

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2022
THE EXPULSION OF ADAM FROM PARADISE
CHEESEFARE SUNDAY
The Holy 40 Martyrs of Sebaste

As we begin the Great Fast, the Church reminds us of Adam's expulsion from Paradise. God commanded Adam to fast (Gen. 2:16), but he did not obey. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and lost the life of blessedness, knowledge of God, and communion with Him, for which they were created. Both they and their descendants became heirs of death and corruption.

Let us consider the benefits of fasting, the consequences of disobedience, and recall our fallen state. Today we are invited to cleanse ourselves of evil through fasting and obedience to God. Our fasting should not be a negative thing, a mere abstention from certain foods. It is an opportunity to free ourselves from the sinful desires and urges of our fallen nature, and to nourish our souls with prayer, repentance, to participate in church services, and partake of the life-giving Mysteries of Christ.

At Forgiveness Vespers we sing: "Let us begin the time of fasting in light, preparing ourselves for spiritual efforts. Let us purify our soul, let us purify our body. As we abstain from food, let us abstain from all passion and enjoy the virtues of the spirit...."

GREAT VESPERS

***LORD I CALL:** Four stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 4 (spiral bound vespers book) followed by three from the Triodion and three for the Martyrs*

Triodion, tone 6:

The Lord took a handful of dust from the earth.
He breathed into it, and created me, a living man!
He made me lord and master of all things on earth;
Truly I enjoyed the life of the angels!
But Satan the deceiver, in the guise of a serpent, tempted me:
I ate the forbidden fruit, and forfeited the glory of God.
Now I have been delivered to the earth through death.//
O my compassionate Lord, call me back to Eden!

When the enemy tempted me,
I disobeyed Your command, O Lord.
I exchanged the glory of my immortal body for shame and nakedness.
Now I must wear garments of skins and fig-leaves;
I am condemned to eat the bread of bitter hardship by the sweat of my brow.
The earth is cursed, and brings forth thorns and husks for me.
O Lord, you took flesh from the Virgin in the fullness of time://
Call me back and restore me to Eden!

O Paradise, garden of delight and beauty,
Dwelling-place made perfect by God,
Unending gladness and eternal joy,
The hope of the Prophets and the home of the Saints,
By the music of your rustling leaves beseech the Creator of all
To open to me the gates which my sins have closed,
That I may partake of the tree of life and grace//
Which was given to me in the beginning.

Holy Martyrs, tone 2:

The holy Martyrs bravely endured their present suffering;
they rejoiced in things hoped for but not yet seen.
They said to each other:
“By stripping off our garments we have put off the old man.
The winter is cold and bitter, but Paradise will be warm and sweet.
The freezing is painful, but the reward will bring us joy.
Let us not be defeated, O brothers!
We suffer a little, but Christ will crown us with the laurel of
victory!//
He is our God and the Savior of our souls.”

The holy Martyrs threw their clothes aside;
fearlessly they entered the lake and encouraged one another:
“Remember that our fallen nature has been deprived of Paradise!
Let us care nothing for our corruptible flesh today!
The serpent once deceived us, handing over our bodies to death;
now let us win resurrection for all!
Let us scorn the ice and cold; let us hate our flesh,
and Christ will crown us with the laurel of victory!//
He is our God and the Savior of our souls.”

The holy Martyrs accepted their torments with joy.
They hurried to the frozen lake as to a comforting bath.
They said: “We will not fear the bitter cold.
Only let us escape Gehenna's flames!
Let a foot be burned, that it may rejoice eternally!
Let a hand be lost, offered to the Lord in sacrifice!
Let us not refuse death in the flesh!
Embrace death, and Christ will crown us with the laurel of
victory!//
He is our God, and the Savior of our souls.”

GLORY...Triodion, tone 6:

Adam sat before the gates of Eden,
Bewailing his nakedness and crying out:
Woe to me! I have listened to wicked deceit:
I have lost my glory, and now am driven away!

