

STICHERA AND SESSIONAL HYMNS
SUNG ON FRIDAY EVENING AND SATURDAY
MORNING IN THE EIGHT TONES FROM THE
OKTOECHOS

TONE TWO

VESPERS ON FRIDAY EVENING

On “Lord, I have cried ...,” after the Stichera of the day from the Triodion, we chant the following Stichera of the holy martyrs:

Verse: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; * O Lord, hear my voice.

Having no desire for earthly pleasure, O ye passion-bearers, ye were granted heavenly blessings, and became fellow-citizens with the angels. By their prayers, O Lord, have mercy on us and save us.

Verse: Let Thine ears be attentive * to the voice of my supplication.

When the holy martyrs pray for us and hymn Christ, all deception ceaseth, and the human race is saved by faith.

Verse: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? * For with Thee there is forgiveness.

The choir of martyrs resisted the tyrants, saying: “We war on behalf of the King of the powers on high; though ye give us up to fire and torment, we shall not deny the power of the Trinity.”

Verse: For Thy name’s sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath patiently waited for Thy word, * my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

O ye saints, great is the glory, ye have acquired through Faith. For by your sufferings ye not only vanquished the enemy; but even in death, O physicians of body and soul, ye drive out evil spirits and heal the infirm; Pray ye to the Lord, that our souls find mercy.

Then 4 Stichera from the Menaion (repeating the first)

Glory ..., a composition of St. John the Damascene:

For the reposed: **E**very man fadeth like a flower and passeth by like a shadow, and is no more; but when the trumpet shall sound, in the midst of an earthquake all the dead shall arise to meet Thee, O Christ God. Then, O Master, do Thou settle in the abodes of the saints the souls of Thy servants whom Thou hast taken from among us.

Both now ...,

Theotokion: The shadow of the law hath passed now that grace hath come, * for as the Bush wrapped in flame was not consumed, * so didst thou bear a Child O Virgin * and remained a Virgin; * in place of a pillar of fire, the Sun of righteousness hath dawned, * instead of Moses, Christ is come, ** the salvation of our souls.

If the Liturgy of the Presanctified gifts is not served, the following is chanted at the Aposticha:

AT FRIDAY VESPERS APOSTICHA

O ye saints, great is the glory, ye have acquired through Faith. For by your sufferings ye not only vanquished the enemy; but even in death, O physicians of body and soul, ye drive out evil spirits and heal the infirm; Pray ye to the Lord, that our souls find mercy.

Verse: Blessed are they whom Thou hast chosen * and taken to Thyself, O Lord.

For the reposed: Every man fadeth like a flower and passeth by like a shadow, and is no more; but when the trumpet shall sound, in the midst of an earthquake all the dead shall arise to meet Thee, O Christ God. Then, O Master, do Thou settle in the abodes of the saints the souls of Thy servants whom Thou hast taken from among us.

Verse. Their souls * shall dwell among good things.

For the reposed: Woe is me! How great a struggle the soul endureth at its parting from the body. Alas! How many tears will it then shed? Yet there will be none to have mercy on it. Raising its eyes to the angels, it supplicates in vain; stretching forth its hands to men, it finds none to help. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, reflecting on the shortness of our life, let us ask of Christ rest for the departed and great mercy for our souls.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Save from misfortunes, * thy servants O Virgin Theotokos, * for after God * it is to thee that we flee, ** as to an impregnable rampart and protection.

AT MATINS ON SATURDAY MORNING

After the 1st chanting of the Psalter, the Sessional Hymns of the Martyrs:

O ye apostles, martyrs and prophets, hierarchs, holy monks and righteous men, ye who have fought the good fight, and kept the faith to the end: since ye have boldness in the presence of the Savior, we entreat you, pray to Him on our behalf that in His compassionate love He may grant salvation to our souls.

Verse: Wondrous is God in His saints, * the God of Israel.

Thou hast made Thy saints to shine brighter than gold, and in Thy love hast glorified Thy holy ones. By their intercessions, set their supplications before Thee as incense, O Christ God, and grant peace to our lives, O Thou who alone restest in the saints.

Verse: In the Saints that are in the earth * hath the Lord been wondrous.

O passion-bearers of the Lord, blessed is the ground which drank your blood, and holy are the temples that have received your bodies. For in the arena ye openly rebuked the enemy, and with boldness preached Christ. * We entreat you, pray to Him, in that He is good, to grant salvation to our souls.

