

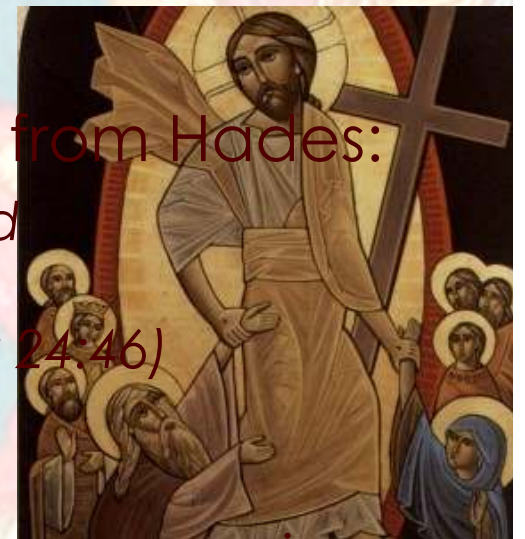
Descent into Hades

*“He descended into Hades,
through the Cross...”*



Into Hades

- In the Old Testament there is no instance of a human descent to, and return from, the underworld.
 - Saul summoned the prophet Samuel through the witch of Endor (1 Sam 28:3-25).
- Christ descended and ascended back from Hades:
 - “ Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day’” (Lk 24:46)
 - **24** whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. **25** For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the Lord always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. **26** Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. **27** For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. (Acts 2)



Hades...

- New Testament does not elaborate on this descent into Hades.
- Hades: intermediate abode of the dead
- Distinction between the abode of the unrighteous dead (Hades) and the abode of the righteous dead (bosom of Abraham – Lk 16)



The Gospel of Nicodemus

- *Apocryphal – non-canonical*
- *Mentioned in St. John Chrysostom's Paschal Homily*
- <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/>
- Written by Nicodemus or one of his followers
- The first part(chapters I–XI) contains the trial of Jesus.
 - Historians believe it's the most accurate account of the events that led to Jesus' crucifixion and his resurrection
 - Possibly written by Pontius Pilate.



The Gospel of Nicodemus

- The second part (XII–XVI) regards the Resurrection.
 - Leucius and Karinus, the two souls raised from the dead after the Crucifixion, relate to the Sanhedrin the circumstances of the descent of Christ to Hades.
 - It depicts the deliverance of the righteous Old Testament patriarchs.



