

THE 23rd DAY OF THE MONTH OF DECEMBER
COMMEMORATION OF SAINT NAHUM,
EQUAL OF THE APOSTLES & WONDER-WORKER OF OKHRID
AT LITTLE VESPERS

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 4 Stichera of the holy hierarch, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “O all-praised martyrs ...”:

As a man of active prayer, in mind thou didst behold the noetic hosts, laying up divine words in thy heart, wherein thou didst also set up ascents like a ladder, O venerable Nahum our father. Pray thou now, that peace and great mercy be granted to our souls. (Twice)

O most venerable Nahum, from childhood thou didst rest thy life upon Christ our God; and, strengthened by Him, thou didst make the passions of the flesh subject to thy mind, causing that which is baser to submit to that which is higher. Wherefore, pray thou, that He grant peace and great mercy to our souls.

O our divinely wise father, thou wast shown to be a beacon most great, enlightening the world with the effulgence of miracles and divine works. Wherefore, the unapproachable Light received thee after thou didst fall asleep. Pray now, that He grant peace and great mercy to our souls.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

The fruit of thy divine labors made steadfast the hearts of the faithful, O venerable father; for thou gavest no slumber to thine eyelids until thou didst send forth the glad tidings of Orthodox. Wherefore, assembling, we all hymn thy memory, O Nahum. Therein watch over us, interceding with boldness before Christ, and ask that we be delivered from evils.

Both now ..., of the forefeast, in Tone VIII:

O Bethlehem, become thou the metropolis of God: for the never-waning Light cometh to be born within thee! Ye angels, marvel in heaven! Ye mortals, render up glory on earth! Ye magi, bring a most glorious gift out of Persia! Ye shepherds, piping, sweetly sing the thrice-holy hymn: Let every breath praise Him Who accomplisheth all!

On the Aposticha, these Stichera of the forefeast, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “O all-praised martyrs ...” ,

“**B**earing gifts of frankincense, myrrh and gold * unto Thee, O Son, * the kings of the East have arrived, * knowing that Thou wast to be born; * and, lo! they stand beyond the doors! * Give Thou the command * that they behold Thee * as an infant held in mine arms, ** Who art far older than ancient Adam!”

Verse: God shall come forth out of Theman, * and the Holy One out of a mountain overshadowed and densely wooded.

“Come ye, and enter with haste,” * the Virgin said to the magi of old, * “and behold the Invisible One * Who hath become visible * in becoming a babe!” * And they came in with ardor * and rendered homage * and offered gifts, ** fulfilling the divine prophecies.

Verse: O Lord, I have heard Thy report, and I was afraid; * O Lord, I considered Thy works, and I was stricken with awe.

“In mine arms I bear Thee as a babe, * Who holdest all things, * and I am amazed,” * said she who knew not wedlock. * “How can I feed with milk * Thee Who feedest all, O my Son and Creator? * I glorify Thy boundless condescension toward men, ** whereby Thou savest the world which is perishing!”

Glory ..., of the holy hierarch, in Tone IV:

Thy good works have shone forth like the sun on earth and in heaven, O blessed servant of Christ, for in Mresia thou didst preach the truest immaculate Faith of Christ in an Orthodox manner. Wherefore, pray thou, O all-blessed and God-bearing Nahum, that at thy commemoration we be granted great mercy.

Both now ..., of the forefeast, in the same tone:

Dance, O Isaiah, and taking up the word of God, prophecy to the Maiden Mary: The bush shall burn, yet shall not be consumed by the radiance of the Godhead! Adorn thyself well, O Bethlehem! Open wide thy gates, O Eden! Ye magi, come and behold Salvation wrapped and lying in a manger, to Whom the star hath pointed, shining above the cave: the Lord and Bestower of life, Who saveth our generation!

The Troparion of the holy hierarch, in Tone IV:

Thou hast departed this world, cleaving unto Christ. * And having crucified thy flesh, thou livest for the Spirit, * O all-blessed Nahum. Thou didst strive to follow the course of the apostles, * and didst win countless multitudes in Bulgaria for the Faith. * Wherefore, by thy supplications ** deliver us from temptations.

Glory ..., Both now ..., the Troparion of the forefeast, in the same tone:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! * Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! * Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! * For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. * Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, * in the midst of which is the divine Tree, * whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. * Christ is born, that He might restore His image ** which of old fell!

AT GREAT VESPERS

After the Introductory Psalm, we chant “Blessed is the man ...,” the first antiphon.

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” 8 Stichera: 3 of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “As one valiant among the martyrs ...”:

With uprightness of mind * let us chant the hymns * of the forefeast of the nativity of Christ; * for, though equal in honor to the Father and the Spirit, * in His loving-kindness He hath clothed Himself in our substance * that He might be born * in the city of Bethlehem. * His ineffable nativity ** have the shepherds and angels hymned.

Let us shout to the sound of cymbals, * let us cry aloud in hymns: The advent of Christ hath come! * The predictions of the prophets have been fulfilled! * For Him of Whom they foretold * that He would appear to mankind in the flesh * is born in the holy cave * and lieth as a babe in the manger; ** and wrapped in swaddling-bands as a babe.

Prepare thyself, O Bethlehem! * O Eden, be thou now opened! * The most holy one cometh to give birth! * Let the heavens be glad! * Let mortals leap for joy! * He Who is our rich Life * cometh in the magnitude of His mercy * to the manger and the cave, * assuming the poverty of Adam ** without change or commingling.

And 5 Stichera of the venerable one, in Tone II:

Spec. Mel.: “With what wreaths of praise ...”:

With what wreaths of praise, with what flowers of hymnody shall we adorn thee, O Christ-bearer Nahum? Receiving thy grace, we understand thee to be the beauteous abode of the Spirit, the splendid edifice of the Word, the right magnificent habitation of the Father, the most perfect dwelling-place of the Godhead Who is apprehended in three Hypostases and a single dignity, in Whom we all believe, and Who hath enlightened the populace of Bulgaria. (Twice)

What words of prophecy do we apply to another as to thee, O holy one? Foreteller and mystic herald, river of the mysteries of God who gavest drink unto the cities of the ungodly, who purifieth the people with divine baptism, raising up a magnificent temple unto Christ out of the stony of heart. Wherefore, O blessed one, unceasingly ask that we be saved. (Twice)

From all misfortunes and demonic perils, from temptation by unjust men who prefer wicked deeds, free all who have gathered to celebrate thine honored memory with love, who stand with faith before the divine shrine of thy relics and bow down with reverence before it; for we hold thee to be our most fervent helper.

