

PSALM 126

A song of Ascents

1. If the Lord does not build the house, they that build it have labored in vain.
If the Lord does not guard the city, the watchman is sleepless in vain.
2. In vain should you rise early, you should arise after resting.
Who would eat the bread of grief, when he can give sleep to his beloved.
3. Behold, the inheritance of the Lord, children,
the reward of the fruit of the womb.
4. Just as arrows are in the hand of the mighty,
so are sons to those of little repute.
5. Blessed is he that fulfills his desire with them,
for he will not be ashamed when he speaks to his enemies at the gates.

This is the eighth psalm of Kathisma XVIII. Because of verse one, it is said during the Consecration of a Church.

Psalms 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.

Compiled by John P. Nasou, M.D.

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SAINT SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

Ὁ Ναός τῆς Αγίας Σοφίας τοῦ Θεοῦ

Washington, D.C.

August 1, 2010

Tenth Sunday of Matthew

The Tone for this day is the First

The Morning Gospel of the Orthros is No. 10

John 21:1-14

At that time, Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. ³Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No."⁶He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off. When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

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PROKEIMENON:

Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us.
Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous Psalm 32: 22 + 1

The Epistle is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 4:9-16

BRETHREN, God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the off-scouring of all things. I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.

The Gospel is from Matthew 17:14-23

AT THAT TIME, a man came up to Him and kneeling before Him said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not heal him." And Jesus answered, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move hence to yonder place,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you." As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day."

From St. John Chrysostom's Homily on Today's Epistle

"For I think that God has set forth us the Apostles last of all, as men doomed to death." There is great depth of meaning and severity implied again in his saying, "us:" and not even with this was he satisfied, but added also his dignity, hitting them vehemently: "us the Apostles;" who are enduring such innumerable ills; who are sowing the word of Godliness; who are leading you unto this severe rule of life. These "He has set forth last, as doomed to death," that is, as condemned. For since he had said, "That we also might reign with you," and by that expression had relaxed his vehemence in order not to dispirit them; he takes it up again with greater gravity, and says, "For I think that God has set forth us the Apostles last, as men doomed to death." "For according to what I see," says he, "and from what ye say, the most abject of all men and emphatically the condemned, are we who are put forward for continual suffering. But you have already a kingdom and honors and great rewards in your fancy." And wishing to carry out their reasoning to still greater absurdity, and to exhibit it as incredible in the highest degree, he said not merely, "We are 'last,'" but, "God made us last;" nor was he satisfied with saying, "last," but he added also, "doomed to death:" to the end that even one quite void of understanding might feel the statement to be quite incredible, and his words to be the words of one vexed and vehemently abashing them.

Observe too the good sense of Paul. The topics by which, when it is the proper time, he exalts and shows himself honorable and makes himself great; by these he now puts them to shame, calling himself "condemned." Of so great consequence is it to do all things at the befitting season. By "doomed to death," in this place he means "condemned," and deserving of ten thousand deaths.

Let us not then desire any others to applaud us. For this is to insult Him; hastening by Him, as if insufficient to admire us, we make the best of our way to our fellow servants. For just as they who contend in a small theatre seek a large one, as if this were insufficient for their display; so also do they, who contending in the sight of God afterwards seek the applause of men; giving up the greater praise and eager for the less, they draw upon themselves severe punishment. What but this has turned every thing upside down? this puts the whole world into confusion, that we do all things with an eye to men, and even for our good things, we esteem it nothing to have God as an admirer, but seek the approbation which comes from our fellow-servants: and for the contrary things again, despising Him we fear men. And yet surely they shall stand with us before that tribunal, doing us no good. But God whom we despise now shall Himself pass the sentence upon us.