Glory ...,

For the reposed: Remember the souls of Thy servants, O Lord, in that Thou art good, and insofar as they have sinned in this life, forgive them; for no-one is sinless save Thee, Who alone art able to give rest to those who have reposed.

Both now ...,

All of thy most glorious mysteries are beyond comprehension, * O Theotokos; * for, thy purity sealed and thy virginity intact, * thou art known to be a true Mother, having given birth unto God. ** Him do thou entreat, that our souls be saved.

ON THE PRAISES

Verse: Praise Him for His mighty acts, * praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness.

To the Martyrs: Ye suffered for Christ's sake unto death, O passion-bearers, and though your souls dwell in the hand of God in the heavens, your relics are venerated throughout the whole world; Priests and all the people venerate them, and rejoicing with them we cry aloud: precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.

Verse: Praise Him with the sound of trumpet, * praise Him with the psaltery and harp.

Every city and land doth honor your relics, O passion-bearers. For, striving lawfully for the prize, ye have received crowns from heaven; wherefore ye are the boast of hierarchs, and the majesty of the Church.

Verse: Praise Him with timbrel and dance, * praise him with strings and flute.

O holy martyrs, taking up the Cross of Christ as an ensign of victory, ye set at naught all the power of the devil; and receiving heavenly crowns, ye have become bulwarks for us, praying to the Lord on our behalf.

Verse: Praise Him with tuneful cymbals, praise Him with cymbals of jubilation. * Let every breath praise the Lord.

For the reposed: **W**oe is me! How great a struggle the soul endureth at its parting from the body. Alas! How many tears will it then shed? Yet there will be none to have mercy on it. Raising its eyes to the angels, it supplicates in vain; stretching forth its hands to men, it finds none to help. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, reflecting on the shortness of our life, let us ask of Christ rest for the departed and great mercy for our souls.

Glory ...,

For the reposed: **F**rom the earth hast Thou formed me, * and because of the transgression Thou hast condemned me to return to earth once more. * Thou hast appointed a day of examination, * when each man's hidden deeds shall stand revealed before Thee. * Spare me then, O sinless Lord, * and grant me the forgiveness of my sins, ** and shut me not out from Thy Kingdom.

Glory ..., Both now ...,

Theotokion: **C**ome, and with unceasing hymns let us all glorify the Mother of the Light, for she hath given birth to our salvation; wherefore let us cry out "Rejoice!" to her who alone gave birth to the chief Cause of all: God Who is before time. Rejoice, thou who hast restored Even who gave birth! Rejoice, all-pure Virgin, who knewest not wedlock!

AT SATURDAY MATINS APOSTICHA:

A composition by Theophanes:

For the reposed: **B**y Thy life-bearing death, O Master, Thou didst stem the violence and corruption of death, pouring forth everlasting life upon all, and granting resurrection unto mortals who have reposed. Wherefore we entreat Thee O Savior: grant rest to those who have departed unto Thee with faith, and deem them worthy of Thine incorruptible glory, O Thou Lover of mankind.

Verse: Blessed are those whom Thou hast chosen * and taken to Thyself, O Lord.

For the reposed: **T**hat Thou mightest enable men to share in Thy divine kingdom, O Christ, Thou didst endure crucifixion, and willingly accepted death.

Wherefore, in Thy tender compassion, show forth as sharers in Thy kingdom those who with faith have passed over to Thee; and grant them Thy sweet beauty.

Verse: Their souls * shall dwell amid good things.

For the reposed: Desiring to save Thy creation, rejoicing Thou didst work the truly awesome mystery of Thy dispensation, in that Thou art supremely good; and with Thy precious blood as a ransom Thou didst redeem the whole world. Wherefore, we pray: With all the saints grant deliverance unto those who have passed on to Thee with faith.

Verse: Their memorial * is unto generation and generation.

For the reposed: Standing before Thy dread, terrible and awesome judgment seat, O Christ, those who have died from the beginning of time will await Thy just sentence and receive divine justice. Grant rest then, O Savior, unto Thy servants who have passed on to Thee in faith, in a place where the choirs of the saints are, and the joy is ineffable.

Glory ..., Both now ..., Theotokion:

When my soul must needs sever its fleshly bond and depart this life, then stand before me, O Lady. Set at naught the counsels of the incorporeal foe, and crush the jaws of those who seek to slaughter me pitilessly, that, unhindered, I may elude the myriad princes of darkness who inhabit the air, O Bride of God.