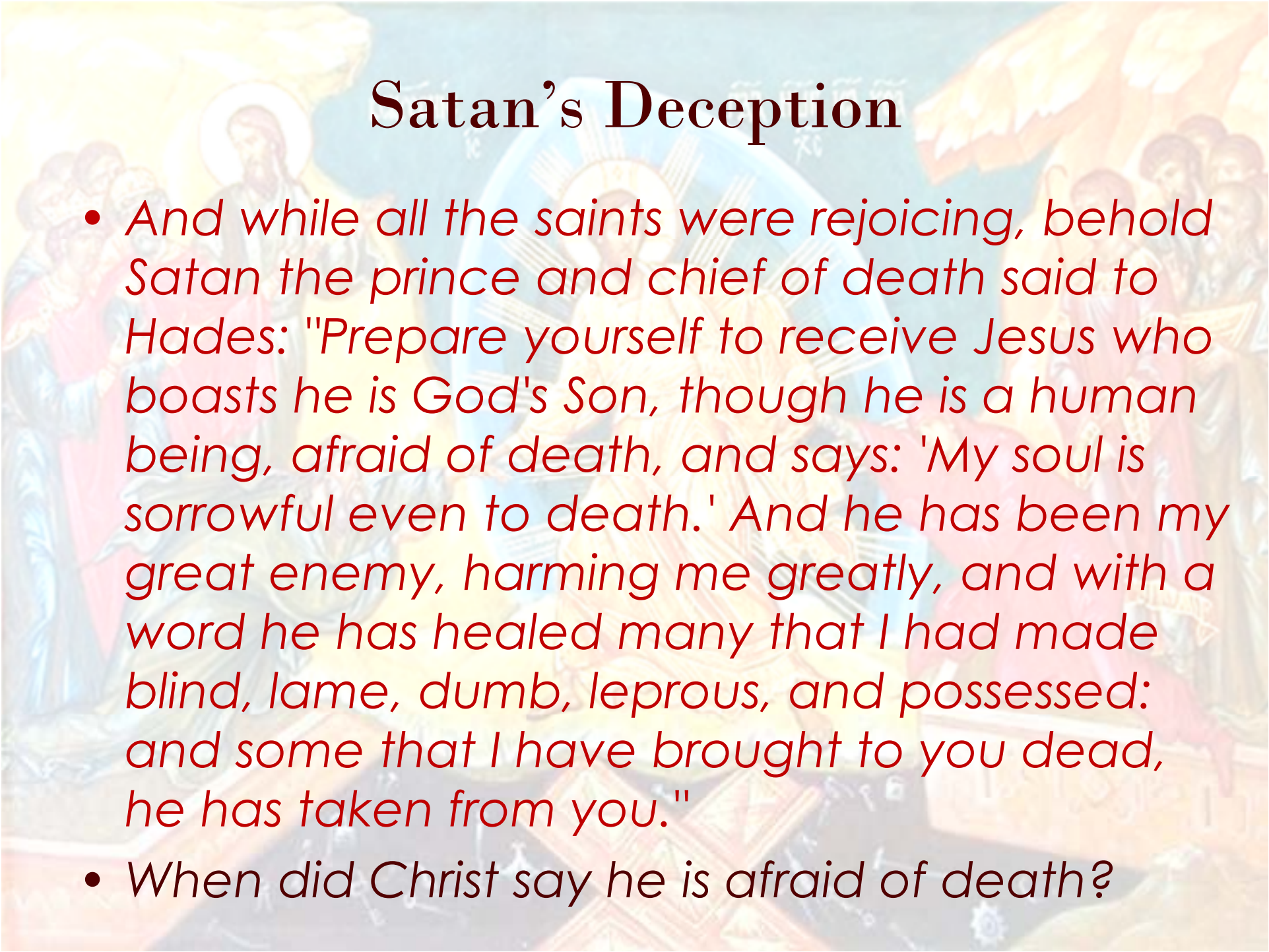
Descensus ad Infernos - The Harrowing of Hell

- *And Joseph rose and said to Annas and Caiaphas: You are indeed right to marvel since you have heard that Jesus has been seen alive after death, and that he has ascended into heaven. It is, however, more marvelous that He did not rise from the dead alone, but many other dead he raised from their graves to life, and many people have seen them in Jerusalem.*
- Joseph of Arimathaea's arrest
- Four Angels save him
- The Sanhedrin "respectfully" summon him
- He tells them about the 2 sons of Simeon the priest who were raised from death



Leucius' and Karinus' Testimony

- Now when we were placed with all our fathers in the deep, in shadowy darkness, suddenly the sun's golden heat was there and purple royal light shining on us. And immediately the father of the whole human race together with all the patriarchs and prophets rejoiced, saying: "This light is the author of everlasting light who promised to send unto us his co-eternal light." And Isaias cried out and said: "This is the light of the Father, the Son of God, just as I prophesied when I was alive on the earth... the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light, and those who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, on them the light has shone. And now it has come and shone upon us that sit in death."

