

THE AKATHIST HYMN TO THE MOST HOLY LADY THEOTOKOS

Kontakion 1

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: "Rejoice, O Bride without Bridegroom."

Ikos 1

A Prince of the Angels was sent from heaven to say to the Theotokos, Rejoice! And seeing Thee, O Lord, take bodily form at the sound of his bodiless voice, filled with amazement he stood still and cried aloud to her:

Rejoice! For through thee joy shall shine forth.
Rejoice! For through thee the curse shall cease.
Rejoice! Recalling of fallen Adam.
Rejoice! Deliverance from the tears of Eve.
Rejoice! Height hard to climb for the thoughts of men.
Rejoice! Depth hard to scan even for the eyes of the angels.
Rejoice! For thou art the throne of the King.
Rejoice! For thou holdest Him Who upholds all.
Rejoice! Star causing the Sun to shine.
Rejoice! Womb of the Divine Incarnation.
Rejoice! For through thee the creation is made new.
Rejoice! For through thee the Creator becomes a newborn Child.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 2

The Holy Maiden, seeing herself in all her purity, said boldly unto Gabriel: "Strange seem thy words, and hard for my soul to accept. From a conception without seed dost thou speak of childbirth, crying: Alleluia!"

Ikos 2

Seeking to know what passes knowledge, the Virgin said to the ministering Angel: "From a maiden womb how can a son be born? Tell me." And to her in fear he answered, crying:

Rejoice! Initiate of God's secret counsel.
Rejoice! Faith in that which must be guarded by silence.
Rejoice! Beginning of Christ's wonders.
Rejoice! Crown and fulfillment of His teachings.
Rejoice! Heavenly Ladder by which God came down.
Rejoice! Bridge leading men from earth to Heaven.
Rejoice! Marvel greatly renowned among the Angels.
Rejoice! Wound bitterly lamented by the demons.
Rejoice! For ineffably thou shalt bear the Light.

Rejoice! For thou hast revealed the Mystery to none.
Rejoice! Wisdom surpassing the knowledge of the wise.
Rejoice! Dawn that illumines the minds of the faithful.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 3

Then the power of the Most High overshadowed her that knew not wedlock, so that she might conceive: and He made her fruitful womb as a fertile field for all who long to reap the harvest of salvation, singing: Alleluia!

Ikos 3

Bearing God within Her womb, the Virgin hastened to Elizabeth; whose unborn child, knowing at once the salutation of the Theotokos, rejoiced and, leaping as if in song, cried out to her:

Rejoice! Vine whence springs a never-withering branch.
Rejoice! Orchard of Pure Fruit.
Rejoice! For thou tendest the Husbandman who loves mankind.
Rejoice! For thou hast borne the Gardener who cultivates out life.
Rejoice! Earth yielding a rich harvest of compassion.
Rejoice! Table laden with mercy in abundance.
Rejoice! For through Thee the fields of Eden flower again.
Rejoice! For thou makest ready a haven for our souls.
Rejoice! Acceptable incense of intercession.
Rejoice! Propitiation of the whole world.
Rejoice! Loving-kindness of God unto mortal man.
Rejoice! Freedom of the approach for mortals unto God.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 4

Tossed inwardly by a storm of doubts, prudent Joseph was troubled: knowing thee to be unwedded, O blameless Virgin, he feared a stolen union. But when he learnt the Thy conceiving was from the Holy Spirit, he said: Alleluia!

Ikos 4

The shepherds heard the Angels glorify Christ's coming in the flesh. Quickly they ran to the Shepherd, and beheld Him as a Lamb without spot, that had been pastured in the womb of Mary; and they sang praises to her, saying:

Rejoice! Mother of the Lamb and Shepherd.
Rejoice! Fold of spiritual sheep.
Rejoice! Protection against unseen enemies.
Rejoice! Key to the door of Paradise.
Rejoice! For Heaven exults with earth.
Rejoice! For things on earth rejoice with the heavens.
Rejoice! Never-silent voice of the Apostles.
Rejoice! Unconquered courage of the victorious martyrs.

Rejoice! Firm foundation of the faith.
Rejoice! Shining revelation of grace.
Rejoice! For through thee hell is stripped bare.
Rejoice! For through thee we are clothed in glory.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 5

Seeing the star pointing to God, the Magi followed its radiance. Keeping it before them as a beacon, with its help they sought the mighty King; and attaining the Unattainable, they rejoiced and cried to Him: Alleluia!