Woe to me! My open-mindedness has left me naked and confused!
No longer will I enjoy your delights, O Paradise;
No longer can I see my Lord, My God and Creator.
He formed me from dust, and now to the dust I return!
I beg You, O Compassionate Lord://
Have mercy on me, who has fallen!

***NOW AND EVER... the Dogmatikon in tone 4 (spiral
bound vespers book)***

THREE OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah: All the nations gather together and the peoples assemble. Which of them foretold this and proclaimed to us the former things? Let them bring in their witnesses to prove they were right, so that others may hear and say, “It is true.” “You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior. I have revealed and saved and proclaimed — I, and not some foreign god among you. You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “that I am God. Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?” This is what the LORD says — your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sake I will send to Babylon and bring down as fugitives all the Babylonians, in the ships in which they took pride. *Isaiah 43:9-14*

The Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon: But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment can ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish, they seem to have died, and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction — but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of Himself; like gold in a furnace He tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering He accepted them. In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever. Those who trust in Him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with Him in

love, because grace and mercy are upon His elect, and He watches over His holy ones. *Wis.3:1-9*

The Reading from the Wisdom of Solomon:

But the righteous live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord; the Most High takes care of them. Therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord, because He will cover them with His right hand, and with His arm He will shield them. The Lord will take His zeal as His whole armor, and will arm all creation to repel His enemies; He will put on righteousness as a breastplate, and wear impartial justice as a helmet; He will take holiness as an invincible shield, and sharpen stern wrath for a sword, and creation will join with Him to fight against the madmen. Shafts of lightning will fly with true aim, and will leap to the target as from a well-drawn bow of clouds, and hailstones full of wrath will be hurled as from a catapult; the water of the sea will rage against them, and rivers will relentlessly overwhelm them; a mighty wind will rise against them, and like a tempest it will winnow them away. Lawlessness will lay waste the whole earth, and evil-doing will overturn the thrones of rulers. Listen, therefore, O kings, and understand; learn, O judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, you that rule over multitudes, and boast of many nations. For your dominion was given to you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High, who will search out your works and inquire into your plans. *Wis. 5:15-6:3*

APOSTIKHA: All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 4

GLORY... Martyrs tone 6:

O faithful, let us praise the forty passion-bearing Martyrs in hymns!
Singing in harmony let us cry out to them saying:
“Rejoice, O sufferers of Christ:
Hesýchius, Méliton, Heráclius, Smarágdus and Domnus;
Euónicus, Válens and Vivíanus;
Claudius and Priscus!
Rejoice, Theódulus, Euthýchius and John,
Xanthéas, Hiliánus, Sisínus, Kýrion, Angíus, Aétius and Flavius!
Rejoice, Acácíus, Ecdíkíus, Lysimáchus, Alexander,
Elías and Candidus,
Theóphilus, Dométian and Gáius

with the Godly Gorgonius!

Rejoice, Leóntius and Athanasius,

Cýril and Sacerdon,

Nicholas and Valerius,

Philóctimon, Sevérian, Chudíon and Aglái^{us}!

You have boldness before Christ our God, most honored Martyrs.

Beseech Him earnestly//

that those who keep your most precious memory with faith may be saved!

NOW AND EVER... from the Triodion, tone 6:

Adam ate the forbidden fruit and was driven from paradise.

He sat outside, weeping bitterly:

Woe to me! What will become of me, a worthless man?

I disobeyed one command of my Master, and lost every good thing!

O Holy Paradise, planted for me by God

And closed by the weakness of Eve,

Grant that I may once again gaze on the flowers of your gardens!

The Savior said to him:

I do not wish the death of my creation!

I desire that all should be saved

And come to the knowledge of the truth,//

For he who comes to me I shall never cast out!

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 4

When the women disciples of the Lord

learned from the angel the joyous message of Your Resurrection,

they cast away the ancestral curse

and elatedly told the apostles:

“Death is overthrown!

Christ God is risen,//

granting the world great mercy!”

Holy 40 Martyrs, tone 1

Through the sufferings which Your holy Forty Martyrs endured for

Your sake, O Lord,

we beseech You, O Lover of ^mankind:://

“Heal all of our infirmities!”

Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, tone 1

When Gabriel announced to you, O Virgin, saying “Rejoice!”

with that word the Master of all was incarnate in ^you,

the holy Ark, spoken of by the righteous David!

Your womb became more spacious than the heavens,

for you carried your Creator.

Glory to Him Who took abode in you!

Glory to Him Who came ^forth from you!//

Glory to Him Who freed us by being born of you!

VESPERS of FORGIVENESS

LORD I CALL,

Penitential Stikhera, tone 4:

Lord, I long to wash away with tears the record of all my sins,

and to spend the remaining days of my life

pleasing You through repentance,

but the Enemy continually deceives me.

He wages war against my soul.//

Save me before I perish completely, O Lord!

Who, when caught in a storm, if he runs to this haven is not saved?

Or who that is sick, if he runs to this healing, is not made whole?

O Creator of all and Physician of the sick,//

Save me before I perish completely, O Lord!

Wash me in my tears, O Savior,

for I am defiled by many sins!

Therefore I fall before You://

I have sinned; have mercy on me, O God!

I, a sheep of Your rational flock,

flee for refuge to You, the Good Shepherd.

O God, I have gone astray;//

seek me, and have mercy on me!

Triodion, tone 2:

Let us humble the flesh by abstinence.

As we follow the divine path of pure fasting.

With prayers and tears let us seek the Lord who saves us.

Let us put an end to anger crying out:

Save us who have sinned against Thee!

Save us, O Christ our King, as Thou didst save the men of

Nineveh,//

And make us partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom,

O compassionate One!

When I think of my deeds, O Lord,

I am filled with despair

And know that I am worthy of every torment.

I have despised Thy commandments, O Savior.

I have spent my life as a prodigal.

I pray to Thee, O only merciful One!

Cleanse me by repentance,

Enlighten me through prayers and fasting,//

And despise me not, O most gracious Benefactor of all!

Let us begin the fast with joy!

Let us prepare ourselves for spiritual efforts!

Let us cleanse our soul and cleanse our flesh!

Let us abstain from every passion as we abstain from food!

Let us rejoice in virtues of the spirit and fulfill them in love!

That we all may see the passion of Christ our God,//

And rejoice in spirit at the Holy Pascha!

GLORY...NOW AND EVER... tone 4:

Wash away the filth of the passions of my heart,

O all-praised Theotokos,

and cleanse all the wounds that come from my sins and their

corruption, O pure one!

Set in order my unstable mind,

so that I, who am condemned and am your worthless servant,//

may magnify your power and great protection!

PROKEIMENON, tone 8: Turn not away Thy face from Thy child for I am afflicted. Hear me speedily draw near unto my soul, and deliver me.

APOSTIKHA, tone 4:

Your grace has shone forth, O Lord:
the grace which illuminates our soul.

This is the acceptable time!

This is the time of repentance!

Let us lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of
light,

that passing through the Fast as through a great sea
we may reach the Resurrection on the third day//
of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls.

You are glorified
in the memory of Your saints, O Christ God.//
At their supplications, send down on us Your great mercy!

GLORY...NOW AND EVER... tone 4:

The angelic hosts glorify you, O Mother of God,
for you gave birth to God,
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,
Who, by His own desire, created the angelic hosts out of nothing.
Beseech Him to deliver from corruption and to enlighten//
the souls of those who rightly praise you, O most pure one!

LENTEN VESPERS TROPARIA

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Mary full of grace, the Lord is with
you;

Blessed are you among women and blessed is the Fruit of your
womb,

For you have borne the Savior of our souls. (*prostration*)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

O Baptizer of Christ, remember us all,

That we may be delivered from our iniquities

For to you is given the grace to intercede for us. (*prostration*)

Now and ever and unto ages of ages, Amen.
Intercede for us, O Holy Apostles and all you saints,
That we may be delivered from perils and sorrows,
For we have acquired you as fervent pleaders before the Savior.
(*prostration*)

Beneath your compassion we take refuge, O Theotokos;
Do not despise our supplications in adversity,
But deliver us from perils, O only pure, only blessed one.

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