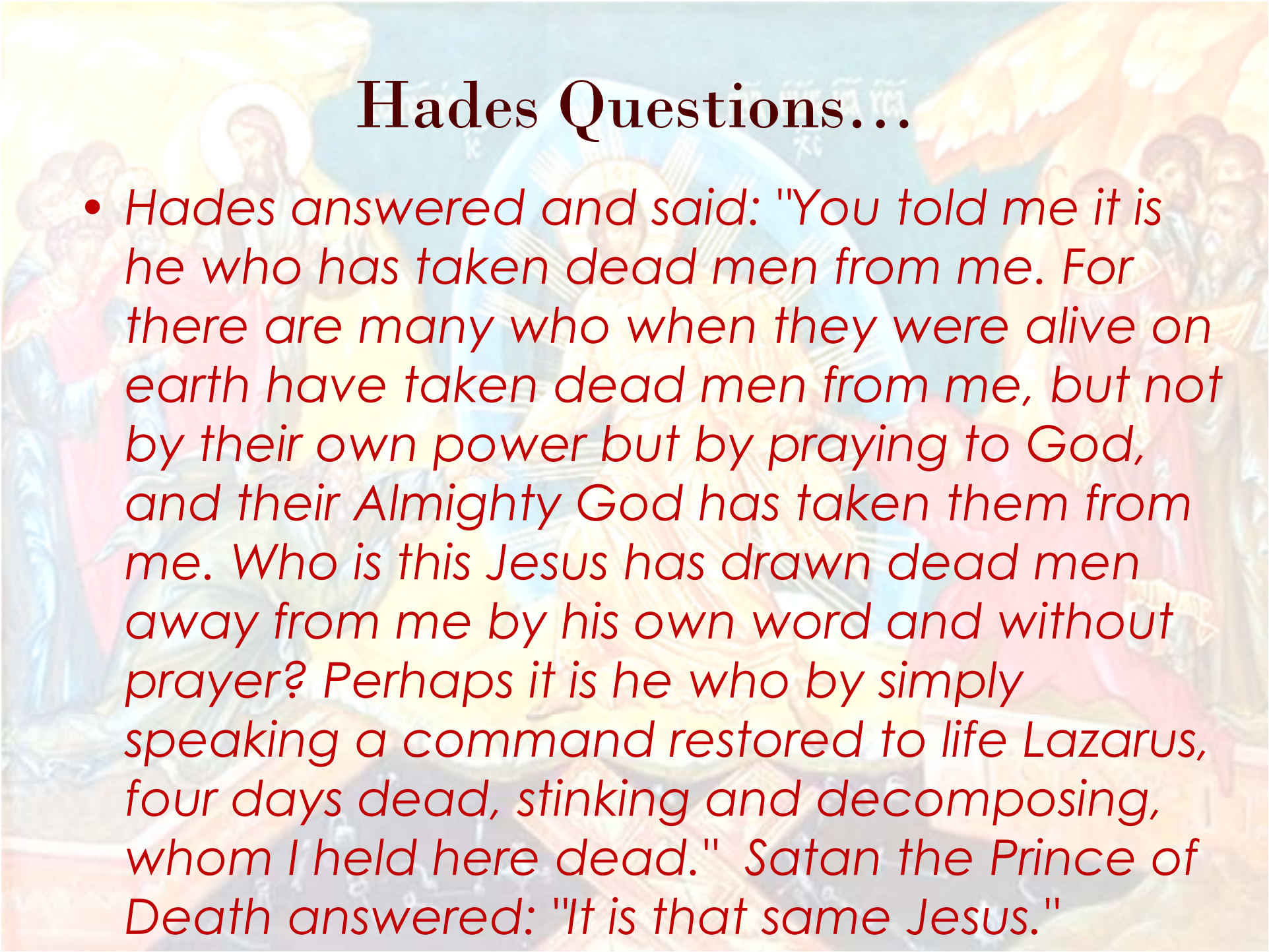


Satan's Deception

- *And while all the saints were rejoicing, behold Satan the prince and chief of death said to Hades: "Prepare yourself to receive Jesus who boasts he is God's Son, though he is a human being, afraid of death, and says: 'My soul is sorrowful even to death.' And he has been my great enemy, harming me greatly, and with a word he has healed many that I had made blind, lame, dumb, leprous, and possessed: and some that I have brought to you dead, he has taken from you."*
- When did Christ say he is afraid of death?

From: Explanation of the 9th Hour Gospels (Coptic Rites)

- *When Satan saw that the Lord bowed His head and gave up the Spirit, he was pleased and came joyfully to capture His soul, thinking Him a weak, simple man. He discovered His divinity and ran but the Lord rebuked and removed the veil. He was unable to move because the Divine Rays surrounded him from all six directions. He saw all the heavenly authorities restless around the cross and was assured that He is the Son of God. He remained under siege in the air... He stood before the Master in humiliation begging for mercy... He asked that God accept all the souls that were in his power as ransom.*



Hades Questions...

