

# February 8

V.  *Holy Great-martyr Theodore Stratelates*



He came from the city Euchaita (in Asia Minor) and was a warrior (stratelates) in the city of Heraclea, near the Black Sea. By his pious life and his meek demeanor he attracted the hearts of the townspeople and many pagans to him, who seeing his good moral life accepted the Christian faith. When word of this reached Licinius, the co-ruler with Constantine, he came to Heraclea and tried to force Theodore to bow to idols. When St. Theodore stood firm, the angry governor ordered the confessor of Christ to submit to severe torture. St. Theodore was dragged on the ground, beaten by iron rods, had his body pierced with sharp iron spikes, was burnt with fire and, finally, was crucified on a cross and had his eyes plucked out. At night an angel appeared to the martyr, took him down from the cross and completely healed him. In the morning the servant of Licinius, who was sent to throw the body of St. Theodore into the sea and saw him completely whole believed in Christ. A lot of other pagans seeing the miracle of God also believed. Having found out about this, Licinius ordered St. Theodore to be beheaded. St. Theodore died in 319. The eyewitness, his servant the scribe Varus, described his sufferings.

## *Troparion, Tone 4*

**Recruited by the truth, O Passion-bearer Theodore,  
You proved yourself a capable warrior for the King of Heaven.  
You equipped yourself wisely with the armor of faith  
And conquered legions of demons!  
Because you showed yourself a victorious athlete, //  
We ever bless you in faith.**

## *Kontakion, Tone 2*

**You put on the whole armor of faith with courage  
And took the word of God as a spear in your hand.**

**You conquered the enemy, Theodore, great among martyrs! //  
Together with them, never cease to pray to Christ God for our sake!**

*Epistle: 2 Tim. 2:1-10; sel. 292. Gospel: Mt. 10:16-22; sel. 36*

*Holy Prophet Zechariah the Sickle*

The Prophet Zechariah "the seer of the most worldly visions ", came from the lineage of Levi and was the eleventh of the Minor Prophets. He is called the Sickle for his unique vision in Zech. 5:1-3. His legacy is the book of prophecies in his name consisting of 14 chapters. This book is especially distinguished by the clearness of the prophecies about last days of the earthly life of the Savior, as no other prophet presents such a set of details, as Zechariah points out, the Entry of Jesus Christ on an ass and foal of an ass (Zech. 9:9), about the His betrayal for 30 pieces of silver and the end use of this money (Zech. 11: 12-13), about the piercing with a spear (Zech. 12: 10), about the dispersal of the apostles from Garden of Gethsemane (Zech. 13:7), and about an eclipse of the sun during the suffering of the Savior on the cross (Zech. 14:6-7). The Holy Prophet Zechariah died in about 520 B.C.

*St Sava, the Second Archbishop of Serbia*

He was the youngest son of the first crowned king of Serbia Stephen and the nephew of Sava IV. In youth he accepted monasticism and ascetically struggled first in Jerusalem, and then on Mount Athos. From here he was called to Serbia and was installed as the archbishop of his native land. St. Sava ruled over the Serbian Church for about seven years and died in peace in 1268 or 1269. St. Sava is known for his special meekness and humility. His relics are in the Serbian monastery in Pec.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 74-5.  
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