doctrine is not mere thoughts or rational words; but in fact, we live it and apply it. Hence, any of our life issues must be based on the faith we live, not just based on something rational. Thus, when we look at the Holy Cross, we see God’s perfect love for us. This phrase is very applicable, practical, and spiritual as well. That’s why the essence of Fr. Bishoy Kamel’s sermons was about the Holy Cross. He has many booklets about the dynamics of the Holy Cross such as “Under the feet of the Holy Cross”. The Holy Cross always occupied his personal life and his teaching.

2) For Reconciliation Between Man and God:

* Through the Holy Cross, reconciliation was accomplished between God and mankind. St. Paul, the apostle, says in his epistle to the Ephesians, *“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who*

were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.” (Ephesians 2:13-18) Hence, by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ that was shed on the Holy Cross, our state changed from being far off to being near. Then, reconciliation between God and man took place after being separated because man made the wrong choice to disobey God and walk in the opposite direction.

* For He Himself is our peace: we believe in One person. Christianity revolves around the personality of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Trinity. However, we saw the Father in our Lord Jesus Christ who sent us His Holy Spirit proceeding from Him. Hence, He is our peace.

* St. Paul, the apostle, says as well, “*For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*” (1 Corinthians 5:7) Our feast and salvation is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as we say in church, “*For You are the life of us all, the salvation of us all, the hope of us all, the healing of us all, and the resurrection of us all.*” In His person, there is salvation. Through our unity with Him, this salvation was fulfilled, and we became alive in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is good to see our faith through the prayers and liturgies of the church.

* Therefore, “*in Jesus Christ*” was a main focus in the mind of St. Paul, the apostle. It was repeated many times in many of his epistles; especially, in the epistle to the Ephesians, in Chapter 1, it was repeated 14 times.

* “*No one comes to the Father except through Me.*” Our Lord Jesus Christ did this when He bought us by His blood, which He shed on the Holy Cross, and accomplished the reconciliation. Thus, we begin the Holy Liturgy by the prayer of the ‘Anaphora’ and the Prayer of Reconciliation that has the story from the beginning. “*O God, the Great, the Eternal, who formed man in incorruption; and death, which entered into the world through the envy of the devil, You have destroyed by the life-giving manifestation of Your only-begotten Son...*”

3) To Obey the Father:

An important point about the Holy Cross is that the Cross was obedience to God, the Father. The first sin was disobedience, so obedience was a must to reverse disobedience. Therefore, there are many verses about our Lord Jesus Christ's obedience, who became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. *"Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."* (Philippians 2: 6,7) This verse is considered an ecclesiastical/liturgical hymn, which is prayed in the church such as in *"Amen. Amen. Amen. Your Death, O Lord, we proclaim;"*

* *"Became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross"*: This verse indicates the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. With His incarnation, He offered Himself, accepts death, and defeated it by the Resurrection. The view that this verse clarifies is that the death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross is an obedience against the disobedience that Adam fell into.

* In the epistle to the Hebrews, St. Paul, the apostle, says, *"Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,"* (Hebrews 5:7)

✠ **Question: Was Our Lord Jesus Christ Heard or Not?**

* Although He died on the Cross and He prayed to the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane to take away the cup of sufferings and crucifixion, yet He was heard. That happened when He said to the Father, *"Not My will, but Yours, be done."* He also saved Him from death by His Resurrection.

Therefore, the spiritual and practical application for us from this all is that we accept death for Him. *"For Your sake we are killed all day long."* We might ask for healing or something else, yet God doesn't allow it. Yet, we are confident that God hears us and that He will give us resurrection. God allowed Him to die, but He defeated death by His Resurrection. Therefore, the cross has no meaning without resurrection and there's no resurrection

without the cross. Even the ritual cross, which we use in the church's processions, it must have our Lord Jesus Christ crucified on one side and risen from the dead on the other side. There's no separation between the crucified Christ and the risen Christ. *"And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by God as High Priest 'according to the order of Melchizedek,' "* (Hebrews 5:9,10)

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2)

"For the joy that was set before Him": Hence, the Cross wasn't just pain, but also the delight of obeying the Father. It was the delight to restore humanity, the redeemed ones to Him, and the delight to fulfill the Father's will.

