

Byzantine Music Course

March 26, 2020.

Vespers.

Mode pl. 4—Sticheraric and Heirmologic.

The Vesper Service

The Vesper Service usually takes place in the evening and liturgically begins the next day. This stems from the book of Genesis where the next day is begun in the evening: “And there was evening and morning, one day.” Gen. 1:5.

The service mainly consists of hymns called *Stichera*, which are placed between Psalm verses. The first set of Stichera are sung between the verses of a paraphrase of Psalm 140 (Lord, I have cried...), along with verses from Psalms 141, 129 and 116. The second set are also sung to Psalms, but can vary. On a normal Saturday evening, they are dispersed between verses of Psalm 92.

Vespers opens with a reading of Psalm 103, which describes God’s glory in the creation of the world. During the service there may also be Old Testament readings, and occasionally an Epistle reading.

The service concludes with a hymn called the *Apolytikion*, or Dismissal Hymn, which is also sung at the beginning of Matins the next day, as well as at Liturgy.

A More Detailed Look

Vespers begins with a reading of Psalm 103, which gives praise to God through the things in the world He created.

Near the end of the Psalm, on major feasts or when a bishop presides, we sing the verses beginning with verse 28 (When You open Your hand...) in Sticheraric style using Mode pl. 4. through the end of the Psalm, the Glory...Both now, and the Alleluias. These verses are named *Anoixantaria*, after of the verse that begins the chant (When You open Your hand...).

Following the Psalm, the Deacon recites the Great Litany. In earlier times and in some monasteries today, Psalms are chanted immediately after the Great Litany. In such a case, there is a Small Litany after the Psalmody.

Psalm 140 and the Stichera

At this point, the chanting of Psalm 140 begins:

Lord, I have cried to You; hear me. Hear me, O Lord. Lord, I have cried to You; hear me. Give heed to the voice of my supplication when I cry to You. Hear me, O Lord.

Let my prayer be set forth before You as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord.

On a regular Saturday evening, the Psalm is chanted in Sticheraric style using the Mode of the upcoming Sunday.

The Deacon censes the entire nave and narthex and departs through the Royal Gates when *Let my prayer...* is chanted. In order to allow the Deacon time to complete the censuring, we chant the rest of the Psalm heirmologically beginning with verse 3, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth...* through the end of Psalm 141.

The Stichera

When we reach Psalm 141:8 (Bring my soul out of prison...) we begin chanting the proper Stichera hymns for the day. In Mode 1, Saturday evening would start like this:

Sticheron 1.

Bring my soul out of prison to give thanks to Your name, O Lord.

Accept our evening prayers, holy Lord, and grant us remission of our sins, for you alone revealed the resurrection to the world.

Sticheron 2.

The righteous shall wait for me, until You reward me.

Encircle Zion, people, and surround her. Give glory to him who is risen from the dead, for he is our God and has delivered us from our iniquities.

The Stichera

Normally, we have 10 Stichera: On Saturday evenings, we have 7 Resurrectional Stichera plus 3 hymns from the Menaion, Triodion and/or Pentecostarion.

On weekdays, for a feast or a Saint, we usually sing only the verses from the Menaion and count the interspersed Psalm 141 verses backwards will we have the correct number. For example, if a Saint only has 4 Stichera hymns, then we continue chanting Psalm 141 until we reach the 4th verse before the end of the designated Psalm verses, which would be, *From the morning watch until night; from the morning watch until night, let Israel hope in the Lord.*

After the last Psalm verse, we have a *Doxasticon* (Glory-verse) and almost always a *Dogmaticon*. On a normal Saturday evening, the *Doxasticon* is taken from the Menaion, Triodion or Pentecostarion; the *Dogmaticon* is taken from the Paracletike and is dedicated to the theology behind the Incarnation by the Theotokos.

While the *Dogmaticon* is being sung, the Entrance of Vespers is made with the Deacon carrying the censer with the Priest directly behind him.

