

TEXTS FOR VESPERS ON WEDNESDAY 14th APRIL 2021

✠ “LORD I CALL ...”

Tone 8

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Hear me, O Lord!
Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Receive the voice of my prayer,
when I call upon Thee!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise
in Thy sight as incense,
and let the lifting up of my hands
be an evening sacrifice!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Let the wicked together fall into their own nets, while I escape.

Tone 8 *(For the Apostles)*

Thou madest Thy disciples into living heavens, O Lord.
By their prayers deliver me from the evils of this earth,
and by abstinence lift up my thoughts to Thy Passion,//
for Thou art merciful and lovest man!

I cry with my voice to the Lord, with my voice I make supplication to the Lord.

This season of fasting helps us all to do the works of God.
Let us weep, then, with our whole heart and cry to the Saviour:
“Through Thy disciples, save us, O Lord of great mercy,//
as with reverence we sing of Thy great love for man!”

I pour out my complaint before Him, I tell my trouble before Him.

O Apostles, worthy of all praise and intercessors for the world,
physicians of the sick and guardians of health,
protect us on all sides as we pass through the Fast!
By God’s grace may we remain at peace with one another!
Preserve our minds untroubled by passions,//
so that we all may sing praises to the risen and victorious Christ!

When my spirit is faint, Thou knowest my way.

Tone 4 *(24 stichera by Simeon the Translator)*

I have wasted my whole life with harlots and publicans.
Will I be able to repent of my many sins even when I grow old?
I cry to Thee, the Creator of all and Healer of the sick://
“Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!”

In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me.

Weighed down with indifference, I wallow in sin.
Pierced by the devil's darts, I have defiled Thine image in me.
Yet Thou convertest the heedless and savest the sinful.//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

I look to the right and watch, but there is none who takes notice of me.

I have become a stumbling block.
Born of earth, I have remained attached to earthly things.
Wed to Thy commandments,
I transgressed them and defiled my bed.
Yet do not despise the creature whom Thou didst form of earth,//
but save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

No refuge remains to me, no man cares for me.

Obsessed with the flesh, I have murdered my soul.
I have become the demons' toy, the slave of lusts.
In Thy compassion, spare me! Put the demons to flight!//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

I cry to Thee, O Lord; I say, Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

More than all men I have wilfully sinned,
and this has left me helpless and forsaken.
As the enemy of my own soul, I have carnal thoughts that darken it.
O Light of those in darkness, Guide of all who go astray,//
save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

Give heed to my cry; for I am brought very low.

"Let me live, and I shall praise Thee," said the Prophet.
Seek me, Thy lost sheep, and number me among Thy flock!
Grant me time for repentance,
so that with cries of sorrow I may call upon Thee://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

Deliver me from my persecutors; for they are too strong for me.

I have sinned, O Christ my God.
I have sinned and rejected Thy commandments.
Be merciful to me, O Bountiful One,
so that escaping from the darkness
I may see with my inner eyes and cry to Thee in fear://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to Thy Name.

Wild beasts surround me,
but do Thou snatch me from them, O Saviour,
for Thou desirest that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth!
As their Creator, save them, and with them save me!//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

The righteous will surround me, for Thou wilt deal bountifully with me.

O my Benefactor, my Redeemer and my Saviour,
be also my healer and reject me not!
Look upon me as I lie in sin
and raise me up, O Almighty One!
Then shall I confess Thy deeds and cry to Thee://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!

Like the foolish servant
I have hidden the talent given to me and buried it in the ground.
I am condemned as useless and no longer dare to ask Thee for forgiveness.
But in Thy patience pity me, so that I may cry to Thee://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

When the woman with an issue of blood touched the hem of Thy garment,
Thou didst dry up the source of her sufferings.
If I also approach Thee with unwavering faith,
I will receive forgiveness of my sins.
Accept me as Thou didst accept her, and heal my grief and pain!//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.

O Lord, Who didst create heaven and earth by Thy word,
Thou shalt sit upon the throne for judgment.
All of us will stand in Thy presence and confess our sins.
Before that day comes, accept me in repentance!//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

For Thy Name's sake I wait for Thee, O Lord. My soul has waited for Thy word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.

O only Saviour,
look upon me with compassion and have mercy on me!
Wash me clean from the filth of my sins,
so that I may sing://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope on the Lord!

The devil has prepared his weapons to hunt down my humble soul.
He has made me a stranger to the light of the knowledge of Thy face.
But rescue me from his traps, for Thou art mighty in strength!//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

I am completely enslaved by the passions.
I have forsaken the Law and the Holy Scriptures.
Heal my every part, O loving Benefactor,
Who for my sake didst become as I am!
Pity me and convert me, O merciful Destroyer of the passions!//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!