* This touches us spiritually: as we hear and speak about faith and doctrine, it establishes our proper spiritual life at the same time. Our role is to rejoice even during hardships, because we find that our Lord Jesus Christ is with us. As we had noticed previously the commemoration of the martyrdom of St. Perpetua (several days ago), we learned about her chastity and how she was careful not to allow her body to be naked in front of the beasts. However, there is an amusing story that was not written in the Synaxarion. St. Perpetua's maidservant was pregnant, and they were going to martyrdom together. However, the Roman law prohibited a pregnant woman to be executed, but the maidservant wanted to be martyred with the Christians and St. Perpetua. She prayed to the Lord to give birth, and indeed she had labor pain in the eighth month of her pregnancy. It is said that giving birth in the eighth month of pregnancy is very painful. She began to scream in pain, and one of the guards said to her, "If you cry out from the labor pain, how will you bear the pain when you are thrown to the beasts?!" She replied, "The current pain is only mine, but when I am thrown to the beasts, this pain will become for the sake of my Lord Jesus Christ who is with me."

* Therefore, we believe that when a person accepts to carry the cross in his life, he comes out of himself and finds the Lord Jesus Christ with him during his distress. He then enjoys the Lord Jesus Christ who is with him and enjoys the resurrection that is after the cross.

4) To Offer Himself as a Sacrifice to Pay the Debt and to Lift the Curse:

* *“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.” (Hebrews 10:4-5)*

After the fall of man, death has entered into the world. Our Lord Jesus Christ came to offer Himself as a sacrifice for us and to remove from us the sentence of death and debt. St. Athanasius, the Apostolic, clarified this in his writings, as well as St. Paul, the apostle, in his epistle to the Hebrews. St. Paul explained in his epistle, who is the Lord Jesus Christ, who has fulfilled all what was written in the Old Testament, and who fulfilled the redemption. Thus, we read and understand the Old Testament, which refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior, who came to fulfill our redemption.

* *“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.” (Hebrews 10:4-5)*

Our Lord Jesus Christ took flesh to offer it as a sacrifice on the Holy Cross. The Cross was the means by which He offered His body, which He took from the Holy Virgin St. Mary and the Holy Spirit, to be sacrificed on the Cross. It is to be noted that this verse is taken from the Septuagint text and not the Hebrew text of the book of the Psalms, which says, *“But a body You have prepared for Me.”*

* *“He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” (Hebrews 9:26)*

Our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified to offer Himself as a sacrifice for us.

* **St. Athanasius the Apostolic said in his book “The Incarnation of the Logos”:** *“But since what was required from all still had to be rendered (... it was absolutely necessary to die and for this, in particular, He sojourned amongst us), for this reason, after the demonstrations of His divinity from His works, He now offered the sacrifice on behalf of all, delivering His own temple to death in the stead of all,*

First: *to make all not liable to and free from the ancient transgression*
Second: *to show Himself superior to death, displaying His own body as incorruptible, the first fruits of the universal resurrection.*”

* **Why the Redemption and What is its Purpose?** To pay the debt that we owe and the death that we deserved.

* *“To be the first fruits of the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep”:* He was the first to defeat death. Although there were others who were raised before Him, they were not raised by their own power, but someone else had raised them up, and they died again. As for Him, He was resurrected by His own power, defeated death, and *sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

* *“Displaying His own body”:* He said His own body, which He took from the Holy Virgin St. Mary. His own personal body that was not only like us in its human nature of sin but also that it was not an assumption of an already existing human body. Nestorius said in his heresy, “There was a man named Jesus and the Son assumed him.” This means that He did not take a body outside of Himself. As if, there was a man who the Son assumed or united with or dwelled in him. However, He was a body that was taken of the Holy Spirit and of the Holy Virgin St. Mary. This is what we call the hypostatic union, which does not mean that two people have united but that the hypostasis of the Son united with the human body.

