

January 6

Theophany of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ

(1st Class)

GREAT VESPERS

Stichera for Theophany (Tone 2)

8. When the Forerunner saw Him who is our Enlightenment, who enlightens every man, coming to be baptized, his heart rejoiced and his hand trembled. He pointed Him out to the people and said: "This is the Savior of Israel, who delivered us from corruption!" O Christ God, O sinless One, glory to You!"
7. When the Forerunner saw Him... *(Repeat)*
6. O our Savior, the armies of angels trembled when they saw You baptized by Your servant, and the Holy Spirit bearing witness by coming down, and when they heard the Father's voice speaking from Heaven: "This One upon whom the Forerunner lays his hands is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased!" O Christ God, glory to You!
5. O our Savior, the armies... *(Repeat)*
4. When the Jordan River received You, O Fountainhead, the Consoler came down in the form of a dove. Behold, the marvel: the One who drew the curve of Heaven bows His head to the Forerunner, to the one made of clay, who cries out to his Maker: "Why do You order me to do things beyond my worth? It is I who need to be baptized by You!" O Christ God, O sinless One, glory to You!

3. When the Jordan River received... *(Repeat)*
2. O God and Lord, when You resolved to save man, who was lost, You deigned to take the servant's form, for it behooved You to assume for our sake what was proper to us. And when You were baptized in the flesh, O our Redeemer, it made us worthy of Your forgiveness. Wherefore, we cry out to You: "O Christ God, our Benefactor, glory to You!"
1. O God and Lord, when You... *(Repeat)*
- v. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Dogmatikon (Tone 2)

When You bowed Your head to the Forerunner, You crushed the heads of the dragons; and when You stood in the midst of the stream, You let Your light shine upon all creatures, that they might glorify You, our Savior, who enlighten our souls!

Entrance with Gospel Book. "O Joyful Light..." Great Prokimenon.

GREAT PROKIMENON

(Tone 7)

Our God is in Heaven and on earth. Whatever the Lord wills, He does.

- v. When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a foreign nation.
- v. The sea looked and ran away; Jordan turned back.
- v. Sea, what makes you run away? Jordan, why did you turn back?

READINGS

1.) *Genesis (1:1-13)*

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept over the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw how good the light was. God then separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." Thus evening came, and morning followed-the first day.

Then God said, "Let there be a dome in the middle of the waters, to separate one body of water from the other." And so it happened: God made the dome, and it separated the water above the dome from the water below it. God called the dome "the sky." Evening came, and morning followed-the second day.

Then God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered into a single basin, so that the dry land may appear." And so it happened: the water under the sky was gathered into its basin, and the dry land appeared. God called the dry land "the earth," and the basin of the water he called "the sea." God saw how good it was. Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth vegetation: every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with its seed in it." And so it happened: the earth brought forth every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with its seed in it. God saw how good it was. Evening came, and morning followed-the third day.

2.) *Exodus 14:15-18, 21-23, 27-29*

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. And you, lift up your staff and, with hand outstretched over the sea, split the sea in two, that the Israelites may pass through it on dry land. But I will make the Egyptians so obstinate that they will go in after them. Then I will receive glory through Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots and charioteers. The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I receive glory through Pharaoh and his chariots and charioteers."

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD swept the sea with a strong east wind throughout the night and so turned it into dry land. When the water was thus divided, the Israelites marched into the midst of the sea on dry land, with the water like a wall to their right and to their left. The Egyptians followed in pursuit; all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and charioteers went after them right into the midst of the sea.

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea flowed back to its normal depth. The Egyptians were fleeing head on toward the sea, when the LORD hurled them into its midst. As the water flowed back, it covered the chariots and the charioteers of Pharaoh's whole army which had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not a single one of them escaped. But the Israelites had marched on dry land through the midst of the sea.

3.) *Exodus 15:22 - 16:1*

Then Moses led Israel forward from the Red Sea, and they marched out to the desert of Shur. After traveling for three days through the desert without finding water, they

arrived at Marah, where they could not drink the water, because it was too bitter. Hence this place was called Marah. As the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?" he appealed to the LORD, who pointed out to him a certain piece of wood. When he threw this into the water, the water became fresh. It was here that the LORD, in making rules and regulations for them, put them to the test.

"If you really listen to the voice of the LORD, your God," He told them, "and do what is right in His eyes: if you heed His commandments and keep all his precepts, I will not afflict you with any of the diseases with which I afflicted the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer." Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water. Having set out from Elim, the whole Israelite community came into the desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai.

All rise for the following Troparia:

(Tone 5)

O Creator of the world. You appeared in the world in order to shine upon those who live in darkness. O Merciful One, glory to You!

v. O God, be merciful to us and bless us, and may Your face shine upon us.

In order to shine upon those who live in darkness. O Merciful One, glory to You!

v. So that Your way may be known on earth, and Your salvation among all the nations.