The Entrance

During the Entrance, the Priest recites the following prayer:

At evening, at morning and at midday we praise, bless and give thanks, and we pray to you, Master of all things, Lord who love mankind: Direct our prayer before you like incense, and do not incline our hearts to words or thoughts of evil, but deliver us from all that hunt down our souls. For our eyes look to you, O Lord, our Lord, and we have hoped in you.

The Deacon then intones, Wisdom! Arise! And the Evening Hymn is sung:

*Gladsome light of holy glory of the holy, blessed, heavenly, immortal Father, O Jesus Christ: arriving at the hour of sunset and having seen the evening light, we praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God. It is worthy for You to be praised at all times with happy voices, O Son of God and Giver of life; * and therefore the world glorifies You.*

This is a very ancient hymn dating at least to the 3rd Century.

The Prokeimenon

Near the end of the Entrance, the Priest and Deacon enter through the Royal Gates into the Sanctuary. The Deacon then commands the Prokeimenon to be sung, “The evening Prokeimenon!”

The Prokeimenon is sung the same way it is in Matins: it may introduce Readings, but that doesn't necessary mean there are readings for the evening.

There is one Prokeimenon for each day of the week. The one for Saturday is:

Prokeimenon. Mode pl. 2.

The Lord reigns; He clothed Himself with majesty.

Verse: The Lord clothed and girded Himself with power.

Verse: And He established the world, which shall not be moved.

The Lord reigns;
He clothed Himself with majesty.

Readings

Not every Vespers has a set of Readings, which are normally reserved for feast days of Saints, or of the Lord or the Theotokos.

When we do have Readings, they are usually, but not always from the Old Testament, i.e. Genesis, the Prophets, Proverbs.

The Old Testament Readings are *read*, not chanted. The Reader chants only the introduction to the text: *The Reading is from the Prophet Isaiah*, or the like. The text itself is read until the last line of the last reading, which is intoned.

Petitions

There are two sets of petitions after the Readings (if there are any). The first set begins with the Deacon exclaiming:

Let us all say with all our soul and with all our mind, let us all say.

The Cantors respond with *Lord have mercy* after the first 2 petitions, then a triple *Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.* for the rest.

Between the first and second sets of petitions, we recite the following:

O Lord, keep us this evening without sin. Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is your name to the ages. Amen. O Lord, let your mercy be upon us for we have set our hope in you. Blessed are you, O Lord, teach me your commandments. Blessed are you, Master, grant me understanding of your commandments. Blessed are you, Holy One, enlighten me with your commandments. Lord, your mercy is forever. Do not despise the works of your hands. To you is due praise, to you is due song, to you is due glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The second set much resembles the petitions that follow the Cherubic Hymn at Liturgy:

Let us complete our evening prayer to the Lord... That the whole evening may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask the Lord. (Grant this, O Lord.)

Lity (Λητή)

A Lity takes place if there is a major feast, the feast of a great Saint, or if there is an Artoclasia. During the Lity, the Altar Company makes a procession around the Nave with the icon of the feast.

The Cantors sing special hymns for the Lity in sticheraric style. If there is no Artoclasia, the Priest places the icon on its podium and re-enters the Sanctuary.

If there is an Artoclasia, the Priest circles the table of 5 loaves 3 times, then places the icon upon the table or on the podium and begins the Artoclasia.

The Artoclasia, briefly, consists of petitions for the parish, for those who offer the bread, wine and oil, etc.

The Priest or Cantors chant in Plagal 1, sticheraric:

O Virgin Theotokos, rejoice, Mary full of grace. The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb; for you have borne the Savior of our souls.

Lity

After the hymn, the Priest recites the prayer for the blessing of the loaves:

Lord, Jesus Christ. our God, You blessed the five loaves in the wilderness and from them five thousand men were filled. Bless now these loaves, the wheat, the wine and oil and multiply them in this holy church, this city, in the homes of those who celebrate today, and in Your whole world. And sanctify Your faithful servants who partake of them. For You are He who blesses and sanctifies all things, Christ our God, and to You we offer up glory together with Your eternal Father and Your holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Thereafter, the Priest and Choir sing the following hymn 3 times in Mode Grave as the Priest then enters the Sanctuary:

The wealthy have become poor and gone hungry, but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.

