

PROSANCTIFIED LITURGY

WEDNESDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

STICHERA AT 'LORD, I CALL...' TONE FOUR

10. Bring my soul out of prison * That I may give thanks unto Thy Name.

(Tone 4) **The fast that bringeth us blessings / hath, now, reached its midmost point: / it hath helped us to receive God's grace in the days that are past; / and it will bring us further benefit in the days still to come: / for, by continuing in what is right, / we attain yet greater gifts; / we, therefore, cry to Christ, the giver of all good: / 'O Thou, Who, for our sakes, hast fasted and endured the cross, / make us worthy to share, un-condemned, in Thy divine passover; / may we spend our lives in peace, // and rightly glorify Thee with the Father and the Spirit'.**

9. *In the 5th Tone:* The righteous shall compass me about: * Until Thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

If we look for a spiritual recompense, / let us perform our good deeds in secret; / let us not proclaim them in the streets, / but, keep them hidden in our hearts: / then, He that seeth the secrets of all men / will reward us for our abstinence; / let us complete the fast, not with a sad countenance, / but, praying in the inner chamber of our souls; / and, without ceasing, let us cry: / 'Our Father, which art in heaven, / lead us not into temptation, we pray, // but deliver us from the evil one'.

8. Out of the depths, have I cried unto Thee, O Lord * Lord, hear my voice.

Your souls, O holy martyrs, / were filled with an insatiable love; / not denying Christ, ye endured great sufferings and torments; / and ye cast down the tyrant's pride; / ye kept the faith unaltered and unharmed, / and, now, have gone to dwell in heaven; / since ye have boldness before Christ, / pray that peace be given to the world, // and, to our souls, great mercy.

7. *In the 1st Tone:* Let Thine ears be attentive * To the voice of my supplications.

Let us wash our souls clean in the waters of the fast; / and, approaching the precious and honoured cross of the Lord, / let us venerate it in faith; / let us draw, from it, divine enlightenment, / gathering the fruit of eternal salvation, // peace and great mercy.

6. If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? * But there is forgiveness with Thee.

O cross, glory of the apostles, / attended by principalities, and powers, and archangels, / keep safe, from all harm, them that venerate thee; / grant us to follow, rightly, to the end, / the divine path of abstinence, / and to reach the day of salvation, // when we, too, shall be saved.

5. In the 7th Tone: 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.

As we venerate, today, the cross of the Lord, let us cry: / 'Rejoice, tree of life, victor over hell; / rejoice, joy of the world and slayer of corruption; / rejoice, for, by thy power, thou scatterest the demons; / strong support of the faithful, weapon that cannot be broken, // we pray thee, guard and hallow them that shew thee honour'.

4. And, in the 4th Tone, From the morning watch, until night, from the morning watch * Let Israel hope in the Lord.

(Monk Nikon) **Using abstinence as a bridle, / thou hast curbed the pleasures of the body, / and the disobedience of the flesh, O blessed one; / courageous, thou hast vanquished the full armour of the enemy / by the power of the Spirit; / wherefore, O Nikon, thou hast been a leader of monastics // that, always, followed thy most-wise and divine preaching.**

*3. For, with the Lord, there is mercy; and, with Him, is plenteous redemption ** And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Repeat: Using abstinence as a bridle...

2. O praise the Lord, all ye nations Praise Him, all ye people.*

Thou hast shone forth, from the east, / like the sun, O most-glorious one, / bringing light to the whole world with the radiance of miracles, / guiding the choir of thy brilliant disciples like a star, / with whom, thou hast suffered mightily; / ye were beheaded, by the sword, // placing your souls in the hands of the King and Master of all.

*1. For His merciful kindness is great towards us ** And the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.

Neither hunger, nor tribulation, / O truly-wondrous ones, / nor nakedness, nor wounds, nor the imminence of a violent death, / were able to separate you

from the love of God; / O crown-bearing athletes, / following the shepherd, like sheep that are led to the slaughter, // from the west, ye reached the unending rest of the heavenly Kingdom.

Glory, now and ever in the 8th Tone: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit * now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Today, He that is, in essence, unapproachable / becometh approachable for me, / and suffereth His passion, / delivering me from passions; / He that granteth light unto the blind / is spat upon by the mouths of the transgressors; / and He giveth His back to scourging / for the sake of them that are held captive; / when the pure Virgin, His Mother, saw Him on the cross, / she cried aloud in pain: / 'Woe is me, my Child; / what is this that Thou hast done? / Thou, Who wast, in beauty, fairer than all mortal men, / now, appearest without life and form, / having neither shape nor comeliness: / woe is me, my light; / I cannot bear to look upon Thee sleeping; / and I am wounded inwardly; / a harsh sword hath pierced my heart; / I sing the praises of Thy passion; / I venerate Thy merciful kindness: // O long-suffering Lord, glory to Thee'.

Old Testament Readings

PROKEIMENON (Ps. 71) - Tone IV: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, * Who alone does wondrous things.

verse: Give the king Thy justice, O God, and Thy righteousness to the royal son.

Genesis (9:18–10:1) The sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah; and from these the whole earth was peopled. Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard. He drank some of the wine and became drunk, and he lay uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backwards and covered the nakedness of their father; their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, he said, 'Cursed be Canaan; lowest of slaves shall he be to his brothers.' He also said, 'Blessed by the Lord my God be Shem; and let Canaan be his slave. May God make space for Japheth, and let him live in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his slave.' After the flood Noah lived for three hundred and fifty years. All the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died. These are the descendants of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; children were born to them after the flood.

PROKEIMENON (Ps. 72) - Tone IV: It is good for me * to be near my God.
verse: Truly, God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.

Proverbs (12:23–13:9) One who is clever conceals knowledge, but the mind of a fool broadcasts folly. The hand of the diligent will rule, while the lazy will be put to forced labor. Anxiety weighs down the human heart, but a good word cheers it up. The righteous gives good advice to friends, but the way of the wicked leads astray. The lazy do not roast their game, but the diligent obtain precious wealth. In the path of righteousness there is life, in walking its path there is no death. A wise child loves discipline, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke. From the fruit of their words good people eat good things, but the desire of the treacherous is for wrongdoing. Those who guard their mouths preserve their lives; those who open wide their lips come to ruin. The appetite of the lazy craves, and gets nothing, while the appetite of the diligent is richly supplied. The righteous hate falsehood, but the wicked act shamefully and disgracefully. Righteousness guards one whose way is upright, but sin overthrows the wicked. Some pretend to be rich, yet have nothing; others pretend to be poor, yet have great wealth. Wealth is a ransom for a person's life, but the poor get no threats. The light of the righteous rejoices, but the lamp of the wicked goes out. By insolence the heedless make strife, but wisdom is with those who take advice. Wealth hastily gained will dwindle, but those who gather little by little will increase it. Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life. Those who despise the word bring destruction on themselves, but those who respect the commandment will be rewarded. The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, so that one may avoid the snares of death. Good sense wins favor, but the way of the faithless is their ruin. The clever do all things intelligently, but the fool displays folly. A bad messenger brings trouble, but a faithful envoy, healing. Poverty and disgrace are for the one who ignores instruction, but one who heeds reproof is honored. A desire realized is sweet to the soul, to turn away from evil is an abomination to fools.