- Hades answered and said: "You told me it is he who has taken dead men from me. For there are many who when they were alive on earth have taken dead men from me, but not by their own power but by praying to God, and their Almighty God has taken them from me. Who is this Jesus has drawn dead men away from me by his own word and without prayer? Perhaps it is he who by simply speaking a command restored to life Lazarus, four days dead, stinking and decomposing, whom I held here dead." Satan the Prince of Death answered: "It is that same Jesus."

يا لهوي... ya lahwi...

- When Hades heard this, he said to him: "I adjure you by your strength and my own not to bring him to me! For at that time when I heard him speak a command I did shook and I was overwhelmed with fear, and all my ministers were troubled with me. And we could not keep Lazarus; like an eagle shaking himself he sprang forth with all agility and swiftness, and departed from us, and the earth too which held Lazarus' corpse at once yielded him up alive. And so it is I know now that that man who was able to do these things is God strong in command and mighty in manhood, and that he is the savior of mankind. And if you bring him to me he will set free all that are shut up here in the hard prison and bound in the unbreakable chains of their sins, and he will bring them to the life of his Godhead for ever."



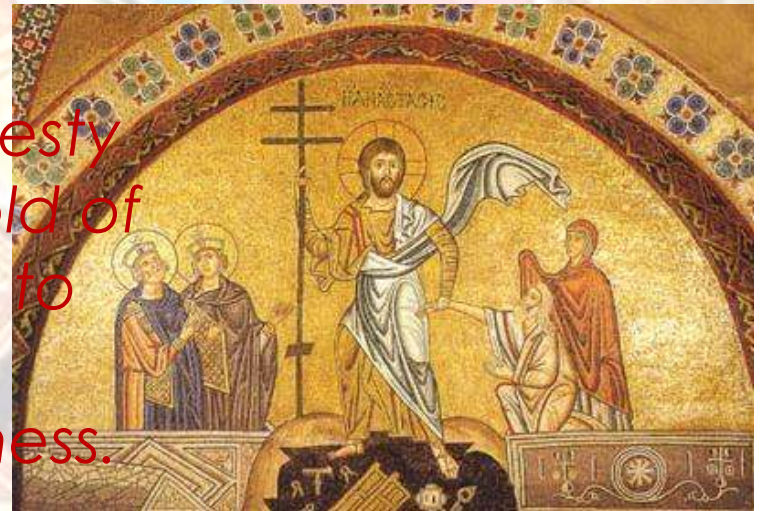
Lift up, your gates, O Princes

- Suddenly, there came a voice like thunder and a spiritual shout: "Lift up, your gates, O princes, and be lifted up, you everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." When the multitude of saints all heard it, they rebuked Hades: "Open your gates, that the King of Glory may come in!"
- And when Hades saw that they cried out twice like this, he said, as if he did not know the answer: "Who is the King of Glory?" And David answered Hades and said: "I know the words being shouted, since by His Spirit I prophesied the same; and now I say to you what I said before: The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, he is the King of glory."



Grand Entrance

- The Lord of Majesty appeared in the form of a man and lightened the eternal darkness and broke the unbreakable bonds: and his everlasting might brought relief to us that sat in the deep darkness of our transgressions and in the shadow of death of our sins. When Hades and death and their wicked ministers saw this, they were stricken with fear, they and their cruel officers, at the sight of the radiance of such a great light in their own realm, seeing Christ suddenly in their dwelling
- Then the King of Glory in his majesty trampled on death, and laid hold of Prince Satan and delivered him to the power of Hades, and drew Adam to him, to his own brightness.



O Foolish One!