In order to shine upon those who live in darkness. O Merciful One, glory to You!

v. O Lord, let the peoples give thanks to You; may all the peoples give thanks to You!

In order to shine upon those who live in darkness. O Merciful One, glory to You!

v. May God, our God, bless us, and let all the ends of the earth revere Him!

In order to shine upon those who live in darkness. O Merciful One, glory to You!

v. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

O Creator of the world, You appeared in the world in order to shine upon those who live in darkness. O Merciful One, glory to You!

READINGS

4.) *Joshua 3:7-8, 15-17*

Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know I am with you, as I was with Moses. Now command the priests carrying the ark of the covenant to come to a halt in the Jordan when they reach the edge of the waters." No sooner had these priestly bearers of the ark waded into the waters at the edge of the Jordan, which overflows all its banks during the entire season of the harvest, than the waters flowing from upstream halted, backing up in a solid mass for a very great distance indeed, from Adam, a city in the direction of Zarethan; while those flowing downstream toward the Salt Sea of the Arabah disappeared entirely. Thus the people crossed over opposite Jericho. While all Israel crossed over on dry ground, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant

of the LORD remained motionless on dry ground in the bed of the Jordan until the whole nation had completed the passage.

5.) *2 Kings 2:6-14*

Elijah said to Elisha, "Please stay here; the LORD has sent me on to the Jordan." "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live," Elisha replied, "I will not leave you." And so the two went on together. Fifty of the guild prophets followed, and when the two stopped at the Jordan, stood facing them at a distance. Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up and struck the water, which divided, and both crossed over on dry ground. When they had crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask for whatever I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha answered, "May I receive a double portion of your spirit." "You have asked something that is not easy," he replied. "Still, if you see me taken up from you, your wish will be granted; otherwise not." As they walked on conversing, a flaming chariot and flaming horses came between them, and Elijah went up to Heaven in a whirlwind. When Elisha saw it happen he cried out, "My father! My father! Israel's chariots and drivers!" But when he could no longer see him, Elisha gripped his own garment and tore it in two. Then he picked up Elijah's mantle which had fallen from him, and went back and stood at the bank of the Jordan. Wielding the mantle which had fallen from Elijah, he struck the water in his turn and said, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" When Elisha struck the water it divided and he crossed over.

6.) 2 Kings 5:9-14

Naaman, the head of the army of the king of Syria, came with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. The prophet sent him the message: "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will heal, and you will be clean." But Naaman went away angry, saying, "I thought that he would surely come out and stand there to invoke the LORD his God, and would move his hand over the spot, and thus cure the leprosy. Are not the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be cleansed?" With this, he turned about in anger and left. But his servants came up and reasoned with him. "My father," they said, "if the prophet had told you to do something extraordinary, would you not have done it? All the more now, since he said to you, 'Wash and be clean,' should you do as he said." So Naaman went down and plunged into the Jordan seven times at the word of the man of God. His flesh became again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

All rise for the following Troparia:

(Tone 6)

O our Savior, through the greatness of Your mercy, You cleansed the sinners and publicans, and now Your light shines upon those who live in darkness. Glory to You!

v. The Lord is King, in splendor robed. The Lord is robed; He is girt about with might. For He has settled the earth; it shall stand unmoved. Your throne has been established of old; You are from everlasting.

And now Your light shines upon those who live in darkness.
Glory to You!

v. The rivers have lifted up, O Lord, the rivers have lifted up their voices, the voices of many waters.

And now Your light shines upon those who live in darkness.
Glory to You!

v. The waves of the sea are wonderful; the Lord is wonderful in high places. Your revelations are utterly secure.

And now Your light shines upon those who live in darkness.
Glory to You!

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

And now Your light shines upon those who live in darkness.
Glory to You!

v. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

O our Savior, through the greatness of Your mercy, You cleansed the sinners and publicans, and now Your light shines upon those who live in darkness. Glory to You!

READINGS

7.) *Isaiah 1:16-20*

Thus says the Lord: Wash yourselves clean! Put away your misdeeds from before My eyes; cease doing evil; learn to do good. Make justice your aim: redress the wronged, hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow. Come now, let us set things right, says the LORD: Though your sins be like scarlet, they may become white as snow; Though they be crimson red, they may become white as wool. If you are willing, and obey, you shall eat the good things of the land. But if you refuse and resist, the sword shall consume you: for the mouth of the LORD has spoken!