* **St. Cyril the Great** says: *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, for no other purpose than to be able to endure death in this body. Thus, He will defeat the principalities and the authorities and destroys him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. He abolishes corruption and expels sin which reigned over us. He breaks the ancient curse that afflicted the human nature in Adam as the firstborn of our race and the first origin.”*

* *“To be able to endure death in this body”:* as we said in the verse: *“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.”* He took this body to endure death with it. As Bishop Moussa says, “Our Lord Jesus Christ was born crucified.” He has accepted the Cross since birth. He had no place in the house and the only place that received Him was

a manger for the animals. He came to the Cross and said, *“But for this purpose I came to this hour.”*

* *“He destroys him who had the power of death, that is, the devil”*: this part is taken from Hebrews 2:14-15. *“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” “He abolishes corruption and expels sin which reigned over us. He breaks the ancient curse that afflicted the human nature in Adam as the firstborn of our race and the first origin.”*

* *“As the firstborn of our race and the first origin”*: He gives us a new beginning and becomes our firstborn from the dead. On the last day, our bodies will be luminous when they are resurrected and will have new luminous nature. However, they are our same bodies despite the different nature as the Holy Bible likened it to us as a grain or a seed.

* *“But someone will say, “How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?” Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain.” (1 Corinthians 15: 35-37)* As a date seed that is placed in the ground, although it is a very small seed, it produces a large tree. Do we deny that this seed produced this tree?! Of course not. Even though this tree came out of this small seed, this tree has its own shape including branches, fruits and leaves, while the seed has a unique shape.

* There is another example from nature. The caterpillar that turns into a butterfly. Can we deny that the caterpillar is the butterfly?! Of course not. Although the caterpillar is the butterfly, the caterpillar crawls slowly, while the butterfly flies in the sky. Likewise, the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, who had died, is the same body that was raised and glorified as we also wait for that. That is why the verse says, *“Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (John 5:28-29).*

This verse speaks about the resurrection of the body. Our Lord Jesus Christ took our nature, without sin. There is a rule that says, (What is not taken cannot be redeemed). It was necessary for our Lord Jesus Christ to take our entire nature, except sin. There are heretics who claimed that our Lord Jesus Christ did not take our entire nature as Apollinaris, who said that our Lord Jesus Christ did not have a human soul. He also said that the soul that was inside Him was the Spirit of God. Therefore, the answer to this idea was: if our Lord Jesus Christ did not take our entire nature, then all of our nature is not redeemed, based on the previous rule.

* As for the verse that says, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.”* (John 5: 25) This verse is about repentance. ‘Now’ is the hour of repentance. ‘The dead’ in sin ‘will hear the voice of the Son of God’ calling for repentance ‘and those who hear will live.’

Second: Redemption for Everyone who Believes:

* How can the redemption that our Lord Jesus Christ offered cover everyone who believes in every place, at all times, and in every era? We definitely know that the desire of God’s heart is to save the whole world. (God *desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*, but not everyone accepted.) However, how could the crucifixion and redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Holy Cross as one person be sufficient for all mankind, *the one for all*?

* *“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”* (John 1:29) Takes away the sin of the whole world.

* *“So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.”* (Hebrews 9:28) ‘Many’ indicates from Adam to the end of ages. ‘To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear’ indicates that the condition is for the believers, who accepted Him only.

* *“Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.” (Isaiah 53:10)* Here, I remember when I saw a recorded video for a Jewish man saying that his family taught him not to read the Christian books. However, at one point, his curiosity made him read. He started to read about our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament, and he noticed that what he read about the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ is entirely found in the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 53. Thus, he realized that He is the awaited Messiah. Hence, he became Christian and preached about our Lord Jesus Christ.

* *“Make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed”*: This seed is from all peoples, all tribes, all nations and all tongues.

* *“For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)* He ‘died for all, then all died’, hence, He is a representative of all. He died to save and redeem everyone because He is capable of that.

