

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, Octoechos Tone 8; The Conception of the Honourable and Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist, John

GREAT VESPERS

“Blessed is the man...” is sung.

At Psalm 140

In Tone 8

10. O Christ, during this spiritual service,
we sing to You these evening prayers,
commemorating the mercy You have shown us
by Your resurrection.

9. O Lord, O Lord, do not cast us away from Your face;
but in Your kindness have mercy on us
through Your resurrection.

8. Rejoice, O holy Zion,
the Mother of Churches and the dwelling-place of God;
for you were the first to receive the forgiveness of sins
through the resurrection.

7. Christ the Word was begotten by God the Father before all ages;
yet in these latter times,
He freely willed to take flesh from the Virgin who did not know man.
By His death on the cross and His resurrection,
He saved mankind from the ancient curse of death.

6. O Christ, we glorify Your resurrection;
for by rising from the dead
You freed the race of Adam from the sufferings of Hades,
and as God You granted eternal life
and great mercy to the world.

5. Glory to You, O Christ our Saviour,
the only-begotten Son of God;
for You were nailed to the cross,
and then arose from the dead on the third day.

In Tone 4

4. As the godly Zachariah sacrificed within the holy temple
and offered up the petitions of the people
to the benefactor and all-merciful One,

he beheld the holy angel who cried to him:
your prayer and petition have been heard!
Take courage, O priest, and believe in me,
for you will have a son, the holy Forerunner,
who will be greater than all those born of women!
Greater than Elijah in power, he will go before Christ!

3. As the godly Zachariah sacrificed within the holy temple
and offered up the petitions of the people
to the benefactor and all-merciful One,
he beheld the holy angel who cried to him:
your prayer and petition have been heard!
Take courage, O priest, and believe in me,
for you will have a son, the holy Forerunner,
who will be greater than all those born of women!
Greater than Elijah in power, he will go before Christ!

2. You appear strange to me in sight and manner, Zachariah replied;
strange in words and in report!
For I have come to ask the salvation of the people
and not to acquire a son as you proclaim.
I find you opposed to their request and fear you do not tell the truth.
For how will what you say be believed?
The limbs of Elizabeth have died, and I am already aged:
these are sure signs that I must not believe your words.

1. Why do you not believe my words, Zachariah?
Why do you say I bear false tidings?
As an archangel of God I stand with you;
what I have been commanded, that I say to you!
But since you were faithless and have not believed,
you will be dumb and speechless until you behold the divine fulfilment of my words.
When Elizabeth has borne the Voice and great Forerunner of the Word,
your tongue will be loosened and you will bless the God of Israel!

In Tone 6, Glory...

Today the fruit of prayer buds forth from a barren womb: John the Forerunner!
Wilderness, give glory! Dance, all people!
Behold, the herald of repentance begins to take flesh in his mother's womb!
Come, lovers of the feast!
Let us exult in his glorious conception, crying out:
you are greater than those born of women!
Do not cease to intercede for those who faithfully honour your divine conception,
that we may receive forgiveness of sins and great mercy!

In Tone 8, Now...

Out of his love for mankind
the King of heaven appeared on earth and dwelt with men,
for He assumed a human body from the pure Virgin
and was seen in the flesh He received from her.
He is the One and only God having two natures but not two persons.
Wherefore we profess and declare the truth
that Christ our God is perfect God and perfect Man.
O Mother, who knew not carnal union,
intercede with Him that He may have mercy on our souls.

Aposticha

In Tone 8

O Jesus, You descended from heaven
so that You might ascend the cross.
O immortal Life, You came to die.
You are the true light to those who live in darkness,
and You are the resurrection of the fallen.
Therefore, O Saviour of all, we glorify You.

*The Lord reigns, He is clothed in majesty. * Robed is the Lord, and girt about with strength.*

Let us glorify Christ, the Saviour of our Souls
Who arose from the dead.
For He took upon himself a soul and a body,
and during His passion He separated the one from the other.
His pure soul went down to conquer Hades,
while His holy body lay uncorrupted in the grave.

*For He has made the world firm. * which shall not be moved.*

O Christ, we glorify Your resurrection with psalms and hymns.
For by Your victory over death
You delivered us from the sufferings of Hades,
and as God You granted us eternal life and great mercy.

*Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, * for length of days.*

O Lord of all, Creator of heaven and earth,
You are above all understanding.
Through Your passion on the cross
You freed us from the sufferings of Hades.
And, after condescending to be buried, You arose in glory;
and with Your mighty arm You also raised up Adam.

O most merciful Lord, we glorify You;
for by Your resurrection on the third day
You granted us remission of sins and eternal life.

In Tone 6, Glory...

You came forth, Baptizer, an angel from a barren womb.
You dwelt in the desert from your very swaddling clothes;
shown forth as the seal of all the prophets:
for you were made worthy to baptize in the Jordan
the One whom they saw in various ways and foretold in figures!
You heard the Voice of the Father come from heaven
bearing witness to His sonship;
you saw the Spirit in the form of a dove
draw down the voice upon the One baptized.
Since you are greater than all the prophets,
do not cease to intercede for us who celebrate your memory in faith!

Now...

Christ the Lord, our Creator and Redeemer,
came forth from your womb, O most pure Virgin.
He clothed Himself in our human flesh
to set us free from the original curse of Adam.
Therefore, O Mary, we praise you, without ceasing,
as the true Virgin Mother of God,
and we sing with the angels:
Rejoice, O Lady, advocate, protector, and salvation of our souls.

Troparia

In Tone 8

You came down from on high, O Merciful One,* and accepted three days of burial* to free us from our sufferings.* O Lord, our life and our resurrection,** glory be to You.

In Tone 4

Rejoice, previously barren One!* For you have conceived the Light of the sun who is to illumine the whole universe darkened by blindness!* Rejoice, Zachariah and cry out with boldness,* for the prophet of the Most High desires to be born!

Glory... Now...

O Mother of God, the mystery hidden from all eternity* and unknown even to the angels,* was revealed through you to those on earth:* God took on our human nature* and united it to His divine nature in a perfect but unconfused union.* Then, He willingly accepted the cross for our sake* and thereby raised again the first created man,** and saved our souls from death.