- Then Hades, receiving Prince Satan, reproached him bitterly, saying: "O prince of perdition and chief of destruction, Beelzebub, the scorn of the angels and spitting of the righteous why did you do this? You crucify the King of Glory and at his death you promise us great spoils of his death: like a fool you did not know what you were doing! See! by the brightness of his majesty this Jesus puts to flight all the darkness of death, he has broken the strong depths of the prisons, and let out the prisoners and loosed the bound. And all those who were groaning in our torments rejoice against us, and at their prayers our dominions are vanquished and our realms conquered, and now no nation of men fears us any more... O Prince Satan, father of all the wicked and ungodly and renegades, why did you do this?"

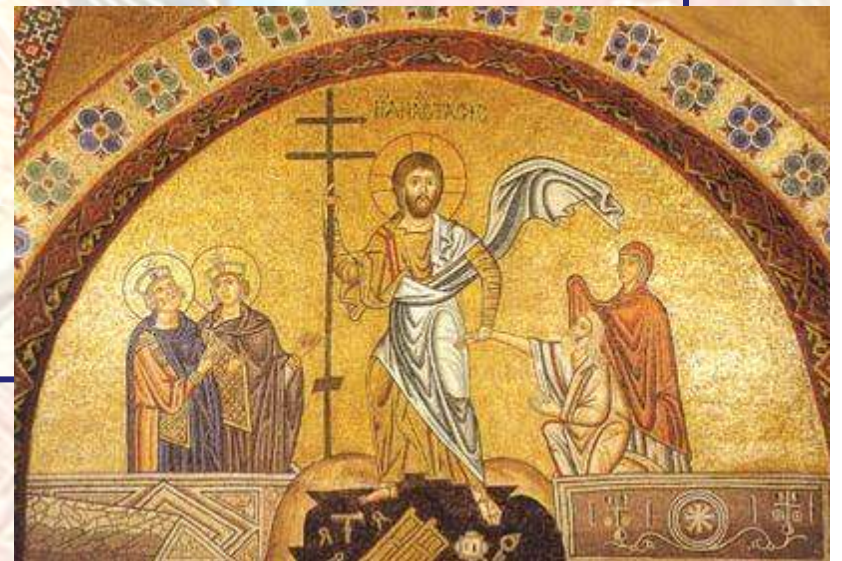
Salvation

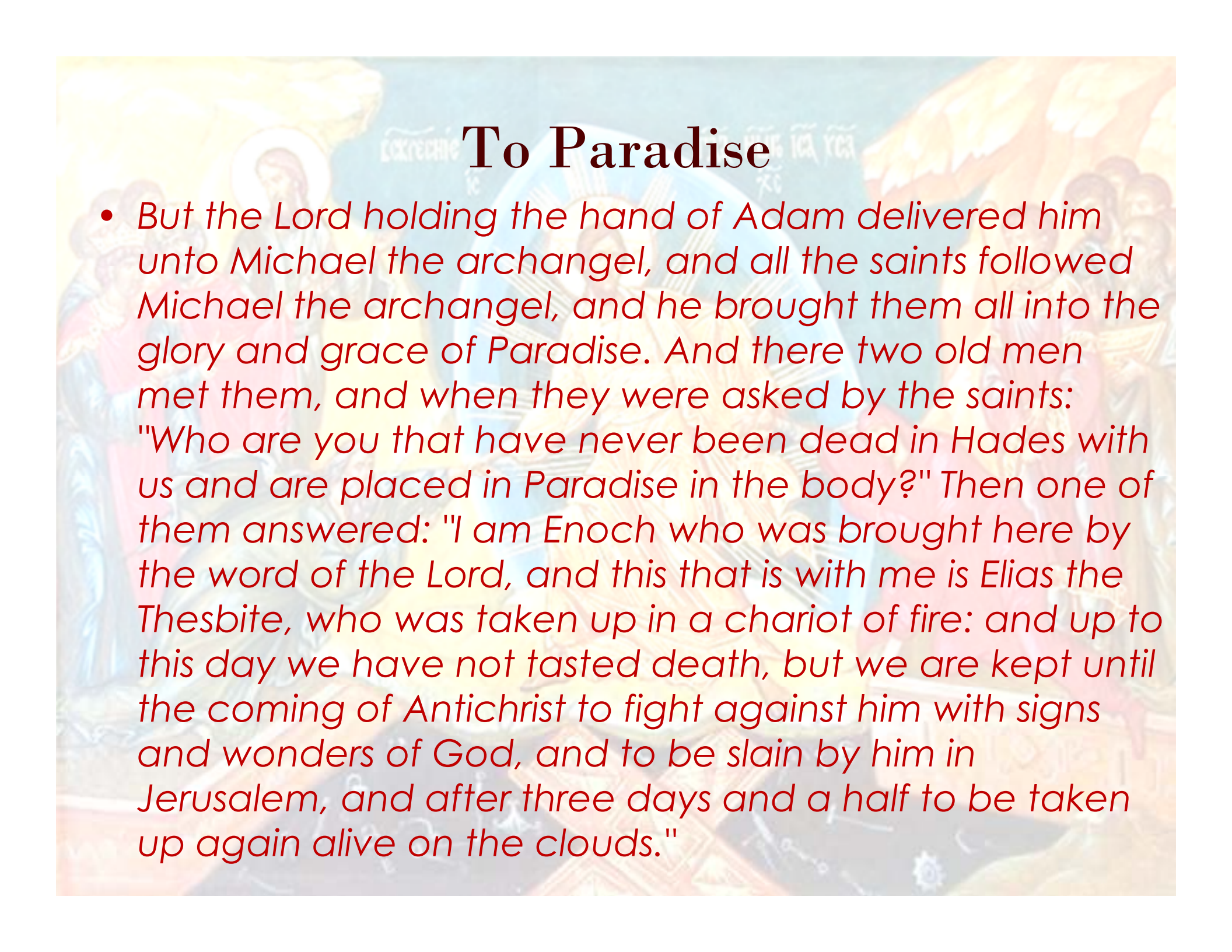
- And the Lord stretching out his hand, said: "Come to me, all my saints who bear my image and my likeness. You that by the tree and the devil and death were condemned, behold now the devil and death are condemned by the Tree!" And forthwith all the saints were gathered together under the hand of the Lord. And the Lord holding the right hand of Adam, said to him: "Peace be to you with all your children, my just ones."



From: “All you heavenly orders” Hymn (Coptic Rites)

