

## **Glory to God for All Things**

The prisoner's Akathist

Written in the Gulag, 1940, by Fr. Gregory Petrov

### Ode 1

King of all time, who has always willed our salvation,  
Your strong right arm guides the course of our lives.  
We thank you for your mercies, whatever they might be:  
For life eternal and the joys of the kingdom,  
Grant mercy to those who sing your praise aloud  
Now in this world and in the life to come.  
Glory to God, sing everlasting Glory.

### Ikos 1

Your angel spread his wings when I was in my cradle,  
From birth until now your light has illumined me  
Leading me ever onward to the radiance of eternity.  
All along the way, your gifts rained down upon me.  
How can I thank you, when your gifts have been so many?

Glory for calling my soul into being.  
Glory for the beauty of all that has been created.  
Glory for the book of eternity whose pages are earth and heaven.  
Glory for your steadfastness as the world flees away.  
Glory for your mercies, whatever they might be,  
Glory for every sigh, tear or sorrow.  
Glory for every small step and every spark of glory,  
Glory to God, sing everlasting glory.

## Ode 2

The blessings of being your guest are unbearable:  
Breezes, scents, mountains and waters –  
The sun and the clouds that float on still waters.  
All nature breathes with your tenderness,  
Lies in your stillness,  
Whispers your majesty.  
The birds and the beasts move with your love,  
And the earth, our ever-dying mother,  
Burns us with that other beauty, everlasting beauty,  
That makes our tongues cry:

Alleluia!

Thank you for life in this enchanted planet.  
Where the sky is a chalice of lapis,  
Where birds sing in the air,  
Where the soothing forests  
And the murmuring streams  
Bring forth fruit and honey.  
Where we live at our ease,  
Honored to be your guest in this paradise.

Glory for the celebration of life,  
Glory for the odor of roses and lilies,  
Glory for blackberry and blueberry,  
Glory for the moist dew on morning's cheek.  
Glory for the heart's sharp joy when dawn awakens,  
Glory for new life that beckons with each day,  
Glory to You, sing everlasting Glory.

### Ode 3

Without the Holy Spirit, no one could smell a flower  
And feel its joy or taste its soft color.  
The glory of the Most High lurks in the tiniest,  
The most evanescent shows forth the Everlasting.  
Glory to the Spirit, the Giver of Life,  
Who carpets the fields with flowers,  
Crowns the harvest fields with gold,  
And brings gladness to our eyes.  
Be joyful and sing to Him.

Alleluia!

### Ikos 3

After long winter, how mighty is your glory  
When creatures awaken and sing your praise with joy,  
O source of life and destroyer of death!  
Nightingales chant by the light of the moon,  
The valleys put on a wedding-dress of snow  
Awaiting the husband who is perfect in his love.  
If creatures and grass and earth know such beauty  
What shall we be when you come again!  
Our bodies shall shine lustrous and our souls be without stain.

Glory for nature that is warm and tender,  
Glory for creatures around us without number,  
Glory for your wisdom that is traced upon the world.  
Glory for shadow of your unseen hand to kiss.  
Glory for the clarity of life eternal.  
Glory for the beauty unspeakable and unchanged.  
Glory to God, sing everlasting Glory.

#### Ode 4

How sweet are thoughts that revolve around you,  
That meditate on your holy Word.  
To talk with you is balm, balm smoother than oil  
And sweeter than dripping honey in the mouth.  
Praying to you refreshes the soul.  
Where you are not is shadow and emptiness,  
Sadness strikes the heart and nature feels no joy  
Until you return and bring all things with you  
And life like a torrent courses through the soul.

Alleluia!

#### Ikos 4

When the sun sets in quietness, in the peace of sleep eternal,  
And the spent day reigns in silence,  
The yellow rays in the clouds show me your dwelling:  
Fire and purple, lapis and gold,  
The voice of the prophets is written on the sky.  
It is your majesty; it is your presence, Father:

Glory for the hushed hour when night creeps down to us.  
Glory for covering the earth with peace.  
Glory for the last setting ray of the sun  
Glory for sleep that restores like wine.  
Glory for your light, even in the darkness,  
Glory for goodness in times of evil.  
Glorious reawakening on the day which has no evening  
Glory to God, sing everlasting Glory.