Aposticha

Next we sing the Aposticha (loosely translated as “the Stichera on the other side.”) These are 4 hymns and a Doxasticon. On feast days of Saints who have a Doxasticon, we sing *Glory...* for the Saint and the *Both now...* in the Mode of the Doxasticon, which comes from the Paracletike on a normal Saturday.

The Aposticha are usually sung heirmologically, while the Doxasticon in Sticheraric.

On normal Saturdays, the Psalm verses between the stichera are the same ones used in the Prokeimenon:

Verse: The Lord reigns; He clothed Himself with majesty; the Lord clothed and girded Himself with power.

Hanging upon the tree, O only mighty One, you shook all creation, and when you were laid in the tomb, you raised up those dwelling there and bestowed life and incorruption on our kind. Therefore, we praise and glorify your resurrection on the third day.

Verse: And He established the world, which shall not be moved.

The lawless people who gave you, O Christ, to Pilate condemned you to be crucified, and showed themselves thankless towards their benefactor. But you willingly suffered burial, and of your own will you arose as God on the third day, and bestowed on us everlasting life and great mercy.

Dismissal

After the Aposticha, the Priest recites the *Song of Simeon*:

Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples. A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.

A reader recites the Trisagion Prayers. If a Bishop is present, the Reader walks to the center of the Solea, salutes the Bishop with *Eis polla eti Despota*. After receiving the Bishop's blessing, the Reader recites the Prayers facing the Altar, then walks to the Bishop's Throne, kisses the Bishop's hand, then returns to his place.

Dismissal - Apolytikia

After the Priest completes the: *For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory...* the Choir chants the Apolytikia. An Apolytikion is a dismissal hymn (ἀπόλυσις = dismissal) because these hymns are the final ones sung at the service.

The normal order for the hymns on a Saturday evening is:

Resurrection Apolytikion in the Mode *for Sunday*, i.e. of the coming week.
Glory.

If there is a Saint or Feast, then that Apolytikion is sung.

Both now.

The Theotokion in the same Mode as the Apolytikion of the *Glory* hymn.

The Theotokion is usually sung in the Mode that the Glory verse is sung. This is not true when a major feast period is in play. In that case the Apolytikion of the Feast is sung, no matter what Mode it's in.

The Priest then finishes the service.

Mode Plagal 4th

Diatonic Scale

Heirmologic Style

Sticheraric Style

Basics of Plagal 4th

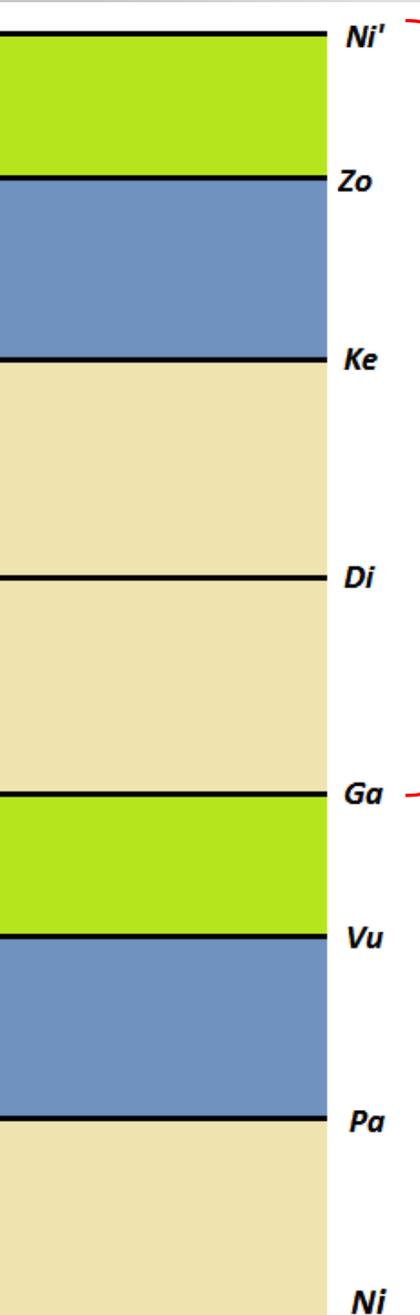
This Mode uses 2 different parts of its scale:

The 1st scale sings from Ni to Ni' and some say it closely resembles a Western C-Major scale. We refer to this scale as "from Ni."