Glory ..., in Tone VI:

Having received the wisdom of grace from the divine Spirit, thou didst instruct the inhabitants of Mresia in piety, O most honored father Nahum, thou adornment of all fasters and ascetics. As thou hast boldness before God, entreat Him to save our souls.

Both now ..., in Tone VI:

Adorn thyself well, O Bethlehem, for Eden hath been opened! Prepare thyself, O Ephratha, for Adam hath been restored, and Eve with him: for the curse hath been annulled, salvation hath blossomed forth, and the souls of the righteous are adorned, offering hymnody instead of myrrh as their gift, and receiving salvation of soul and incorruption. For, lo! He Who lieth in the manger doth order those who cry out to chant unceasingly in spirit: Glory be to Thee, O Lord!

Entrance. Prokeimenon of the day. Three lessons:

A READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality. And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded: for God proved them, and found them worthy for Himself. As gold in the furnace hath He tried them and received them as a burnt offering. And in the time of their visitation they shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks among the stubble. They shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign for ever. They that put their trust in Him shall understand the truth: and such as be faithful in love shall abide with Him: for grace and mercy is to His saints, and He hath care for His elect.

A READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

The righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the Most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand: for with his right hand shall He cover them, and with His arm shall He protect them. He shall take to Him His jealousy for complete amour, and make the creature His weapon for the revenge of His enemies. He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate, and true judgment for an invincible shield. His severe wrath shall He sharpen for a sword, and the world shall fight with Him against the unwise. Then shall the right-aiming thunderbolts go abroad; and from the clouds, as from a well drawn bow, shall they be cast as out of a stone bow, and the water of the sea shall rage against them, and the floods shall cruelly drown them. Yea, a mighty wind shall stand up against them, and like a storm shall blow them away: thus iniquity shall lay waste the whole earth, and ill dealing shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty. Hear, therefore, O ye kings, and understand; learn, ye that be judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, ye that rule the people, and glory in the multitude of nations. For power is given you by the Lord, and sovereignty from the Most High.

A READING FROM THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

Though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in rest. For honorable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by number of years. But wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age. He pleased God, and was beloved of Him: so that living among sinners he was translated. Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. For the bewitching of naughtiness doth obscure things that are honest; and the wandering of concupiscence doth undermine the simple mind. He, being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time: for his soul pleased the Lord; therefore hastened He to take him away from among the wicked. This the people saw, and understood not, neither laid they up this in their minds: that His grace and mercy is with His saints, and that He hath respect unto His chosen.

At Litiya, the Sticheron of the temple, and these Stichera:

The composition of Parthenius of Leucium, in Tone II: O ye faithful, let us praise the star of light divine, the luminary of Bulgaria, the champion of the Faith, the godly Nahum; for he rejoiceth with the angels, receiving a crown of incorruption from God Himself, and prayeth that our souls be saved.

O all-blessed and wise Nahum, even after death thou livest in Christ in the heavens; for having crucified thyself to the world for His sake and lived truly beyond the flesh, thou didst not live for thyself, rather Christ God dwelt within thee. Him do thou beseech, that our souls be saved.

In Tone IV: As one who shared in the ways of the apostles, O venerable one, thou hast also been shown to share their dwelling-place, for thou didst keep their faith and didst finish the race so wondrously and well, that thou hast been deemed worthy to abide with them. With them entreat the Creator and Fashioner of all, that He deliver us from all evils.

As a receptacle of the virtues, O ever-memorable one, thou didst become an abode of the Trinity, and, as thou didst promise, thou didst found a monastery for Christ; and having come to thee with the Father and the Spirit, O Nahum, He glorified thee surpassingly, making thee a son of God and a bridegroom through communion.

The Mresian language, more difficult of comprehension than that of the Pannonians, of a generation subject of old to deception, which worshipped stones and trees, did ye free from grievous unbelief by your words and preaching, O most honored father Nahum; and now they are truly children of God, breathing Orthodox piety.

In Tone VI: O divinely blessed father Nahum, boast of the faithful, most splendid ornament of fasters, pastor and teachers, by thy labors thou didst bring all to the Lord; for by thine entreaties send down peace and mercy upon thy flock, its shepherds and thy fellow ascetics.

O venerable Nahum, the land of Mresia shone with the brilliance of thy teaching; wherefore, like heaven thou didst declare the glory of God, advancing more radiantly than the sun, and shining more brightly than a lamp. Therefore, thou didst lead to Christ a multitude of the Bulgarians, who believed with all their heart. Remember them now, as thou hast boldness before the Lord.

Glory ..., in Tone V:

O venerable father, thou gavest neither sleep unto thine eyes, nor slumber unto thine eyelids, until thou didst free thy soul and body from the passions, and didst prepare thyself as a receptacle of the Holy Spirit. For Christ, coming with the Father, made his habitation within thee. As thou art a favorite of the consubstantial Trinity, O most blessed Nahum, pray thou on behalf of our souls.

Both now ..., of the forefeast, in the same tone:

“Be not dour at the sight of my womb, O Joseph; for thou shalt see the One born from me, and shalt rejoice and worship Him as God!” the Theotokos said to her betrothed when she was to give birth unto Christ. Let us cry out to her, saying: Rejoice, O divinely joyous one! The Lord is with thee; and, because of thee, is with us as well!

On the Aposticha, these Stichera of the venerable one, in Tone V:

Spec. Mel.: “Rejoice ...”:

Rejoice, O venerable Nahum, enlightener of Bulgaria, measure of dogmas, standard of Orthodoxy, heaven declaring the glory of Christ the King of all, ever vigilant eye watching over the ends of the earth, which thou didst fill with divine preaching! In thee hath the saying of the prophet been fulfilled, for thy sound hath gone forth into all the earth through the grace of Christ our God. Him do thou beseech, that He grant peace and great mercy to our souls.

Verse: Precious in the sight of the Lord * is the death of His saints.

Rejoice, O venerable Nahum, preacher of the Gospel throughout Bulgaria, who instilled the love of the kingdom of Christ in every human soul! Wherefore, banishing deception, thou didst teach all the people to worship in Orthodox manner the uncreated Trinity - the beginningless Father, the Son Who is equally without beginning, and the divine Spirit Who proceedeth directly from the Father. Him do Thou entreat, that He grant peace and great mercy to our souls.

Verse: The righteous man shall be glad in the Lord * and shall hope in Him.

