

# THE LAMENTATIONS SERVICE FOR HOLY SATURDAY MATINS

According to the order of the Lenten Triodion, the Matins service for Holy and Great Saturday is served Friday night, or on Friday evening as is the practice in most parish churches. This service includes what are called the Lamentations of the Theotokos. Our Lord Jesus Christ has been taken down from the cross, and His Most Pure Mother laments and grieves over His lifeless Body, but theologizes concerning the mystery of His death and our redemption. The Burial Shroud (in Greek, Epitaphios, Slavonic, Plashchanitsa) remains in the center of the church to symbolize Jesus's burial in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

The Lamentations consist of verses (troparia) called the "Praises" interspersed with verses of the 118th Psalm (17th kathisma), which is divided into three parts (staseis). In the Greek practice, you will hear the priest chant the Psalm verses, followed by the choir or cantor singing the Praises in a special sweet melody, imbued with an ineffable feeling of sorrow for a son, yet radiantly colored by a sacred love for His Divinity.

The Slav practice usually reverses this order, with the choir singing the Psalm verses, while the priest reads the Praises. Special melodies are sometimes used to convey the solemn feeling.

The Lamentation service is long, and constraints may cause a parish to omit them from the Matins services for Holy Saturday. For those who would like to follow along with the services, or who are unable to attend, or have a parish that does not have this practice, we have posted the Lamentations taken from the Lenten Triodion, translated by Mother Mary and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware. For the full text of this and other Great Lent and Holy Week services we highly recommend purchasing a copy of this priceless book from St. Tikhon's Press. Please see the video at the end of this page for an example of the Byzantine style Lamentations, sung by the Romanian Patriarchal Choir.

## **Matins**

### *TONE TWO*

Noble Joseph, taking down Thy most pure body from the Tree, wrapped it in clean linen with sweet spices, and he laid it in a new tomb.

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

Going down to death, O Life immortal, Thou hast slain hell with the dazzling light of Thy divinity. And when Thou hast raised up the dead from their dwelling place beneath the earth, all the powers of heaven cried aloud: "Giver of Life, O Christ our God, glory to Thee.'

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages, Amen.

The Angel stood by the tomb, and to the women bearing spices he cried aloud: "Myrrh is fitting for the dead, but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption."

#### FIRST STASIS *TONE FIVE*

**Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art those that are blameless in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.**

Thou who art the Life wast laid in a tomb, O Christ; and the hosts of angels were amazed and glorified Thy self-abasement.

**Blessed are they that search out His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart.**

O Life, how canst Thou die? How canst Thou dwell in a tomb? Yet Thou dost destroy death's kingdom and raise the dead from hell.

**For they that work wickedness have not walked in His ways.**

We magnify Thee, Jesus our King: we honour Thy burial and Thy sufferings, whereby Thou hast saved us from corruption.

**Thou hast commanded us to keep Thy precepts diligently.**

O Jesus, King of all, who hast set measures to the earth, Thou dost go this day to dwell in a narrow grave, raising up the dead from their tombs.

**O that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes!**

O Jesus, my Christ and King of all, why hast Thou come to those in hell? Is it to set free the race of mortal men?

**Then shall I not be ashamed, when I give heed unto all Thy commandments.**

The Master of all is seen lying dead, and in a new tomb He is laid, who empties the tombs of the dead.

**I will praise Thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness.**

Thou who art Life wast laid in a tomb, O Christ: by Thy death Thou hast destroyed death and art become a fountain of life for the world.

**I will keep Thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.**

Numbered with the transgressors, O Christ, Thou dost free us all from the guilt brought upon us of old by the deceiver.

**Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By keeping Thy words.**

Fairer in His beauty than all mortal men, He appears now as a corpse without form or comeliness, He who has made beautiful the nature of all things.

**With my whole heart have I sought Thee: O let me not wander from Thy commandments.**

How could hell endure Thy coming, O Saviour? Was it not shattered and struck blind by the dazzling radiance of Thy light?

**Thy words have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee.**

O Jesus, my sweetness and light of salvation, how art Thou hidden in a dark tomb? O forbearance ineffable, beyond all words!

**Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy statutes.**

The spiritual powers and the angelic hosts are amazed, O Christ, at the mystery of Thy burial past utterance and speech.

**With my lips have I declared all the judgements of Thy mouth.**

O strange wonder, new to man! He who granted me the breath of life is carried lifeless in Joseph's hands to burial.

