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## Références éditoriales

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Paul's words do not seem to allow that others take the place of those who fall (ἀντὶ τῶν πιπτότων ἑτέρους ἀνίστασθαι, 543). Chrysostom energetically repudiates this view for two reasons, the first of which points to the origin of marriage. As long as the protoplasts were in Paradise there was no question of marriage. They were living as in heaven, enjoying God's companionship; every kind of desire (ἐπιθυμία) was far from their soul; virginity was their ornament. But when they had been disobedient to God, He left them together with virginity; they put off the royal vestment of virginity, and together with the corruption that is inherent to death, marriage, that mortal garment, appeared on the scene. For where death is, there is marriage (ὅπου γὰρ θάνατος, ἐκεῖ γάμος 544); the latter necessarily follows the former. Virginity, on the other hand, is not subject to this necessary order (ἀκολουθία): it is always useful, and beautiful, before and after the appearance of death, before as well as after marriage. Chrysostom then moves to his second point: God could have made men without marriage; he refers to Adam and Eve, to the thousands of angels, and the tenths of archangels. It is not marriage as such that increases and preserves the human race, but the word God spoke in the beginning (*Gen.* 1, 28); he illustrates this by the example of Abraham. Without God willing marriage is unable to multiply the human race, whereas, on the other hand, virginity will not hinder its multiplication if God wants men to be many. Marriage serves the preservation of the human race only for want of something better; it has been given to us because of our weakness, and should not be preferred to virginity. Without drawing all conclusions from this text, we may at this point usefully compare Chrysostom's reply to the objection with the viewpoint developed in EvEg. According to the latter the bringing forth of children is the maintenance of the power of death, whereas virginity is meant to break it and will undoubtedly lead to the gradual dying out of the human race<sup>53</sup>. Chrysostom has to cope with this conception of virginity as a "collective suicide", and, therefore, points out that there are alternative ways of procreation, and that the increase of the human race is not dependent on marriage, but on the word and the will of God. This explains why for Chrysostom, in contrast with EvEg, virginity means abstinence not so much from procreation as from sexual intercourse.

In another text (*In Gen. Hom.* 18, 4; *PG* 53, 153-154) the author develops similar thoughts. Commenting on *Gen.* 4, 1 he says that before their disobedience the protoplasts were imitating the life of the angels; there was absolutely no question of intercourse, for they were not subject to bodily needs (ταῖς τῶν σωμάτων ἀνάγκαις); from the beginning virginity had priority over marriage. In fact, it follows from our Lord's own words (His answer to the Sadducees' question concerning the resurrection) that the virgins, though being on earth and in the body, are leading an angelic life. Chrysostom here uses the same old tradition on the protoplasts' virginity in Paradise as Basil of Ancyra. But he goes further in that he calls this paradisiac life angelic. This way of speaking is obviously based on *Lk.* 20, 35-36 par.; it is, in fact, another application of the principle that the end will be like the beginning: to the eschatological superiority of virginity corresponds its protological priority; if the eschatological life will be angelic, the same must be true for paradisiac life (—the argument also works the other way round.). It was only after the verdict made man mortal, Chrysostom continues, that God, in His wisdom, providing for the permanence of the human race, allowed that it should be multiplied by intercourse. In his exegesis of *Gen.* 4, 1c (ἐκτεράσμεν ἄνθρωπον διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ) he again underscores that the begetting of children has to be attributed not to nature (τῇ φύσει), but to God. Because of recognizing this Eve was rewarded by a second baby (*Gen.* 4, 2a). The text that follows is worth being quoted in full:

53. Or did the virgins consider themselves as not exposed to death because they had already received the resurrection?

