

CONCERNING BYZANTINE MUSIC AND HYMNOLOGY

—According to Saint Porphyrios—

Byzantine music is extremely beneficial. There should be no Christian who does not know byzantine music. All of us must learn it. It has a direct influence upon the soul. Byzantine music sanctifies man without bloodshed. That is, without effort, with rejoicing, you become holy.

Byzantine music is very easy to learn when your soul falls in love with it. Its harmony is tremendously beneficial for the soul!

King Saul at one time was possessed by an evil spirit. David would go and chant for him, and the demon would depart. When the King was overcome by the demon of melancholy, David would go to play the psalter, and the demon would leave.

The canons and the hymns contain many hidden treasures. Within these we discover the methods the saints used to acquire the love of Christ and to conquer evil. They are just as valuable as the books of Saint Isaac, Saint Ephraim, and others. The canons were written by Saint Theophan, Saint John of Damascus, and other saints. They would extol the saint, whose life and accomplishments they knew, simultaneously denoting various ways to repent. These hymnographers were holy, and they embodied their own emotions into the hymns as well.

The holy fathers composed their written works and hymns guided by the Holy Spirit. This is why they produced exquisite works of art! Every single word they use is intricately carved. They place each word exactly where it needs to be, so that it is not misaligned. Just as a builder pays attention to every stone, where it will be placed, and how they will all be tied together, similarly the saints who wrote with prayer composed orderly and harmonious works, because they had order and harmony within their soul as well.

Let us glorify and thank God Who gave His grace and His Spirit to the saints, who in turn impart this grace and Spirit with their lives, their writings, and their hymnology, and we now have them at our disposal, and we can enjoy reading and listening to them.