

## Compassion (Abba Zossimas)



### **The Elder speaks on the circumstance of being harmed by a brother in Christ:**

If it is necessary to grieve at all, then we should grieve for the loss of that person who has harmed us, not for the loss of our possessions. For, that person has done injustice to himself by being cast out of the heavenly kingdom. 'Wrongdoers shall not inherit the kingdom of God' (1 Cor. 6:9). As for you that have been done injustice, the person that has wronged you has in fact procured life for you. It is indeed said: 'Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in Heaven' (Matt. 5:12). Yet, instead of grieving over the loss of one of Christ's members, we sit and weave thoughts about corruptible and insignificant matters, which are easily lost and worth nothing. We are truly and rightly condemning ourselves."

In effect, God has placed us in an order of many members, which have Christ our God as their head, as the Apostle said: "Just as the body is one and has many members, and the head of all is Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12). Therefore, when your brother afflicts you, he is hurting you like a hand or an eye that suffers from some illness. Yet, even when we are in pain, we do not cut off our hand and throw it away; nor do we pull out our eye, but consider the rejection of each of these as being a very serious matter. Instead, we place on these members the sign of Christ, which is more precious than anything else, entreating the saints to pray for them, as well as offering our own fervent prayers to God on their behalf. In addition to this, we apply medication and plaster in order to heal the sore member. Therefore, in the same way that you pray for your eye or your hand to heal and longer to hurt, you should also do that for your brother. Nevertheless, when we see the members of Christ hurting in this way, not only do we not grieve for them, but we even curse them. Truly such conduct is appropriate for someone without any compassion.