

WEDNESDAY OF THOMAS WEEK

April 29, 2020 • Eleventh day of Paschaltide



CHRIST IS RISEN!

Canticle

Let us who carry bright lights go forth and meet Christ Who comes as a Bridegroom from the tomb. And let us celebrate the saving Pascha of God with all those who love this feast.

*Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down Death by death,
and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.*



AT MORNING PRAYER

from the Pentecostarion, at Orthros

When Thou wast crucified, O Christ, the tyranny of the enemy was destroyed and his power was trampled underfoot; for neither an Angel nor a man, but Thou, the Lord Himself, didst save us. Glory be to Thee.

Glory to Thy holy Resurrection, O Lord.

Isaac was taken up into the mountain, Jonah was taken down into the deep, and both figured forth Thy Passion, O Saviour: the first, the bonds and the slaughter; the other, the burial and the life that ensued from Thine unlooked-for Arising. O Lord, glory be to Thee.

Glory to Thy holy Resurrection, O Lord.

Having thy protection, O immaculate one, and being delivered from afflictions by thy prayers, we who are in every way guarded by the Cross of thy Son do all magnify thee reverently as is due.

AT EVENING PRAYER

from the Pentecostarion, at Vespers

By Thy Passion, O Christ, we were freed from the passions, and by Thy Resurrection we were delivered from corruption. Lord, glory be to Thee.

Glory to Thy holy Resurrection, O Lord.

O strange wonder, unbelief that hath engendered steadfast faith! For Thomas said: Except I see, I will not believe. But when he had touched that side, he confessed the Divinity of Him Who was incarnate, that He is the very Son of God; he recognized Him to be the One that had suffered in the flesh; he preached the risen God, and cried with a clear voice: O my Lord and my God, glory be to Thee.

Glory to Thy holy Resurrection, O Lord.

O strange wonder, that grass should touch fire and be preserved! For when Thomas thrust his hand into the fiery side of Jesus Christ our God, he was not burned by the touching. For he ardently changed the obstinacy of his soul into ready faith, and cried out from the depths of his soul: My Master art Thou and my God, Who art risen from the dead. Glory be to Thee.

WISDOM OF THE HOLY FATHERS

IRENÆUS OF LYON

Bishop

†c.202

~ from 'Against Heresies' ~

THE OBJECT OF THE LONG-SUFFERING of God was this: that man, passing through all things and acquiring the knowledge of moral discipline and then attaining to the resurrection from the dead and learning by experience what is the source of his deliverance, may always live in a state of gratitude to the Lord, having obtained from Him the gift of incorruptibility, that he might love Him all the more; for *he to whom more is forgiven, loves more.* (Cf. Luke 7:47) And another object of His long-suffering was so that man may know himself, how mortal and weak he is, while he also understands respecting God, that He is immortal and powerful to such a degree as to confer immortality upon what is mortal, and eternity upon what is temporal; and that man may understand also the other attributes of God displayed towards himself, by means of which, being instructed, he may think of God in accordance with the divine greatness.

For the glory of man is God, but the glory of God is His works; and the receptacle of all His wisdom and power is man. Just as the physician is proved by his care of his patients, so is God also revealed through His conduct toward men. And therefore, Paul declares, *For God has consigned all men to disobedience, that He may have mercy upon all.* (Romans 11:32) He said this in reference to man who had been disobedient to God and, being cast off from immortality, then obtained mercy, receiving through the Son of God that adoption which is accomplished by Himself. If man, without pride and boasting, has a true belief regarding created things and the Creator—Who is the Almighty God of all and Who has granted existence to all—and continues in His love and subjection and in the giving of thanks, he shall also receive from Him the greater glory of promotion, looking forward to the time when he shall become like Him Who died for him; for He, too, was made *in the likeness of sinful flesh,* (Romans 8:3) to condemn sin, and to cast it, as now a condemned thing, away beyond the flesh, that He might call man forth into His own likeness, appointing him as an imitator of God, and imposing on him His Father's law, in order that he may see God, and granting him power to receive the Father. He is the Word of God Who dwelt in man, and became the Son of man, that He might open the way for man to receive God, and for God to dwell in man, according to the good pleasure of the Father.

For this reason, therefore, the Lord Himself, Who is Emmanuel from the Virgin, is the sign of our salvation, since it was the Lord Himself Who saved them, because they could not be saved by their own power; and, therefore, Paul speaks of human infirmity, saying: *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells,* (Romans 7:18) showing that the blessing of our salvation is not from us, but from God. And again, he says: *Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?* (Romans 7:24) Then he introduces the Deliverer, saying, *The grace of Jesus Christ our Lord.* And Isaiah declares this also, when he says: *Be strong, ye relaxed hands and feeble knees. Be comforted, ye fainthearted; be strong, fear not. Behold, our God renders judgment, and He will render it. He will come and save us.* (Isaiah 35:3-4) Here we see that not by ourselves, but by the help of God, we must be saved.

Again, that it should not be a mere man who should save us, nor one without flesh—for the Angels are without flesh—Isaiah says: *Not an elder or an Angel, but the Lord Himself saved them from all their tribulation, because He loved them and spared them. He redeemed and took them up.* (Isaiah 63:9) And that He should Himself become very man, visible, when He should be the Word giving salvation, Isaiah says: *Behold, there is Sion, the city of our salvation; your eyes will see Jerusalem.* (Isaiah 33:20) And that it was not a mere man who died for us, Isaiah says: *And the holy Lord remembered His dead Israel, who had slept in the land of the sepulcher; and He came down to preach His salvation to them, that He might save them.*¹ And Micah the prophet declares the same: *He will return and have compassion on us. He will subdue our transgressions, and all our sins will be cast into the depths of the sea.* (Micah 7:19) *Amen.*



¹ Here, Irenaeus quotes this as being from Isaiah; but in Book IV Chapter 22, he refers to the same passage as being from Jeremiah. However, it is to be found in neither prophet, although Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho, quotes this as well.