

Today Is Suspended - The 15th Antiphon (Fr. Stephen Freeman)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



At the Matins service of Holy Friday the following hymn is sung:

Today is suspended on a tree He who suspended the earth upon the waters.
The King of the angels is decked with a crown of thorns.
He who wraps the heavens in clouds is wrapped in the purple of mockery.
He who freed Adam in the Jordan is slapped on the face.
The Bridegroom of the Church is affixed to the Cross with nails.
The Son of the Virgin is pierced by a spear.
We worship Thy passion, O Christ.
We worship Thy passion, O Christ.
We worship Thy passion, O Christ.
Show us also Thy glorious resurrection.



This version (below) is being sung by the late Archbishop Job of Chicago (OCA). In the service, the 12 Passion Gospels are read (12 gospels recounting the sufferings of Christ) and the Cross is brought out for the veneration of the faithful. This hymn is sung during the procession with the Cross after the reading of the 6th gospel.

Its poetry is typical of the liturgical thought of the Fathers. The death of Christ is ironic – indeed – the whole of Christ’s ministry is ironic. Things are turned upside down. God becomes man so that man can become god – this is ironic beyond measure! But the Fathers also saw in this irony the hiddenness of the mystery of our salvation. A literal reading of the world – a straightforward approach to our salvation – would be expected and anticipated. There is nothing hidden within such an account. But the hiddenness of things is the nature of wisdom. Wisdom is for the one who seeks, the one who listens, the one who looks beyond the obvious.

And it is there that the Wisdom of God is revealed in all of its ironic glory: a King crowned with thorns; God wrapped in mockery and suspended from a tree! In our own lives this same wisdom continues. The way of life is found in the way of the Cross. He who loses his life saves it. The gospel commands can only be understood in this wise foolishness. Forgiving enemies is foolishness, yet is our only hope.

Glory to God!

Source: glory2godforallthings.com