

Ma' de' dono: The Book of Church Festivals (1984)
Pp. 152-171

ܢܘܨܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

The Order of the Entrance into the Haven

Commonly called: The Parable of the Ten Virgins

At the close of the second service of the eve of Monday (Sunday evening), which is the first day of Passion Week, the clergy and the deacons shall put on their vestments. Carrying a cross, the Gospel, the fans and the censer, they shall be ready to start the procession inside the church, as usual, starting from the northern door of the chancel and ending at the southern door.

During the procession, they shall sing the following hymns:

Fethgomo

Tune: yabeb b-teshbuhto

Psalmody: O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good and His mercy endures forever. (*Psalm 118:1*)

The Entrance into the Haven has led us to life and to the glorious Resurrection of Christ our Savior Who is the Ruler of creation and the consolation of those who are oppressed; He makes us worthy by His grace to behold that miraculous night in which the luminous stars shine forth from the spiritual waters.

Psalmody: Let Israel now say that His mercy endures forever. (*Psalm 118:1*)

The Entrance into the Haven is the true door and the entrance to the redeeming Passion which pardons our offenses and forgive all our debts; therefore, be vigilant, O you who fast, for the Bridegroom has arrived to glorify your crowns; let us suffer with Him in His Passion which is on our account, that we may rejoice with Him on the day of His Resurrection.

Psalmody: O give thanks to the God of gods, for His mercy endures forever. (*Psalm 136:2*)

How pleasant¹ was the night of our Lord's arrival, and how excellent² and full of grace it was, to behold the old and young who are gathering during it and with lights they sing glory. The baptisery is adorned like a glorious bride and gives life to those who are baptized therein.

Also, they shall say the following supplication:

Takhshefto (Supplication)

Tune: shubho l-tobo

Glory be to the Good One, Who, by His love, revealed His glory to men. He created, out of earth, a rational being which He adorned with a soul rich in treasures and put knowledge in the body of man so that the whole creation might sing His praise. Come, you, O eloquent ones, sing His praise before we sleep the sleep of death. In the night, which is so long, let us remember death which will strike dumb our mouths and put us to silence. The righteous, who kept watch during the night, even though they be dead, yet they are alive. And the evil doers, who rejected the glory of their Lord, even though they be alive, yet they are dead. Let us awaken our minds to prayers and to the songs of the Holy Spirit and become the companions of the wise virgins whom our Lord commended. Thus, on that night which will inspire the worlds with awe, we may behold the Bridegroom. Let us not be sunk in pleasures, so that we may sing His praise on the day when He appears.

Now they all stand before the sanctuary. The curtain is kept closed. Most of the lights in the church are put out and very few are left shining. The darkness signifies the dark night on which the ten virgins were expecting the arrival of the Bridegroom. The priest starts the service.

Opening Prayer

Priest: Glory be to the Father...

Deacons: And upon us, weak and sinful, mercy and compassion in both worlds, forever. Amen.

Priest: Grant to us, Christ our God, Who is the Harbor of life and the Haven of all benevolence, that by Your second glorious coming, we may come out and greet You with pure lamps that are filled with the oil of righteousness. May we be worthy to behold Your Divine Countenance, while our lamps are lit and our faces confident, and grant us to wait for You with vigilance, virtue, and purity all the days of our lives, our Lord and our God, forever.

¹ shafir

² shbiḥ - glorious/magnificent

They shall say Psalm 51: Have mercy upon me, O God...

Hymn

Tune: shmayone shubho zomrin

Behold, the bridal chamber is prepared, awaiting those whose lamps are lit, so that when the Bridegroom comes to enter, they will enter the bridal feast with Him.

The Bridegroom is about to come, go out to greet Him with your lamps, while your souls are adorned with the works of righteousness.

Let everyone examine himself and not enter with filthy clothes so that the Bridegroom will not see him and be in anger and throw him out of the door.

Glory be to the Father...

By You, my Lord, may our sins be forgiven and our conscience purified, and by You may our souls be sanctified that we may rejoice with the wise virgins.

Husoyo

Priest: Let us pray and implore the Lord for mercy and compassion.
Merciful Lord, have mercy upon and us and help us.

Make us worthy to offer unto You continually, at all times and in all seasons, praise, thanksgiving, glory, and unceasing exaltation.

Prumiyon (Preface)

Priest: Glory to Him Who is the haven of tranquility, where the tired and those afflicted by sin find rest for themselves; to Him Who is the repose unto those who carry the heavy burdens of the Law and by Him they attain freedom. Exaltation to the heavenly Bridegroom, Who invited the wise virgins to His banquet and ordered them to keep their lamps lit before Him and to wait for Him with vigilance, to keep watch before Him with prudence, purity, and cheerfulness. To Him be glory, honor, and dominion at this time of the entrance into the haven and at all festivals, times, hours, seasons, and through all the days of our life, forever.

Deacons: Amen.