**I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.**

Thou hast gone down into the tomb, O Christ, yet wast Thou never parted from Thy Father's side. O marvellous wonder!

**I will meditate on Thy precepts, and I will understand Thy ways.**

Though Thou wast shut within the narrowest of sepulchres, O Jesus, all creation knew Thee as true King of heaven and earth.

**My study shall be in Thy statutes : I will not forget Thy words.**

When Thou wast laid in a tomb, O Christ the Creator, the foundations of hell were shaken and the graves of mortal men were opened.

**O reward Thy servant: give me life, and I shall keep Thy words.**

He who holds the earth in the hollow of His hand is held fast by the earth; put to death according to the flesh, He delivers the dead from the grasping hand of hell.

**Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold the wondrous things of Thy law.**

O Saviour, my Life, dying Thou hast gone to dwell among the dead: yet Thou hast shattered the bars of hell and arisen from corruption.

**I am but a sojourner upon the earth: hide not Thy commandments from me.**

The flesh of God is hidden now beneath the earth, like a candle underneath a bushel, and it drives away the darkness in hell.

**My soul is consumed with the longing that it has for Thy judgements at all times.**

The multitude of the heavenly powers makes haste with Joseph and Nicodemus, and within a narrow sepulchre they enclose Thee whom nothing can contain.

**Thou hast rebuked the proud: and cursed are they that do err from Thy commandments.**

With Thine own consent slain and laid beneath the earth, O my Jesus, Fountain of Life, Thou hast brought me back to life when I was dead through bitter sin.

**Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have sought Thy testimonies.**

The whole creation was altered by Thy Passion: for all things suffered with Thee, knowing, O Word, that Thou holdest all in unity.

**Princes also did sit and speak against me: but Thy servant did meditate on Thy statutes.**

All-devouring hell received within himself the Rock of Life, and cast forth all the dead that he had swallowed since the beginning of the world.

**Thy testimonies also are my study: and Thy statutes are my counsellors.**

Thou wast laid in a new tomb, O Christ, and hast made new the nature of mortal man, rising from the dead by Thy divine power.

**My soul has cleaved unto the dust: quicken Thou me according to Thy word.**

To earth hast Thou come down, O Master, to save Adam: and not finding him on earth, Thou hast descended into hell, seeking him there.

**I have declared my ways, and Thou heardest me: teach me Thy statutes.**

The whole earth quaked with fear, O Word, and the daystar hid its rays, when Thy great Light was hidden in the earth.

**Make me to understand the way of Thy precepts: so shall I talk of Thy wondrous works.**

Willingly Thou diest as a mortal man, O Saviour, but as God Thou dost raise up the dead from the grave and from the depths of sin.

**My soul is grown drowsy from heaviness: strengthen me with Thy words.**

Tears of lamentation the pure Virgin shed over Thee, Jesus, and with a mother's grief she cried: "How shall I bury Thee, my Son?"

**Remove from me the way of lying: and take pity on me with Thy law.**

Buried in the earth like a grain of wheat, Thou hast yielded a rich harvest, raising to life the mortal sons of Adam.

**I have chosen the way of truth: Thy judgements have I not forgotten.**

Now art Thou hidden like the setting sun beneath the earth and covered by the night of death: but, O Saviour, rise in brighter dawn.

**I have stuck unto Thy testimonies: O Lord, put me not to shame.**

As the moon hides the circle of the sun, O Saviour, now the grave has hidden Thee, bodily eclipsed in death.

**I have run the way of Thy commandments: for Thou hast enlarged my heart.**

Christ the Life, by tasting death, has delivered mortal men from death, and now gives life to all.

**Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes; and I shall seek it always.**

Adam was slain of old through envy, but by Thy dying Thou hast brought him back to life, O Saviour, revealed in the flesh as the new Adam.

**Give me understanding, and I shall seek Thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.**

When the ranks of angels saw Thee, O Saviour, laid out dead for our sake, they were filled with wonder and veiled their faces with their wings.

**Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments; for therein do I delight.**

Taking Thee down dead from the Tree, O Word, Joseph now has laid Thee in a tomb: but rise up as God to save us all.

**Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.**

Thou art the Joy of the angels, O Saviour, but now Thou art become the cause of their grief, as they see Thee in the flesh a lifeless corpse.

**Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken Thou me in Thy way.**

Uplifted on the Cross, Thou hast uplifted with Thyself all living men; and then descending beneath the earth, Thou raisest all that lie buried there.