* **The One for All:**

St. Cyril the Great explains to us how the death of our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient for all mankind. He says: *"The One Lamb had died for the sake of all to save all the earthly flock for God, the Father. The One for the sake of all, so that all may submit to God. The One for the sake of all to win them all; so that later, all ‘should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.’ While we were still sinners, we were sold to death and corruption, but the Father gave His Son as a ransom for us. The One for all because all are in Him and He is more honorable than all. The One died for the sake of all, that all could live in Him. For when death swallowed up the sacrificed lamb for the sake of all, it vomited everyone with Him and into Him. We all were in our Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sake and because of us had died and rose also."*

The fathers used verses from the Holy Bible without quoting them in their talks. Their words were of their satiation with the words of the Gospel. This is a lesson for us that our words should be from the Gospel and our mind as the mind of Christ.

* **St. Ephraim the Syrian** spoke about that subject also saying, *“When life met with death, at that moment death perished. Just like when light meets with darkness, the darkness perishes away in the presence of light. We never noticed before the presence of some dark area beside the light because light demolishes darkness.”*

* How can the salvation of Christ exist until now? What makes His salvation which was done 2000 years ago work with us until today? How does it affect us?

In baptism, we are united with Him and become members of His body and flesh of His bones. Thus, the idea of *‘in Jesus Christ’* is very essential. We receive our salvation through uniting with Him. Therefore, baptism gave us union with Christ, and Eucharist gives us steadfastness in Him. *“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him.”*

* With a difference in analogy, but for example, a membership card represents baptism, and partaking of the Holy Sacraments represent using that membership in an easy and natural way. Being a member of that place.

* **St. Cyril the Great** said, *“While you see in the One who was nailed on the cross just a visible person... we see in Him, the Logos, who is from God the Father, and has become incarnate.”*

* **Why is There One Redemption that Redeems All?**

Because He is the eternal and immeasurable. *“While you see in the One who was nailed on the cross just a visible person... we see in Him, the Logos, who is from God the Father, and has become incarnate.”* (St. Cyril the Great)
He is the eternal Son who is from God the Father and has become incarnate.

Third: How Can God Accept Death in His Soul?

* *‘He who lives, and was dead’*: In the Syrian Fraction prayer, *“Thus truly the Logos of God suffered in the flesh, was slain, bowed on the Cross, and His Soul parted from His body, even though His divinity never parted, either from His soul or from His body.”* He died in the flesh; this means that His soul parted from His body like any person. However, His divinity never parted from His soul or from His body.

* Bishop Raphael gave an example to explain this. If you cut a paper into two halves this is like any person's death, the soul is separated from the body. However, if you put the paper in water that it would be totally immersed, when it is cut, every part will be full of water. (This explains the divinity)

* The Book of Revelation also clarifies:

"And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death." (Revelation 1:17-18)

'He who lives, and was dead': St. Cyril the Great says, "How can it be said that He, who is life, is dead? It was that He endured death in His own body in order to revive it anew, thus, truly showing that He is Life." ('His own body' emphasizes the hypostatic union.)

* St. Cyril the Great also says:

"The Logos was alive even when His Holy body tasted death. This happened to overcome death, to trample on corruption, and the power of resurrection extends to the rest of the human race."

* *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22)*

Fourth: Why the Cross?

St. Athanasius said in his book "On the Incarnation", 'Why the Cross?' for many reasons:

1) Without Illness:

"Why, then, one might ask, if it was necessary for Him (our Lord Jesus Christ) to deliver the body to death on behalf of all, did He not lay it aside privately (on the deathbed or in a special place), as a human being, instead of going so far as to be crucified? For it would have been more fitting for Him to have laid His body aside honorably, than to endure such a death with ignominy.

Consider again whether such an objection is not human, whereas what was done by the Savior is truly divine and worthy of His Divinity for many reasons. First, because the death which befalls human beings comes to them according to the weakness of their own nature, for not being able to remain for long, in time they are dissolved (in due time). For this reason, also diseases come upon them, weakens them, then they die. But the Lord is not weak, but He is the Power of God, and the Word of God, and He Himself is Life.

Why, then, did He not prevent death, just as He did illness? Because it was for this (death) that He had the body, and it was unfitting to prevent it, lest the Resurrection should also be hindered.”

Someone may say that death is weakness but on the other hand, He did not accept illness. For death is for human beings and our Lord Jesus Christ was incarnate to defeat death by resurrection. His victory over death was not by preventing death in itself, but by accepting it and defeating it by the resurrection. Illness affected humanity when man fell, but illness is not because of sin.