Sedro

Our God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who is the haven of tranquility and the resort of rest, serenity and peace; the Good One, Whose eternal mercies were moved at His creation and could not endure to lose such a work of His hands; the Good Shepherd, Who went out in search of the lost sheep³ and found the royal coin⁴ buried under the lusts of sin which He cleansed and purified in the crucible of the baptisery, bestowing upon it its former beauty. Even now, we pray to You, O Lord God, to liberate completely our souls from the defilement of sin. May we not be stripped of the grace of the Holy Spirit, but rather make us worthy to become pure shrines of Your Godhead. Grant that, on Your second glorious coming with the wise virgins, we too may come out to greet You with radiant lamps that are filled with the oil of righteousness. Do not let us hear the saying: Go away from me, you cursed, for I do not know you. May we not, O Lord, be left in a state of bewilderment and sorrow, nor become strangers to the comely feast of Your bridal chamber; rather, make us worthy that, with our lamps lit and blowing trumpets, we may meet Your Divine Countenance and that there, in the delightful banquet and in the banqueting chamber of the elect, we may rejoice at the table filled with pleasures. Grant that, with true faith, we may reach Your spiritual haven and the place of serenity which is prepared for Your saints. Exalt the horn of Your Holy Church all over the world, by Your glories, and enrich her with the songs of the Holy Spirit, and instead of the lamps which she is carrying in her hands, may she and her children come to meet You at Your second coming with spiritual lamps and with garments that are fit for Your banquets. And keep her in this world from perverted doctrines; make firm her foundations on the rock of the Orthodox faith so that, while Your peace and tranquility reign over her, she may celebrate the feasts of gladness till the end of the world. Lift up her horn, raise high her head, lengthen the cords of her tent and strengthen its pegs⁵. Establish in her the pillar of the Cross of light, so that, unshakable, she may withstand the tempests of paganism. Set over her shepherds to tend her flocks with vigilance and care, and lead her to the haven of tranquility. Sanctify her priests that they may minister honorably before You. Purify her deacons that, with sincerity, holiness, and angelic life, they may praise and dwell among her holy companies. Guide her children, uphold her elders, help her youth, grant them power to be unwavering in every kind of pitfall, and cause her infants to be brought up in a virtuous manner. Sign the whole world with Your victorious Cross. Heal the sick; comfort the oppressed; arise up to help the poor; the orphans and the widows; redeem the captives; release the prisoners; bring together those who are scattered abroad and make men from all ranks of life ready to come to her bosom and arrive at the haven which is free from the storms and the tempests of the sea. Grant to us that, with purity, we may be prepared for the rejoicing and the gladness of Your Resurrection, which is the haven

³ Matthew 18:12

⁴ Luke 15:8

⁵ Isaiah 54:2

of happiness and peace, and the end of this spiritual struggle⁶. On the day of Your Resurrection, may we rejoice in the company of Your holy disciples and with them may we be prepared for Your haven of life where blissful repose is bestowed upon those who have labored in Your spiritual vineyard; and, being illumined with the lamps of light, may we give praise to Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Deacons: Amen.

Priest: From God, may we receive remission of debts and forgiveness of sins, in both worlds, forever.

Deacons: Amen.

Hymn

Tune: Quqoyo

How fitting it was for the virgins as they carried their lamps! When the Bridegroom was delayed in His coming, they all slumbered and slept. Five of them were very foolish and five of them were very wise. There was a mighty cry: Behold, the Bridegroom is coming. The wise virgins entered with Him and the foolish ones were rejected, Halleluyah, Lord, have compassion on us.

Priest: Glory be to the Father...

Deacons: From ages and ages, and forever. Amen.

Let the divine trumpets blow today and unceasingly let us celebrate the feast of the haven of the Most High, Whereby we have rested from the violent waves by obtaining the repose which is the Resurrection of the Only-begotten. And with rejoicing, let us declare the miracles of the Lord Who in His love came and redeemed us and counted us worthy of His haven, Halleluyah, praise be to Him Who sent Him.

Versicles of the Passion

Blessed be Your passion on our behalf, O Lord. Blessed be Your humility on account of us.

A haven of life is the Passion of the Son of God for those who are concerned and consider how He showed and taught us good deeds: love, mercy, and blessed hope.

⁶ The end of Lent

By the virgins, He typified and declared to us that imperishable Kingdom. Let us follow their example and take the oil of good deeds that we may enter with the Bridegroom into Eden.

Let us offer glory to the Bridegroom, Who rejoices because all the peoples shall rejoice with Him in His chamber. Therefore, to exhort us to rejoice with Him, He typified for us the virgins.

When You judge the people who judged You, enter not, O Lord, into judgment with us.

Supplication of Saint James (On Virgins)

Christ, Who came for the Passion and the death of the Crucifixion, hear our supplication and grant mercy upon our souls.

Our God, have mercy upon us; our Lord, by Your mercy, have compassion upon us.

The Son of God was teaching a great parable whereby He announced His coming and the tidings of His path. The kingdom of heaven is like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to greet the Royal Bridegroom and to enter with Him into the banqueting house which is prepared for all the saints.

