

Thursday of the 5th Week

At the 6th Hour

Prokimenon, Tone 6 (Psalm 96): The Lord is King,* let the earth rejoice.

Verse: Let the many islands be glad.

The Reading is from the Prophecy of Isaiah (42:5-16)

Whus saith the Lord God, Who made the heaven, and established it; Who settled the earth, and the things in it, and giveth breath to the people on it, and spirit to them that tread on it: "I the Lord God have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will strengthen thee; and I have given thee for the covenant of a race, for a light of the Gentiles: to open the eyes of the blind, to bring the bound and them that sit in darkness out of bonds and the prison house. I am the Lord God: that is My name: I will not give to another, nor My praises to graven images. Behold, the ancient things have come to pass, and so will the new things which I tell you: yea, before I tell them they are made known to you. Sing a new hymn to the Lord: ye His dominion, glorify His name from the end of the earth: ye that go down to the sea, and sail upon it: the islands, and they that dwell in them. Rejoice, thou wilderness, and the villages thereof, the hamlets, and the dwellers in Kedar: the inhabitants of the rock shall rejoice, they shall shout from the top of the mountains. They shall give glory to God, and shall proclaim His praises in the islands. The Lord God of hosts shall go forth, and crush the war; He shall stir up jealousy, and shall shout mightily against His enemies. I have been silent: shall I also always be silent and forbear: I have endured like a travailing woman: I will now amaze and wither at once. I will make desolate mountains and hills, and will dry up all their grass: and I will make the rivers islands, and dry up the pools. And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and I will cause them to tread paths which they have not known: I will turn darkness into light for them, and crooked things into straight. These things will I do, and will not forsake them."

Prokimenon, Tone 6 (Psalm 97): O sing unto the Lord a new song, for the Lord hath wrought wondrous things.*

His right hand [hath] wrought salvation for Him.

Verse: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Thursday of the 5th Week

1st Reading at Vespers

Prokimenon, Tone 7 (Psalm 98): Exalt ye the Lord our God,*
and worship the footstool of His feet, for He is holy.

Verse: The Lord is king, let the peoples rage.

The Reading is from Genesis (18:20-33)

Whe Lord said, "The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah hath been increased towards Me, and their sins are very great. I will therefore go down and see, if they completely correspond with the cry which cometh to Me, and if not, that I may know." And the men having departed thence, came to Sodom; and Abraham was still standing before the Lord. And Abraham drew nigh and said, "Wouldest Thou destroy the righteous with the wicked and shall the righteous be as the wicked? Should there be fifty righteous in the city, wilt Thou destroy them? wilt Thou not spare the whole place for the sake of the fifty righteous, if they be in it? By no means shalt Thou do as this thing is so as to destroy the righteous with the wicked, so the righteous shall be as the wicked: by no means. Thou that judgest the whole earth, shalt Thou not do right?" And the Lord said, "If there should be in Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will spare the whole city and the whole place for their sakes." And Abraham answered and said, "Now I have begun to speak to my Lord, and I am earth and ashes. But if the fifty righteous should be diminished to forty-five, wilt Thou destroy the whole city because of the five wanting?" And He said, "I will not destroy it, if I should find there forty-five." And he continued to speak to Him still, and said, "But if there should be found there forty?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the forty's sake." And he said, "Will there be anything against me, Lord, if I speak? but if there be found there thirty?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the thirty's sake." And he said, "Since I am able to speak to the Lord, what if there should be found there twenty?" And he said, "I will not destroy it, if I should find there twenty." And he said, "Will there be anything against me, Lord, if I speak yet once? but if there should be found there ten?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the ten's sake." And the Lord departed when He left off speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

Thursday of the 5th Week

2nd Reading at Vespers

Prokimenon, Tone 6 (Psalm 99): O sing unto the Lord a new song,* sing unto the lord, all the earth.

Verse: Sing unto the Lord, bless His name.

The Reading is from Proverbs (16:17-17:17)

He that receiveth instruction shall be in prosperity; and he that regardeth reproofs shall be made wise. He that keepeth his ways, preserveth his own soul; and he that loveth his life will spare his mouth. Pride goeth before destruction, and folly before a fall. Better is a meek spirited man with lowliness, than one who divideth spoils with the proud. He who is skillful in business finds good: but he that trusteth in God is most blessed. Men call the wise and understanding evil: but they that are pleasing in speech shall hear more. Understanding is a fountain of life to its possessors; but the instruction of fools is evil. The heart of the wise will discern the things which proceed from his own mouth; and on his lips he will wear knowledge. Good words are honeycombs, and the sweetness thereof is a healing of the soul. There are ways that seem to be right to a man, but the end of them looketh to the depth of hell. A man who laboureth, laboureth for himself, and driveth from him his own ruin. But the perverse beareth destruction upon his own mouth: a foolish man diggeth up evil for himself, and treasureth fire on his own lips. A perverse man spreadeth mischief, and will kindle a torch of deceit with mischiefs; and he separateth friends. A transgressor trieth to ensnare friends, and leadeth them in ways that are not good. And the man that fixeth his eyes deviseth perverse things, and marketh out with his lips all evils: he is a furnace of wickedness. Old age is a crown of honour, but it is found in the ways of righteousness. A man slow to anger is better than a strong man; and he that governeth his temper better than he that taketh a city. All evils come upon the ungodly into their bosoms; but all righteous things come of the Lord. Better is a morsel with pleasure in peace, than a house full of many good things and unjust sacrifices, with strife. A wise servant shall have rule over foolish masters, and shall divide portions among brethren. As silver and gold are tried in a furnace, so are choice hearts with the Lord. A bad man hearkeneth to the tongue of transgressors: but a righteous man attendeth not to false lips. He that laugheth at the poor provoketh Him that made him; and he that rejoiceth at the destruction of another shall not be held guiltless: but he that hath compassion shall find mercy. Children's children are the crown of old men; and their fathers are the glory of children. The faithful hath the whole world full of wealth; but the faithless not even a farthing. Faithful lips will not suit a fool; nor lying lips a just man. Instruction is to them that use it a gracious reward; and whithersoever it may turn, it shall prosper. He that concealeth injuries seeks love; but he that hateth to hide them separateth friends and kindred. A threat breaketh down the heart of a wise man; but a fool, though scourged, understandeth not. Every bad man stirreth up strifes: but the Lord will send out against him an unmerciful messenger. Care may befall a man of understanding; but fools will meditate evils. Whoso rewards evil for good, evil shall not be removed from his house. Rightful rule giveth power to words; but sedition and strife precede poverty. He that pronounceth the unjust just, and the just unjust, is unclean and abominable with God. Why hath the fool wealth? for a senseless man will not be able to purchase wisdom. He that exalteth his own house seeketh ruin; and he that turneth aside from instruction shall fall into mischief. Have thou a friend for every time, and let brethren be useful in distress.