



SYNAXARIA OF THE PENTECOSTARION

by Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos

WEDNESDAY of MID-PENTECOST

On the Wednesday of Mid-Pentecost, we commemorate the words of our Lord Jesus Christ concerning the provenance of His teaching and His Divine origin, whereby He proved that He was the Messiah, and the Mediator and Reconciler of us and the eternal Father.

Verses

Standing in the midst of the teachers,
Christ the Messiah teacheth at Mid-feast.

Synaxarion

We celebrate this Feast in honor of the two great Feasts, I mean Pascha and Pentecost, for it unites and joins each of them together. It came about in this way. After Christ had worked a wondrous miracle for the Paralytic, the Jews, supposedly scandalized over the Sabbath (for the miracle was performed on the Sabbath), sought to kill Him. Therefore, He fled to Galilee, and, spending time in the mountains there, He wrought the miracle of the five loaves and the two fishes, feeding five thousand men, not including women and children. Thereafter, when the Feast of Tabernacles was at hand (this was a great feast among the Jews), He went up to Jerusalem and walked about in secret. Around the middle of this feast, He went up to the Temple and taught, and everyone was amazed at His teaching. Out of envy, they said to Him: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" For, being the New Adam, and also as God, He possessed knowledge, just as the First Adam was replete with all wisdom. They all murmured and were aroused to envy against Him. But Christ, refuting those who were supposedly fighting in defense of the Sabbath, said: "Why go ye about to kill me?" Alluding to previous events, he said: "If ye are fighting in defense of

the Law, why are ye angry at Me? Because I made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath? But although Moses legislated these things, you choose to break the Sabbath for the sake of circumcision.” Having spoken to them at length about this and having proved that He was the Giver of the Law and equal to the Father, on the last day, that great day of the feast, He was about to be stoned by them; but no stone touched Him at all. Passing by thence, He found the man who was blind from birth and gave him sight.

It should be known that among the Jews there were three very great feasts. The first was Passover, which was celebrated in the first month in commemoration of the crossing of the Red Sea. The second was Pentecost, which commemorates the sojourn in the wilderness after the crossing of the Red Sea; for the Jews spent fifty days in the wilderness, until they received the law of Moses; and also on account of the honor given to the number seven, which is esteemed among them. The third feast is that of Tabernacles, which commemorates the tabernacle which Moses saw in the cloud on the mountain and which he pitched through the agency of the architect Be-seleel. It was celebrated over a period of seven days, commemorating the gathering of fruit and the time spent in the wilderness. It was then, during the celebration of this feast, that Jesus stood and cried, saying, “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.”

Because through this teaching Christ proved that He was the Messiah, being the Mediator and Reconciler between us and His eternal Father, for this reason, in celebrating the present feast and calling it “Mid-Pentecost,” we extol Christ and portray the honor of the two Great Feasts on either side of it. On account of this, I think, the feast of the Samaritan woman is celebrated after it; for it, too, recounts much about Christ the Messiah, and also about water and thirst, as in this case.

By Thy boundless mercy, O Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