**Stablish Thy word in Thy servant, that I may fear Thee.**

As a lion hast Thou fallen asleep in the flesh, O Saviour, and as a young lion hast Thou risen from the dead, putting off the old age of the flesh.

**Take away my reproach which I fear: for Thy judgements are good.**

O Thou who hast fashioned Eve from Adam's side, Thy side was pierced and from it flowed streams of cleansing.

**Behold, I have longed after Thy precepts: quicken me in Thy righteousness.**

Of old the lamb was sacrificed in secret; but Thou, longsuffering Saviour, wast sacrificed beneath the open sky and hast cleansed the whole creation.

**Let Thy mercy come also upon me, O Lord, even Thy salvation, according to Thy word.**

Who can describe this strange and terrible thing? The Lord of Creation today accepts the Passion and dies for our sake.

**So shall I give an answer to them that reproach me: lor I trust in Thy word.**

“How do we see the Giver of Life now dead?” the angels cried in amazement. “How is God enclosed within a tomb?”

**And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in Thy judgements.**

Pierced by a spear, O Saviour, from Thy side Thou pourest out life upon Eve, the mother of all the living, who banished me from life; and Thou quickenest me also with her.

**So shall I keep Thy law continually for ever and ever.**

Stretched out upon the Wood, Thou hast drawn mortal men to unity; pierced in Thy life-giving side, O Jesus, Thou art become a fountain of forgiveness unto all.

**And I walked at liberty: for I have sought Thy precepts.**

With fear and reverence noble Joseph lays Thee out for burial as a corpse, O Saviour, and he looks with wonder on Thy dread form.

**I spoke of Thy testimonies also before kings, and was not ashamed.**

Of Thine own will descending as one dead beneath the earth, O Jesus, Thou leadest up the fallen from earth to heaven.

**And my study was in Thy commandments, which I have loved exceedingly.**

Dead in outward appearance, yet alive as God, O Jesus, Thou leadest up the fallen from earth to heaven.

**My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved.**

Dead in outward appearance, yet alive as God, Thou hast restored dead .mortals to life and slain him that slew me.

**And I have meditated in Thy statutes.**

How great the joy, how full the gladness, that Thou hast brought to those in hell, shining as lightning in its gloomy depths.

**Remember Thy words unto Thy servant, in which Thou hast caused me to hope.**

I venerate Thy Passion, I sing the praises of Thy burial, and I magnify Thy power, O loving Lord: through them I am set free from corrupting passions.

**This is my comfort in my affliction: for Thy word has quickened me.**

A sword was sharpened against Thee, O Christ: but the sword of the strong was blunted, and the sword that guards Eden was turned back.

**The proud have transgressed exceedingly: yet have I not turned aside from Thy law.**

The Ewe, seeing her Lamb slaughtered, was pierced with anguish : and she cried aloud in grief, calling the flock to lament with her.

**I remembered Thy judgements of old, O Lord ; and was comforted.**

Though Thou art buried in a grave, though Thou goest down to hell, O Saviour Christ, yet hast Thou emptied the graves and stripped hell naked.

**Discouragement has taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake Thy law.**

Willingly, O Saviour, Thou hast gone down beneath the earth, and Thou hast restored the dead to life, leading them back to the glory of the Father.

**Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.**

One of the Trinity endures a shameful death in the flesh on our account; the sun trembles and the earth quakes.

**I have remembered Thy Name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept Thy law.**



Offspring from a bitter source, the children of the tribe of Judah have cast into a pit Jesus who fed them with manna.

**This has been my reward, because I sought Thy precepts.**

The Judge stood as one accused before the judgement-seat of Pilate, and He was condemned to an unjust death upon the wood of the Cross.

**Thou art my portion, O Lord: I have said that I would keep Thy law.**

O arrogant Israel, O people guilty of blood, why hast thou set free Barabbas but delivered the Saviour to be crucified?

**I entreated Thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to Thy word.**

With Thy hand Thou hast fashioned Adam from the earth; and for his sake Thou hast become by nature man and wast of Thine own will crucified.

**I thought on Thy ways, and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies.**

In obedience to Thine own Father, O Word, Thou hast descended to dread hell and raised up the race of mortal men.

**I made ready, and I was not troubled: that I might keep Thy commandments.**

“Woe is me, Light of the world! Woe is me, my Light! Jesus, my heart's desire!” cried the Virgin in her bitter grief.

**The cords of the wicked have entangled me: but I have not forgotten Thy law.**

O bloodthirsty people, jealous and vengeful! May the very grave-clothes and the napkin put you to shame at Christ's Resurrection.