The 2nd scale is a section of the first scale and sings from Ga to Ni', yet frequently dips below Ga.

In the 2nd scale, Zo is always flat. We refer to it as singing "from Ga."

The Heirmologic style uses both scales, but the Sticheraric uses the 1st scale exclusively.



Basics of Plagal 4th

Heirmologic

Heirmologic hymns that use the Ga scale:

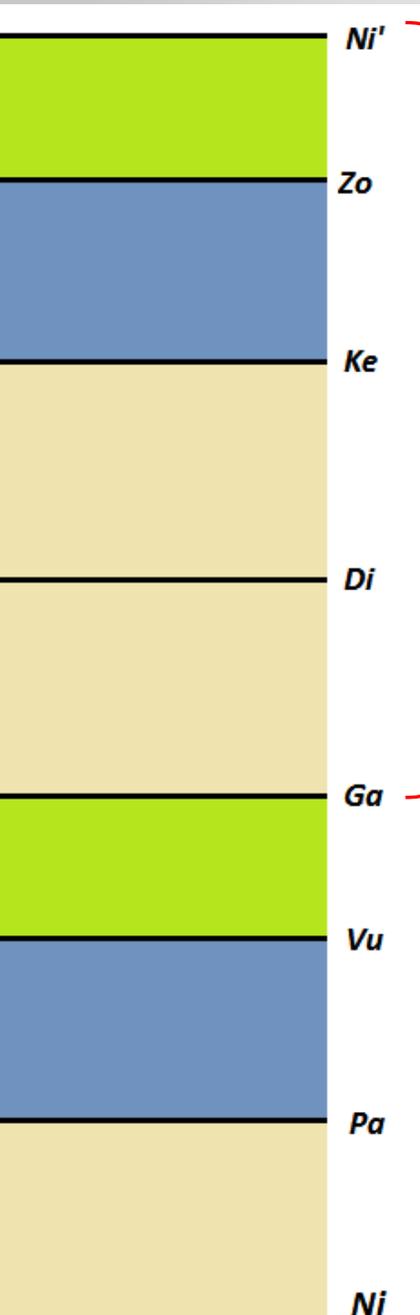
- Apolytikia
- Kathismata

Heirmologic hymns that use the Ni scale:

- Stichera and Aposticha of Matins and Vespers when sung quickly.
- The Anavathmoi
- Prokeimena of every kind

Heirmologic hymns that use both scales:

- Katavasias
- Other canon troparia
- Prosomia



Basics of Plagal 4th

Heirmologic Attraction Points

Base Notes. Ni for the Ni scale, and Ga for the Ga scale.

Attraction Points.

Ga Scale: Di, Zo-flat

Ni Scale: Vu, Ga, Di

Cadences.

