

# The Canon of Repentance

## ODE 1 (*Tone 6*)

*Irmos:* Treading over the floor of the sea as over dry land, and seeing their pursuer Pharaoh drown, Israel cried out: Let us sing to God a song of victory!

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

Sinful and burdened, I now approach Thee, my Master and my God. I dare not look up towards heaven, but simply pray, saying: grant me, Lord, the sense to weep bitterly over my deeds.

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

O woe is me, a sinner! I am the most wretched of men! There is no repentance in me! Grant me tears, Lord, that I may weep bitterly over my deeds.

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

O senseless and wretched man, thou art destroying thy life in laziness! Think about thy life and turn to the Lord God, weeping bitterly over thy deeds.

*Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

O most pure Mother of God, look on me, a sinner, and deliver me from the snares of the devil. Direct me onto the path of repentance, that I may weep bitterly over my deeds.

## ODE 3

*Irmos:* None is holy as Thou, O Lord my God! Thou hast raised the strength of Thy faithful, O Good One, and made us stand firmly on the rock of Thy confession.

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

When the thrones will be set up for the dread judgment, the deeds of all men will be recalled. Alas for the sinners

who will be sent to torment! Knowing this, my soul, repent of thine evil deeds!

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

The righteous shall rejoice, but sinners shall lament. No one will be able to help us at that moment — our deeds will condemn us! Before the end cometh, repent of thine evil deeds!

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

Woe is me, a great sinner! I have defiled myself in deed and thought and cannot even shed a single tear in my hard-heartedness. Free thyself from the earth my soul, and repent of thine evil deeds.

*Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Thy Son calleth, O Lady, and teacheth us what is good. Yet I, a sinner, always flee from good. Have mercy on me, nevertheless, O merciful one, that I may repent of mine evil deeds.

## Sessional Hymn, *Tone 6*

I think of the Dread Day and weep over mine evil deeds. How shall I answer the immortal King? Or how shall a prodigal like me dare to look up at the judge? O compassionate Father, only-begotten Son, and Holy Spirit: have mercy on me!

## ODE 4

*Irmos:* “Christ is my strength, my God and my Lord,” the sacred Church reverently sings with a mighty voice, rejoicing in the Lord.

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

Our present path is wide and conducive to pleasures, but bitter will the Last Day be when the soul will part from the body. O man, beware of those pleasures, for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

Why dost thou mistreat the poor? Why dost thou withhold the worker's pay? Why dost thou not love thy brother? Why dost thou pursue lust and pride? Abandon all that, my soul, and repent for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

O foolish man! How long wilt thou bustle like a bee, gathering thy wealth? It will soon perish like dust and ashes. Seek rather the Kingdom of God.

*Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Have mercy on me a sinner, O Lady Theotokos, and strengthen me in virtues. Protect me, so that insolent death may not seize me unprepared, and bring me, O Virgin, to the Kingdom of God.

### **ODE 5**

*Irmos:* I pray Thee, O Good One: Enlighten with Thy Divine Light the souls which look to Thee from early dawn, that they may know Thee, O Word of God, as the True God Who calleth them out from the darkness of sin.

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

Remember, wretched man, how thou hast been enslaved to lies, slander, crime, infirmities, and wild beasts because of thy sins. Is this what thou didst want, my sinful soul?

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

My members tremble, for I have been guilty through all of them: my eyes by seeing, my ears by hearing, my tongue by speaking evil, surrendering my whole self to Gehenna. Is this what thou didst want, my sinful soul?

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

Thou didst receive the Prodigal and the thief who repented, O Savior. I alone have been weighed down by sinful laziness and submitted to evil deeds. Is this what thou didst want my sinful soul?

*Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

O Mother of God, the wondrous and swift helper of all mankind, help me, the unworthy, for this is what my sinful soul wanteth!

### **ODE 6**

*Irmos:* Beholding the Sea of Life raging with the storm of temptations, I have fled to Thy calm haven and cry to Thee: Deliver my life from destruction, O Most-merciful One!