**At midnight I rose to give thanks unto Thee because of the judgements of Thy righteousness.**

Come, evil disciple, murderer of thy Lord, and show me the manner of thy wickedness, how thou hast become Christ's betrayer.

**I am a companion of all them that fear Thee and keep Thy commandments.**

O blind fool, utterly wicked, implacable in hatred, thou dost make a pretence of love for men, yet thou hast sold for money the sweet Myrrh.

**The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy: teach me Thy statutes.**

What price hast thou received for the heavenly Myrrh? What wast thou given in exchange for Him who is precious? Thou hast gained folly and madness, O accursed Satan.

**Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O Lord, according unto Thy word.**

If thou lovest the poor and dost grieve over the ointment emptied out in cleansing propitiation for a soul, how canst thou sell the Giver of Light for gold?

**Teach me goodness, discipline and knowledge: for I have believed in Thy commandments.**

“O my God and Word, my Joy, how shall I endure Thy three days in the tomb? Now is my heart torn in pieces by a mother's grief.” **Before I was humbled I went astray: but now have I kept Thy word.**

“Who will give me water and springs of tears,” cried the Virgin Bride of God, “that I may weep for my sweet Jesus?”

**Thou art good, O Lord: in Thy goodness teach me Thy statutes.**

“O hills and valleys, the multitude of men, and all creation, weep and lament with me, the Mother of our God.”

**The injustice of the proud is multiplied against me: but I will seek Thy commandments with my whole heart.**

“When shall I see Thee, Saviour, Light eternal, the joy and gladness of my heart?” cried the Virgin in her bitter grief.

**Their heart is curdled like milk; but my study has been in Thy law.**

Thy side was pierced, O Saviour, like the rock of flint in the wilderness; but Thou hast poured forth a stream of living water, for Thou art the Fount of Life.

**It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me: that I might learn Thy statutes.**

Out of Thy side, as from a single source, there flows a double stream; and drinking from it we gain immortal life.

**The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.**

Of Thine own will, O Word, Thou wast laid dead in the tomb: yet dost Thou live, my Saviour, and, as Thou hast foretold, Thou shalt raise up mortal men by Thy Resurrection.

Glory be to the Father. . . .

O Word and God of all, in our hymns we praise Thee with the Father and Thy Holy Spirit, and we glorify Thy divine burial. Both now. . .

### Theotokion

We bless thee, O pure Theotokos, and with faith we honour the three-day burial of thy Son and our God.

And we repeat the first troparion:

Thou who art Life wast laid in a tomb, O Christ, and the hosts of angels were amazed and glorified Thy self-abasement.

*The beginning of the procession with the epitaphios at the end of Matins.*

It is right to magnify Thee, Giver of Life, who hast stretched out Thine arms upon the Cross and broken the power of the enemy.

**Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, and I shall learn Thy commandments.**

It is right to magnify Thee, Creator of all, for through Thy Passion we are freed from passions and corruption.

**They that fear Thee will be glad when they see me: because I have hoped in Thy words.**

The earth trembled with fear, O Saviour Christ, and the sun hid itself, seeing Thee, the Light that knows no evening, sinking in Thy body down into the tomb.

**I know, O Lord, that Thy judgements are right, and that with truth Thou hast humbled me.**

Thou hast slept, O Christ, a life-giving sleep in the tomb, and aroused mankind from the heavy slumber of sin.

**O let Thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy servant.**

“Alone among women without pain I bore Thee, my Child’, said the Holy Virgin. “But now at Thy Passion I suffer unbearable pain.” **Let Thy tender mercies come unto me, and I shall live: for Thy law is my study.**

The seraphim, O Saviour, beheld Thee on high, united inseparably with the Father, yet they saw Thee below lying dead in the tomb; and they trembled with fear.

**Let the proud be ashamed, for they have transgressed against me unjustly: but I will meditate on Thy commandments.**

The veil of the temple is rent in twain at Thy Crucifixion, O Word, and the lights of heaven hide their radiance, when Thou, the Sun, art hidden beneath the earth.

**Let those that fear Thee turn unto me, and those that know Thy testimonies.**

He who at the beginning by His will alone set the earth upon its course, now descends dead beneath the earth. Tremble, O heaven, at this sight.

**Let my heart be blameless in Thy statutes: that I be not ashamed.**

O Thou who hast fashioned Adam with Thine own hand, Thou hast gone down beneath the earth, to raise up fallen men by Thine almighty power.