Incomplete –

Ga Scale: Di

Ni Scale: Di, Vu

Complete –

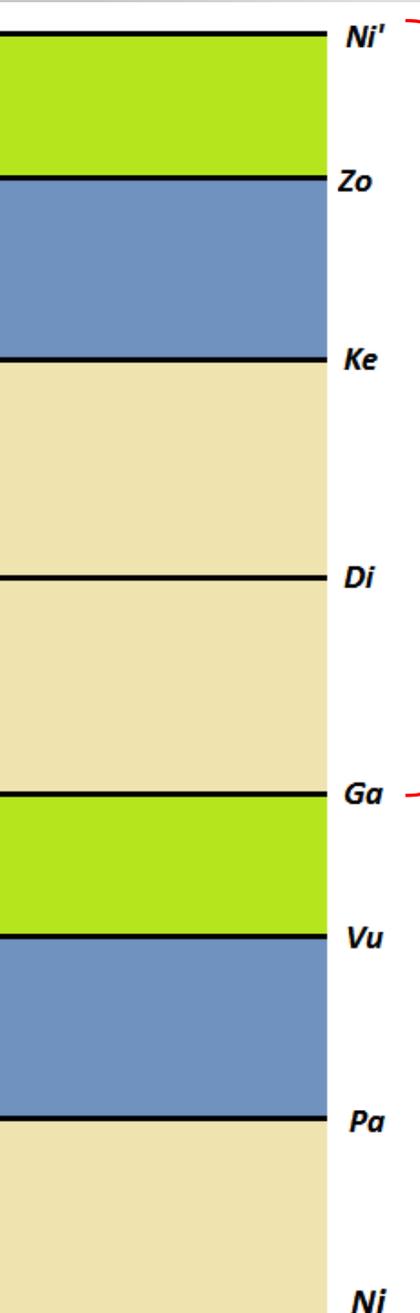
Ga Scale: Ga

Ni Scale: Ni

Final –

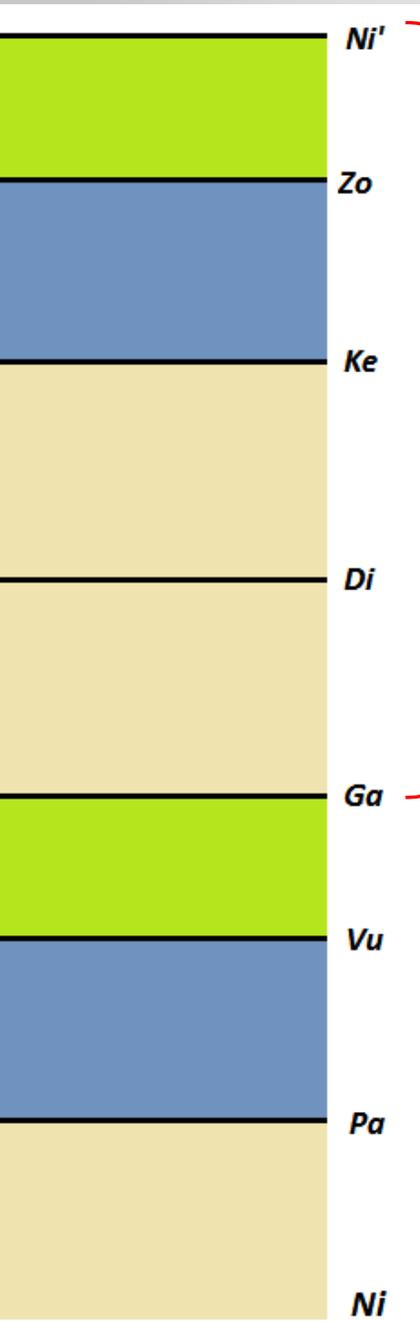
Ga Scale: Ga

Ni Scale: Ni

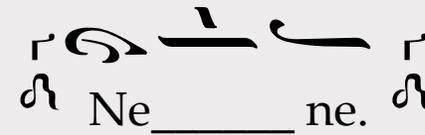


Basics of Plagal 4th

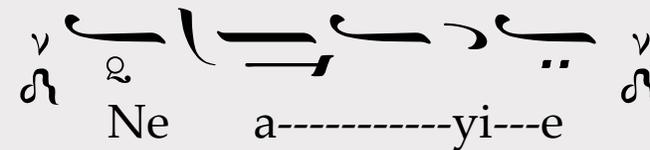
Heirmologic Intonations



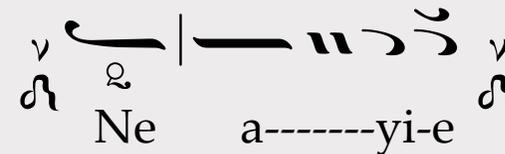
Intonation From Ga:



Intonation From Ni:



