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The Elder Joseph the Hesychast (+1959) Struggles, Experiences, Teachings (13)



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Perhaps I am now making myself incomprehensible or exaggerating, in the view of those who do not know this language. But it would be an omission if we were to conceal the full truth in order to please people at large, and so downplay the reality

of how men of God think and act. The Elder knew the inner state of each one of us, and explained to us in detail how and why each thing happened to us, whether it was thoughts or the operation of passions or even the operation of grace; and also the way to be cured and free ourselves of things that happened to us. He was full of the grace and illumination of God, and gave richly from the abundance of his heart, without contrivance or effort or specialised qualifications but out of the treasure of his life experience, and in a way that was simple and convincing. He offered this to each individually according to what was preoccupying him; and when some of his advice and teachings exceeded the disciple's capacity to receive them, he would supplement them with his prayer. The ever-memorable Elder also had the invariable practice never to undertake anything without praying and receiving guidance, and this was why we did not receive an answer immediately when we asked him about something we had a mind to do.

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