

## PSALM 96

*For David, when his land was restored to him. Untitled in the Hebrew.*

- 1 The Lord reigns, may the earth rejoice;  
and the multitude of islands be glad.
- 2 Clouds and darkness surround Him; righteousness and  
judgment are the foundation of His throne.
- 3 Fire shall go before Him, and flames shall encompass His enemies.
- 4 His lightning has glowed throughout the world;  
the earth had seen it, and was moved.
- 5 The mountains, like wax, melted at the presence of the Lord,  
at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
- 6 The heavens proclaimed His righteousness,  
and all the people beheld His glory.
- 7 Shamed were all that worship graven images,  
those who boast of their idols.  
Worship Him, all His angels.
- 8 Zion heard, and was pleased,  
and the daughters of Judea rejoiced  
because of Thy judgments, O Lord.
- 9 For Thou, O Lord, are highest over all the earth;  
Thou art exalted greatly above all the gods.
- 10 They that love the Lord, abhor evil.  
The Lord preserves the souls of His saints;  
He will rescue them out of the hands of the wicked.
- 11 A Light has risen unto the righteous,**  
and joy for the decent at heart.
- 12 Rejoice, you righteous in the Lord,**  
and give thanks at the memory of His holiness.  
*Glory. Both now. Alleluia.*

A Psalm of the 13th Kathisma. This psalm gives voice to the our Lord's promise of bringing salvation to all the people.

Verses 11 and 12 serve as the Alleluia refrain at the Synaxis of John the Baptist.

Compiled by John P. Nasou, M.D.

## SAINT SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

Ἁγία Σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ

Washington, D.C.

December 20, 2009

Sunday Before the Nativity of Our Lord

The Tone for this day is Three

The Morning Gospel of the Orthros is No. Six

Luke 24:36-53

As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" But they were startled and frightened and thought 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:** Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers.  
For You are just in all You have done. Daniel 3: 26 + 27

### **The Epistle is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40**

BRETHREN, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

### **The Gospel is from Matthew 1:1-25**

The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. →

## **Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord, Jesus Christ**

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

<<<<+>>>>

### **Apolytikion Tone 2**

**Great are the achievements of faith!**

**In the fountain of flame, as in refreshing water, the Three Holy Children rejoiced.**

**And the Prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep.**

**By their prayers, O Christ our God, save our souls.**

### **Kontakion Tone 1**

**O Bethlehem, rejoice! Make ready, Ephratha!**

**The ewe is hastening to give birth to the Great Shepherd Whom she carries in her womb.**

**The Godbearing Fathers rejoice at seeing Him,  
and the Shepherds praise the Virgin who suckles Him.**