

## PSALM 123

*A Song of Ascent*

1. Had it not been that the Lord was among us, truly Israel could say:
2. If it had not been that the Lord was among us, when men rose up against us,
  3. indeed they would have swallowed us alive,  
when their wrath was inflamed against us:
  4. verily the waters would have drowned us,  
our soul would have gone under the torrent.
5. Yes, our soul would have gone under the overwhelming water.
6. Blessed be the Lord, who has not given us up to be hunted by their teeth.
7. Our soul like a sparrow has been delivered from the snare of the hunters:  
the snare is broken, and we are delivered.
  8. Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
who made the heaven and the earth.

*Glory, now and ever. Alleluia*

This is the fifth psalm within Kathisma XVIII.

Psalm 119 and the following psalms through Psalm 133 are titled *Songs of Ascent* [Ὕμνοι 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 11, 2010

Seventh Sunday of Matthew

The Tone for this day is Plagal 2

The Morning Gospel of the Orthros is No. 7

John 20:1-10

On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, <sup>7</sup>and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes.

**Prokeimenon:** O Lord, save your people, and bless your inheritance.  
To you, O Lord, have I cried O my God. (Psalm 27:9, 1)

### **The Epistle is from St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians 6:1-10 In Commemoration of St. Euphemia the Great Martyr**

BRETHREN, working together with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

### **The Gospel Reading is from Matthew 9:27-35 The Seventh Sunday of Matthew**

AT THAT TIME, as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, "See that no one knows it." But they went away and spread his fame through all that district. As they were going away, behold, a dumb demoniac was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons." And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

## **The Miracle by St. Euphemia the Great Martyr**

In 451, during the reign of the Sovereigns Marcian and Pulcheria, the Fourth Ecumenical Council was convoked in Chalcedon against Eutyches and those of like mind with him. After much debate, the Fathers who were the defenders of Orthodoxy, being 630 in number, agreed among themselves and with those who were of contrary mind, to write their respective definitions of faith in separate books, and to ask God to confirm the truth in this matter. When they had prepared these texts, they placed the two tomes in the case that held Saint Euphemia's relics, sealed it, and departed. After three days of night-long supplications, they opened the reliquary in the presence of the Emperor, and found the tome of the heretics under the feet of the Martyr, and that of the Orthodox in her right hand. St. Euphemia is also commemorated on September 16 as a martyr. Today's commemoration is for the miraculous event noted above.

### **St. John Chrysostom's Exegesis of today's Gospel Lesson**

*"And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed Him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. And when He was come into the house, the blind men came to Him: and Jesus says unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord. Then touched He their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened."* Wherefore can it be that He puts them off, and they crying out? Here again teaching us utterly to repel the glory that comes from the multitude. For because the house was near, He leads them thither to heal them in private. And this is evident from the fact, that He charged them moreover to tell no man. But this is no light charge against the Jews; when these men, though their eyes were struck out, receive the faith by hearing alone, but they beholding the miracles, and having their sight to witness what was happening, do all just contrary. And see their earnestness also, both by their cry, and by their prayer itself. For they did not merely approach Him, but with loud cries, and alleging naught else but "mercy." And having brought them into the house, He puts to them a further question. For in many cases He made a point of healing on entreaty, lest any should suppose Him to be rushing upon these miracles through vainglory: and not on this account alone, but to indicate also that they deserve healing, and that no one should say, "If it was of mere mercy that He saved, all men ought to be saved." For even His love to man has a kind of proportion; depending on the faith of them that are healed. But not for these causes only does He require faith of them, but forasmuch as they called Him "Son of David," He to lead them up to what is higher, and to teach them to entertain the imaginations they ought of Himself, says, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" He did not say, "Believe ye that I am able to entreat my Father, that I am able to pray" but, "that I am able to do this?" What then is their word? "Yea, Lord." They call Him no more Son of David, but soar higher, and acknowledge His dominion.