**My soul faints for Thy salvation: and I have hoped in Thy words.**

Come, and as the women bearing myrrh let us sing a holy lament to the dead Christ, that like them we too may hear Him say “Rejoice!”

**Mine eyes have grown dim with waiting for Thy word; they say: when wilt Thou comfort me?**

Thou art in very truth, O Word, the myrrh that never fails: yet the women with their spices brought myrrh to Thee, the living God, to anoint Thee as a corpse.

**For I am become like a wineskin in the frost; yet have I not forgotten Thy statutes.**

Through Thy burial, O Christ, Thou dost destroy the palaces of hell: by Thy death Thou slayest death, and dost deliver from corruption the children of the earth.

**How many are the days of Thy servant? When wilt Thou execute judgement on them that persecute me?**

Source of the river of life, the Wisdom of God descends into the tomb and gives life to all those in the depths of hell.

**The transgressors told me idle tales, which are not after Thy law, O Lord.**

“To renew the broken nature of mortal men, willingly have I been wounded in the flesh by death. O Mother, do not strike thy breast in grief.” **All Thy commandments are true: they persecute me wrongfully; help Thou me.**

O Morning Star of righteousness, Thou art gone down beneath the earth and hast raised up the dead as if from sleep, dispersing all the darkness of hell.

**They had almost made an end of me upon earth; but I forsook not Thy commandments.**

The life-giving Seed, twofold in nature, today is sown with tears in the furrows of the earth; but springing up He will bring joy to the world.

**Quicken me according to Thy mercy; so shall I keep the testimonies of Thy mouth.**

Adam was afraid when God walked in Paradise, but now he rejoices when God descends to hell. Then he fell, but now he is raised up.

**For ever, O Lord, Thy word endures in heaven.**

Seeing Thy body laid in the tomb, O Christ, Thy Mother brings Thee the offering of her tears, and she says: “Arise, my Child, as Thou hast foretold.”

**Thy truth also remains from one generation to another: Thou hast established the earth, and it abides.**

Joseph hid Thee reverently in a new tomb, O Saviour, and lamenting sang to Thee a funeral hymn fitting for God.

**The day continues according to Thine ordinance: for all things are Thy servants.**

Seeing Thee, O Word, pierced with nails upon the Cross, Thy Mother was wounded in her soul with the nails and arrows of bitter grief.

**Unless Thy law had been my study, I should have perished in my humiliation.**

Thy Mother saw Thee drink the bitter vinegar, O Sweetness of the world, and her cheeks were wet with bitter tears. **I will never forget Thy precepts: for with them Thou hast quickened me.**

“I am grievously wounded and my heart is torn, O Word, as I behold Thee slain unjustly”, said the All-pure Virgin weeping.

**I am Thine, save me; for I have sought Thy precepts.**

“How shall I close Thy sweet eyes and Thy lips, O Word? And how shall I lay Thee out for burial as a corpse?” cried Joseph trembling. **Sinners have waited for me to destroy me: but I have understood Thy testimonies.**

Joseph and Nicodemus now sing hymns of burial to the dead Christ; and with them sing the seraphim.

**I have seen the outcome of all perfection: but Thy commandment is exceeding broad.**

O Saviour, Sun of Righteousness, Thou dost set beneath the earth: therefore the Moon, Thy Mother, is eclipsed in grief, seeing Thee no more.

**O how I have loved Thy law, O Lord! It is my meditation all the day.**

Hell trembled, O Saviour, when he saw Thee, the Giver of Life, despoiling him of his wealth and raising up the dead from every age.

**Thou through Thy commandment hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for it is mine for ever.**

After the night the sun shines out again in brightness; and after death do Thou, O Word, arise once more and shine in Thy glory, as a bridegroom coming from his chamber.

**I have more understanding than all my teachers: for Thy testimonies are my meditation.**

When she received Thee in her bosom, O Creator and Saviour, the earth shook in fear, and with her quaking she awoke the dead.

**I understand more than my elders, because I have sought Thy commandments.**

In a new and strange way Nicodemus and noble Joseph buried Thee with spices, and they cried aloud: "Tremble, all the earth!"

**I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep Thy words.**

Thou hast gone down beneath the earth, O Creator of light, and with Thee the sun's light has also set; creation is seized with trembling and proclaims Thee the Maker of all.

**I have not departed from Thy judgements: for Thou hast taught me.**

A stone hewn from the rock covers the Cornerstone; and a mortal man now buries God in the grave as one dead. Tremble, O earth!