Ikos 5

The children of the Chaldaeans saw the Virgin holding in her hands Him Who with His hands fashion mankind. Though He had taken the form of a servant, yet they knew Him as their Master. In haste they knelt before Him with their gifts and cried out to the Blessed Virgin:

Rejoice! Mother of the Star that never sets.
Rejoice! Bright Dawn of the mystical day.
Rejoice! For thou hast quenched the furnace of deception.
Rejoice! For thou dost illumine all who love the mystery of the Holy Trinity.
Rejoice! For thou hast cast down from his dominion the tyrant who hates humankind.
Rejoice! For thou hast made known the Lord Christ Who loves humankind.
Rejoice! Liberation from the filth of pagan idols.
Rejoice! Liberation from the filth of sin.
Rejoice! For thou hast quenched the worship of fire.
Rejoice! For thou hast released us from the flames of passion.
Rejoice! Guide of the faithful to chastity.
Rejoice! Joy of all generations.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 6

Becoming God's messengers, the Magi returned to Babylon. Having fulfilled the prophecy concerning Thee, and preaching Thee to all as Christ, they left Herod to his own raving, for he known not how to sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 6

Shining upon Egypt with the light of truth, Thou hast dispelled the darkness of falsehood; for the idols of that land fell down, unable to endure Thy power, O Savior, and all who were from them cried unto the Theotokos:

Rejoice! Restoration of humankind.
Rejoice! Downfall of demons.
Rejoice! For thou hast trampled on the delusion of error.
Rejoice! For thou hast exposed the snare of idols.
Rejoice! Sea that hast drowned the invisible pharaoh.
Rejoice! Rock that gives drink to all who thirst for life.
Rejoice! Pillar of fire, guiding those in darkness.
Rejoice! Protection of the world, wider than the cloud in the wilderness.

Rejoice! Food that takes the place of manna.
Rejoice! Minister of holy Joy.
Rejoice! Promised land.
Rejoice! Source of milk and honey.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 7

As Simeon drew near to the time of his departure from this world of error, he received Thee as an infant in his arms, but he knew Thee to be perfect God; and, struck with wonder at Thine ineffable wisdom, he cried: Alleluia!

Ikos 7

A new creation has the Creator revealed, manifesting Himself unto us His creatures. From a Virgin's womb He came, preserving it inviolate as it was before: that, beholding the miracle, we might sing her praises, crying:

Rejoice! Flower of incorruption.
Rejoice! Crown of chastity.
Rejoice! Bright foreshadowing of the Resurrection glory.
Rejoice! Mirror of the angels' life.
Rejoice! Tree of glorious fruit on which the faithful feed.
Rejoice! Wood of shady leaves where many shelter.
Rejoice! For thou hast conceived a guide for the wanderers.
Rejoice! For thou hast borne a deliverer for the captives.
Rejoice! Intercessor for the righteous Judge.
Rejoice! Forgiveness for many who have stumbled.
Rejoice! Robe for the naked and bereft of hope.
Rejoice! Love surpassing all desire.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 8

Seeing this strange birth, let us become strangers to the world, fixing our minds in Heaven. To this end has the Most High God appeared on earth as a lowly man, because He wishes to draw heavenward all who cry aloud to Him: Alleluia!

Ikos 8

The Word uncircumscribed was wholly present here below, yet in no wise absent from the realm on high: God descended to earth, yet underwent no change in place. He was borne of a virgin, overshadowed by divine Power, and unto her we sing:

Rejoice! Enclosure of the God Whom nothing can enclose.
Rejoice! Gate of the hallowed Mystery.
Rejoice! Tidings doubted by unbelievers.
Rejoice! Undoubted glory of the faithful.
Rejoice! Most holy Chariot of Him Who rides upon the Cherubim.
Rejoice! Best of all dwellings for Him Who is above the Seraphim.
Rejoice! For thou bringest opposites to harmony.

Rejoice! For thou hast joined in one childbirth and virginity.
Rejoice! For through Thee our sin is remitted.
Rejoice! For through Thee Paradise is opened.
Rejoice! Key of Christ's Kingdom.
Rejoice! Hope of eternal blessings.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 9

All the ranks of Angels marveled at the great work of Thine Incarnation. For they saw God, Whom none can approach, as a man approachable to all, dwelling in our midst, and hearing from our lips: Alleluia!

