

**GREAT VESPERS  
SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS (CHEESEFARE)  
OCTOECHOS TONE 4**

**KATHISMA READING**

*Blessed is the man... is sung*

**AT PSALM 140**

*In Tone 4*

*10.*

We never cease to adore Your life-giving Cross, O Christ our God,  
And we glorify Your resurrection on the third day.  
For You, Almighty One, have thereby restored the corrupted nature of all  
and reopened the way to heaven,  
since You alone are gracious and You love mankind.

*9.*

O Saviour, You have absolved the penalty of disobedience,  
committed through the tree of Eden,  
by willingly being nailed to the tree of the Cross.  
As Almighty God, You descended into Hades  
and broke asunder the bonds of death.  
We, therefore, venerate Your resurrection from the dead,  
and joyfully cry out to You:  
Almighty Lord, glory to You!

*8.*

O Lord, You have battered down the gates of Hades,  
and by Your death You have dissolved the realm of death.  
You have freed mankind from corruption,  
bestowing life, incorruption, and Your great mercy upon the world.

*7.*

Come, all you people,  
let us sing the praises of our Saviour's resurrection on the third day.  
For we have, thereby, been delivered from the invincible bonds of Hades,  
and we have received incorruption, together with eternal life.  
Therefore, we cry out to You  
after Your crucifixion, burial, and resurrection:  
Save us by Your resurrection, for You love mankind.

6.

O Saviour, with the angels we sing the praises of Your resurrection on the third day.  
For the very ends of the universe have, thereby, been enlightened,  
and we have been saved from the deceit of the enemy.  
Therefore, we cry out to You,  
Almighty Saviour, Giver of Life, and Lover of Mankind:  
Save us by Your resurrection.

5.

O Christ our God, You have demolished the brazen gates of Hades.  
You have broken asunder the bonds of death,  
and lifted up the fallen human race.  
Therefore, we cry out with one accord:  
O Lord, Who arose from the dead, glory to You!

*In Tone 6*

4.

The Lord my Creator took me as dust from the earth  
and formed me into a living creature  
breathing into me the breath of life and giving me a soul;  
He honoured me,  
setting me as a ruler upon the earth over all things visible,  
and making me a companion of the angels.  
But Satan the deceiver,  
using the serpent as his instrument,  
enticed me by food;  
he parted me from the glory of God  
and gave me over to the earth  
and to the lowest depths of death.  
But, Master, in compassion, call me back again.

3.

In my wretchedness I have cast off the robe woven by God,  
disobeying Your divine command, O Lord, at the counsel of the enemy;  
and I am clothed now in fig leaves and in garments of skin.  
I am condemned to eat the bread of toil in the sweat of my brow,  
and the earth has been cursed so that it bears thorns and thistles for me.  
But, Lord, who in the last times was made flesh of a Virgin, call me back again  
and bring me into Paradise.

2.

O precious Paradise, unsurpassed in beauty,  
tabernacle built by God, unending gladness and delight,  
glory of the righteous, joy of the prophets and dwelling of the saints,  
with the sound of your leaves  
pray to the Maker of all:

may He open to me the gates which I closed by my transgression,  
and may He count me worthy  
to partake of the Tree of Life  
and of the joy that was mine  
when I dwelt in you before.

1.

Adam was banished from Paradise through disobedience and cast out from delight,  
beguiled by the words of a woman.  
Naked he sat outside the garden, lamenting, "Woe is me!"  
Therefore let us all make haste to accept the season of the Fast  
and hearken to the teaching of the Gospel,  
that we may gain Christ's mercy  
and receive once more a dwelling-place in Paradise.

*Glory...*

Adam sat before Paradise and lamenting his nakedness,  
he wept: "Woe is me!  
By evil deceit was I persuaded and led astray,  
and now I am an exile from glory.  
Woe is me!  
In my simplicity I was stripped naked,  
and now I am in want.  
O Paradise, no more shall I take pleasure in your joy;  
for I shall return to the earth from whence I was taken.  
O merciful and compassionate Lord,  
to You I cry aloud:  
I am fallen, have mercy on me."

*In Tone 4*

*Now...*

O Mother of God, because of You David the Prophet  
became an ancestor of God;  
he foretold and sang a joyous hymn of praise  
and cried out to Him who worked wonders in you:  
"The Queen stood at your right hand."  
God revealed you as a life-giving mother,  
when He chose to be incarnate of you without a father.  
He renewed in man His image which the passions had corrupted.  
He found the lost sheep in the mountains, carried it on His shoulders,  
offered it to the Father, generously numbered it among the powers of heaven,  
and saved the whole world, since He is Christ of great and rich mercy.

## **APOSTICHA**

### *In Tone 4*

In being lifted upon the Cross, O Lord,  
You abolished the curse which we had inherited from our ancestors.  
By going down into Hades,  
You freed from eternal captivity those imprisoned there,  
and granted incorruption to the human race.  
We, therefore, praise Your life-giving and redeeming resurrection.

*The Lord reigns, He is clothed in majesty. Robed is the Lord, and girt about with strength.*

By hanging on the Cross, O Almighty One,  
You shook the whole creation to its foundations.  
When You Yourself were laid in the grave,  
You raised to life those who had been lying in the graves,  
and You granted life and incorruption to mankind.  
We, therefore, praise and glorify Your resurrection on the third day.

*For He has made the world firm, which shall not be moved.*

O Christ, the lawless people showed their ingratitude to You, their Benefactor,  
by delivering You to Pilate who condemned you to be crucified.  
But You willingly suffered death and burial;  
and, as God, You rose by Your own power on the third day,  
granting us everlasting life and great mercy.

*Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, for length of days.*

The women, shedding bitter tears, came to see You in Your tomb;  
and not finding Your body, they lamented, saying:  
O Saviour and King of All, how were You stolen?  
What place holds Your life-bearing body?  
An angel answered them, saying:  
Do not weep, but go and proclaim that the Lord is risen,  
filling our hearts with joy;  
for He alone is most compassionate.

### *In Tone 6*

*Glory...*

Adam was cast out of Paradise through eating from the tree.  
Seated before the gates he wept,  
lamenting with a pitiful voice and saying:

“Woe is me,  
what have I suffered in my misery!  
I transgressed one commandment of the Master,  
and now I am deprived of every blessing.  
O most holy Paradise, planted for my sake and shut because of Eve,  
pray to Him that made you and fashioned me,  
that once more I may take pleasure in your flowers.”  
Then the Saviour said to him:  
“I desire not the loss of the creature which I fashioned,  
but that he should be saved and come to knowledge of the truth;  
and when he comes to me I will not cast him out.”

*Now...*

Christ the Lord, my Maker and Saviour,  
came out of your pure womb in the likeness of me, O Woman without stain,  
and He delivered Adam from the original curse.  
Therefore, O Woman all pure,  
since you are the Mother of God and a true Virgin,  
we never tire of calling you with the salutation of the angel:  
“Hail, O Lady,  
O our intercessor, our shield,  
and the Redemptrix of our souls!”

## **TROPARIA**

*In Tone 4*

When the disciples of the Lord learned from the angel\* the glorious news of the resurrection\* and cast off the ancestral condemnation,\* they proudly told the apostles:\*  
“Death has been plundered!\* Christ our God is risen,\*\* granting to the world great mercy.”

*Glory... Now...*

O Mother of God, the mystery hidden from all eternity\* and unknown even to the angels,\* was revealed through you to those on earth:\* God took on our human nature\* and united it to His divine nature in a perfect but unconfused union.\* Then, He willingly accepted the cross for our sake\* and thereby raised again the first created man,\*\* and saved our souls from death.