## Ode 5

Clouds with dark thunder no longer bring me terror  
Your fire in my heart burns brighter than the sky.  
Outside is the terror, the whirlwind and the howling,  
But Christ calms the heart and the savagery is gone.  
Silence reigns, when He is near, silence, light and peace.  
Sing, heart, sing:

Alleluia!

Your stars light the heaven,  
How glorious are your beacons!  
Eternity is watching  
With distant starlight gleaming.  
I am but a cup of dust  
With heaven's glory shining.  
Your strong right arm guides me surely on my path.

Glory for your kindness, ceaselessly watching  
Glory for the encounters you have arranged  
Glory for the love of friends and of parents.  
Glory for animals, mankind's humble servants,  
Glory for the moments a heart seals in memory,  
Glory for the joy that is innocent and pure.  
Glory for living, moving and loving you,  
Glory to God, sing everlasting Glory.

## Ode 6

How gloriously you light the thunder-track!  
How mighty your arm when it flashes forth fire!  
How awesome your majesty! Majestic your voice is  
When it encompasses the fields and rustles in the trees.  
Your voice is the thunder and downpour of waters,  
It is heard above the waters and the blazing hillside.  
You shake the earth like a rag.  
Wave upon wave you lift to the sky.  
It is for your praise that mankind is humbled.  
A penitent heart cries out:

Alleluia!

## Ikos 6

When the lightning flashes in the prison mess hall,  
How feeble and dim the light from the lamp is.  
Without warning you strike. It fills my heart with joy,  
Flash unexpected, light so searing,  
Leaving all else seem drab, colorless, illusory.

Glory for the heights that heart can dream of,  
Glory for the thirst of oneness with your being,  
Glory for the turning of our hearts from earthly love,  
Glory for the healing rays of forgiveness,  
Glory for subduing darkness, death and evil  
Glory for your presence, your voice and your love,  
Glory to God, sing everlasting Glory.

## Ode 7

How wondrous is music when sounds blend together,  
In music we hear your harmony and love.  
All the great music-makers speak with a voice of yours,  
Preparing us for paradise and choirs of angels.  
All that is beauty draws our souls unto you,  
The ecstatic heart has but one cry:

Alleluia.

Your Spirit inspires the poet and the scientist,  
Your power makes them prophets  
And interpreters of your law.  
Your wisdom is creative, and they, without knowing You,  
Show forth your greatness, the greatness of your work,  
And how great you are in bringing forth mankind!

Glory for the power of the laws of the universe  
Glory for nature that is ruled by your law.  
Glory for your mercy that reveals your laws unto us,  
Glory for your wisdom that keeps deep wonders hid,  
Glory for the mind of man, endlessly inventive,  
Glory for the dignity that labor does endow us with.  
Glory for the tongues of flame and inspiration,  
Glory to God, sing everlasting Glory.

## Ode 8

When we are sick, how near you approach to us,  
You stand by our bedside and comfort our suffering.  
You lean on his bed and the sick man's heart confides in you.  
You bring him your peace and leave him consolations.  
For you are the Love and you are the Comforter  
That watches us by night and heals us by day.  
Night and day we sing:

Alleluia.

From my earliest childhood, from the first time I called on you  
You heard me cry out and you filled my heart with peace.  
Instantly I knew your goodness, knew your blessings  
For all who turn to you and call out night and day.  
Morning, night and day and even now I call on you  
Filling every hour up with praises to your name.

Glory for fulfilling every good desire,  
Glory for watching over me night and day.  
Glory for time's flow healing loss and affliction.  
Glory for eternal life repairing the irreparable.  
Glory for immortality to every good and noble thing  
Glory for the hope of meeting loved ones who have died.  
Glory to God, sing everlasting glory.