Rejoice, O venerable Nahum, truly precious ornament of monastics, thou hast passed over to the place of wondrous habitation, to the abode of God, with joy and gladness of soul, where the beautiful sound of one keeping festival and of sweet praise is heard. For, having desired Him alone, thou didst mortify the flesh and receive the divine righteousness of Christ our God. Him do thou beseech, that He grant peace and great mercy to our souls.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

Forsaking the tumults of life, O venerable Nahum, and taking the Cross of the Savior on thy shoulder, thou didst entrust thyself wholly unto God. Wherefore, while in the world thou didst show thyself to be beyond the flesh, O all-praised one; and having struggled with intense asceticism every day, with the angels thou art ever in the presence of the Spirit, and dost rejoice with them. As thou hast boldness before the Lord, pray that those who celebrate thine ever-honored memory may be delivered from misfortunes and sorrows.

Both now ..., of the forefeast, in the same tone:

O Bethlehem, receive standing as the metropolis of God; for the never-waning Light cometh to be born within thee. Ye angels, marvel in the heavens! Ye mortals, give glory on earth! O magi, bring ye most glorious gifts from Persia! Ye shepherds, piping, sweetly sound forth the thrice-holy hymn! Let every breath praise the Creator of all!

After the Blessing of the loaves, the Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

Thou hast departed this world, cleaving unto Christ. * And having crucified thy flesh, thou livest for the Spirit, * O all-blessed Nahum. Thou didst strive to follow the course of the apostles, * and didst win countless multitudes in Bulgaria for the Faith. * Wherefore, by thy supplications ** deliver us from temptations. **(Twice)**

And the Troparion of the forefeast, in the same tone:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! * Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! * Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! * For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. * Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, * in the midst of which is the divine Tree, * whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. * Christ is born, that He might restore His image ** which of old fell! **(Once)**

AT MATINS

On “God is the Lord ...,” the Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! * Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! * Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! * For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. * Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, * in the midst of which is the divine Tree, * whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. * Christ is born, that He might restore His image ** which of old fell! (Twice)

Glory ..., that of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

Thou hast departed this world, cleaving unto Christ. * And having crucified thy flesh, thou livest for the Spirit, * O all-blessed Nahum. Thou didst strive to follow the course of the apostles, * and didst win countless multitudes in Bulgaria for the Faith. * Wherefore, by thy supplications ** deliver us from temptations.

Both now ..., that of the forefeast (Once).

After the 1st chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “Awed by the beauty of thy virginity ...”:

In that thy feet were truly most beautiful, and as thou didst proclaim the glad tidings of the peace which passeth all understanding, O venerable and godly one, thou didst tame wild beasts; the untamed pagans of Mresia, and didst bring them among the sheep. Wherefore, ask unshakable humility and great mercy for us.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the forefeast, in the same tone:

Spec. Mel.: “Of the divine Faith ...”:

Today the Church rejoiceth, singeth and adorneth herself, celebrating the forefeast of the nativity; for it is truly a most holy solemnity, and she doth therefore array herself for the Lord of glory, and we all cry out to Christ God: O Lover of mankind, have mercy upon us who hymn Thee!

After the 2nd chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “Thy tomb, O Savior ...”:

As a worker of miracles, an advocate and mediator for all before God, O most blessed God-bearer Nahum, thou boast of Bulgaria, by thy divine supplication deliver thy servants, we pray, from the misfortunes which befall us and from the flame which is to come.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the forefeast, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “Of the Wisdom ...”:

Thou hast descended from the bosom of the Father, and in an ineffable abasement hast taken upon Thyself our poverty, O Lover of mankind; in a manner transcending nature Thou hast been well-pleased to make Thine abode in a cave, O Lord, and Thou, the Creator and Lord, art nourished as a babe from Thy Mother's breasts. Wherefore, the magi, guided by the star, bring gifts unto Thee as the Master of creation, and the shepherds and angels marvel, crying: Glory in the highest to God Who cometh to be born as a man on earth!

Polyeleos, and this magnification: We bless thee, O venerable father Nahum, and we honor thy holy memory, O instructor of monks and converser with the angels.

Selected Psalm verse:

A: With patience I waited patiently for the Lord, and He was attentive unto me, and He hearkened unto my supplication.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Alleluia ..., Glory to Thee, O God! (Thrice)

After the Polyeleos, the Sessional Hymn, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: "Joseph marveled ...":

O Nahum, thou emulator of the apostles, rule of hierarchs, adornment of fasters, who shared the sufferings of those who suffered exposure and struggled in conscience for Christ: as thou hast ever had divine boldness, thou didst preach the mystery of the Trinity, Whom do thou unceasingly entreat on behalf of those who hymn thee with faith.

Glory ..., Both now ..., the Sessional Hymn of the forefeast, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: "Of the Wisdom ...":

The Word of God, Who shone forth without commingling from the bosom of the Father before all ages, cometh forth within time seedlessly from thy womb, O most pure one, lifting up him who of old had grievously stumbled, raising him up to his primal beauty. The armies of the incorporeal beings come forth for His nativity and mystically send forth hymns of victory to mortals, crying aloud: Glory to God Who hath given us peace, breaking down the middle wall of enmity, as is His good pleasure!

Song of ascents, the first antiphon of Tone IV.

Prokeimenon, in Tone IV: Precious in the sight of the Lord * is the death of His saints.

Verse: What shall I render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto me?

Let every breath praise the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, § 43 (MT. 11: 27-30)

The Lord said to His disciples: "All things are delivered unto Me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

After Psalm 50, this Sticheron, in Tone VI:

Grace was poured forth in thy lips, O venerable father, and thou wast a shepherd for the inheritance of Christ, teaching the reason endowed sheep to believe in the consubstantial Trinity, in the one Godhead.

Canon of the forefeast, with 6 Troparia, including the irmos; and two canons of the venerable one, with a total of 8 Troparia.

ODE I

Canon of the forefeast, the acrostic whereof is the (Greek) alphabet, the composition of Joseph, in Tone VI:

Irmos: He Who in ancient times * hid the pursuing tyrant beneath the waves of the sea, * is now concealed in a manger * for Herod seeketh to slay Him * But let us sing with the magi; chanting unto the Lord, * for gloriously hath He been glorified.

Judah shall not lack for a prince, for to him was a promise made, as hath been written before: Jesus Christ, the Expectation of the nations, hath come, and is born in a cave in His surpassing goodness.

Be glad with great joy, O Bethlehem; for in thee is Christ the Lord born! Let the whole world leap up, receiving deliverance, and let all creation dance, keeping festival!

