

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2021
SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE

The Sunday after the Sunday of Zacchaeus is devoted to the Publican and the Pharisee. At Vespers the night before, the TRIODION (the liturgical book used in the services of Great Lent) begins.

Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee who scrupulously observed the requirements of religion: he prayed, fasted, and contributed money to the Temple. These are very good things, and should be imitated by anyone who loves God. We who may not fulfill these requirements as well as the Pharisee did should not feel entitled to criticize him for being faithful. His sin was in looking down on the Publican and feeling justified because of his external religious observances.

The second man was a Publican, a tax-collector who was despised by the people. He, however, displayed humility, and this humility justified him before God (Luke 18:14).

The lesson to be learned is that we possess neither the Pharisee's religious piety, nor the Publican's repentance, through which we can be saved. We are called to see ourselves as we really are in the light of Christ's teaching, asking Him to be merciful to us, deliver us from sin, and to lead us on the path of salvation.

GREAT VESPERS

LORD I CALL: Seven stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 4, followed by 2 of the Triodion

We glorify Your Resurrection on the third day, O Christ God,
by always honoring Your life-creating Cross;
by it You have renewed the corrupted nature of mankind, O almighty One.
By it You have renewed our entrance to heaven,//
for You are good and the Lover of mankind.

You loosed the Tree's verdict of disobedience, O Savior,
by being voluntarily nailed to the tree of the Cross.
By descending to hell, O almighty God,
You broke the bonds of death.
Therefore, we adore Your Resurrection from the dead, singing in joy://
“Glory to You, O all powerful Lord!”

You smashed the gates of hell, O Lord,
and by Your death You demolished the kingdom of death.

You delivered the human race from corruption, //
granting the world life, incorruption and great mercy.

Come, O people,
let us sing of the Savior's Resurrection on the third day!
By it, we have been freed from the unbreakable bonds of hell.
By it, we have received life and incorruption.
Save us by Your Resurrection! //
Life-creating and almighty Savior, glory to You!

Angels and mortals sing of Your Resurrection on the third day, O Savior.
By it, the ends of the earth have been illuminated.
By it we have been delivered from bondage to the enemy.
Save us by Your Resurrection! //
Life-creating and almighty Savior, Glory to You!

You have shattered the gates of brass
and destroyed the chains of death, O Christ God.
You have raised the fallen human race. //
O Lord, risen from the dead, glory to You!

O Lord, Your begetting from the Father is timeless and everlasting.
Your incarnation from the Virgin is beyond words and understanding.
Your descent into hell is terrible for the devil and his angels.
You have trampled on death, rising on the third day, //
and granting mankind incorruption and great mercy.

Triodion, tone 1:

Brothers, let us not pray like the Pharisee.
He who exalts himself will be humbled!
Let us prepare to abase ourselves by fasting;
Let us cry aloud with the voice of the Publican:
“O God, forgive us sinners!”

The Pharisee went up to the temple with a proud and empty heart;
The Publican bowed himself in repentance.
They both stood before You, O Master:
The one, through boasting, lost his reward,
But the other, with tears and sighs, won Your blessing.
Strengthen me, O Christ our God, as I weep in Your presence,
Since You are the Lover of man!

GLORY... *Triodion, tone 8:*

I know the value of tears, O Almighty Lord:
They delivered Hezekiah from the gates of death,
And rescues the harlot from repeated sins;
Tears justified the Publican instead of the Pharisee.
I pray You, O Lord:
Number me with the former, and have mercy on me!

NOW AND EVER.. the Dogmatikon in tone 4:

The Prophet David was a Father of the Lord through you, O Virgin.
He foretold in songs the One Who worked wonders in you:
“At Your right hand stood the Queen,”
Your Mother, the mediatrix of life,
since God was freely born of her without a father.
He wanted to renew His fallen image, made corrupt in passion,
so He took the lost sheep upon His shoulder
and brought it to His Father, joining it to the heavenly pow’rs.//
Christ who has great and rich mercy has saved the world, O Theotokos.

APOSTIKHA: all stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 4:

By ascending the Cross, O Lord,
You have annulled our ancestral curse.
By descending to hell, You have freed the eternal prisoners,
granting incorruption to the human race.//
Therefore in songs we glorify Your life-creating and saving Resurrection.

By hanging upon the tree, O only powerful Lord,
You shook all of creation.
By being laid in the tomb You have raised those who dwelt in the tombs,
granting life and incorruption to the human race.//
Therefore in songs we glorify Your rising on the third day.