**How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!**

"Behold the disciple whom Thou hast loved and Thine own Mother, O my sweetest Child, and do Thou speak to them," cried the pure Virgin weeping.

**Through Thy commandments I have gained understanding: therefore have I hated every evil way.**

Since Thou art Life-giver, O Word, when stretched out upon the Cross, Thou hast not slain the Jews but raised their forefathers from the dead.

**Thy law is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.**

At Thy Passion, O Word, there was neither form nor beauty in Thee: but Thou hast risen in glory, and with Thy divine light Thou hast given beauty to mortal- men. **I have sworn, and am steadfastly purposed, that I will keep the judgements of Thy righteousness.**

Daystar without evening, Thou hast gone down in the flesh neath the earth; and the sun grew dark at height of noon-day, for could not bear to look upon Thee.

**I have been very greatly humbled : quicken me, O Lord, according unto Thy word.**

The sun and moon grew dark together, O Saviour, like faithful servants clothed in black robes of mourning.

**Accept, I beseech Thee, the free-will offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me Thy judgements.**

“The centurion knew Thee to be God, though Thou wast dead. How, then, my God, shall I touch Thee with my hands? I am afraid,” cried Joseph.

**My soul is continually in Thy hands: yet have I not forgotten Thy law.**

Adam slept, and from his side there came death; now Thou dost sleep, O Word of God, and from Thy side there flows a fountain of life for the world.

**Sinners have laid a snare for me: yet have I not gone astray from Thy commandments.**

Thou hast slept a little while, and brought the dead to life; Thou hast arisen, O loving Lord, and raised up those that from the beginning of time had fallen asleep.

**Thy testimonies have I received as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.**

O life-giving Vine, Thou wast lifted up from the earth, yet hast Thou poured out the wine of salvation. I glorify Thy Passion and Thy Cross.

**I have inclined my heart to perform Thy statutes: for therein is an everlasting reward.**

When the chief captains of the heavenly hosts saw Thee, Saviour, stripped, bloodstained and condemned, how could they bear the boldness of Thy crucifiers?

**I have hated transgressors: but Thy law have I loved.**

Perverse and crooked people of the Hebrews, ye knew how the temple would be raised again: why then did ye condemn Christ?

**Thou art my helper and defender: I have hoped in Thy words.**

In a robe of mockery ye clothe Him who ordered all things, who adorned the heavens with stars and the earth with wonders.

**Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will seek the commandments of my God.**

Wounded in Thy side, O Word, through the life-giving drops of Thy blood as the pelican Thou hast restored Thy dead children to life.

**Uphold me according unto Thy word, and give me life: and turn me not away in shame from mine expectation.**



Of old Joshua made the sun stand still, as he smote the heathen tribes; but Thou hast blotted out its light, whilst casting down the prince of darkness.

**Help me, and I shall be saved: and my study shall be ever in Thy statutes.**

Without leaving Thy Father's side, O merciful Christ, Thou hast consented in Thy love to become a mortal man, and Thou hast gone down to hell.

**Thou hast brought to nothing all them that depart from Thy statutes: for their inward thought is unrighteous.**

He who hung the earth upon the waters is hung upon the Cross. As a lifeless corpse He is laid in the earth, and it quakes in terror, unable to endure His presence.

**I have regarded all the wicked of the earth as transgressors: therefore I love Thy testimonies.**

“Woe is me, my Son!” laments the Virgin. “I see Thee now condemned upon the Cross, whom I had hoped to see enthroned as King.” **Nail my flesh with the fear of Thee: for I am afraid of Thy judgements.**

“Such were the tidings Gabriel brought me when he flew down from heaven: for he said that the Kingdom of my Son Jesus would be eternal.”

**I have done judgement and justice: O give me not over unto mine oppressors.**

“Alas! the prophecy of Simeon has been fulfilled: for Thy sword has pierced my heart, Emmanuel.”

**Be surety for Thy servant for good: let not the proud accuse me falsely.**

Be ashamed, O Jews, for the Life-giver raised your dead, yet ye slew Him out of envy.

**Mine eyes have failed with waiting for Thy salvation, and for the word of Thy righteousness.**

Seeing Thee, my Christ, the Light invisible, hidden lifeless in the tomb, the sun trembled and darkened its light.

**Deal with Thy servant according unto Thy mercy, and teach me Thy statutes.**

Thine all-blameless Mother wept bitterly, O Word, when she beheld Thee in the grave, God ineffable and without beginning.