Desiring to save the human race, the Supremely good One made His abode in the womb of the Virgin who knew not wedlock; and, lo! He cometh to be born. Let us worship Him, for gloriously hath He been glorified!

Canon of the venerable one, the acrostic whereof is “I, Constantine, archpastor of Bulgaria, do praise Nahum, the latter acquisition of God”, in Tone I:

Irmos: Let us all chant a triumphant hymn unto God * Who wrought wondrous miracles * with His upraised arm, * and saved Israel, * for He hath been glorified.

O Nahum, who art full of the streams of the Holy Spirit, by thine entreaties show me to be a divine river, that I may proclaim thy works, praising thee with hymns.

Thou wast a follower of those who taught the Faith of Christ in the land of Bulgaria, O venerable one, sharing from thy youth in the labors and sufferings of Cyril and Methodius.

Thy life was angelic, thy life truly beyond that of men, and thy struggle truly like unto that of the martyrs, O venerable one; wherefore we hymn thee.

As a teacher of perfect doctrines, O Nahum, thou and thy fellow initiates of the mysteries went up to the summit of divine cedars, and covered the mountains of Mresia.

Theotokion: O most pure one, from ages past nature hath recognized thee as the one who in a manner transcending nature alone art Mother and Virgin; for thou hast given birth for us unto the Creator of all.

Canon II of the venerable one, which is connected to the foregoing canon and the acrostic whereof is a continuation of that of the former; in Tone IV:

Irmos: I shall open my mouth, * and be filled with the Spirit, * and utter discourse to the Queen and Mother; * and be seen radiantly keeping festival, * joyfully praising her wonders.

O Christ Who of old dried up the deep for the people who were traveling on foot, dry up the abyss of my transgressions, and let fall a drop of understanding upon me, that with hymns I may praise Thy venerable one.

Desiring to behold the ineffable glory of God, O Nahum, thou didst endure tribulations, imprisonment and cruelties, and every earthly disgrace, and didst struggle for the sake of Christ's name.

Solitary in spirit, yet burning with zeal for the Faith, thou didst bear the yoke of the grace of Christ and didst clear the souls of thy people of the brush of the demons and didst plant therein the seed of divine understanding.

O blessed one, thou didst consider the whole world to be as dung; thou didst love Christ, and by withdrawing from it thou didst draw nigh unto Him Who draweth nigh unto all for the sake of their faith.

Theotokion: O Lady as thou hast given birth unto Life, give life unto me who have become dead through many and varied evils, and cause me to pass over to the life which is on high, that I may ever glorify thee as her who giveth me life.

ODE III

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: When creation beheld Thee, * Who founded the whole earth upon the waters, * born in the cave, * it was seized with awe, crying aloud: * None is holy save Thee, O Lord!

Thou didst desire to clothe Thyself in the guise of a servant, that Thou mightest deliver me from slavery to the evil one. I hymn Thy loving-kindness, O Word Who art co-beginningless and consubstantial with the Father: Glory to Thy dispensation!

The Virgin cometh to give birth to the Lord in the cave! Come forth, O ye magi! Ye shepherds, come forth! Ye angels, cry out hymns from on high: The Deliverance of mankind hath come!

Seeking me who have become lost and by my barren acts have been shown to be a den of thieves O Lover of mankind, Thou hast now arrived at the cave to be born today from the Virgin, O Master. Glory to Thy Nativity, O Word!

Canon I of the venerable one

Irmos: Let my heart be established in Thy will O Christ God, * Who hath established a second heaven over the waters, * and founded the earth upon the waters, * O all-powerful One.

Thou didst pass beyond the bounds of nature, O blessed one, and draw nigh unto the mountains of divine knowledge through truly everlasting life; and bringing light to the mountains of ungodliness, thou didst protect the people with the mountains of faith.

Out of the cruel and waterless pit of ignorance didst thou draw the children of darkness, hard of heart, showing them to be habitations of Christ through their teachers and thy compatriots.

The people of the West, who were in the darkness of ungodliness, didst thou enlighten, O father, and by thy holy and divine teaching thou didst make them temples.

Theotokion: O Virgin, the prophets proclaimed thee to be the mountain, the jar, the table, the golden censer and ark of holiness; and we hymn thee as the tabernacle which contained God.

Canon II of the venerable one

Irmos: O Theotokos, thou living and plentiful fount, * establish in spiritual fellowship those who sing hymns to thee, * and in thy divine glory * grant them crowns of glory.

In latter times the land of Bulgaria became thy portion, O venerable one, and with thy teachers thou didst struggle, and didst strive to share in the ways of the apostles.

The godly Nahum was the assistant of the holy hierarch Clement: he reached the lands of the West and, having illumined them with the light of preaching, is therefore glorified with him.

The people of Bulgaria, whom for thy sake, O venerable Nahum, the Lord hath raised up from stones as children of Abraham, as the Forerunner said, now glorify thee, abiding in the knowledge of Him.

The people of Bulgaria, who before sat in the darkness of grievous unbelief, O venerable one, through thee have beheld the light of understanding; wherefore, we honor thy memory with sweet hymns of joy.

Theotokion: Fill me with tranquility, O Theotokos, for thou art the tranquility of the souls of all peoples; and still the tempest of the demons which make war on me and in vain seek to thrust me into the abyss and pit of Hades, O Lady.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “Today the Virgin ...”:

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave * to ineffably give birth unto the pre-eternal Word. * Having heard this, be glad, O thou ecumene, * and with the angels and shepherds glorify the pre-eternal God, ** Who is to appear as a little babe

Ikos: **O** truly awesome wonder past all telling! He Who giveth existence to all, in His goodness hath entered the womb of the holy Virgin, and cometh to be born in the cave and to be laid in a manger. And His star is a herald from on high to the magi who come to do Him homage with gifts, drawing from afar those who zealously follow the prophecy of Balaam who said: “A star will proclaim beforehand the little babe, the pre-eternal God!”

Sessional Hymn of the venerable one, in Tone VIII:

Spec. Mel.: “Of the Wisdom ...”:

As one wise and intelligent, from the time of thy youth thou didst bow thyself beneath the easy yoke of thy Master, O father, and, filled with goodness, thou didst receive the godly Clement as thy fellow husbandman. With him thou didst plough the hearts of unbelievers and didst sow therein the seeds of Orthodoxy. Wherefore, thou hast passed over to the lands which are devoid of pain, ever reaping the reward of thy labors. O most blessed Nahum, entreat Christ God that He grant remission of offenses unto those who celebrate thy holy memory with love.