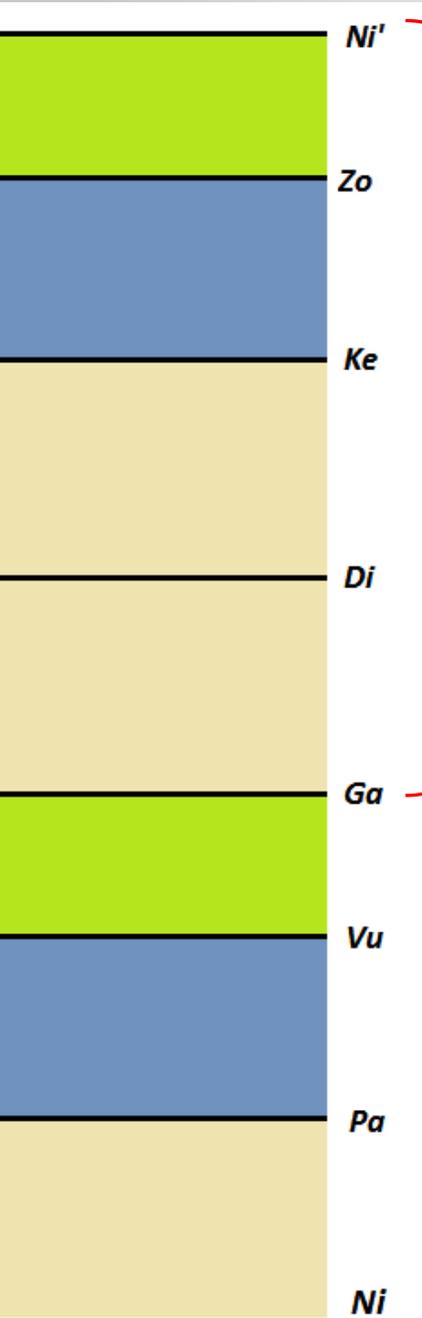
Alternate:



Basics of Plagal 4th

Heirmologic Cadences, Catalyses

This cadence helps differentiate Plagal 4th from 3rd and Grave.



From Ga: Musical notation for a cadence starting on Ga. It consists of a sequence of notes with stems and flags, ending with a final cadence symbol.

From Ni: Musical notation for a cadence starting on Ni. It consists of a sequence of notes with stems and flags, ending with a final cadence symbol.

The catalyses for both scales sound the same, just on different pitches.

Musical notation for a catalysis starting on Ga. It shows a sequence of notes with stems and flags, ending with a final cadence symbol.

Musical notation for a catalysis starting on Ni. It shows a sequence of notes with stems and flags, ending with a final cadence symbol.