“Moreover, it was again unfitting for illness to precede death, lest it be thought a weakness of Him who was in the body. Did He not then hunger? Yes, He hungered because of the property of the body, but He did not perish of starvation, because of the Lord was wearing it. Therefore, if He died for the ransom of all, yet “He saw no corruption”. For He rose whole, since the body belonged to none other but Life itself.” (On the incarnation 21:3,4,7)

Our Lord Jesus Christ even adapted to the natural emotions, yet these didn't lead Him to sin.

2) By the Hands of Human Beings:

St. Athanasius says:

“But, one might say, He should have been hidden from the counsel of the Jews, in order to preserve His own body altogether immortal. Let such a one hear that this also was unfitting for the Lord. For as it was not fitting for the Word of God, being Life, to give death to His own body by Himself, so neither was it suitable to flee from that given by others, but rather to follow it to

destruction, whence it was right that He neither laid aside the body Himself nor fled when the Jews took counsel.

Such action did not show weakness on the part of the Word, but rather made Him known to be the Savior and the Life, in that He both waited for death to destroy it and hastened to complete the death given to Him for the salvation of all. And, besides, it was not His own death that the Savior came to complete, but that of human beings'. Therefore, He did not lay aside the body by His own death—for He had none, being Life—but He accepted that death coming from human beings, in order to destroy it completely when it came to His own body." (On the Incarnation 22:1-3)

3) Publicly Not in Secret:

After Resurrection, St. Peter, the Apostle, said that our Lord Jesus Christ didn't die in a corner. Rather, His death was declared to all people. Some of the theories, which attack Christianity, claim that our Lord Jesus Christ didn't die. Therefore, the disciples say that our Lord Jesus Christ died and resurrected in a revealed truth that cannot be denied.

"But if, without any illness and without any pain, He had hidden His body away by Himself privately and "in a corner", or in a deserted place or a house or anywhere at all, and afterwards suddenly appearing again said He had raised Himself from the dead, He would have been supposed by all to be telling nonsense tales and would have been distrusted even more when speaking about the Resurrection, as there would be no one at all to witness to His death. Death must precede Resurrection, for there would be no Resurrection without death preceding, so that if the death of the body took place somewhere in secret, death neither appearing nor taking place before witnesses, its Resurrection also would be unseen and unwitnessed.

Or why would He, arising, proclaim the Resurrection, yet cause His death to take place invisibly? Or why did He drive out the demons in the sight of all, and cause the man blind from birth to see again, and change the water into wine, that through these works He might be believed to be the Word of God, yet not show in the sight of all the mortal to be incorruptible that He might be believed to be Life Himself?

And how could His disciples have had boldness with the message of the Resurrection, were they not able to say that He first died? Or how would they be believed when saying that death first took place, and then the

Resurrection, if they did not have as witnesses of the death those to whom they were speaking with boldness?

For if, when the death and Resurrection had thus occurred in the sight of all, the Pharisees of the time did not wish to believe but compelled even those who had seen the Resurrection to deny it, surely, if these things had taken place in secret, how many pretexts would they have devised for disbelief?

How then could the end of death, and the victory over it, be demonstrated, unless summoning it in the sight of all He proved it to be dead, being annulled (that is death) thereafter by the incorruptibility of the body?" (On the Incarnation 23:1-5)

4) Without the Choice of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

He was delivered to death, yet they chose the means of the Cross.

"But we must also offer answers to questions that others might ask. Perhaps someone might even say this, "If it was necessary that His death occur in the sight of all and be witnessed that the account of the Resurrection might be believed, then He ought to have contrived a glorious death for Himself, if only to escape the ignominy of the Cross." But if He had done this, it would provide the suspicion against Him that He was not powerful over every form of death but only concerning that which He devised, and then the pretext for disbelief regarding the Resurrection would again be no less. So, death came to the body not from Him but from plotting, that He might destroy that death which they brought upon the Savior.