Glory ..., another Sessional Hymn, in Tone IV:

Spec. Mel.: “Joseph marveled ...”:

O venerable Nahum, emulator of the apostles and rule of hierarchs, adornment of the venerable and fellow struggler with the spiritual athletes of God: thou wast crowned as a martyr though thou didst not shed thy blood, for thou wast buffeted by cruel tribulations, bearing the divine name of Christ and ever preaching with boldness the mystery of the Trinity, to Whom do thou never cease to pray on behalf of those who praise thee.

Both now ..., Sessional Hymn of the forefeast, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “Thy tomb, O Savior ...”:

Rejoice, O Sion! Adorn thyself, O Bethlehem! For the Sustainer of all, having sent forth a star, hath announced His infinite condescension, before which the hosts of heaven tremble: Truly He Who alone is the Lover of mankind is immutably born from the Virgin!

ODE IV

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: Foreseeing Thine advent from the Virgin, * Habbakuk cried out in awe: * Thou hast come from Theman incarnate, O Redeemer * to restore Adam who had been expelled!

The radiant cloud cometh forth to shine from her maternal womb Christ, the Sun of righteousness, Who illumineth the whole earth with the rays of divinity.

God hath revealed Himself to be like unto men: He abaseth Himself by assuming flesh, that He might deify us, and is born in a cave. O ye faithful, let us receive Him with a pure heart.

Behold! Christ is born in the city of Bethlehem, that He might open Eden unto us, which of old was closed through the disobedience initiated by the serpent: Let us celebrate a divine festival!

Canon I of the venerable one

Irmos: **Foreseeing in the Spirit O Prophet Habbakuk, * the incarnation of the Word, * thou didst proclaim, crying aloud: * When the years draw nigh, Thou shalt be known; * when the season cometh, Thou shalt be shown forth! * Glory to Thy power, O Lord!**

Behold! by thy preaching have hardhearted pagans been called and come to know God, O wise one; for, as Isaiah writeth, all the land is filled with divine understanding; wherefore, we glorify thy memory.

Full of higher wisdom, thou didst teach the all-simple people of Bulgaria to worship the Hypostases of the Trinity-God Who is immutably One in nature, united without commingling; and they cry aloud: Glory to Thee, O Lord!

Like a divinely chosen steed thou didst stir up the sea of ungodliness, O wise Nahum, as the prophet saith; and thou didst draw forth as fish the men who were drowning in the depths of unbelief, who cry out: Glory be to thee O Lord!

Theotokion: **Thou wast shown to be a divine palace and a temple truly consecrated unto God, O Virgin Mary. Him do thou entreat on our behalf, that He wash away the defilement of our sins, that we also may become the abode and habitation of the Spirit.**

Canon II of the venerable one

Irmos: **He who sitteth in glory upon the throne of the Godhead, * Jesus the true God, * is come in a swift cloud * and with His sinless hands he hath saved those who cry: * Glory to Thy power, O Christ.**

Thou wast shown to be an unshakable pillar of the Faith, in nowise toppled by the winds of temptations; enduring multifarious wounds, and opposing the enemies of the Holy Spirit.

Speaking of the mighty works of God before kings and nations, with simplicity of speech thou didst shut the mouths of the rhetors who uttered evil fables; and magnify piety and the glory of Christ.

For piety's sake, like an apostle and a preacher thou didst endure every tribulation; wherefore, we beseech thee, O venerable one: dispel every sorrow and illness from us who celebrate thy memory.

Theotokion: **O pure Mother of God, strengthen the movement of my mind, illumine the senses of my soul, and make me strong against mine enemies, that I may cry out unto thee: Glory to thy birthgiving, O Virgin!**

ODE V

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: I seek Thee early in the morning, * Who for our sake didst mercifully empty Thyself * and willingly submit to be baptized by the hand of a servant, * O Word of God, * Grant Thy peace unto me the fallen one, * O Lover of mankind.

Let the hearts of all mortals leap up, and let creation be glad! The Lord is born from the pure Maiden in the cave of Bethlehem, and the magi offer Him fitting gifts.

O ye people, who of old sat in the shadow of death, behold the Light which hath shone forth upon us from the Virgin, and be filled with great sweetness of soul, ever magnifying the Word Who lowered Himself.

Thou comest to be contained in a little cave, O Thou Who art infinite by nature, that, in Thy boundless mercy, Thou mightest magnify me who have made myself insignificant through disobedience.

Canon I of the venerable one

Irmos: Shine forth thy radiant and everlasting light * upon us who rise early at dawn, * unto the judgments of Thy commandments, * O Master, Lover of mankind, * Christ our God.

O father, thou wast a new apostle, like unto the seventy; and, following Methodius as if he were Paul, thou wast an initiate of the mysteries of God, proclaiming Him by preaching.

Like the chosen vessel, thou wast truly shown to be a receptacle of grace, O most wise one, like the godly Prophet Nahum of old, whose name and goodly ways thou didst inherit, O Nahum.

Thou didst surpassingly love Christ with all thy heart, thy mind and soul, O venerable one, and thou wast accounted worthy to be surpassingly loved by Him,

Theotokion: Tempest-tossed by violent changes, evil circumstances and long scattering, we flee to thy haven, O Lady, for thou art the hope of the hopeless.

Canon II of the venerable one

Irmos: All creation stands in awe of thy divine glory; * for thou, O Virgin who hast not known wedlock, * didst contain within thy womb the God of all, * and gave birth to the timeless Son, * bestowing peace, upon all who hymn thee.

Thou didst sincerely hearken unto the all-wise teachings of the godly Methodius, who brought rebirth to Pannonia through holy baptism and the introduction of the written word, and thou didst emulate his way of life.

Thy feet became beautiful through the preaching of the divine Gospel, and they traversed divers lands, leading up to the divine Light those who in darkness had stumbled on the rocks of unbelief.

The apostles went about the whole earth and ploughed it; and thou and the godly Clement sowed doctrines therein, O venerable one, and now take in the fruits of divine knowledge and everlasting hymnody.

Theotokion: O Lady, bestow a sword of goodwill upon us, strengthening us with thy compassions, help and aid; for evil circumstances pitilessly surround our lives.

ODE VI

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: The uttermost depths of sin have encompassed me; * and its stormy waves I can endure no more, * wherefore like Jonah I cry out to Thee, O Master: * Lead me up from corruption.

Transcending the laws of the flesh, O Lord, the Virgin cometh to give birth to Thee in the cave and to lay Thee in a manger as a babe in the flesh.

