

Vespers as a Reader's Service

Sunday of the Prodigal Son

For use on Saturday evening, February 28, 2021

Reader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of good things, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *(x3)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Most-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; O Lord, blot out our sins; O Master, pardon our iniquities; O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. *(x3)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. *(x12)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O come let us worship God our King.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Psalm 103

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever.

The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid. The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth.

He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.

He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.

He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad. Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening.

How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein.

All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being. May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *(x3)*

Lord, have mercy. *(x12)*

Blessed Is The Man

People: Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in Him with trembling!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Salvation belongs to the Lord! Thy blessing be upon Thy people!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. **(x3)**

Reader: Lord, have mercy. **(x3)**

Lord, I Call (Tone 5)

People: Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me! Hear me, O Lord! Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me! Receive the voice of my prayer when I call upon Thee. Hear me, O Lord! Let my prayer arise in Thy sight as incense, and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord!

Reader: Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips. Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins. With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen. The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head. For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been. They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades. For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away. Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity. The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by. With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication. I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare. When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths. In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare. I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me. Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul. I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living. Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low. Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison that I may confess Thy name.

Tone 5 (Resurrection)

People: By Thy precious Cross, O Christ, Thou hast put the devil to shame. By Thy Resurrection, Thou hast blunted the sting of sin and saved us from the gates of death. We glorify Thee, O only-begotten One.

Reader: The righteous shall wait patiently for me until Thou shalt reward me.

People: Christ was led as a sheep to the slaughter in order to grant Resurrection to the human race. The princes of hell were frightened by this, for the gates of sorrow were lifted. Christ the King of glory had entered, saying to those in chains: "Go forth!" And to those in darkness: "Come to the light!"

Reader: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice.

People: O great wonder! The Creator of the invisible suffered in the flesh in His love for man and rose again immortal. Come, O ye sons of nations, let us worship Him! Delivered from error by His compassion, we have learned to sing of one God in three Persons!

Reader: Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

People: We offer Thee our evening worship, O never-setting Light, Who came in these last days to the world in the flesh; Who even descended to hell to dispel its darkness. Who has revealed the light of Resurrection to the nations. Glory to Thee, O Lord and Giver of light!

Reader: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

People: We glorify the Leader of our salvation; by His resurrection from the dead, the world was saved from deceit. The assembly of angels rejoices as the deceit of demons is overthrown; fallen Adam rises as the devil falls.

Reader: For Thy name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited patiently for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

People: The guards were instructed by the lawless ones: Hide the Rising of Christ, take money and say: The body was stolen from the tomb while we were asleep. But who has heard of a body being stolen, a body embalmed and naked, with its grave-clothes left behind in the tomb? Do not be deceived, O Jews, study the words of the Prophets and understand, Christ is the Redeemer of the world and all-powerful.

Reader: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.

Tone 1 (from the Lenten Triodion)

People: Rich and fertile was the earth allotted to us, but all we planted were the seeds of sin. We reaped the sheaves of evil with the sickle of laziness; we failed to place them on the threshing floor of sorrow. Now we beg Thee, O Lord, eternal Master of the harvest: “May Thy love become the breeze to winnow the straw of our worthless deeds! Make us like the precious wheat to be stored in heaven, and save us all!”

Reader: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

People: Rich and fertile was the earth allotted to us, but all we planted were the seeds of sin. We reaped the sheaves of evil with the sickle of laziness; we failed to place them on the threshing floor of sorrow. Now we beg Thee, O Lord, eternal Master of the harvest: “May Thy love become the breeze to winnow the straw of our worthless deeds! Make us like the precious wheat to be stored in heaven, and save us all!”

Reader: O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.

People: Brothers, our purpose is to know the power of God’s goodness. For when the Prodigal Son abandoned his sin, he hastened to the refuge of his father. That good man embraced him and welcomed him; he killed the fatted calf and celebrated with heavenly joy. Let us learn from this example to offer thanks to the Father, Who loves all men, and to the glorious Victim, the Savior of our souls!

Reader: For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, and the truth of the Lord abideth for ever.

People: Brothers, our purpose is to know the power of God’s goodness. For when the Prodigal Son abandoned his sin, he hastened to the refuge of his father. That good man embraced him and welcomed him; he killed the fatted calf and celebrated with heavenly joy. Let us learn from this example to offer thanks to the Father, Who loves all men, and to the glorious Victim, the Savior of our souls!