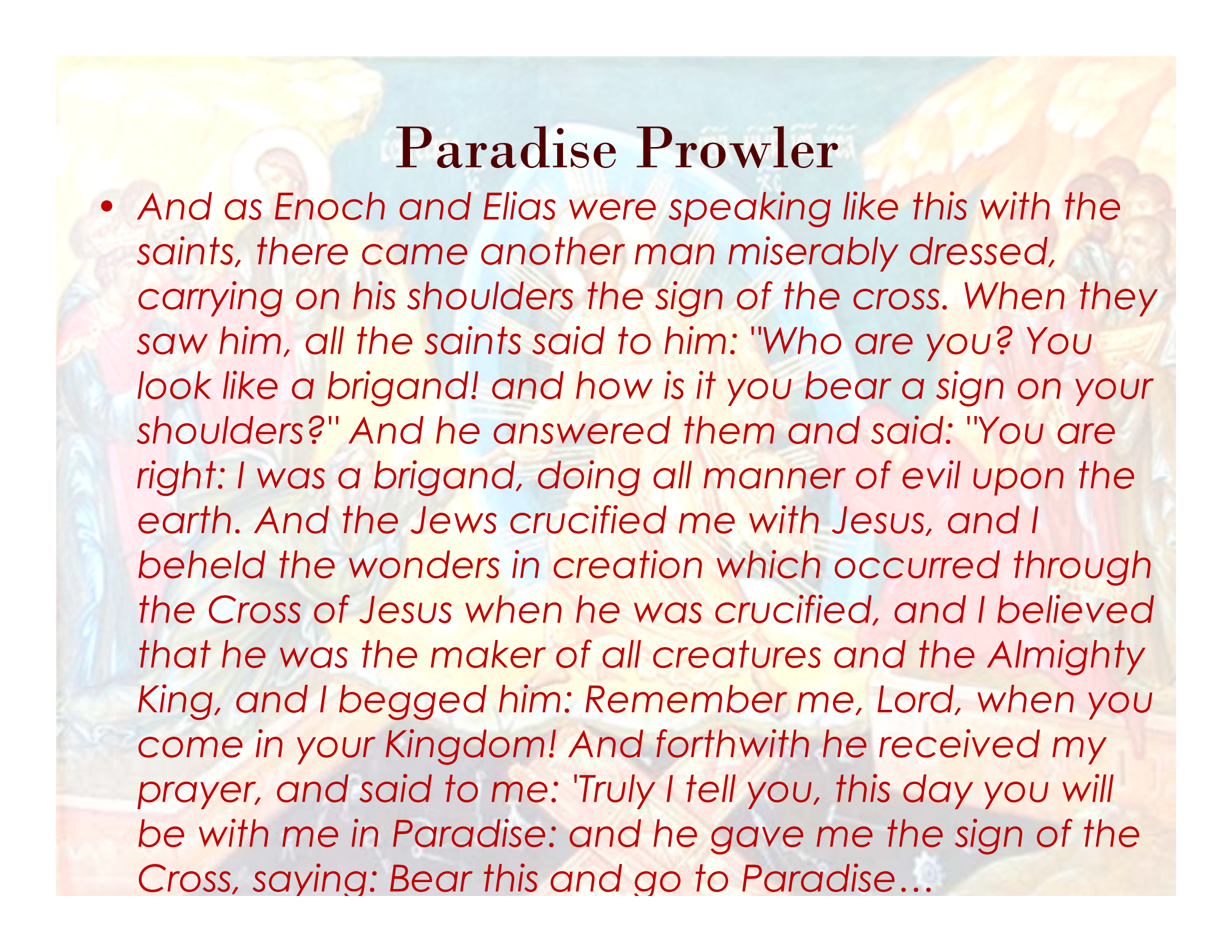
He led Hades captive and crushed the brass doors. He utterly broke the bars of iron and, for us, exchanged salvation for punishment. And brought back Adam to Paradise, with joy, gladness, and happiness; him and his sons who were in captivity, to the joy once more.