In His mercy, the Supremely divine One, Who was born of the Maiden who knew not wedlock, showeth me to be a citizen of heaven, though I had become a stranger to God through disobedience.

Ye mountains, hills and valleys, be glad; for the Lord is born in the flesh, restoring creation which had become corrupt through wicked disobedience.

Canon I of the venerable one

Irmos: Emulating the Prophet Jonah, I cry aloud: * Free Thou my life from corruption, O Good One; * and save me who crieth out: * O Savior of the world, Glory be to Thee!

O wise one, thou wast added to the four disciples of Cyril and Methodius, the preachers of Christ, the wise initiates of the holy mysteries, the godly fathers of the Bulgarians and Slavs.

O preachers and initiates of the mysteries, ye were driven far away and endured imprisonment and beatings, suffering affliction for the procession of the Holy Spirit.

With the most wise Cyril thou didst traverse far paths, from the North even unto Rome, sharing in his labors, O wise one; and with Methodius thou didst enlighten the Bulgarians.

Theotokion: Deliver us from the cruel assault of the evil one, from the temptations of the passions and all misfortunes, O most pure one, and quickly rescue us from every harm.

Canon II of the venerable one

Irmos: Prefiguring Thy three-day burial * Prophet Jonah praying in the belly of the sea-monster cried aloud: * Deliver me from corruption * O Jesus Thou King of hosts.

In thee also was the word of God fulfilled, for thy divine sound went forth into all the land of Bulgaria, and thy words even unto the ends of the earth.

From the ends of the North even unto the ends of the West your paths were in the sea, O blessed ones, and ye entered Rome, proclaiming the New Testament.

As a divine temple and precious divine habitation from thy youth, O God-bearing Nahum, by thy supplications make me a receptacle of the Holy Spirit.

Theotokion: What will happen to me, who am ever beset on every side? Be thou a protection and refuge for me, O Bride of God, for thou art the invincible helper of the downtrodden.

Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone III:

Spec. Mel.: “Today the Virgin ...”:

Like a great sun doth the all-honored memorial of thy splendid struggles * shine forth upon all; * it illumineth the faces of those who hymn thee * and driveth away the demons and every illness. ** Wherefore, assembling, we faithfully praise thee with love.

Ikos: Come, ye multitudes of the Slavs, and let us hasten together, rejoicing in our father Nahum, for he hath appeared today as the great intercessor and most splendid luminary; for he hath enlightened us all and dispelled the gloom of deception. He followed after Christ and gave himself up as a right acceptable sacrifice; and he now offereth unto all the faithful his most glorious memorial as a spiritual banquet. Let us all praise it with love!

ODE VII

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: In Babylon the Children feared not the fiery furnace; * but cast into the midst of the flames * they were bedewed and sang: * ‘O Lord God of our fathers, Blessed art Thou.’

How can the least of caves hold Thee, O Word, Who in Thine exceeding abasement assumed the poverty of Adam, enriching mankind with the wealth of divine grace?

Hearing strange words, the shepherds hastened to Bethlehem to behold Him Who lieth in a manger of dumb beasts and releaseth all mankind from irrationality.

With mouth and heart let us hasten to hymn and worship with faith Christ Who cometh to be born in the flesh from the Virgin Maiden, in the cave.

Canon I of the venerable one

Irmos: Thy children who were in the furnace O Savior, * were neither touched nor troubled by The fire. * Whereupon the three sang, as with a single mouth * Thy praises and blessed Thee, saying: * ‘O God of our fathers, Blessed art Thou.’

Working wonders, God miraculously delivered thee and thy friends from prison and arrest by the ungodly, O Nahum; for the fetters suddenly fell from your hands and feet, and ye were released.

Through the proclamation of divine doctrines thou didst become a teacher for people of evil ways, and by thy divine translations thou didst make them truly knowledgeable in things divine, transforming them from wild beasts into sheep of the meek Christ.

Thou wast shown to be a chariot of God, O Nahum, bearing the name of Christ in writing against many pagan kings, and glorifying His works, and being gloriously glorified by Him.

Theotokion: **O** most holy and pure one, accept the lowly entreaties of thy servants, and by thy supplications deliver us from the grievous sorrows which afflict us; and cause us to share in thy divine glory.

Canon II of the venerable one

Irmos: **O** all-hymned Lord God of our fathers, * Who saved the children of Abraham in the fire * and slew the Chaldeans, * blessed art Thou!

O father, thou didst mix the sweat of asceticism with the sweat of apostolic labor, and later thou wast shown to be a willing martyr, though thou didst not shed thy blood. And thou didst cry aloud: Blessed art Thou, O God!

Thou didst manifestly cut off the deadly bonds of wicked thoughts, as Moses freed his feet of old; and thou didst truly understand God and command the people to chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

He Who doeth the will of those who fear Him in nowise rejecteth thy prayers on our behalf, O father; wherefore, be thou ever mindful of those who hymn thee with all their heart and all their soul.

ODE VIII

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **S**uffering affliction for the sake of the laws of their fathers, * the blessed Children in Babylon * scorned the foolish decree of the King. * Standing together in the midst of the flames, they remained unharmed, * and sang a song fitting for almighty God: * ‘O ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord * and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.’

Holding in thine arms, bowing down before, and kissing maternally the one Lord Who had become incarnate in a manner beyond all telling, and was clad in human likeness, O Maiden, thou didst say: “O my most sweet Child, how is it that I hold Thee Who holdest all creation in thy hand, while freeing it from the hand of bondage?”

Make ready to chant to Him Who hath been born on earth, O divine angels! Guided by the star, bring ye gifts, O magi! Ye shepherds, hasten ye to behold Him

sitting as a babe in His Mother's arms, crying out: Hymn the Lord, ye works, and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages!

O cloud of the Light, thou who knewest not wedlock, how canst thou wrap in swaddling-bands Him Who clothes the heavens with clouds by His ineffable will?

How canst thou lay in a manger of dumb beasts the Master Who in His boundless mercy doth deliver mankind from irrationality? Him Whom all creation worships with fear, hymning Him throughout all ages.

Canon I of the venerable one

Irmos: Him of whom the angels and all the hosts of heaven are in awe * as their Lord and Creator, * ye priests hymn, ye children praise, * ye peoples bless and supremely exalt * throughout all ages.

Let us hymn Nahum, the divinely inspired instrument of the Holy Spirit, O ye faithful, crying out to the Lord in sacred words: By his supplications save those who hymn Thy might!

