

SELECTED VERSES FROM THE LAMENTATIONS AT THE BIER OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

(FBE 1987)

Arranged to be chanted to the melodies of the Lamentations chanted at the Bier of Christ published in the Archdiocese's blue book "Orthodox Hymns in English" (pp. 107, 110 & 114) and the Archdiocese's yellow book "Great Friday – Matins of Great Saturday" (pp. 11, 14 & 17).

It is traditional that the Lamentations at the Bier of the Mother of God be chanted at Great Vespers on the eve of the Feast. Immediately following the Hymn of Righteous Simeon the clergy come to stand before the Bier (in which is the epitaphion of the Theotokos or the festal icon) that has been decorated with fresh flowers. The order of the censings, Lamentations and litanies follows the same pattern as on the eve of Great Saturday. At the conclusion of the Third Stasis we continue Great Vespers as usual with the Trisagion Prayers. If a procession will be made with the Bier, it occurs during the chanting of the festal Apolytikion which is repeated as many times as necessary. Then the usual Great Dismissal is made.

First Stasis Tone 5

1. In a grave they laid Thee / O my Life and my Christ / and now also the Mother of Life / a strange sight both to angels and men.
2. We magnify thee / O pure Theotokos / and we honor thy holy Dormition / as we bow before thine hon'orable tomb.
3. How, O Mary, canst thou die / thou who art the life of faithful ones / and how can the tomb contain thy body / which contained the One Which cannot be contained.
4. Queen who gavest birth to God / the King of the heavens / thou art now royally translated, O pure one / to the kingdom of the heavens.
5. From the earth thou wast translated / but thou didst not forsake the earth / Now All-holy Theotokos / liberate the whole world from mighty ones.
6. Gabriel was sent from God / to announce to thee the good news / of thine imminent departure from this life / O thou pure and spotless heavenly Lady.
7. Receive, O Mother / from thy children our love / and these hymns and odes to bid thee farewell / which we offer from the depth of our souls.
8. Leave us not orphaned, O Mother / as thou dost go from earth to heav'n / where thou will be reunited / with thy Son and thy God.
9. Come with me, O Anna / Come and stand with us now / lead us in the festive praises of Mary / thine own daughter, the Mother of God.
10. The God of glory / thy Son, O pure one / now admits thee as His Mother with glory / and enthrones thee at His right hand.
11. The holy Apostles / O pure Theotokos / when they saw thine all-holy body / fell before it weeping rev'rently.
12. The gate enters the gate / and heaven enters heaven, / O ineffable and wondrous mystery! / Now the throne draws near to the throne of God.

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

Word of God, we hymn Thee / God of all things art Thou / with Thy Father and Thy Spirit Most Holy
praised / and we glorify Thy nature divine.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Ev'ry generation / blesses thee, O Theotokos / ever-virgin and sov'reign Lady / and we glorify thy
Dormition.

And again, slowly:

1. In a grave they laid Thee / O my Life and my Christ / and now also the Mother of Life / a strange sight
both to angels and men.

Second Stasis

Tone 5

1. Right it is indeed / Life-bestowing Lord, to magnify Thee / who hast glorified Thy Mother / at the time of
her life-bearing repose.

2. Right it is indeed / to magnify thee, Theotokos / for thy divine and blameless soul / is entrusted to the
hands of God.

3. Shudder, O ye heavens! / and, O earth, give ear unto these words: / God descended once before for our
sake / He descends again today for His Mother.

4. Though heaven receives / thine undefiled body, O Lady / yet grace hath been poured out / covering the
whole face of the earth.

5. Now Joachim rejoiceth / seeing the great glory of his only child / who indeed didst bear a divine Child /
truly inexplicable and inspired!

6. Gethsemane is blessed / for it gained thy virginal and blessed tomb / it hath been greatly honored / as the
royal bridal chamber.

7. Angels rev'rently attend / to thy most pure sepulchre, O pure one / and a light from it doth shine forth / a
place lighted by the light of God.

8. Thou didst leave thy pure belt / and entrusted it to holy Thomas / as a witness of thy translation / from the
earth unto God above.

9. Mighty kings of the earth / and the wealthy among all earth's peoples / pray to thee, O All-holy Virgin / as
a daughter of the King of heaven.

10. The glor'ious city of the Lord / about which they spoke so gloriously / was translated from earth to heaven
/ and was led into the house of God.

11. Mary, thou only high Queen / of heaven above and of earth here below / lead into thy kingdom / those who
glorify thy holy Dormition.

12. Holy and ever-virgin Lady / Mary Theotokos, Queen and Mother / take now thy rest and sleep and rule /
unto ages of ages with God.

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

O eternal God / Word co-unoriginate and Spirit / make firm the faith of the Orthodox / against heresy and
error, O good One.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Grant true life to the faithful / O all-blameless and pure holy Virgin / thou who gavest birth unto Life Itself
/ and who hast now departed unto Life.

And again, slowly:

1. Right it is indeed / Life-bestowing Lord, to magnify Thee / who hast glorified Thy Mother / at the time of her life-bearing repose.

Third Stasis

Tone 3

1. Ev'ry generation / to thy grave comes bringing / its dirge of praises, O Virgin.
2. All of creation / to the grave comes bringing / a farewell hymn to our Lady.
3. Christ's holy Disciples / tend to the body / of Mary, Mother of my God.
4. Orders of Angels / and Archangels / invisibly hymn her presence.
5. Pious Women / with the Apostles / now cry out their lamentations.
6. She who was at Cana / at the marriage / hath been called with the Apostles.
7. The Master descendeth / to Gethsemane / with countless hosts of heaven.
8. The choir of the Disciples / seeing the Lord descend / in glory greatly rejoiceth..
9. Let the earth leap for joy / as it beholdeth / our God from heaven descending.
10. Let us go out quickly / meeting the Lord Jesus / Who cometh once more among us.
12. Let us be attentive / God now speaketh / with His most pure Mother.
13. Most sweet Mother / come and rejoice with / thine own most sweet Child, Jesus.
14. Behold now thy Son / cometh to bring thee / into His home in the heavens.
15. Come, My most lovely one / and enjoy the beauty / of thine own Son thy Maker.
16. Come indeed, My Mother / come into divine joy / and enter into the kingdom.
17. What will I bring Thee / O my Son, the God-Man / the Maiden cried to the Master.
18. What will I bring Thee / O my God in heaven / except my soul and body.
19. The Father I glorify / to the Son I sing a hymn / the Holy Spirit I worship.
20. Adam and Eve came out / to behold the glory / of their own Virgin offspring.
21. Blessed be the parents / Joachim and Anna / who for the world bore a daughter.
22. Grant to thy Church peace/ to thy flock salvation / through thy most holy Dormition.

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

O Thou Triune Godhead / Father, Son and Spirit / upon Thy world have mercy.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Make thy servants worthy / O most holy Virgin / to see thy Son's kingdom.

And again, slowly:

1. Ev'ry generation / to thy grave comes bringing / its dirge of praises, O Virgin.