

224 The good deed of the harlot enflamed the jealousy of Judas and urged him on to betrayal. "O misery of Judas! He saw the harlot kiss your feet, and deceitfully he plotted to betray you with a kiss. She loosed her hair and he was bound a prisoner by fury ... for envy knows not how to choose its own advantage."¹⁸⁴ Nevertheless, Jesus does everything for the sake of Judas' salvation: He washes his feet, and offers him bread during the Mystical Supper. "O ineffable self-abasement! ... O Saviour, you who are fire have washed the feet of your betrayer, and washing him, you have not burned him up ... but you have given him Bread at the supper."¹⁸⁵

b. The Passion

225 In the Old Testament, the prophet Isaiah gives witness to the suffering of the Servant of God, which the Church recognizes to be the suffering of Christ:

He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account. Surely, he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and of licted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth (Is 53:3-7).

226 Jesus himself foretold his future Passion: "Everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be handed over to the Gentiles; and he will be mocked and insulted and spat upon. After they have flogged him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise again" (Lk 18:31-33). Christ voluntarily accepts suffering and death, in order to conquer death. "It was not death which accepted life, but Life which accepted death."¹⁸⁶

227 In her liturgical tradition, with various images presented by the sticheras of the Passion, the Church prayerfully hymns the salvific suffering of the Son of God. Allowing himself to be bound in the garden of

¹⁸⁴ *Floral Triodion*, Great and Holy Thursday, Vespers, Stichera at Psalm 140.

¹⁸⁵ *Floral Triodion*, Great and Holy Friday, Compline, Canon, Ode 8.

¹⁸⁶ AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 12, 10-11: PL 35,1489-1490.

Gethsemane, Christ unbinds the chains of sin of the forefather A Christ accepts the sentence of death, in order to offer the forgiven sins. With the reed, a sceptre of shame, Christ inscribes people into Book of Life. With the stripping of his garments on Golgotha, Christ tears away the covering of hypocrisy from human sin. Allowing himself to be nailed to the cross the Lord puts an end to the desire of Adam the forbidden fruit. Humanity's written record of sins is nailed to cross, and the lance of the centurion tears asunder our debt obligations. The tree of the cross, an instrument of death, becomes the tree of The body of Christ, raised upon the cross, becomes a beacon of light by God, in order to find the lost drachma—the sinner. The arms Christ spread out upon the cross become the embrace of God and a blessing for all people. The place of the crucifixion becomes Paradise because the tree of the Cross issues the shoot of life—Christ. He fell asleep on the cross and was pierced with the lance; and from his pier side poured forth blood and water. Therefore, with blood he redeemed all the nations, and with water he cleansed them. He who dies from the famine of sinfulness feeds the human race with the Body that is flesh of his own flesh.

c. The Resurrection

228 Foretelling his death, Christ also proclaims Resurrection from the dead. He identifies the three-day sojourn of the prophet Jonah in the belly of the whale as the sign of his Resurrection (see Mt 12:40). Christ will rise "on the third day in accordance with the scriptures" (1 Cor 15:4) "After they have flogged him, they will kill [the Son of Man], and on the third day he will rise again" (Lk 18:33). Christ likens his Death and Resurrection to the destruction and rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up ... But he was speaking of the temple of his body" (Jn 2:19, 21).

229 By the miraculous raising of Jairus' daughter (see Lk 8:41-42, 49-56), the raising of the widow's son in Nain (see Lk 7:11-16), and the raising of his friend Lazarus (see Jn 11:1-57), Christ gradually prepared the apostles for his own Resurrection. Christ refers to human death as sleep: "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping" (Mt 9:24). Death is not the end of life but a falling asleep; humankind is not dead, it has fallen asleep. The Church also refers to Christ's death in the same way; "In the flesh you fell asleep as a mere mortal."¹⁸⁷ Saint John of Damascus unveils the meaning of Christ's death: "Although he died as man

¹⁸⁷ Floral Triodion, Sunday of Holy Pascha, Paschal Matins, Exapostilarion.