8.) *Genesis 32:2-11*

Then God's messengers encountered Jacob. When he saw them he said, "This is God's encampment." So he named that place Mahanaim. Jacob sent messengers ahead to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, with this message: "Thus shall you say to my lord Esau: 'Your servant Jacob speaks as follows: I have been staying with Laban and have been detained there until now. I own cattle, asses and sheep, as well as male and female servants. I am sending my lord this information in the hope of gaining your favor.'" When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, "We reached your brother Esau. He is now coming to meet you, accompanied by four hundred men." Jacob was very much frightened. In his anxiety, he divided the people who were with him, as well as his flocks, herds and camels, into two camps. "If Esau should attack and overwhelm one camp," he reasoned, "the remaining camp may still survive." Then he prayed: "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac! You told me, O LORD, 'Go back to the land of your birth, and I will be good to you.' I am unworthy of all the acts of kindness that You have loyally performed for Your servant: although I crossed the Jordan here with nothing but my staff.

9.) *Exodus 2:5-10*

Pharaoh's daughter came down to the river to bathe, while her maids walked along the river bank. Noticing the basket among the reeds, she sent her handmaid to fetch it. On opening it, she looked, and lo, there was a baby boy, crying! She was moved with pity for him and said, "It is one of the Hebrews children." Then his sister asked Pharaoh's

daughter, "Shall I go and call one of the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" "Yes, do so," she answered. So the maiden went and called the child's own mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will repay you." The woman therefore took the child and nursed it. When the child grew, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her son and called him Moses; for she said, "I drew him out of the water."

10.) *Judges 6:36-40*

Gideon said to God, "If indeed You are going to save Israel through me, as You promised, I am putting this woolen fleece on the threshing floor. If dew comes on the fleece alone, while all the ground is dry, I shall know that You will save Israel through me, as You promised." That is what took place. Early the next morning he wrung the dew from the fleece, squeezing out of it a bowlful of water. Gideon then said to God, "Do not be angry with me if I speak once more. Let me make just one more test with the fleece. Let the fleece alone be dry, but let there be dew on all the ground." That night God did so; the fleece alone was dry, but there was dew on all the ground.

11.) *1 Kings 18:30-39*

Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." When they had done so, he repaired the altar of the LORD which had been destroyed. He took twelve stones, for the number of tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the LORD had said, "Your name shall be Israel." He built an altar in honor of the LORD with the stones, and made a trench around the altar large enough for two seahs of grain. When he had arranged the wood, he cut up the young bull and laid

it on the wood. "Fill four jars with water," he said, "and pour it over the holocaust and over the wood." "Do it again," he said, and they did it again. "Do it a third time," he said, and they did it a third time. The water flowed around the altar, and the trench was filled with the water. At the time for offering sacrifice, the prophet Elijah came forward and said, "LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and have done all these things by Your command. Answer me, LORD! Answer me, that this people may know that You, LORD, are God and that You have brought them back to their senses." The LORD'S fire came down and consumed the holocaust, wood, stones, and dust, and it lapped up the water in the trench. Seeing this, all the people fell prostrate and said, "The LORD is God! The LORD is God!"

12.) *2 Kings 2:19-22*

Once the inhabitants of the city of Jericho complained to Elisha, "The site of the city is fine indeed, as my lord can see, but the water is bad and the land unfruitful." "Bring me a new bowl," Elisha said, "and put salt into it." When they had brought it to him, he went out to the spring and threw salt into it, saying, "Thus says the LORD, 'I have purified this water. Never again shall death or miscarriage spring from it.'" And the water has stayed pure even to this day, just as Elisha prophesied.

13.) *Isaiah 49:8-15*

Thus says the LORD: In a time of favor I answer you, on the day of salvation I help you, to restore the land and allot the desolate heritages, saying to the prisoners: Come

out! To those in darkness: Show yourselves! Along the ways they shall find pasture, on every bare height shall their pastures be. They shall not hunger or thirst, nor shall the scorching wind or the sun strike them. For He who pities them leads them and guides them beside springs of water. I will cut a road through all My mountains, and make My highways level. See, some shall come from afar, others from the north and the west, and some from the land of Syene. Sing out, O heavens, and rejoice, O earth, break forth into song, you mountains. For the LORD comforts His people and shows mercy to His afflicted. But Sion said, "The LORD has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me." Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you.

PROKIMENON (*Tone 3*)

The Lord is my light and my Savior: whom shall I fear?

- v. The Lord is the Protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?

EPISTLE

1 Cor 9:19-27

Brethren: Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew to win over Jews; to those under the law I became like one under the law-though I myself am not under the law-to win over those under the law. To those outside the law I became like one outside the law-though I am not outside God's law but within the law of Christ-to win over those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some. All this I do for the sake of the

gospel, so that I too may have a share in it. Do you not know that the runners in the stadium all run in the race, but only one wins the prize? Run so as to win. Every athlete exercises discipline in every way. They do it to win a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one. Thus I do not run aimlessly; I do not fight as if I were shadowboxing. No, I drive my body and train it, for fear that, after having preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

ALLELUIA (*Tone 6*)

~ My heart has uttered a good word, I declare my works to the King.