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

I have lived my life on earth prodigally and committed my soul to darkness. Now, O Merciful Master, I pray: free me from the Enemy's labor and give me the intelligence to do Thy will.

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

Who doeth what I do? As a pig walloweth in mud, so do I serve sin! Pull me out of this mire, Lord, and give me the heart to accomplish Thy commandments.

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

Lift yourself towards God, wretched man, recalling thy transgressions! Fall down before the Creator with tears and groans! Being merciful, He will give thee the mind to know His will.

*Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Keep us from both visible and invisible harm, O Virgin Theotokos! Receive my prayers, Most Pure One, and bear them to thy Son, that He may give me the mind to do His will.

Lord, have mercy! (*3 times*)

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

#### **Kontakion, Tone 6**

O my soul, why dost thou enrich thyself with sins? Why dost thou do the Devil's will? In what hast thou put thy hope? Cease all this and turn to God, weeping and crying: O compassionate Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!

#### **Ikos**

Contemplate, my soul, the bitter hour of death and the dread judgment of thy Creator and God. Threatening angels will seize thee, my soul, and lead thee to eternal flames. Repent before thy death, therefore, crying: O Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!

#### **ODE 7**

*Irmos:* The Angel made the furnace a source of dew for the pious youths, and the Will of God, which burned the Chaldeans, made the persecutor call out: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers!

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

Put not thy hope in corruptible wealth, my soul, nor in things unjustly gathered. Thou knowest not to whom thou wilt leave it all. Instead, cry out: O Christ God, have mercy on me, the unworthy!

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

Remember, my soul, both the eternal life and the Heavenly Kingdom prepared for the saints and the outer darkness and divine wrath prepared for the wicked. Then cry out: O Christ God, have mercy on me, the unworthy!

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

Count not on physical health, my soul, nor on fleeting beauty. Thou seest how both the strong and the young die. Instead, cry out: O Christ God, have mercy on me, the unworthy!

*Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Fall down before the Mother of God, my soul, and pray to her, for she is the swift helper of penitents. She will entreat her Son, Christ God, and He will have mercy on me, the unworthy!

#### **ODE 8**

*Irmos:* Thou didst cause dew to pour from the flames over the pious youths, and didst burn the sacrifice of a righteous man with water -- for Thou doest all things, O Christ, by Thy Will alone. We exalt Thee throughout all ages.

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

How can I not weep when I think of death? I have seen my brother lying in the tomb without glory and without form.

What can I expect? What can I hope? Only grant me, Lord, repentance before the end.

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

How can I not weep when I think of death? I have seen my brother lying in the tomb without glory and without form. What can I expect? What can I hope? Only grant me, Lord, repentance before the end.

*Let us bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Lord.*

I believe that Thou wilt come to judge, the living and the dead, and that everyone I will stand in his rank: the old and the young; masters and princes; virgins and priests. Where will I find myself? Therefore, I cry out: grant me, Lord, repentance before the end.

*Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Receive mine unworthy prayer, Most Pure Theotokos. Keep me from sudden death, and grant me repentance before the end.

## ODE 9

*Irmos:* No man can see God, upon Whom the Angelic ranks dare not gaze. But through thee, O Pure One, the Incarnate Word was revealed to mankind. Magnifying Him with the heavenly hosts, we call thee blessed.

*Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me!*

I now turn to you, angels, archangels, and all the heavenly host who stand by the throne of God: pray to your Creator that He deliver my soul from eternal torments.

*Have mercy on me. O God, have mercy on me!*

I now weep before you, holy patriarchs, kings and prophets, apostles and hierarchs, and all the elect of Christ: help me at the Judgment, that my soul be saved from the strength of the Enemy.

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.*

I now lift up my hands to you, holy martyrs, desert-dwellers, virgins, righteous ones, and all saints who pray to the Lord for the whole world: may He have mercy on me at the hour of my death.

*Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Help me, Mother of God, for I have great hope in thee! Pray to thy Son, that when He sitteth to judge the living and the dead, He may place me at His right hand, even though I am unworthy.

*From the 1982 St. Tikhon's Prayerbook, now out of print. Edited for grammatical consistency.*