

## B. The Triodion

In the Menaion are contained the sacred commemorations and designations for each day, connected with each date of the year, which in different years, changing the day of the week, always keeps the same date; but there are commemorations and designations, which in other years, changing the date, does not change the day of the week, and in any year always incorporates the same day of week. These commemorations and designations, which exist in different years not on one and the same dates, comprise the cycle of movable ecclesiastical days. The cycle of movable days depends on the feast of Pascha, which, as is known, occurs in different years on various dates. Some of these days of the movable cycle serve as the preparation for Pascha; others serve as its continuation. In the Ustav (Rubrics) the cycle of movable days is called the Triodion, because during this period of time the Lenten and Festal Triodion is sung. The name "Triodion" (three odes) follows in that it comprises, by the way, canons consisting of three odes, which are appointed for certain days. On especially important days of singing the Triodion, it is necessary to read the Synaxarion (from *syna, gō* -- to gather or to reduce) after the sixth ode of the canon. These Synaxaria are located in the Triodion after specified odes of the canon. In them, usually, the content and purpose of the establishment of the service for the designated day is briefly stated, and in the first and the last Synaxarion, besides this, the content of both Triodia is briefly stated and is shown, that they contain all the good acts of Providence and all the destiny of mankind from the creation of the world until that time, when the Holy Church will cease to struggle on earth and be effective triumphantly from the heavens, having been established by the choirs of all the saints (Synaxarion for the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee and for the Sunday of All Saints). The Synaxarion was compiled in the XIV century by Nicephorus Xanthopoulos, a Greek historian and an expert in church antiquities, who witnesses in relation to the Triodion that it contains "many of the saints and the beautifully effective god-bearers of our fathers, the good and the worthy inspired by the Holy Spirit, those who serve, those who write hymns" (Synaxarion for the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee).

### I The Lenten Triodion

This Triodion comprises the variable prayers for the preparatory days for Great Lent and for the very days of Great Lent itself (i. e. for the days of the Forty Day Fast and for Holy Week). From such content it received the name "fasting" or

"lenten". The general tone and character of the Lenten Triodion is prayerful repentance. All hymns and readings, kept in the Lenten Triodion, are distinguished by deep edification and involuntarily dispose the listener to sincere prayer, and cause feelings of repentance for sins, cause a thirst for fasting, repentance and improvement and raise faith and hope for a Deliverer for fallen mankind. The choice and disposition of subjects represented in the services of the Lenten Triodion, their mutual combination, their agreement with the circumstances of time and essential acts, their touching, sad and together with sacred hope opened expression, - all is directed to forcing the sinner to enter into himself and to understand his unworthiness; all to teach him to reject the highly praised pride of the Pharisee, to pray with humility like the Publican, to repent like the Prodigal Son, to tremble before the Dread Judgment of God, to lament similarly to the fallen Forefathers; that having taken up the saving works of the fast during Holy Forty Day Lent, imitating his Savior, who fasted for forty days in the Jordanian desert; in order that, having put lamentation upon lamentation and pouring out tears, looked into the great acts of the Lord, fulfilled by him in the last days of His earthly life, that he mentally suffers and is crucified with the Deliverer. Beginning with the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the Lenten Triodion includes the weeks of both the preparatory Sundays and of Great Lent, ending with Holy Week. In its structure it is similar to the Octoechos and differs from it by the content of their hymns expressing, as applied to time, the feeling of true repentance, and that for week-days instead of complete canons as are in the Octoechos, the canons are not complete 1). The structure of the Lenten Triodion includes the hymns of many different hymnographers (in number about 20), the most remarkable of whom belong to the VIII and IX centuries, such as: Andrew of Crete, Cosmas of Maium, John of Damascus, Joseph, Theodore and Simeon the Studites, Emperor Leo the Wise, Theophanes the Branded and others. These hymns were compiled in one book, according to the witness of the first Synaxarion of the Lenten Triodion by Theodore and Joseph the Studites. However and after these the Lenten Triodion was enlarged in its structure up to the fourteenth century. So, after these the Synaxarion was brought into the order of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, and into the second, fourth and fifth Sundays of the Holy Forty Day Fast. Three following orders of our Triodion are called the newest institutions.

Notes:

1) The Lenten Triodion differs from the Octoechos in that it has no similar division into tones: the hymns of this Triodion are sung in various tones during all the weeks. The hymns of the Lenten Triodion during the week days of Great Lent replace the hymns of the Octoechos, and only a few of the hymns of the Octoechos are sung during this time, such as: at Matins we sing the Troparia to the

Trinity after the "Alleluia", the sessional hymns after first verses of the Kathisma and the Exapostilarion after the canon, which therefore are printed at the end of the Lenten Triodion. Replacing the Octoechos, the Lenten Triodion sometimes replaces also the hymns of the Menaion, which are not sung then; on Sundays from the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, ending with Palm Sunday; on Wednesdays and Fridays of the third week and Thursday of the fifth week; on the Saturdays of Meatfare, Cheesefare, the first and fifth weeks of Great Lent, on Lazarus Saturday, on the days of Holy Week (again Feb. 2 and 24, Mar. 9 and 25). On weekdays of the remaining time of the Menaion we sing from the monthly, even if there is no commemoration of a great saint. As the prayers of the Lenten Triodion are not always designated by name of the books from which they are borrowed, then it is necessary to have in mind the following: If we meet a designation by the word: "tone" (for example "Hymn to the Trinity tone"), and the instruction for the content (for example "sessional hymns for the Apostles"), then under this it is necessary to understand the prayers of the Octoechos; if the designation is by the word "day" (for example by the word "idiomelon of the day"), then understand the prayer of the Triodion.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1274 pp., (Kharkov, 1900) p. 487  
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