~ You are handsomer than the sons of men: grace has poured forth from your lips. For this cause, God has blessed You forever.

GOSPEL

Luke 3:1-18

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the desert. He went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one crying out in the desert: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made

straight, and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

He said to the crowds who came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruits as evidence of your repentance; and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father, for I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.'"

And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" He said to them in reply, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized and they said to him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He answered them, "Stop collecting more than what is prescribed." Soldiers also asked him, "And what is it that we should do?" He told them, "Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages."

Now the people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Messiah. John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water, but One mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand to clear His threshing floor and to gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." Exhorting them in many other ways, he preached good news to the people.

LETE (*Tone 4*)

He who covers Himself with light as with a garment has deigned for our sake to become as we are. Today He is covered by the streams of the Jordan, though He had no need to be cleansed by them: but through the cleansing that He Himself receives, He bestows a rebirth on us. O wonder! Without fire, He casts anew and without shattering, He refashions. And He saves those who are enlightened in Him, Christ our God, the Savior of our souls!

John the Baptist saw You draw near, You who cleanse the sin of the world by Spirit and by fire. And He cried aloud in fear and trembling, saying, "I dare not touch Your spotless head. O Master, sanctify Me by Your Theophany, O You who alone are the Lover of Mankind!"

Come, let us imitate the wise virgins: come, let us go and see the Master who has appeared; for as a Bridegroom has He come forth to John. The Jordan, seeing You, trembled in fear and stopped. John cried aloud, "I dare not touch Your immortal head!" The Spirit came down in the form of a dove to sanctify the waters, and a voice cried from on high: "This is My Son who has come into the world to save mankind!" O Lord, glory to You!

Christ is baptized! He comes up out of the waters, and with Him He carries up the world. He sees the heavens opened that Adam had closed against himself and his posterity. The Spirit bears witness to His Divinity, for He hastens toward His like. And a voice sounds from Heaven, for it is from Heaven that He has come down, to whom this testimony is given, and He is the Savior of our souls!

The hand of the Baptist trembled when it touched Your spotless head. The River Jordan turned back, not daring to minister to You. For how could he who had stood in awe of Joshua, the son of Nun, not be afraid before the Maker of Joshua? But You, our Savior, have fulfilled all that was appointed, that You might save the world by Your Theophany, O You who alone love mankind!

All: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

(Tone 8)

O Lord, when You willed to perfect what You had made from the beginning, out of all creation You selected servants that they might bring about Your mysteries. From among the angels, Gabriel; from the human race, the Virgin; from the heavens, a star, from the waters, the Jordan River through which You washed away the sins of the world. O our Savior, glory to You!

- now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Today the creation is enlightened. Today all nature is glad, things of Heaven and things of earth. Angels and men mingle with one another, for where the King is present, there His army also goes. Let us run, then, to the Jordan; let us all see how John baptizes a sinless and uncreated head. Therefore, let us cry aloud with one accord, echoing the voice of the Apostle: "The grace of God that brings salvation to all men has appeared, shining upon the faithful and granting them great mercy!"

APOSTICHA *(Tone 2)*

1. O Lord, when John saw You coming to him at the Jordan River, he cried out: "How do You, O Lord, who have no stain, come to me, Your servant? In whose name shall I

baptize You? In the name of the Father You possess in Yourself? In the name of the Son, while You are the very Son in the flesh? In the name of the Holy Spirit whom You grant to the faithful with the breath of Your mouth?"
O God made manifest, have mercy on us!

All: The sea fled at the sight; the Jordan turned back on its course.

2. The waters have seen You! O Lord, when the waters saw You, they trembled, for the very Cherubim do not dare to look upon Your glory, nor can the Seraphim rest their eyes upon You. They stand in fear before You, some on guard, others glorifying Your might. Together with them, we proclaim Your praise, O Merciful One, and say: "O God made manifest, have mercy on us!"

All: Why was it, O sea, that you fled? That you turned back, Jordan, on your course?

3. Today the Creator of Heaven and earth comes in the flesh to the Jordan River; the One who is free from stain seeks baptism in order to cleanse mankind from the Enemy's error; the Master of All is baptized at the hand of a servant in order to grant mankind the cleansing through water. Let us cry out to Him: "O God made manifest, have mercy on us!"

All: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Dogmatikon (Tone 8)

When John, the bright luminary, born of a barren mother, perceived that Christ, the Sun, who had risen from a Virgin, was now asking for baptism, he cried out with joy: "O Lord, sanctify me by Your Theophany!"

TROPARION OF THEOPHANY (*Tone 1*) [3 times]

At Your Baptism in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was revealed. For the Father's voice bore witness to You by calling You His beloved Son; and the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of these words. O Christ God who have appeared to us and enlightened the world, glory to You!

APOLYSIS

...who accepted to be baptized by John in the Jordan River for our salvation...