The harlot washed Thy pure and precious feet with her tears.
She encourages all to approach Thee and receive remission of their sins.
Grant also unto me her faith, O Saviour,
so that I may cry to Thee://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

For His mercy is confirmed on us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

For my sake Thou wast made poor and becamest a young Child in the flesh.
Now cleanse my soul of all filth, O Christ!
I am weak and broken; send down a drop of Thy mercy on me!
Wash away the dirt, and heal me of my sickness!//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Strengthen my soul, O Master!
Let me run to Thee and always serve Thee,
for Thou art my Guardian and Protector, my Defence and my help!
Enable me to cry to Thee with boldness, O Word of God://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Be our unshakeable rampart, O Jesus, our Saviour and merciful God,
for we have fallen into deceitful ways and deeds!
Raise up Thy creature, O Benefactor,
and reconcile us to Thee in Thy compassion!//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

I am like the Prodigal Son,
for after wasting my riches I now am dying of hunger.
Receive me as Thou didst receive him, O loving Father,
for I seek refuge beneath Thy protection!
Let me eat at Thy table, so that I may cry to Thee://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Out of envy the author of evil drove Adam from Paradise,
but by saying "Remember me," the thief on the cross regained it.
With faith and fear I also cry to Thee, "Remember me!"//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Stretch out Thy hand to me as to Peter,
and raise me from the depths, O God!
Grant me grace and mercy, through the prayers of Thine all-pure Mother,
who gave birth to Thee without seed,
and of all Thy saints!//
Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

Receive me as I sing to Thee each day,
O Lamb, Who takest away my sins!
I commend my soul and body entirely into Thy hands,
and, as is my duty, I cry to Thee both day and night://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

What inexpressible loving-kindness,
O gracious and long-suffering Lord!
Cast me not away from Thy face,
O sinless and compassionate Saviour,
so that with thanksgiving and rejoicing I may cry to Thee://
"Save me before I completely perish, O Lord!"

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 4 (*Theotokion*)

What inexpressible condescension!
What a wonderful birth!
How does the Virgin carry Thee as a babe in her arms,
for Thou art her Creator and God?
O Benefactor Who hast consented to take flesh from her,//
save me before I completely perish, O Lord!

✠ **PROKEIMENON** Tone 4

The Lord God to Whom vengeance belongs: * the God to Whom vengeance belongs has spoken openly.

℟. Rise up, O Judge of the earth; reward the proud as they deserve.

✠ **The Reading from Genesis**

(17:1-9)

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am your God; be pleasing before Me and blameless. I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be your God and the God of your seed after you. Also I will give you and your seed after you the land you are occupying as a sojourner, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your seed after you throughout their generations."

✠ **PROKEIMENON** Tone 4

Sing unto the Lord a new song; * sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

℟. Sing to the Lord, bless His Name!

✠ **The Reading from the Proverbs of Solomon**

(15:22-33, 36-38; 16:1-5; 15:34-35)

A wise son gladdens a father, but a son without discernment treats his mother with contempt. The paths of one without understanding are in need of discernment, but a man with discernment walks uprightly. Those not honoring councils defer their deliberations, but counsel remains in the hearts of those who resolve to do it. The evil man will not obey counsel, nor will he speak anything appropriate, even something for the common good. The thoughts of a wise man are his ways of life, that he might turn aside and be saved from Hades. The Lord will destroy the houses of the arrogant, but He will strengthen the boundary of a widow. The thinking of the unrighteous man is an abomination to the Lord, but the words of the holy are sacred. He who receives bribes utterly destroys himself, but he who hates the receiving of bribes saves himself. Sins are cleansed by almsgiving and faithfulness, and by the fear of the Lord everyone turns aside from evil. The hearts of the righteous care about faithfulness, but the mouth of the ungodly answers evil things. The ways of righteous men are acceptable before the Lord, and through them even enemies become friends. God is far from the ungodly, but He hears the prayers of the righteous. The eye that beholds good things gladdens the heart, but a good report enriches the bones. He who rejects instruction hates himself, but he who gives heed to reproofs loves his soul. The fear of God is instruction and wisdom, and the beginning of glory will respond to it. All the works of the humble are evident before the Lord, but the ungodly will be destroyed in the evil day. Every high-hearted man is unclean before the Lord, and he who joins hands with the unrighteous will not go unpunished. The beginning of a good way is to do righteous things, and this is more acceptable to God than to offer sacrifices. He who seeks the Lord will find knowledge with righteousness, and those who seek Him rightly will find peace. All the works of the Lord are with righteousness, but the ungodly man is kept for an evil day. Better is a small yield with the righteous than abundant fruits with the unrighteous. Let the heart of a man think righteous things that he may make his steps straight under God.

✠ APOSTICHA

Tone 8

My thoughts, like thieves, have seized me, a wretched man.
My mind hath been robbed, and I have been sorely beaten.
My soul is wounded, and I am stripped of virtues.
I lie naked in the highway of life.
The priest saw my pain and hopeless wounds and looked away.
The Levite could not bear my groaning and passed me by.
But Thou wast pleased to come, O Christ my God,
not from Samaria but from the flesh of Mary.
In Thy love for man, grant me healing//
and pour upon me Thy great mercy!

℟. Unto Thee have I lifted up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven! Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid look unto the hands of her mistress, so do our eyes look unto the Lord our God, until He take pity on us.

Repeat: My thoughts, like thieves, have seized me, a wretched man ...

℟. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for greatly are we filled with abasement. Let reproach come upon them that prosper, and abasement on the proud.

Tone 8 *(For the Martyrs)*

Whatever is excellent and worthy of praise
is rightly ascribed to the saints,
for they bowed their necks beneath the sword,
for Thy sake, Who bowed the heavens and came down.
They shed their blood for Thee, Who emptied Thyself,
taking the form of a servant.
They humbled themselves even unto death,
following the example of Thy lowliness.
By their prayers have mercy on us, O God,//
according to Thine abundant mercy!

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Those who were worthy to behold God in the flesh
proclaimed thee to be a Bride and a Virgin, O Maiden,
worthy of the Father and his Divinity.
They proclaimed thee to be the Mother of God the Word,
and the dwelling of the Holy Spirit,
for the whole of Divinity,
the full and perfect Essence of Grace,//
bodily dwelt in thee.