## Ode 9

Why on a feast day is nature bright and smiling?  
Why do our hearts brim with gladness from beyond?  
Why are the incense, altar and air luminous?  
Is it the breath of your gracious love upon us?  
Is it Tabor's glory? The glory that transfigured?  
Even the earth and the sky shout

Alleluia?

When you called me to service, you filled me with humility.  
Your deep and piercing ray of light shone deep into my heart.  
It glowed within me luminous like iron shining in the furnace.  
I have seen your face  
Full of mystery  
and glory unapproachable.

Glory for transforming our lives with deeds of love.  
Glory for the pleasure of keeping your commandments.  
Glory for appearing whenever man shows mercy.  
Glory for failures which teach us men compassion.  
Glory for the good we do, which your reward so fully,  
Glory for accepting the heart's bright spark of love,  
Glory for exalting every act of human love  
Glory to God, sing everlasting Glory.

## Ode 10

Smash an urn once and it lies forever shattered,  
But You can reshape a conscience turned to dust.  
You can relight the beauty of a soul despair has darkened  
The darkest forest is not beyond your mercy.  
There is nothing so old that You cannot renew it.  
For you are our Creator, Redeemer and our Love.  
As a candle in the nightfall we praise you:

Alleluia!

## Ikos 10

Lucifer, the angel, was full of pride and glory,  
Downward he fell. Lord, keep my by your grace.  
Save me from the doubt and save me from the falling.  
Turn this my heart to your inclination,  
Turn me to your calling, may I call upon your name.

Glory for all that has happened, every turn of Providence,  
Glory for the words you speak into my heart.  
Glory for the truth you have revealed to me.  
Glory for the scattering of vain imaginations.  
Glory for our rising out of passion through suffering,  
Glory for the death of pride by humiliation.  
Glory to God, sing everlasting glory.

Ode 11

Across the chains of history, your breath keeps me warm.  
It is your redeeming blood that pulses in my veins.  
Centuries of time have past, but you stand beside me.  
I stand before your cross, which I hastened to make ready.  
I throw myself down before the dust of your death.  
For love has triumphed, salvation has known victory.  
The centuries themselves sing your praise:

Alleluia.

Blessed will they be who share your feast in heaven,  
As a sinner I have tasted of that blessedness below.  
Time after time you have held out your body  
And blood and called aloud for me to partake.  
I weep for my sins, for I have tasted Love,  
And my flesh burns with heaven's fire.

Glory for the fire that burns but does not consume  
Glory for the Church's peace in a tortured world.  
Glory for the waters of baptism and rebirth.  
Glory for penitence, pure as the lily-flower.  
Glory for the cup of Salvation, Glory for the bread of joy!  
Glory for exalting us and bringing us to heaven.  
Glory to God, sing everlasting glory.

## Ode 12

I live surrounded by mountains of the dead  
And I see your glory reflected in their eyes.  
What splendid beauty, what heavenly joy!  
What light has shone through their translucent faces!  
For joy and peace have triumphed over suffering and death..  
With silent lips they called you, your blessing breathed upon them.  
In the hour of my death, enlighten my soul also,  
That it may cry:

Alleluia!

The Cherubim above I have never heard singing.  
How then can my voice the melody of their praise?  
The only praise I know is the song that nature sings to you.  
The silent moon in winter when earth offers its prayer  
When it breathes through its mantle of white diamonds.  
The rising sun rejoices and the birds sing forth your praise.  
The dark forests whisper you and the winds stir the waters.  
The choir of stars in serried ranks proclaim your glory  
Moving in ever-deeper infinities of space.  
What is my worship? All nature obeys you.  
I do not obey you, but I too seek your love,  
Longing to thank you, pray to you and praise you.

Glory for the light,  
Glory for the love, deep, divine and infinite.  
Glory for blessing us with angels, grace and saints.  
Glory All-Holy father, for the promise of your kingdom,  
Glory Holy Spirit, radiance of the world to come.  
Glory for all things, Trinity most holy.  
Glory to God, sing everlasting glory.

**Repeat:**

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Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!