Typical Movements

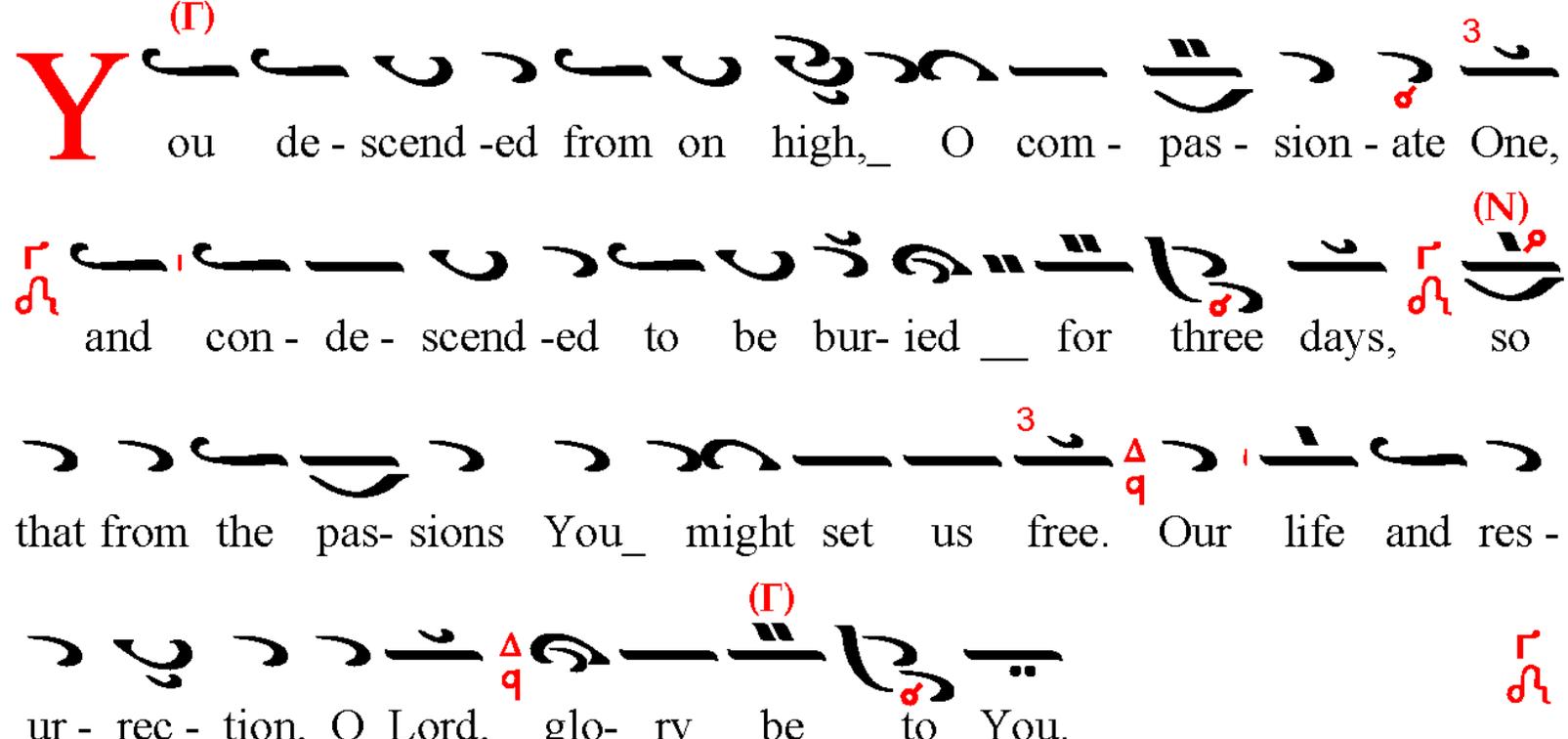
Heirmologic from Ga

Apolytikion.

Mode Pl. 4.

Mode $\lambda \pi \alpha$  $\Gamma \alpha$

Y^(Γ) ou de - scend - ed from on high, O com - pas - sion - ate One,
and con - de - scend - ed to be bur - ied ^(N) for three days, so
that from the pas - sions You ³ might set us free. Our life and res -
ur - rec - tion, O Lord, ^Δ glo - ry be ^(Γ) to You.



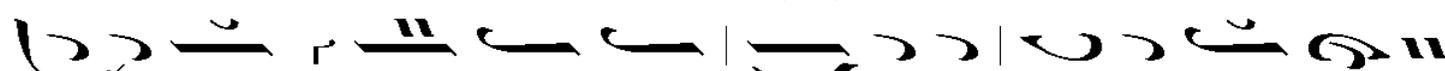
Typical Movements

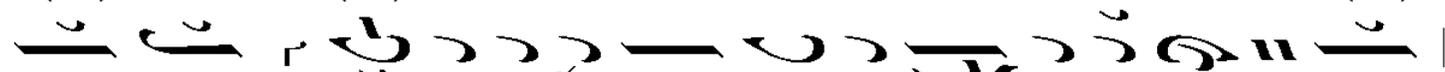
Heirmologic from Ga

Γ
Α

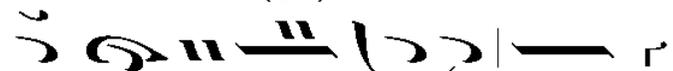
(Γ) 
The wo - men who were bring-ing the bur - i - al__ spic-