**I am Thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies.**

Thine undefiled Mother, seeing Thy death, O Christ, cried to Thee in bitter sorrow: “Tarry not, O Life, among the dead.”

**It is time for the Lord to act: for they have made void Thy law.**

Cruel hell trembled when he saw Thee, O immortal Sun of glory, and in haste he yielded up his prisoners.

**Therefore have I loved Thy commandments above gold or topaz.**

Great and fearful is the sight now before our eyes, O Saviour: for of His own will the Cause of life submits to death, that He may give life to all.

**Therefore I walked uprightly according unto all Thy commandments : and I hated every evil way.**

Thy side is pierced, O Master, and Thy hands are transfixed with nails; so Thou healest the wound of our first parents and the sinful greed of their hands.

**Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore has my soul sought them.**

Once they wept in every house for Rachel's child; and now the company of Christ's disciples with His Mother lament for the Virgin's Son.

**The revelation of Thy words shall give light and understanding unto the simple.**

With their hands they struck Christ in the face, though He it was who formed man with His hand and crushed the teeth of the beast.

**I opened my mouth, and drew in my breath: for I longed for Thy commandments.**

In our hymns, O Christ, with all the faithful we worship now Thy Crucifixion and Thy Sepulchre, for by Thy burial we are set free from death.

Glory be to the Father. . . .

O God without beginning, Word coeternal, and Holy Spirit, in Thy love strengthen the power of our rulers against their enemies.

Both now...

## Theotokion

O Virgin pure and undefiled, who hast given birth to our Life, bring to an end the scandals of the Church and in thy love grant her peace.

And we repeat the first troparion of the second stasis: It is right to magnify Thee, Giver of Life, who hast stretched Thine arms upon the Cross and broken the power of the enemy.

THIRD STASIS *TONE THREE*

Every generation, O my Christ, offers praises at Thy burial.

**Look Thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, according the judgement of those that love Thy Name.**

Taking Thee down from the Tree, Joseph of Arimathaea lay Thee in a sepulchre.

**Order my steps in Thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.**

Providently bringing Thee sweet spices, O my Christ, the Myrrh-bearers drew near.

**Deliver me from the false accusation of men: so will I keep Thy commandments.**

Come, and with the whole creation let us offer a funeral hymn to the Creator.

**Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant; and teach me Thy statutes.**

Understanding what we do, with the Myrrhbearers let us all anoint the Living as a corpse.

**Rivers of water have run down from mine eyes, because I kept not Thy law.**

O thrice-blessed Joseph, bury the body of Christ, the Giver of Life.

**Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgements.**

Those He fed with manna have lifted up their heel against their Benefactor.

**Thy testimonies that Thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.**

Those He fed with manna offer to the Saviour vinegar and gall.

**My zeal has consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words.**

O the folly of those who killed the prophets and slew Christ!

**Thy word is tried in the fire to the uttermost: therefore has Thy servant loved it.**

Like a foolish servant, the disciple has betrayed the Abyss of Wisdom.

**I am young and despised: yet have I not forgotten Thy statutes.**

Judas the traitor has sold his Deliverer and himself become a captive.

**Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is truth.**

As Solomon said, the mouth of the transgressing Hebrews is a deep pit.

**Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me: yet Thy commandments are my study.**

In the crooked paths of the transgressing Hebrews there are thorns and snares.

**The righteousness of Thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.**

Joseph and Nicodemus bury the Creator with the honours that befit the dead.

**I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord: I will seek Thy statutes.**

Life-giver and Saviour, Thou hast destroyed hell: to Thy power be glory!

**I cried unto Thee; save me, and I shall keep Thy testimonies.**

When she saw Thee lying dead, O Word, the all-pure Virgin wept with a mother's grief.

**I rose up before it was dawn, and cried: I have hoped in Thy word.**

“O my sweet springtime, O my sweetest Child, where has all Thy beauty gone?”

**Mine eyes woke before the morning: that I might meditate in Thy words.**

When Thou, O Word, wast dead, Thine all-pure Mother raised a lamentation for Thee.

**Hear my voice according unto Thy loving-kindness, O Lord quicken me according to Thy judgement.**

The women came with myrrh to anoint Christ, the Myrrh of God.

**They draw nigh that persecute me unlawfully: they are far from Thy Law.**

By dying, O my God, Thou puttest death to death through Thy divine power.