With Clement as thy companion, thou didst traverse all the lands of the Slavs, O most wise one, by thy preaching guiding Okhrid and the people round about it unto the straight path.

Taking thy cross upon thy shoulder, O Nahum, thou didst follow after Christ, the one King, struggling lawfully; and from Him thou hast received a crown of victory, O blessed one of God.

Theotokion: The children who were in nowise burned prefigured thy womb which was in nowise consumed by the divine Fire, O most pure one, but was preserved as a habitation for the one God.

Canon II of the venerable one

Irmos: The Offspring of the Theotokos * saved the holy children in the furnace. * He who was then prefigured hath now been born on earth, * and He gathereth all creation to hymn thee: * all ye works praise ye the Lord * and supremely exalt Him throughout all ages.

Desiring to deliver all peoples from irrationality, the Word of God gave thee a tongue of fire, whereby thou didst lead the people of Bulgaria to a knowledge of the Truth, teaching them to hymn Christ throughout all ages.

By thine opposition thou didst overcome the savagery of the tyrants, O ever-memorable Nahum, and as a champion of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the divine Source of the uncaused Trinity thou didst endure wounding, beatings and imprisonment.

Thou didst in nowise escape all tribulation, pain and groaning, O Nahum; but Christ, accepting thy labors for Him, hath caused thee to dwell in the place of ineffable joy and delight, where the first-formed beings now abide.

Beset with violent tribulations by enemies visible and invisible, contending with sorrows, pain and evil circumstances, with ignorant injustices and bitter banishment, we cry out in pain of heart: Save us, O Compassionate One, through the supplications of the venerable Nahum.

Theotokion: Flight hath utterly failed me, and, as say the Scriptures, they that seek after me have multiplied; but be thou for me protection and strength, a refuge and confirmation, O Lady, a hope and the sure joy of salvation, that I may glorify thee throughout all ages.

ODE IX

Canon of the forefeast

Irmos: **B**e not now amazed, O Mother, * beholding as an infant Him Whom the Father begat from within Himself * before the morning star; * for I have manifestly come to restore and glorify with Me * the nature of fallen mankind, * who with faith and love magnifieth thee.

Rejoice, O most pure one, thou receptacle of ineffable joy! For, lo! thou comest to give birth ineffably in the cave to the Master Who truly desires to restore all creation, which of old became corrupt through disobedience. Hymning Him with faith, we magnify thee.

O all ye souls of the righteous, and those beneath the earth, rejoice! For, lo! the Deliverance of all hath appeared, born in the city of Bethlehem! And the star proclaimeth Him to the magi, who seek Him with piety; and, beholding Him in the cave, they are filled with joy.

O Virgin, we hymn thee as another heaven, who in the morning shall shine forth the Sun of righteousness upon us from thy most pure womb, illumining those in the darkness of death and corruption. Wherefore, we magnify thee with praises, as is meet.

Canon I of the venerable one

Irmos: **T**he light-bearing cloud upon whom * the beginningless Master of all descended from heaven, * like the dew upon the fleece, * and of whom He was incarnate, * becoming a man for our sake, * let us all magnify as the pure Mother of God.

As is meet, the land of Bulgaria honoreth thy memory, O Nahum; for with the godly Clement, Gorazd the wonder-worker, and Angelarius the wise initiate of the sacred mysteries, thou wast its enlightener. By your supplications save it!

Rome beheld your apostolic journeys, O godly Cyril, right blessed Methodius and glorious Nahum, and it stood in awe of the wonders of God wrought through you; wherefore, we honor you with annual hymnody.

O blessed Nahum, the choirs of the fathers, the apostles, the venerable, the hierarchs, prophets and martyrs, have now received thee and those who suffered with thee; for thou didst emulate their manner of life. With them remember us all.

We know thee to be the sacred ark of the covenant which beareth the word of God saving multitudes of the Slavs, and bringing them to the eternal promised land; wherefore, guided toward everlasting life, we venerate the shrine of thy relics.

Theotokion: **O** most pure Theotokos, free all of us who trust in thee from iniquitous people and the assault of the demons, from the grievous oppression of multifarious passions, and from the cruel affliction of many temptations.

Canon II of the venerable one

Irmos: **Let every mortal born on earth, * radiant with light, in spirit leap for joy; * and let the host of the angelic powers * celebrate and honor the holy feast of the Mother of God, * and let them cry aloud: * Rejoice! O all-blessed Theotokos, * thou pure Ever-Virgin.**

O ye faithful, let us stand in the house of our God and let us glorify His mighty works and miracles in His courts; for He is wondrous in His saints, who submit to His commands. With them the venerable Nahum rejoiceth.

That, holding festival, we may honor thee, O Nahum, by thy supplications deliver us from all assaults and evil circumstances, perils and tribulations, and every other form of wrath, entreating Christ, Who hath revealed thee to be a keeper of His commandments.

The people whom thou didst nurture with thy labors, whom thou didst water with thy sweat, and whom thou didst root firmly by thy sufferings, O all-blessed one, offer thee annual hymnody as the first-fruits of thy memory; wherefore, pray thou to God for them.

Loose me, O Christ, for Thou knowest mine infirmities, that through them I may find rest before my departure through the supplications of Nahum Thy favored one, O Master; and let me not become a joy for mine enemies in this age or that which is to come.

Theotokion: **With** faith we entreat thee, the true Mother of the Creator Who hath wrought all things by His will: In that thou art good, cause the counsels and pursuit of those who are at enmity with us to be in vain, O all-hymned one, and preserve all thy servants, thy pastors and flock, from the hands of our enemies.

Exapostilarion of the venerable one:

Spec. Mel.: “Thou hast visited us ...”:

Christ hath visited a most embittered people, and through thee, O Nahum, hath saved them from the hands of the evil one and from the darkness of unbelief. And all the land hath been filled with divine understanding.

Glory ..., another Exapostilarion:

As is meet, let the godly Nahum be honored in hymnody: the well of miracles and spring of healings, the glory of monastics and adornment of priests.

Both now ..., Exapostilarion of the forefeast:

Adorn thyself well, O Bethlehem! Open wide thy gates! For thy King cometh, Who before all ages hath in His mercy desired to become a man. Rejoice and dance, all creation!

