

December 20-23: Sunday before Nativity
Stichera on "Lord I have cried", Tone 6
Kievan Chant

Stichera of the Forefeast

(6) *Reader:* In the 6th tone—

If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand?



For with Thee there is for - give - ness.

The never-setting Sun /

doth come to shine forth from the Virgin's womb /

and to enlighten all the world. /

Let us make haste to meet Him with pure eyes and deeds; /

and let us now make ready in spirit to receive Him /

that cometh into His own through a strange birth, /

as He hath been well pleased to be born in Bethlehem, /

that, as He is compassionate, //

He might lead us up that have estranged ourselves from the life of Eden.

(5) Reader: For Thy name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited patiently for Thy word,

The image shows a musical score for a Stichera. It consists of two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The melody is written on the treble staff, and the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics are: "My soul _____ hath hoped _____ in the Lord." The lyrics are placed below the treble staff, with horizontal lines indicating the placement of the words. The music is in a simple, homophonic style, typical of traditional church music.

God the Word, Who is upborne /
upon the shoulders of the cherubim, /
having united Himself hypostatically to the flesh, /
hath made His abode within the womb /
of the all-immaculate one /
and become man; /
and He hath come to earth to be born of the tribe of Judah. /
The holy cave is beautifully adorned, /
like a most magnificent palace, for the King of all; /
and the manger, /
wherein the Virgin Mary layeth the Infinite One as babe, /
is like a fiery throne, //
and serveth for the renewal of creation.

(4) *Reader:* From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch

The musical score is written on two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The melody is primarily in the treble clef, with some notes in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "Let Is - - - ra - el hope in the Lord." The word "Is" is followed by three dashes, indicating a long note or a pause. The word "hope" is followed by a long horizontal line, indicating a long note or a pause. The word "in" is followed by a short horizontal line, indicating a short note or a pause. The word "Lord." ends with a period. The music consists of several measures, with some notes beamed together and some notes held for a long duration.

In a manger of dumb beasts /
doth the Virgin lay Thee, O unoriginate Word of God, /
Who, in manner which passeth understanding, hast received a beginning. /
For Thou comest to put an end to that foolishness /
which I assumed through the malice of the serpent, /
and to be wrapped in swaddling clothes, /
that Thou mightest rend asunder /
the rags and chains of my transgressions, /
O Thou that alone art good and the Lover of mankind. /
Wherefore, I glorify Thee /
and I hymn and most joyfully worship Thine advent in the flesh, //
whereby I have been set free.

Stichera of the Fathers (in the same tone)

(3) *Reader:* For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption;



And He shall redeem Israel out of all _____ his in - iq - - ui - ties.

Unto the ends of the earth /
hath the memory of the forefathers been manifest /
as truly filled with light and shining with rays of grace; /
for Christ, the radiant Sun, /
shining from afar on high, /
doth lead forth an assembly of stars which shineth with Him, /
and in the midst of Bethlehem /
a nativity is shown to be that of God and man. /
Therefore, piously clapping our hands, /
with faith let us all join chorus //
to utter prefestive praise unto His nativity.

(2) *Reader:* O praise the Lord, all ye nations;

Praise Him all ye peo - - - ples.

Rejoicing today, /

Adam is adorned with the glory of divine communion, /

as the foundation and confirmation of the wise forefathers; /

and with him Abel doth leap for joy and Enoch is glad, /

and Seth danceth together with Noah; /

the all-praised Abraham doth chant with the patriarchs, /

and from on high Melchizedek doth behold a birth /

wherein a father had no part. /

Wherefore, celebrating the divine memory of the forefathers of Christ, //

we beseech Him, that our souls be saved.

(1) *Reader:* For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us,

And the truth of the Lord a - bi - deth for - ev - - - er.

The image shows a musical score for a Stichera. It consists of two staves, a treble clef on top and a bass clef on the bottom, both in the key of D major (one sharp). The melody is written in a simple, homophonic style. The lyrics are: "And the truth of the Lord a - bi - deth for - ev - - - er." The word "abideth" is split across two notes in the treble staff, and "forever" is split across three notes. There are some rests and ties in the bass staff.

With gladness hath the assembly /
of the divinely wise children in the furnace shone forth, /
and it proclaimeth the nativity of Christ on earth; /
for the Lord, descending like a precious dew, /
doth preserve unconsumed her that gaveth Him birth, /
doth keep her undefiled and doth enrich her with divine gifts. /
Wherefore, the God-pleasing Daniel /
rejoiceth in gladness, /
for he hath clearly foreseen the Stone uncut from the mountain, //
and with boldness doth he now pray in behalf of our souls.

Reader: Glory, in the same tone.

7

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spi - rit.

Daniel, the man of divine desires, /
seeing Thee, the Stone uncut by human hands, O Lord, /
prophetically called Thee a babe born without seed, /
the Word incarnate of the Virgin, /
the immaculate God, //
the Savior of our souls.

Reader: Both now, in the same tone.

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Both now and ever and unto the a - ges of a - ges. A-men.

Splendidly ad̄orn thyself, O cave, /
for the ewe-lamb com̄eth /
who doth bear Chr̄ist in her womb! /
O manger, receive thou Him /
that by a word doth release us mort̄als /
from irrational activ̄ity! /
Ye piping shepherds, bear witness to the awesome wonder! /
Ye Magi from Persia, bring forth gold, frankincense and myrrh, /
for the Lord hath appeared from the Virgin Mary. /
And the Mother, regarding Him as befitteth a handmaid, /
worshipped Him and cried out in greet̄ing /
unto Him that was laid in her arms: /
How wast Thou sown within me? /
How didst Thou spring forth in me, //
O my Deliverer and God?