And as a noble wrestler, great in skill and courage, does not choose opponents for himself, lest he cause suspicion that he is fearful of some, but leaves it to the choice of the spectators, especially if they are hostile, so that when he has overthrown by the one they have chosen, he may be believed to be superior to all. So also, is the Life of all, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, did not contrive death for His own body, lest He should appear fearful of some other death, but He accepted and endured on the Cross that was inflicted by others, especially by enemies, which they reckoned fearful and ignominious and shameful, in order that this being destroyed, He Himself might be believed to be Life, and by Him the power of death might be completely annihilated." (On the Incarnation 24:1-3)

5) He Leaves a Sign:

Hence, the sign of the Holy Cross became the sign of the believers of our Lord Jesus Christ and the sign of victory. The Holy Cross is our weapon, the sign of power, and victory over the devil. The Holy Cross frightens the demons.

“So, something wonderful and marvelous happened: that ignominious death which they thought to inflict, this was the trophy of His victory over death.”
(On the Incarnation 24:4)

6) Without Separating or Dividing the Body:

“Therefore, He neither endured the death of John by being beheaded, nor as Isaiah who was sawn in part, that in death He might keep His body undivided and whole and that there be no pretext for those wishing to divide the Church.” (On the Incarnation 24:4)

7) He Lifted the Curse:

Our Lord Jesus Christ became a curse (Galatians and Corinthians) for us. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

“These comments are for outsiders, who pile up arguments for themselves. But if anyone from among us asks, not as a lover of contention but as a lover of learning, why He (the Lord Jesus Christ) endured the Cross rather than some other way then let Him hear that in no other way than this was it beneficial for us, and that it was good that the Lord endured this for us. For if He came Himself to bear the curse which lay upon us, how else could He have “become a curse” if He had not accepted the death occasioned by the curse? And that is the (death of the) Cross, for thus it is written, “cursed is He who hangs from the tree.” (On the Incarnation 25:1-2)

8) He Stretched His arms to Attain Reconciliation:

“Moreover, if the death of the Lord is a ransom for all and by His death “the wall of partition” is broken down, and the call of the Gentiles effected, how would He have called us if He had not been crucified? For only upon the Cross does one die with hands stretched out. Therefore, it was fitting for the Lord to endure this, and to stretch out His hands, that with the one He might

draw the ancient people (the Jews) and with the other those from the Gentiles, and join both together in Himself. This, He Himself said when He indicated by what manner of death, He was going to redeem all, “When I am lifted up, I shall draw all to Myself.” (John 12:32)” (On the Incarnation 25:3-4)

9) Occurs in the Air to Defeat the Prince of the Power of the Air:

“And again, if the enemy of our race, the devil, having fallen from heaven, wanders around these lower airs and lording it here over the demons with him, similar in disobedience, through them works illusions in those who are deceived and attempts to prevent them rising upwards—about this the Apostle also says, “Following the prince of the power of the air, who is now at work in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2) – yet Jesus Christ came that He might overthrow the devil, purify the air, and open up for us the way to heaven, as the Apostle said, “through the veil, that is, His flesh” (Hebrews 10:20), this must have been by death, and by what other death would these things have happened except that which takes place in the air, I mean the (death of the) Cross? For only He that completes His life on the Cross dies (hanging) in the air. Therefore, it was right that the Lord endured it.” (On the Incarnation 25:5)

10) Through the Cross, Our Lord Jesus Christ Died Between Heaven and Earth, Hence, He Opened the Path Between Them:

“For being thus lifted up, He purified the air from the diabolical plots of all demons, saying “I saw Satan falling as lightening” (Luke 10:18), and blazing the trail He made anew the way up to heaven, saying again, “Lift up your gates, O princes of yours, and be raised up, everlasting gates” (Psalm 23:7). For it was not the Word Himself who needed the gates to be opened, since He is the Lord of all, nor was any made thing closed to its Maker; but we were those who needed it (needed the doors to be opened. Our Lord Jesus Christ went into the Holies to take us with Him, raise us with Him, and seat us with Him in the heavens.), who He Himself carried up through his own body. For as He offered to death on behalf of all, so through it He opened up again the way to heaven.” (On the Incarnation 25:6)

And Glory Be To God Forever, Amen.