(N) 
es Α heard the voice of an An-gel com - ing from the__ sep-

(N) 
ul - cher Α Cease from your tears and in - stead of sor - row__

(Γ) (N) (Γ) 
bring joy Α Sing prais-es cry a - loud that Christ the Lord has__ ris -

(N) 
en Α He is the One who as God__ was well pleased to

(Γ) 
save the__ hu - man__ race Α

Typical Movements

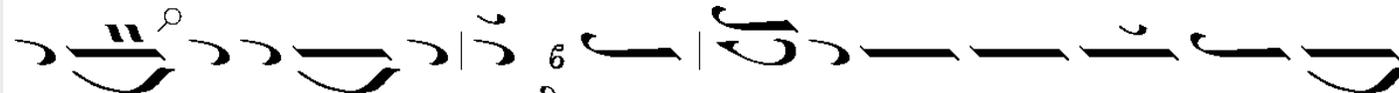
Heirmologic from Ni

γ
δ

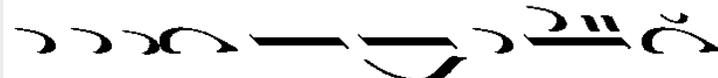
(2)



From my youth does the en - e - my tempt me and with



the pleas-ures he scorch-es me λ But trust-ing You O Lord mon - u -



men-tal - ly do I de-feat_ him

γ
δ

(2)



Let the hat - ers of Zi - on be - come_ as the grass



is be - fore_ it is plucked up δ For Christ will al - so



cut their necks_ with the cut - ting sword of tor- ments

Typical Movements

Heirmologic from Ni

(N)

Lord____ e - ven if You stood on tri - al and suf -

(□)

(N)

fered Pon - ti - us Pi - late to be Your judge^{dh} yet You did not leave

(□)

(N)

Your di - vine throne seat - ed with the__ Fa - ther as You are ^{dh}

And when You rose__ from the dead ^{dh} You freed the world from__

ser - vi-tude that was im - posed on it by the Dev - - il ^{dh}

(□)

(N)

O Com - pas - sion-ate who loves__ man - kind ^{dh}

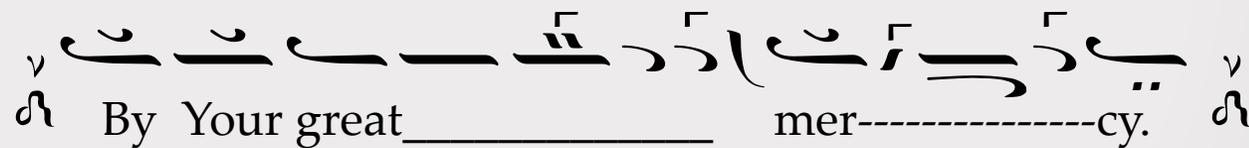
Basics

Sticheraric

The Sticheraric style uses the Ni scale and does not use the Ga scale.

The intonations for the Heirmologic style can also be used to invoke the Sticheraric.

Its attraction points and cadences are the same as for the Heirmologic Ni scale, but being sticheraric, the cadences change.



Typical Movements

Mode $\lambda \delta \zeta \text{N}\eta$

N^(N) e Lord, _____ O _____ Lord, $\nu \delta \zeta$ I have cried to _____

$\Delta \delta \zeta$ You. Hear _____ me. Hear _____ me, _____ O _____ Lord. $\nu \delta \zeta$ Lord

I have cried to _____ You; hear _____ me. ⁴ $\Delta \delta \zeta$ Give heed _____ to the voice _____

$\nu \delta \zeta$ of _____ my sup - pli - ca - - - tion, $\nu \delta \zeta$ ^(\Delta) when I cry to _____ You.

$\Delta \delta \zeta$ ^(N) Hear me, hear _____ me, _____ O _____ Lord. $\nu \delta \zeta$

Note: As in all diatonic Modes, Zo is natural when the melody ascends past it and flatted when the melody descends through it again.

Assignment

Study the hymns in the Mode Plagal 4th Anastasimatarion (downloadable at the website) and review this presentation for the theory of pl. 4th.

Next Class: April 2, 2020