On the Praises, 6 Stichera: 3 of the forefeast, in Tone VI:

Spec. Mel.: “Go forth, ye angels ...”:

The mystery appointed beforehand by the Father * before time began, * and Thy mystery appointed beforehand by the Father * before all ages, * and proclaimed of old by the prophets, * hath been revealed in the latter days: * God hath become a man, * receiving flesh from the Virgin, * the Uncreated One of His own will taketh on our form, * He Who Is entereth temporal existence: * Christ cometh forth, ** the King of Israel.

I hymn Thee, O King * Who art wrapped in swaddling-bands, * for thou loosest the bonds of my falls into sin, * and, honoring me with immortal and incorruptible glory, * Thou hast made me wholly the Father's own, * refashioning and restoring me. * Wherefore, I cry to Thee: * Christ cometh forth, ** the King of Israel.

The magi, observers of the stars, * beholding through the star * the light which proceedeth from the Light * and shone forth from the Virgin upon those on earth, * cast off the darkness of Persia * and all the deception of astrology, * and chanted in joy to God Who is born: * “Blessed is our God Who hath come! ** Glory be to Thee!”

And 3 Stichera of the venerable one, in Tone I:

Spec. Mel.: “O all-praised martyrs ...”:

Come, ye who love the feasts of the Church, and, blessing Nahum, the precious receptacle of the Spirit, in sacred hymns, let us crown him, having tasted well of his words and received adoption of the divine Spirit; for by his supplications we receive the remission of our offenses.

Thy death was truly precious in the sight of the Lord, O ever-memorable Nahum; for thy life is full of piety and purity, and is filled with all holiness. Thereby hast thou attained the deification, O father, which hath come to thee through sharing in the Divine.

Grant us help against every tribulation and deliver us from temptations, O holy Nahum, for human aid is impotent. In a manner transcending that of men thou didst become a converser with the angels, and thou dost protect us who fear God and venerate thy precious relics.

Glory ..., in Tone VIII:

The fruit of thy divine labors hath made steadfast the hearts of the faithful, O venerable father; for thou gavest neither sleep to thine eyes nor slumber to thine eyelids until thou didst sow piety and Orthodox dogmas. Wherefore, having now assembled, we praise thy memory, O Nahum. Standing with boldness before Christ, watch over us thereon, and pray that He save our souls from misfortunes.

Both now ..., the composition of Anatolius, in Tone VIII:

The Creator of all is born in Bethlehem; the pre-eternal King openeth Eden. He turneth back the flaming sword, and the middle wall of enmity is broken down. The hosts of heaven unite with mortals, angels and men form a mighty solemnity. The pure offer hymnody to the Pure One. We behold the Virgin as the cherubims' throne of glory, who contained God Whom naught can contain, and beareth Him Whom the seraphim glorify with fear, that He may grant the world great mercy.

Greed Doxology. Troparia:

Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

Thou hast departed this world, cleaving unto Christ. * And having crucified thy flesh, thou livest for the Spirit, * O all-blessed Nahum. Thou didst strive to follow the course of the apostles, * and didst win countless multitudes in Bulgaria for the Faith. * Wherefore, by thy supplications ** deliver us from temptations. **(Twice)**

Glory ..., Both now ..., Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! * Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! * Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! * For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. * Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, * in the midst of which is the divine Tree, * whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. * Christ is born, that He might restore His image ** which of old fell! **(Once)**

Litanies. Dismissal. First Hour

AT LITURGY

On the Beatitudes, 8 Troparia: 4 from ODE III of the canon of the forefeast, and 4 from ODE VI of the 1st canon of the venerable one.

Thou didst desire to clothe Thyself in the guise of a servant, that Thou mightest deliver me from slavery to the evil one. I hymn Thy loving-kindness, O Word Who art co-beginningless and consubstantial with the Father: Glory to Thy dispensation! (Twice)

The Virgin cometh to give birth to the Lord in the cave! Come forth, O ye magi! Ye shepherds, come forth! Ye angels, cry out hymns from on high: The Deliverance of mankind hath come!

Seeking me who have become lost and by my barren acts have been shown to be a den of thieves O Lover of mankind, Thou hast now arrived at the cave to be born today from the Virgin, O Master. Glory to Thy Nativity, O Word!

O wise one, thou wast added to the four disciples of Cyril and Methodius, the preachers of Christ, the wise initiates of the holy mysteries, the godly fathers of the Bulgarians and Slavs.

O preachers and initiates of the mysteries, ye were driven far away and endured imprisonment and beatings, suffering affliction for the procession of the Holy Spirit.

With the most wise Cyril thou didst traverse far paths, from the North even unto Rome, sharing in his labors, O wise one; and with Methodius thou didst enlighten the Bulgarians.

Theotokion: Deliver us from the cruel assault of the evil one, from the temptations of the passions and all misfortunes, O most pure one, and quickly rescue us from every harm.

Troparion of the forefeast, in Tone IV:

Make ready, O Bethlehem! * Be thou opened unto all, O Eden! * Adorn thyself, O Ephratha! * For in the cave the Tree of Life hath sprung forth from the Virgin. * Her womb is shown to be a noetic paradise, * in the midst of which is the divine Tree, * whereof eating, we shall live, and not die as did Adam. * Christ is born, that He might restore His image ** which of old fell!

Troparion of the venerable one, in Tone IV:

Thou hast departed this world, cleaving unto Christ. * And having crucified thy flesh, thou livest for the Spirit, * O all-blessed Nahum. Thou didst strive to follow the course of the apostles, * and didst win countless multitudes in Bulgaria for the Faith. * Wherefore, by thy supplications ** deliver us from temptations.

Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone III:

Like a great sun doth the all-honored memorial of thy splendid struggles * shine forth upon all; * it illumineth the faces of those who hymn thee * and driveth away the demons and every illness. ** Wherefore, assembling, we faithfully praise thee with love.

Kontakion of the forefeast, in Tone III:

Today the Virgin cometh to the cave * to ineffably give birth unto the pre-eternal Word. * Having heard this, be glad, O thou ecumene, * and with the angels and shepherds glorify the pre-eternal God, ** Who is to appear as a little babe.

Prokeimenon, in Tone VII: Precious in the sight of the Lord * is the death of His saints.

Verse: What shall I render unto the Lord for all that He hath rendered unto me?

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, § 335 (HEB. 13: 17-21)

Brethren: Obey those who have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as ones who must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the ever lasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia, in Tone VI: Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; in His commandments shall he greatly delight.

Verse: His seed shall be mighty upon the earth.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE, § 24 (LK. 6: 17-23)

At that time Jesus stood in the plain, and the company of His disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him: for there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all. And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said: “Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when

they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven.”

Communion Verse: In everlasting remembrance shall the righteous be; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.