

**THE ASCENSION
OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

GREAT VESPERS

LORD I CALL: All stikhera of the Ascension, tone 6:

The Lord has ascended into heaven,
that He might send the Comforter to the world.
The heavens prepared His throne, and clouds -- His means of ascent.
Angels marvel to see a Man high above them.
The Father receives Him Whom He holds, co-eternal, in His bosom.
The Holy Spirit commands all His Angels:
“Lift up your gates, you princes!”!
All you nations, clap your hands: //
for Christ has gone up to where He was before!”

The Cherubim were amazed at Your Ascension, O Lord,
beholding You, the God Who sits enthroned upon them,
ascending upon the clouds;
and we glorify You, for Your mercy is good. //
Glory to You!

Beholding Your ascension on the holy mountain,
O Christ, the brightness of the Father’s glory,
we hymn the radiant appearance of Your countenance;
we worship Your sufferings,
we honor Your Resurrection,
as we glorify Your glorious Ascension. //
Have mercy on us!

Lord, when Your Apostles saw You carried up upon the clouds,
they were filled with despondency, O Christ, Giver of life:
with wailing and tears they lamented and said:
“Master, do not leave us orphans,
Your servants whom through pity You have loved, as You are compassionate;
but, as You promised, send us Your all-holy Spirit //
to enlighten our souls!”

Lord, when You had fulfilled the mystery of Your dispensation,
You took Your Disciples with You,
and were taking them up onto the Mount of Olives;
and behold, You passed through the firmament of heaven.
For my sake You became poor like me,

and ascended to the place from where You had not been parted: //
send forth Your all-holy Holy Spirit to illumine our souls!

Glory...now and ever... tone 6:

Not parted from the Father's bosom, O sweetest Jesus,
and having lived among those on earth as man,
today You have been taken up in glory from the Mount of Olives,
and exalting in Your compassion our fallen nature,
You have seated it with the Father.
Therefore the heavenly ranks of the Bodiless Powers were amazed at the wonder,
and beside themselves with fear;
and seized with trembling, they magnified Your love for mankind.
With them, we on earth also give glory
for Your condescension to us and Your Ascension from us;
and we supplicate You, saying:
“At Your Ascension You filled with boundless joy
the Disciples and the Theotokos who bore You; //
by their prayers make us also worthy of the joy of Your elect through Your great mercy!”

READINGS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. Isaiah 2:2-3

The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

Thus says the Lord: It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

2. Isaiah 62:10-63:3, 7-9

The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

Thus says the Lord: Go through and enter My gates; prepare My way and make a way for My people. Cast the stones out of the way; lift up a sign for the nations. For behold, the Lord has made it to be heard even to the ends of the earth, “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your Savior comes, having his reward with him, and his work before him.’” And they shall call them, The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord.” And you shall be called, A City Sought Out, and Not Forsaken. Who is this that comes from Edom, his garment red, from Bosray? Beautiful in his apparel, he cried out with great strength, “I speak of righteousness and a judgment of salvation!” Why are your garments red, and your apparel like his that treads in the winepress? “I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the nations no one was with me.” I remembered the mercy of the Lord, the virtues of the Lord according to all that He has granted us. The Lord is a good judge to the House of Israel; He deals with us according to His mercies, and according to the abundance of His righteousness. And He said, “Is it not My people? Children that will not be rejected?” And He became to them salvation out of all their

afflictions. Not a mediator, or an angel, but the Lord Himself saved them, because He loved them and spared them; He Himself redeemed them and accepted them, and lifted them up all the days of the age.

3. Zechariah 14:1,4, 8-11

The Reading from the Prophecy of Zechariah.

Thus says the Lord: Behold, the days of the Lord shall come, and His feet shall stand in those days on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem toward the east. And in those days living water shall come forth out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and half of them toward the western sea; and so shall it be in the harvest time and in the spring. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in those days there shall be one Lord. His name shall be one, encompassing all the earth, and the wilderness, from Geba to Rimmon, opposite the crest of Jerusalem. And she shall be lifted up, and abide in her place; from the gates of Benjamin to the place of the former gates, and to the gate of the corners, and from the Tower of Hananeel to the king's winepresses, they shall dwell in her. And no longer shall there be a curse; but Jerusalem shall dwell securely.

LITYA, tone 1:

Having ascended to heaven from where You had descended,
do not leave us orphans, O Lord!

May Your Holy Spirit come, bringing peace to the world;

show the sons of men the works of Your power, //

O Lord Who love mankind!

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

tone 4:

Fulfilling, O Lord, in Your goodness,

the mystery hidden from ages and generations,

You came with Your Disciples to the Mount of Olives,

together with the Mother who bore You, the Maker and Creator of all;

for it was fitting that she who as a mother had been grieved beyond all at Your Passion,
should also be filled with exceeding joy at the glory of Your flesh.

In this joy we also partake at Your ascent into heaven, O Master, //

and we glorify Your great mercy that has come upon us.

APOSTIKHA: All Ascension, tone 2:

You were born, as You Yourself did will;

You appeared, as You Yourself desired;

You suffered in the flesh, O our God;

You rose from the dead, having trampled on death.

You were taken up in glory, You Who fill the universe,

and You sent us the Divine Spirit, //

that we may praise and glorify Your Godhead.

Verse: *Clap your hands, all peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy!*

As You were taken up, O Christ, from the Mount of Olives,
the Powers saw it and cried to one another: “Who is this?”
And they were told: “This is the Strong and Powerful One,
this is He Who is mighty in war,
this is truly the King of Glory.”
“And why are His garments crimson?”
“He has come from Bosor, that is, from the flesh.”
But, as God, You sat down at the right hand of Majesty
and have sent us the Holy Spirit, //
to guide and save our souls.

Verse: *God has gone up with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet!*

You ascended in glory from the Mount of Olives, O Christ our God,
in the presence of Your Disciples,
and sat down at the right hand of the Father,
You Who in Your Godhead fill the universe;
and You sent them the Holy Spirit, //
Who enlightens and strengthens and sanctifies our souls.

Glory...now and ever..., Tone 6:

God has gone up with a shout;
the Lord with the sound of a trumper,
to raise up Adam’s fallen image,
and send the Comforter Spirit, //
to sanctify our souls.

TROPARION, tone 4

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God,
granting joy to Your Disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit.
Through the blessing, they were assured
that You are the Son of God, //
the Redeemer of the world!

MAGNIFICATION

We magnify, we magnify You,
O Christ the giver of life,
and we honor Your divine Ascension into heaven
with Your Most pure body.