

Psalm 103

Of David. Concerning the world's establishment.

1. O my soul, Bless the Lord. O Lord, my God, Thou hast been greatly exalted.
2. Thou have been robed in praise and magnificence. Light covers Thee like a mantle.
 3. Thou who tosses aside heaven as if it were a curtain;
Who covers His chambers in the waters; Who arranges the clouds for His pedestal; who walks upon the wings of the wind.
4. Who fashions His angels of spirits, and His servants of flaming fire.
5. Who established the earth in its firmness from which
It shall not be made to wander, forever and ever.
6. The abyss like a garment is its raiment; the waters shall stand upon the mountains.
7. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder they shall be terrified.
 8. The mountains rise up and the plains sink down,
unto the place where Thou hast established for them.
 9. Thou hath established a limit beyond which they shall not pass,
nor to return and cover the earth.
10. He issues springs in the valleys; between the mountains the waters will run.
11. They shall water all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will defer their thirst.
12. Among them roost the birds of the sky, from the midst of the rocks they clamor.
 13. The mountains gush water from their upper reaches;
the earth is satiated by the fruit of Thy work.
 14. He causes the fodder to spring out of the ground for the herds,
and greenery that by the efforts of man brings forth bread out of the earth.
15. Wine gladdens the heart of man, oil delights his face and bread strengthens a man's heart.
16. The woods of the plain are satisfied, even the cedars of Lebanon that have been planted.
 17. There sparrows build their nests; the herons prefer lodging among them.
 18. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and the rocks for the hares.
 19. He made the moon for the seasons; the sun knows his setting,
20. which causes darkness, and then it becomes night, when all the beasts of the forest emerge.
 21. Howling lion whelps grasp them, seeking their food from God.
 22. The sun rises, and they gather together to lie at rest in their dens.
 23. But man shall go forth to work and to his labor until the evening.
24. How great art Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom Thou have made
them all; the world of Thy creation has been fulfilled.
Who touches the mountains and they begin to smoke.

(The remainder of this Psalm and the commentary on its use is on Page 3)

SAINT SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

Ἁγίας Σοφίας τοῦ Θεοῦ

Washington, D.C.

February 7, 2010

Meatfare Sunday

The Tone for this day is - 2

The Morning Gospel of the Orthros is No. 2

Mark 16:1-8

And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back--it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Compiled by John P. Nasou, M.D.

PROKEIMENON: **The Lord is my might and my song.**
The Lord has chastened me sorely. Psalm 117:14 + 18

The Epistle is from St. Paul's 1st Letter to the Corinthians 8:8-13; 9:1-2

BRETHREN, food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if any one sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall.

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

The Gospel Lesson is from Matthew 25:31-46

THE LORD SAID, "When the Son of man comes in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

This is The Sunday of The Last Judgment.

Kontakion

God, when you come to this world in glory
and the universe trembles,
Rivers of fire flowing before your footsteps,
When books are thrown open and their secrets revealed,
Then rescue me from the unquenchable flames,
and, O beneficent Judge,
find me worthy to stand at your right hand!

Today look up at the arch above the soleas and you will see the Judgment Seat prepared before all ages for the second coming of Jesus Christ. Upon it sits the closed book which contains the dark secrets of all mankind, which will be thrown open on that fateful day. This seat and book are termed the "Etimasia" - the preparation - and we should all be prepared to face our Lord Jesus Christ when he returns to judge the living and the dead.

(This is the continuation of Psalm 103 from page 4)

25. This sea, so great and spacious, within it are innumerable creeping creatures, little ones along with the large.
26. Therein ships go about; also the dragon that Thou hast made to play in it.
27. All of them look to Thee to give them their food in due time.
28. When Thou give it to them, they gather it. On opening Thy hand, all things are replete with goodness.
29. On turning Thy face away, they are troubled. Take away their spirit and they cease to exist; and they return to dust.
- 30. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they are created; and Thou renewest the face of the earth.**
31. The glory of the Lord is unto the ages; the Lord rejoices in His works.
32. Who looks upon the earth and causes it to tremble,
Who touches the mountains and they begin to smoke.
33. I will sing unto the Lord in my life, I will chant to my God as long as I exist.
34. Should my speech be pleasing to Him, I will rejoice in the Lord.
35. If only sinners, and the wicked, would cease from the earth, and no longer exist.
Bless the Lord, O my soul.
Glory, now and ever. Alleluia

This, the third of the 14th Kathisma, is a tribute to God's creation of the world, and is the first of a series of three psalms relating the history of the Hebrew people. It is read during the Vespers service, being considered a "*sunset psalm*." It is also sung on Pentecost because of the message conveyed by verse 30

Verses 24 + 1 serve as the prokeimenon on Sunday Liturgies of tone 4, as well as on the great feast of our Lord's Transfiguration. Verses 1 and 2 (combined with psalm 97:8 + 9) serve as the first antiphon on the feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord. Verses 4 + 1 serve as the Prokeimenon of The Synaxis of the Archangels (Nov. 8) and on all Mondays the day dedicated to the Angelic Hosts. Verse 3 is heard in the Orthros of the fore feast of Theophany for its mention of water.