**Thou art near, O Lord; and all Thy ways are truth.**

The deceiver is deceived, and those he misled are set free by Thy wisdom, O my God.

**Concerning Thy testimonies, I have known of old that Thou hast founded them for ever.**

The traitor was cast down to the depths of hell, and to the pit of destruction.

**Behold my humiliation, and deliver me: for I have not forgotten Thy law.**

Thorns and snares beset the path of Judas the foolish and the thrice-wretched.

**Judge my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to Thy word.**

All that crucified Thee shall be destroyed together, O Word, Thou Son of God and King of all.

**Salvation is far from the wicked: for they have not sought Thy statutes.**

In the pit of destruction shall all the men of blood be destroyed together.

**Many are Thy tender mercies, O Lord: quicken me according to Thy judgement.**

O Son of God and King of all, my God and my Creator, how hast Thou accepted suffering?

**Many are they that persecute and afflict me: yet have I not turned aside from Thy testimonies.**

As the mother of a foal, the Virgin gazed on Thee in grief when she saw Thee hanging on the Tree.

**I beheld the foolish and was grieved; because they kept not Thy words.**

Joseph and Nicodemus bury the body that is the Source of life.

**See how I have loved Thy commandments: quicken me, O Lord, in Thy mercy.**

Pierced to the heart, the Virgin shed warm tears and cried aloud.

**The beginning of Thy words is truth: and every one of Thy righteous judgements endures for ever.**

“O Light of mine eyes, my sweetest Child, how art Thou hidden now in the sepulchre?”

**Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart stands in awe of Thy words.**

“Weep not, O Mother, for I suffer this to set at liberty Adam and live.”

**I will rejoice at Thy words, as one that finds great spoil.**

“O my Son, I glorify Thy supreme compassion, that causes Thee to suffer so.”

**I have hated and abhorred injustice: but Thy law have I loved.**

Thou hast drunk vinegar and gall, in Thy compassion, to loose us from the guilt of the forbidden fruit.

**Seven times a day have I praised Thee because of the judgements of Thy righteousness.**

Thou art nailed upon the Cross, who of old hast sheltered Thy people with a pillar of cloud.

**Great peace have they that love Thy law: and for them there is no stumbling-block.**

The women bearing myrrh came, O Saviour, to Thy tomb and offered Thee sweet spices.

**Lord, I have looked for Thy salvation, and loved Thy commandments.**

Arise, O merciful Lord, and raise us from the depths of hell,

**My soul has kept Thy testimonies: and loved them exceedingly.**

“Arise, O Giver of Life’, the Mother who bore Thee said with tears.

**I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies: for all my ways are before Thee, O Lord.**

Make haste to arise, O Word, and take away the sorrow of Thy Virgin Mother.

**Let my prayer draw near to Thee, O Lord; give me understanding according to Thy word.**

All the powers of heaven were filled with fear and wonder when they saw Thee dead.

**Let my supplication come before Thee, O Lord: deliver me according to Thy word.**

With love and fear we honour Thy Passion: grant us the forgiveness of our sins.

**Let my lips speak of Thy praise : for Thou hast taught me Thy statutes.**

Strange and dreadful wonder! How art Thou now hidden in the earth, O Word of God?

**Let my tongue speak of Thy words: for all Thy commandments are righteousness.**

Joseph once fled with Thee, O Saviour, and now another Joseph buries Thee.

**Let Thine hand be near to save me: for I have chosen Thy commandments.**

Thine all-holy Mother weeps for Thee lamenting, O my Saviour, at Thy death.

**I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord; and Thy law is my study.**

The spiritual powers tremble at Thy strange and fearful burial, O Maker of all.

**My soul shall live, and it shall praise Thee: and Thy judgements shall help me.**

Early in the morning the myrrh-bearers came to Thee and sprinkled myrrh upon Thy tomb.

**I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek Thy servant, for I have not forgotten Thy commandments.**

By Thy Resurrection give peace to the Church and salvation to Thy people.

Glory be to the Father. . . .

O my God in Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit, grant Thy mercy to the world.

Both now. . . .

### Theotokion

Grant to us thy servants to behold, O Virgin, the Resurrection of thy Son.

*At this point in the Greek use, the priest sprinkles the Epitaphion with rose-water.*

*10 апреля 2015 г.*



*Православие.Ру рассчитывает  
на Вашу помощь!*

РАЗМЕР ПОЖЕРТВОВАНИЯ  РУБЛЕЙ

**ПОЖЕРТВОВАТЬ**