

PSALM 122

A Song of Ascent

1. Unto Thee I have lifted up my eyes, to Thee that dwelleth in heaven.
2. Behold, as the eyes of a servant to the hands of his master,
as the eyes of a maid to the hands of her mistress;
so our eyes are directed to the Lord our God,
until He has compassion upon us.
3. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us:
for we are exceedingly despised.
- 4 Our soul has been exceedingly filled with it.
May the reproach be to the fortunate ones,
and contempt to the proud.

This psalm is the fourth within Kathisma XVIII. It is sung during the Liturgy on the Entry of the Theotokos to the temple.

Psalm 119 and the following psalms through Psalm 133 are titled *Songs of Ascent* [Ὁδὴ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν] because they were sung by the Hebrews as they ascended up the mount to Jerusalem on their high holidays when this journey was a pilgrimage for them to the Temple. All of these psalms are read during the Kathismata of the Presanctified Liturgy as a sign of our ascent through Great Lent to Pascha.

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SAINT SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

Ὁ Ναός τῆς Αγίας Σοφίας τοῦ Θεοῦ

Washington, D.C.

July 4, 2010

Sixth Sunday of Matthew

The Tone for this day is Plagial 1

The Morning Gospel of the Orthros is No. 6

Luke 24:36-53

At that time, Jesus went up stood among his disciples and said to them, "Peace be with you!" But they were startled and supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate before them. Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Prokeimenon: You, O Lord, shall keep us and preserve us.
Save me, O Lord, for the godly man has failed. Ps. 11: 7, 1

The Epistle is from Paul's letter to Romans 12:6-14

BRETHREN having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

📖 Paul reveals that through God's grace we each receive a gift to do good and he tells us to "use them". It is a sin for us not to seek out our gift and to use it for our own benefit, but more importantly, for the benefit of our fellow man. He goes on to give us examples of virtues and how to use these and he urges forgiveness.

The Gospel Reading is from Matthew 9:1-8

AT THAT TIME JESUS getting into a boat crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" --he then said to the paralytic--"Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

📖 Jesus, being God, could foresee the intentions of those who faced Him. He sees the *faith* of the people who brought the paralytic and He gives to him a gift of faith - his sins were forgiven, something only God could do. Moreover He knew the thoughts of the scribes even though they had not spoken, and He confronted them with this knowledge. He then went on to show them that He not only had the authority from heaven, but He also rules the earth and could heal illness as well as forgive sins.

Andrew of Crete, the Jerusalemite is commemorated this day

Saint Andrew was born in Damascus around 660 of George and Gregoria, both pious parents. Having received an excellent education he served as secretary to Theodore, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who ordained a cleric. It was from this site of activities that he was called the "Jerusalemite." He was sent to Constantinople at 680 to attend the Sixth Ecumenical Council, convoked by the Emperor Constantine IV against the Monothelite heresy. He stayed there in one of the monasteries of the capital. Subsequently he became a deacon of the Church of Constantinople and director of the Holy Wisdom Orphanage and Saint Eugene's home for destitute elderly men. From there he was appointed Archbishop of Gortyna in Crete. He attended the Council in Trullo in 692. In 712 during the reign of Philippicus Bardanes, weakened by illness, he accepted the Monothelite definition of the heretical synod which this emperor had convened. However he immediately repented and abjured it. He left numerous writings to the Church, and hymns in praise of God, the Theotokos, and the Saints. Among the most famous of his hymns is the Great Canon that is chanted on Thursday of the fifth week of the Great Fast. This was the first of the melodious Canons. He defended the veneration of the Holy Icons and died in peace on the Island of Mytilene in 723. He is honored with these hymns:

Apolytikion in the Fourth Tone

The truth of things has revealed you to your flock
as a rule of faith, an icon of meekness, and a teacher of temperance;
for this reason, you have achieved the heights by humility, riches by poverty,
O Father and Hierarch Andrew,
intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

Kontakion in the Second Tone

While trumpeting forth the songs of God with clarity,
you also proved to be a blazing light for all the world,
O most righteous Andrew, who had shone with the light of the Trinity.
Wherefore, we all cry out to you: Cease not to entreat the Master for us all.