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Tone 2 (from the Lenten Triodion)

People: What great blessings have I forsaken, wretch that I am? From what kingdom have I miserably fallen? I have squandered the riches that were given me; I have transgressed the commandments. Woe to me when I shall be condemned to eternal fire! Cry out to Christ, O my soul, before the end draws nigh: "Receive me as the Prodigal, O God, and have mercy on me!"

Reader: Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 5 (Resurrection)

People: In the Red Sea of old, a type of the Virgin Bride was prefigured. There Moses divided the waters; here Gabriel assisted in the miracle. There Israel crossed the sea without getting wet, here the Virgin gave birth to Christ without seed. After Israel's passage, the sea remained impassable; after Emmanuel's birth, the Virgin remained a Virgin. O ever-existing God Who appeared as Man, O Lord, have mercy on us!

O Gladsome Light

People: O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal Father, heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ! Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, and behold the light of evening, we praise God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For meet it is at all times to worship Thee with voices of praise, O Son of God, and Giver of life! Therefore, all the world doth glorify Thee!

Prokeimenon

Reader: The prokeimenon in the sixth tone:

The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: The Lord is robed with strength and hath girt Himself.

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: For He hath made the world so sure that it shall not be moved.

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days.

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: The Lord is King

People: He is robed in majesty!

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (*x12*)

Vouchsafe, O Lord

Reader: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages. Amen. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, grant me understanding of Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes. O Lord, Thy mercy endureth for ever; disdain not the works of Thy hands. Unto Thee is due praise, unto Thee is due song, unto Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*x3*)

Aposticha

Tone 5 (Resurrection)

People: We magnify Thee in songs of praise, O incarnate Christ and Savior. By accepting the Cross and death for our sake, as the Lord and Lover of man, Thou didst overthrow the gates of hell, and didst arise on the third day, saving our souls.

Reader: The Lord is King; He is robed in majesty!

People: By being pierced in the side, O Lover of man, Thou hast poured out drops of life and salvation for all. By accepting death in the flesh, Thou hast granted immortality. Thou hast freed us by being placed in the tomb, and hast resurrected us with Thyself in glory, as God. Glory to Thee, O Lord and Lover of man!

Reader: For He has established the world, which shall not be moved!

People: Thy crucifixion and descent into hell are awesome, O Lover of man. Thou hast captured it, releasing the ancient prisoners. Thou hast opened Paradise and given it to us. Grant us purification of sins, who glorify Thy Resurrection on the third day! Make us worthy of Paradise and save us, O Lover of man!

Reader: Holiness befits Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days.

People: For our sake, Thou didst accept death in the flesh, to rise from the dead on the third day. Heal us from our earthly passions, and restore us from our evil transgressions; and save us, O Lover of man!

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Tone 6 (from the Lenten Triodion)

People: I, a wretched man, hide my face in shame: I have squandered the riches my Father gave to me; I went to live with senseless beasts; I sought their food and hungered, for I had not enough to eat. I will arise, I will return to my compassionate Father; He will accept my tears, as I kneel before Him, crying: "In Thy tender love for all men, receive me as one of Thy servants and save me!"

Reader: Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 (Resurrection)

People: My Maker and Redeemer, Christ the Lord, was born of thee, O most pure Virgin. By accepting my nature, He freed Adam from his ancient curse. Unceasingly we magnify thee as the Mother of God! Rejoice, O celestial Joy! Rejoice, O Lady, the protection, intercession and salvation of our souls!

Prayer of St. Symeon

People: Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou has prepared before the face of all peoples: a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (*x3*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Most-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; O Lord, blot out our sins; O Master, pardon our iniquities; O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*x3*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Troparia

Tone 5 (Resurrection)

People: Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

Either: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 5 (Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion)

People: Hail, thou impassable gateway of the Lord! Hail, thou wall and protection of those who take refuge in thee! Hail, thou haven untroubled by storms; Hail, thou who hast not known wedlock, and who hast borne thy Son and Maker and God in the flesh. Fail not in thy intercession on behalf of those who sing the praises of and worship thy Son!

Dismissal

People: Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox faith, and Orthodox Christians unto ages of ages.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*x3*)

O Christ, bless!

Reader: Thou that didst rise from the dead, O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, for the sake of the prayers of Thy most pure Mother, of our holy and God-bearing fathers, and all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.