Our God, have mercy upon us; our Lord, by Your mercy, have compassion upon us.

Glory be to the Father Who typified the world by the virgins, adoration to the Son Who is the Bridegroom of truth, thanks be to the Holy Spirit Who causes the pure and the wise to enter into the abode of life full of pleasures, while the foolish ones He drives away, rejecting, and refusing to accept them; Triune God of one nature, praise be to Him.

Our God, have mercy upon us; our Lord, by Your mercy, have compassion upon us.

Zumoro

I lifted up my mind on high, pondering on the great Passion of our Savior as He stood between the thieves and was mocked by the unbelievers, Hanah was threatening and Caiapha was mocking. Blessed be Your Passion for our sake and Your humility on our account.

Readings

Jeremiah 18:18-22

Acts 3:22-26

Deacons: I heard Paul, the blessed apostle, saying...

The deacon shall read the epistle of Saint Paul.

Hebrews 5:12-14

My brethren, by now, you should be teachers because you have been training for a long time, but even now you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the word of God. You need milk, not solid food. For everyone who lives on milk is unfamiliar with the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, for those whose senses have been trained, by practice, to discern good from evil. Barekhamor.

Hulolo & Pethgomo

Deacon: Halleluyah, Halleluyah. Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will enter in them and I will praise the Lord, Halleluyah. (Psalm 118:19)

Priest: Glory to the Lord, His mercies be upon us and upon you, forever.

The Holy Gosepl from the Apostle Matthew.

All: May His prayer be with us.

The priest reads the Gospel of Saint Matthew 25:1-13

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, there will not be enough for you and us; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

Priest: Worship to the Lord.

Deacons: Kyrie eleison.

Quqliyon (Tone 6)

Hear my prayer, O Lord, Halleluyah, and let my cry come unto You.

For my days are consumed like smoke, Halleluyah, and my bones are whitened as if they were burned. (*Psalm 102:1,3*)

Then they shall sing the following hymn:

Hymn (On Repentance)

Tune: qum fawlos (Tone 7)

Open, O Lord, unto me Your door which is full of mercies, as You opened it unto the woman who was a sinner and accept from me the tears which I offer; and grant me the forgiveness of my sins. You, O Living Water, have I taken on my journey, that there I may not ask for water from Abraham, for I have heard concerning the rich man when he asked for water on the tip of the little finger.

Then they shall add the following:

Hymn

Tune: b-tar'okh moran noqesh no

At Your door, O Lord, do I knock; from Your treasury I ask for mercies. I, a constant sinner, have turned aside from Your way. Grant me to confess and renounce my sin and to live in Your grace.

At whose door, other than Yours, shall we go knocking, O merciful Lord; and who, O King, Whom the kings of the earth worship and glorify, will plead for our transgressions, if Your own mercy pleads not.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be to us a fortress of refuge and a high wall of defense from the evil one and his hosts that fight against us. Shelter us under the wings of Your mercies, when the good are separated from the wicked.

Let the voices of our ministry be a key to open the gates of heaven, and may the archangels in their heavenly order say: how sweet is the voice of the mortals that the Lord quickly answers their requests.

Supplication of Saint Ephrem

Lord, have mercy upon us. Lord, accept our service. Send us from Your treasure: grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

At night, let mortals give thanks, keeping watch with the heavenly hosts; let them send forth voices of glory to the Vigilant One Who never sleeps.

Grant us the vigilance of the wise virgins that when You come at midnight we may enter into the bridal chamber with You.

They bow down before the door of the sanctuary, and with a contrite heart, they shall say each of the following petitions ten times, five to each side. At each time they shall bow their heads until they touch the floor:

Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have compassion and mercy upon us.

Lord, hear us⁷ and have mercy upon us.

Here they all stand up. The priest shall say the following petition three times with a tone that is full of sorrow, sadness, and remorse. The choir repeats the same after him:

Tune: abo k-thab wo egartho

Peter sat at the outer door weeping and crying out: ‘Master, open Your door, I am Your disciple, heaven and earth weep for me because I have lost the keys of the kingdom.’

⁷ ‘nin - reply, answer

Then the priest approaches the veil of the door of the sanctuary holding the cross in his right hand. He touches the veil with the cross three times, each time saying:

Our Lord, our Lord, our Lord, open Your door to us.

At the third time, the veil is drawn back, all the lights are put on, and the clergy and the deacons enter into the sanctuary and sing the following hymn:

Hymn

Tune: quqoyo

Blessed are the good servants who, when their Master comes, finds them keeping watch and working in His vineyard. He binds His loins with a girdle and ministers to them for they have labored with Him from morning till evening. The Father makes his laborers to rest, the Son ministers to them, and the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, weaves their crowns, Halleluyah, and puts it on their heads.

Here a sermon should be delivered to admonish the faithful to lead a life of virtue, charity, good deeds, and always to be alert and watchful for the Lord's second coming, that they may greet Him and, like the wise virgins, enter into His everlasting kingdom.

End of the order of the entrance into the haven.