Ikos 9

Eloquent orators we see dumb as the fishes in Thy presence, O Theotokos, for they are at a loss to say how thou remainest virgin and yet hast power to bear a child. But we, marveling at the mystery, cry aloud with faith:

Rejoice! Casket of God's Wisdom.
Rejoice! Treasury of His Providence.
Rejoice! For thou revealest lack of wisdom in the lovers of wisdom.
Rejoice! For thou provest devoid of reason those skilled in reason's art.
Rejoice! For the cunning disputants are shown to be fools.
Rejoice! For the myth-makers have withered into silence.
Rejoice! For thou hast torn asunder the tangled web of the Athenians.
Rejoice! For thou hast filled the nets of the fishermen.
Rejoice! For thou dost draw men from the depths of ignorance.
Rejoice! For thou dost illumine multitudes with knowledge.
Rejoice! Ship of all who would be saved.
Rejoice! Haven for the seafarers of life.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 10

Wishing to save the world, the Fashioner of all things came to it of His own free choice. As God He is our Shepherd, yet has He appeared for our sakes as a man like us; and calling like be means of like, as God He hears our cry: Alleluia!

Ikos 10

For the virgins and for all who flee to thee thou art a Wall, O Virgin Theotokos undefiled: for the Creator of Heaven and earth has made thee ready and adorned thee, dwelling in thy womb, and teaching all to sing to thee:

Rejoice! Pillar of virginity.
Rejoice! Gate of salvation.
Rejoice! Beginning of the new and spiritual creation.
Rejoice! Provider of God's mercy.
Rejoice! For thou hast given new birth to those conceived in shame.
Rejoice! For thou hast given good counsel to those robbed of understanding.

Rejoice! For thou bringest to naught the corrupter of man's mind.
Rejoice! For thou bringest to birth the Sower of purity.
Rejoice! Bridal Chamber of a marriage without seed.
Rejoice! For thou joinest in union the faithful to their Lord.
Rejoice! Fair nursing-mother of virgins.
Rejoice! Bridal escort of holy souls.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 11

No hymn can recount the multitude of Thy mercies. For though we offer unto Thee, O holy King, songs as numberless as the sand upon the seashore, yet we do nothing worthy of the blessings Thou hast given us, who cry to Thee: Alleluia!

Ikos 11

We see the Holy Virgin as the lamp of living light, shining upon those in darkness. Kindling the immaterial Fire, she guides all men to divine knowledge; she illumines our minds with radiance, and we sing these praises in her honor.

Rejoice! Beam of the Spiritual Sun.
Rejoice! Ray of the Moon that never wanes.
Rejoice! Lighting-flash that shines upon our souls.
Rejoice! Thunder that brings terror to our enemies.
Rejoice! Dawn that maketh the manifold splendor to arise.
Rejoice! Spring that maketh the River with many streams flow.
Rejoice! For thou dost prefigure the baptismal font.
Rejoice! For thou takest away the filth of sin.
Rejoice! Water washing clean the conscience.
Rejoice! Cup wherein is mixed the Wine of mighty joy.
Rejoice! Scent of Christ's fragrance.
Rejoice! Life of mystical feasting.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 12

Wishing to grant release from ancient debts, the Redeemer of all men came of His own will to those who were exiled from His grace; He has torn up the record of our sins, and from all He hears the cry: Alleluia!

Ikos 12

We all sing in honor of thy Son, O Theotokos, and praise thee as a living temple. For the Lord Who holds all things in His hand made His dwelling in thy womb; He hallowed and He glorified thee, teaching all to cry to thee:

Rejoice! Tabernacle of God the Word.
Rejoice! Greater Holy of Holies.
Rejoice! Ark made golden by the Spirit.
Rejoice! Never-empty treasure-house of life.
Rejoice! Precious crown of Orthodox kings.

Rejoice! Honored boast of Godly priests.
Rejoice! Unshaken fortress of the Church.
Rejoice! Unconquered rampart of the Kingdom.
Rejoice! For through thee the standards of victory are raised on High.
Rejoice! For through thee our enemies are cast down.
Rejoice! Healing of my body.
Rejoice! Salvation of my soul.
Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 13

O Mother worthy of all praise, who hast borne the Word, the Holiest of all Holies.
accepting this our offering, deliver from every ill and from the punishment to come all those who cry
aloud to thee. Alleluia!

*Through the prayers of our holy fathers,
Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on us and save us!*