The lawless people, O Christ,
handed You over to Pilate, condemned to be crucified,
thus proving themselves ungrateful before their benefactor.
But voluntarily You endured burial,
rising by Your own power on the third day as God,//
granting us life everlasting and great mercy.

With tears the women reached Your tomb,
searching for You, but not finding You.
They wept with wailing and lamented:

“Woe to us! Our Savior, King of all,
how were you stolen?
What place can hold Your life-bearing body?”
An angel replied to them:
“Do not weep but go and proclaim that the Lord is risen,//
Granting us joy as the only compassionate One!”

GLORY...Triodion, tone 5:

The weight of my transgressions burdens my eyes;
I cannot lift my gaze to the heights of heaven, O Lord.
Accept me in repentance, as You accepted the Publican!
Have mercy on me, O Savior!

NOW AND EVER... we sing the Theotokion of the Resurrection in tone 5:

Most precious Virgin,
you are the gate, the temple,
the palace, the throne of the King.
From You, my Redeemer, Christ the Lord, appeared to those asleep in darkness.
He is the Sun of Righteousness,
Who desired to enlighten His image, whom He had created.
Since you possess motherly boldness before Him, all praised Lady,//
pray unceasingly that our souls may be saved!

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 4

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel
The joyous message of Thy Resurrection;
They cast away the ancestral curse
And elatedly told the apostles;
Death is overthrown!
Christ our God is risen,
Granting the world great mercy.

Glory...Now & ever...

Resurrection Dismissal Theotokion, tone 4

The mystery of all eternity,
unknown even by Angels,
through you, Theotokos, is revealed to those on earth:
God incarnate by union without confusion.
He voluntarily accepted the Cross for us,
by which He resurrected the first-created man,//
saving our souls from death.

DIVINE LITURGY

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 5

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,
coeternal 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.

Saint John of Damascus

Teacher of Orthodoxy, piety, and purity!
Enlightener of the universe!
And divine inspiration to monastics
by your teachings we are all enlightened,
and by your spiritual music, O all-wise John of Damascus,
pray to Christ our God for the salvation of our souls!

KONTAKIA

Saint John of Damascus

Let us the faithful sing praises to John,
worthy of great honor the composer of hymns.
The star and teacher of the Orthodox Faith,
the defender of its doctrine.
Through the might of the Lord's Cross he overcame heretical error!
Now he is fervent in prayer to Christ God,
to grant forgiveness of our sins.

Triodion, Publican & Pharisee, tone 4

Let us flee from the pride of the Pharisee
And learn humility from the Publican's tears.
Let us cry to our Savior:
Have mercy on us, O only merciful One!

PROKEIMENON, tone 4: O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all!

Vs. Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, Thou art very great!

EPISTLE: (296) 2 Timothy 3:10-15 My son Timothy, you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra. What persecutions I

endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered me! Yes, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Alleluia in the fourth tone: Go forth, prosper and reign, for the sake of meekness, righteousness and truth.

Vs. For Thou lovest righteousness and dost hate iniquity.

GOSPEL: (89) Luke 18:10-14 And the Lord said this parable: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

COMMUNION HYMN: Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!
Alleluia...

The Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee “The Pharisees were an ancient and outstanding sect among the Jews known for their diligent observance of the outward matters of the Law. Although, according to the word of our Lord, they “did all their works to be seen of men” (Mt. 23:5), and were hypocrites (Mt. 23:13-15, etc.), because of the apparent holiness of their lives they were thought by all to be righteous, and separate from others, which is what the name *Pharisee* means. On the other hand, Publicans, collectors of the royal taxes, committed many injustices and extortions for filthy lucre’s sake, and all held them to be sinners and unjust. It was therefore according to common opinion that the Lord Jesus in His parable signified a virtuous person by a Pharisee, and a sinner by a Publican, to teach His disciples the harm of pride and the profit of humble-mindedness.

Since the chief weapon for virtue is humility, and the greatest hindrance to it is pride, the divine Fathers have set these three weeks before the Forty-day Fast as a preparation for the spiritual struggles of virtue. This present week they have called *Harbinger*, since it declares that the Fast is approaching; and they set humility as the foundation for all our spiritual labors by appointing that the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee be read today, even before the Fast begins, to teach, through the vaunting of the Pharisee, that the foul smoke of self-esteem and the stench of boasting drives away the grace of the Spirit, strips man of all his virtue, and casts him into the pits of Hades; and, through the repentance and contrite prayer of the Publican, that humility confers upon the sinner forgiveness of all his wicked deeds and raises him up to the greatest height.”

