

24<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—Tone 7 (9<sup>th</sup> of Luke)

Prophet Obadiah. Martyr Barlaam.

Vespers

At "Lord, I Call", sing the stichera verses (4) of the Resurrection in Tone 7.

Then the following stichera (3) for the Prophet Obadiah in Tone 1

As a shining vessel of the Spirit, thou wast illumined by Him, Obadiah. With most divine vision, thou wast enriched by the image of prophecy; foreknowledge of things to come and knowledge of the truth.//Pray that He may grant our souls peace and great mercy!

The glorious and honorable Prophets participate through communion by grace in the very attributes and properties by which God is made known.//The Lord enlightens His chosen ones with His splendor.

Thou wast a glorious prophet: a divine herald of God full of unfading light. Thou didst behold the glory which surpasses understanding and reason as thou didst stand before the Master of all.//Entreat Him that He may grant our souls peace and great mercy!

Then the following stichera (3) for the Martyr Barlaam in Tone 4

Thou wast more sturdy than a pillar, harder than iron, and stronger than bronze; for each of these, when submitted to fire, is overcome by its force; it melts and is quickly destroyed. But thy right hand did not waver when it was placed over the burning coals.//Unexpectedly it prevailed, O all-wise Barlaam.

As though thou wast a priest standing before God, and coming before Him, not with another's blood, but with thine own, O blessed martyr, thou didst offer a sacrifice of sweet fragrance,

not to the delusion of demons, //but to Christ the Savior and Master Who reigns forever.

A priest who offers and a lamb that is offered; joyfully we call thee both, O Martyr, worthy of all praise; as a victim, entirely unblemished, thou didst make thyself a whole-burnt offering to God through the fire of torments://Earnestly pray that He save those who praise and honor thy memory!

### **After “Glory...now and ever...” sing the Dogmatic in Tone 7**

Of thy wonderful childbearing no tongue can speak, for the order of nature was overruled by God. Thou wast revealed to be a Mother above nature, for thou didst remain a Virgin beyond all reason and understanding. Thy conception was most glorious, O Theotokos! The manner of thy giving birth was ineffable, O Virgin! Therefore knowing thee to be the Mother of God, devoutly we pray to thee: // Beseech Him to save our souls!

### **At the Aposticha, sing the verses of the Resurrection in Tone 7**

#### **After “Glory...now and ever...” the Resurrectional Theotokion in Tone 7**

The earth-born run to thy protection O Lady. Thou art our Hope, O Theotokos! Deliver us from our countless sins and pray that our souls may be saved!

#### **Resurrectional Troparion, Tone 7**

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change weeping into joy, and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ God, to proclaim that Thou art risen:// granting the world great mercy.

#### **Troparion, Tone 4 (Martyr Barlaam)**

Armed with youthful fervor, Thou didst endure martyrdom in old age and glorified Christ. Thou didst offer Him thy right hand as a whole burnt offering and thy holy soul as a blameless sacrifice. Intercede that all that be granted forgiveness, Great-martyr Barlaam.

#### **Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos**



**Among the saints we commemorate today: The Holy Prophet Obadiah** [or Abdia] is the fourth of the Twelve Minor Prophets, and he lived during the ninth century B.C. He was from the village of Betharam, near Sicheim, and he served as steward of the impious Israelite King Ahab. In those days the whole of Israel had turned away from the true God and had begun to offer sacrifice to Baal, but Obadiah faithfully served the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in secret.

When Ahab's wife, the impious and dissolute Jezebel, hunted down all the prophets of the Lord (because of her quarrel with the Prophet Elias), Obadiah gave them shelter and food (3/1 Kgs 18:3 ff). Ahab's successor King Okhoziah [Ahaziah] sent three detachments of soldiers to arrest the holy Prophet Elias (July 20). One of these detachments was headed by Saint Obadiah. Through the prayer of Saint Elias, two of the detachments were consumed by heavenly fire, but Saint Obadiah and his detachment were spared by the Lord (4/2 Kgs 1).

From that moment Saint Obadiah resigned from military service and became a follower of the Prophet Elias. Afterwards, he himself received the gift of prophecy. The God-inspired work of Saint Obadiah is the fourth of the Books of the Twelve Minor Prophets in the Bible, and contains predictions about the New Testament Church. The holy Prophet Obadiah was buried in Samaria.

**The Holy Martyr Barlaam** lived in Antioch of Syria. During Diocletian's persecution against Christians, the aged Saint Barlaam was arrested and brought to trial, where he confessed himself a Christian.

The judge, wanting to compel the saint to renounce Christ, ordered that Saint Barlaam be brought to the pagan altar. His right hand was placed over it, and a red-hot censer burning with incense was put into his hand. The torturer thought that a physically weak old man could not endure the pain and would drop it on the altar. In this way he would involuntarily be offering sacrifice to the idol. However, the saint held on to the censer until his hand fell off. After this, the holy Martyr Barlaam surrendered his soul to the Lord.