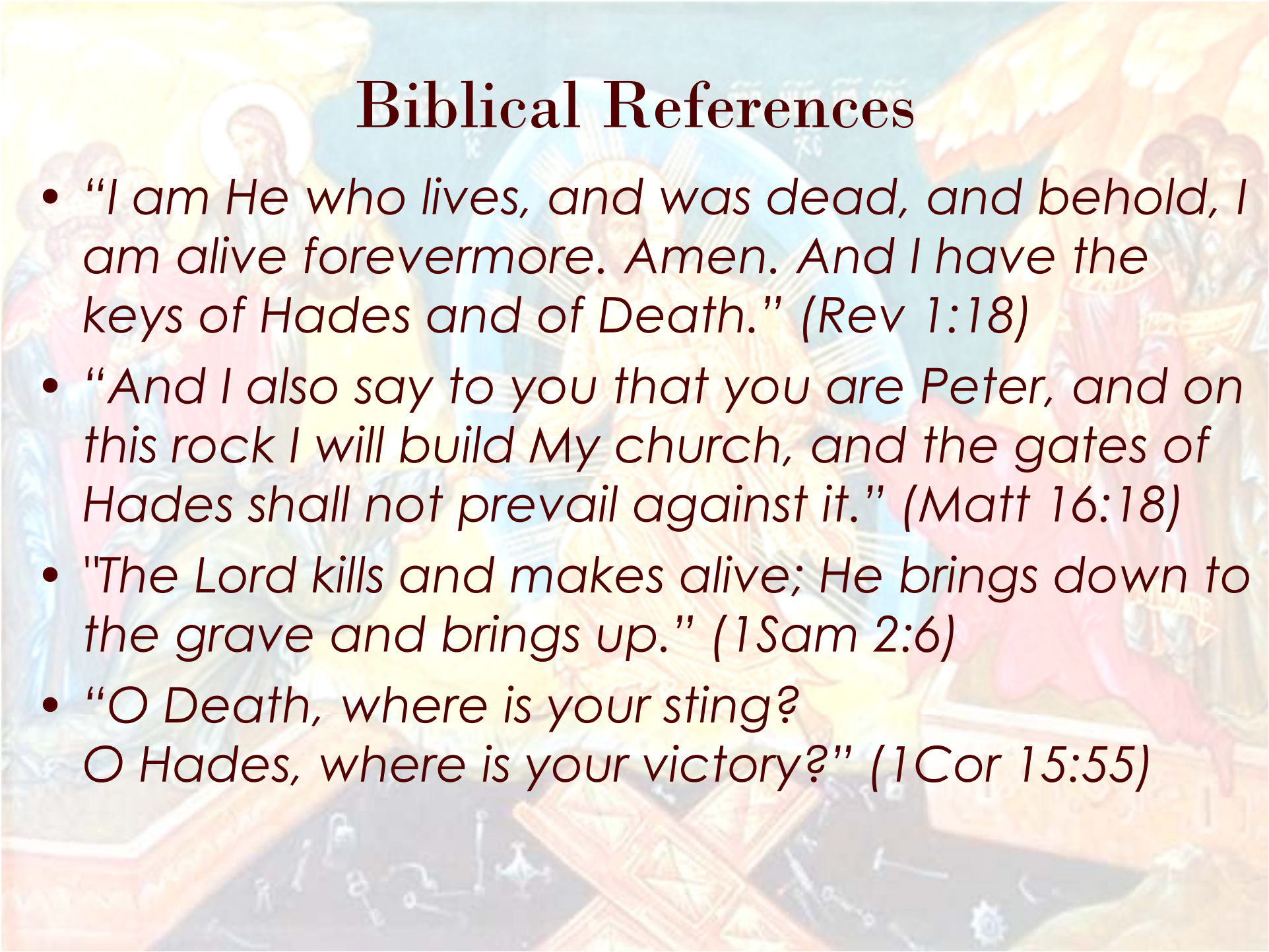
To Paradise

- But the Lord holding the hand of Adam delivered him unto Michael the archangel, and all the saints followed Michael the archangel, and he brought them all into the glory and grace of Paradise. And there two old men met them, and when they were asked by the saints: "Who are you that have never been dead in Hades with us and are placed in Paradise in the body?" Then one of them answered: "I am Enoch who was brought here by the word of the Lord, and this that is with me is Elias the Thesbite, who was taken up in a chariot of fire: and up to this day we have not tasted death, but we are kept until the coming of Antichrist to fight against him with signs and wonders of God, and to be slain by him in Jerusalem, and after three days and a half to be taken up again alive on the clouds."



Paradise Prowler

- And as Enoch and Elias were speaking like this with the saints, there came another man miserably dressed, carrying on his shoulders the sign of the cross. When they saw him, all the saints said to him: "Who are you? You look like a brigand! and how is it you bear a sign on your shoulders?" And he answered them and said: "You are right: I was a brigand, doing all manner of evil upon the earth. And the Jews crucified me with Jesus, and I beheld the wonders in creation which occurred through the Cross of Jesus when he was crucified, and I believed that he was the maker of all creatures and the Almighty King, and I begged him: Remember me, Lord, when you come in your Kingdom! And forthwith he received my prayer, and said to me: 'Truly I tell you, this day you will be with me in Paradise: and he gave me the sign of the Cross, saying: Bear this and go to Paradise...'



Biblical References

- *“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.” (Rev 1:18)*
- *“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” (Matt 16:18)*
- *“The Lord kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up.” (1Sam 2:6)*
- *“O Death, where is your sting?
O Hades, where is your victory?” (1Cor 15:55)*

Biblical References

- “By whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison” (1Pet 3:19)
- “For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.” (1Pet 4:6)
- ⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. ⁸ Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.” ⁹ (Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) (1Pet 3:19-20)