

RUSSIA BEFORE THE SECOND COMING

Material outlining Russian eschatology

Fourth Edition,
Revised, corrected and expanded

**“He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?
Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me?
And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I
love thee.”**

(John 21:17)

“Russia, lovest thou the Lord?”

Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow

**Moscow
FORUM
2011**

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**Fourth Edition,
Revised, corrected and expanded**

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Author - Compiler**

First Edition – The Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra. 1993

Second Edition, corrected and expanded – M. “Rodnik” 1994
completed with the financial cooperation of the Cathedral of Christ The
Saviour.

Third Edition, corrected and extended – Volumes I-II. Compilers
Sergei and Tamara Fomin, St. Petersburg, Society of St. Basil the Great,
1998.

What will happen to us in the future? What will happen to our
Fatherland?

This book is a collection of prophecies about the future destiny of our
Great Motherland, which has been foretold by: monk Abel the Seer, Saint
Seraphim of Sarov, Reverend Father St. John of Kronstadt, the Elders of
Optina,, the Holy Hierarchs Ignaty (Brianchaninov) and Theophan the
Recluse, reverend monk St. Lawrence of Chernigov, the Eldresses
Matrona, Makariya, Blessed Pasha of Saraev and many others...

ISBN 978-5-89747-001-3
Fomin, 2011

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T.S. Protopopova, 2011

“EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS.”

Prologue to the Second Edition

The divinely wise Fathers of the Holy Orthodox Church, having care for the salvation of Christian souls, left a compilation of the teachings and sayings of the Holy Fathers and Teachers of the Church, the discourses of many learned men, writers and thinkers, expressly for the edification of their descendants: “The Spiritual Meadow”, “The Garden of Flowers”(Translators Note; in Russian - “*Tvsetnik Dukhovnyi*”), the writings of the Fathers, Patericons.....

Indeed, reading such deeply meaningful instructions of the Fathers, prompted the Compiler of this particular work to choose a patristic-instructive form to set out the material herein, since this proposed collection *is the first attempt to gather the thoughts and opinions of Christian ascetics, and also the reasoning of theologians, philosophers and historians of various ages about the end of the world and of the forthcoming fate of Russia,*

Amongst the authors of the extracts one will come across the names of both spiritual and secular writers, famous scholars; writers not only of our Orthodox Church, but also from the West, whose thoughts and opinions about the Last Judgement and the final Day of the Coming of Christ, should not lose their instruction and meaning for us by virtue of the fact that “*the Spirit breathes where it wills*” (John 3:8), and the spiritual “flowers, found beyond expectation in the crevasses and gorges of mountains, have the same interest and value as those flowers growing in the garden, even though they may lack freshness, beauty and grandeur” (“*The Garden of Flowers*”, C. IV.).

Thus, the publication of sayings of certain authors found in this book (for example, Sergei Bulgakov or the opinions of V.S. Soloviev and others) in no way means we are oblivious to the falsehoods found in their teachings. In his time the remarkable Russian spiritual thinker K.N. Leontiev spoke out about V.S. Soloviev, the writings of whom he treated

with strictness: “....Read his works; be impressed by him; rise up with him, *within certain limits*, up to the height of his *spiritual pyramid*: but while doing so strictly maintain a fear in the depths of your heart of sinning against the very Church, in which you were baptised and nurtured. If the *courageous fear of God* is strong in your heart – do not fear Soloviev; love and respect him. *This strong Orthodox awareness will of itself teach you where to stop!*”

With the help of God, the Author has attempted to gather the wealth, which the Creator has entrusted to many, even children, that reveals the celestial meaning of the Divine plan of the creation of the Universe and its last days.

The fundamental concern was the desire to have the Words of the Lord heard:

“Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” (Revelation 22:7).

“The spirit of constant anticipation of the Second Coming of Christ is the spirit of the first Christians, who prayerfully cried out to the Lord: “*Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*” (**Revelation 22:20**) However, the opposite spirit to this is, without a doubt, the spirit of the Antichrist, who tries in every way to distract Christians from the thought of the Second Coming of Christ and the subsequent reckoning. Those who give in to this spirit are in danger of not recognising the Antichrist when he comes, and to be trapped in his net. This is precisely what is most horrifying in this contemporary world, full of all manner of deceit and temptation. As our Lord warned us, the servants of the Antichrist will attempt to “*deceive, if it were possible, the very elect.*” (**Matthew 24:24**).

The causes of a social, economic and political nature can only be seen as derivations, as secondary factors of what is transpiring. The root cause, the main driving force of all that is occurring in the world is the never-ending, not even for one moment, fierce battle of the prince of this world, the Devil, with God – the aspiration of the Devil, as the enemy of God, is to destroy all of the works of God in this world and to ruin mankind as the crown of God’s creation. Only from this viewpoint can we understand and explain all that is going on in people’s lives, privately, also within families,

as well as socially and politically. Then all that sometimes seems unclear, even unexplainable, becomes totally understandable.” (Archbishop Averky, *True Orthodoxy and the Modern World*).

AMEN

T.G.

THE MEANING OF RUSSIAN HISTORY

Prologue to the First Edition

What will happen to us in the future? This question, probably, worries every person. What will happen to our Fatherland? No citizen of Russia should remain indifferent to this question. This book is a collection of prophecies about the future destiny of our Great Motherland. It contains the most diverse material – the statements of saints, ascetics of the Orthodox Church, the opinions of philosophers, historians and other writers. Obviously, not all predictions are equally trustworthy¹: that, which has been revealed to the enlightened spiritual gaze of ascetics by God Himself, cannot be compared to the assumptions of those who are called thinkers, and who may at times possess a high degree of intuition, nonetheless cannot exceed the normal forecast of man's biogenic reasoning, which by its nature is unable to have complete knowledge of the future. However, the Compiler has tried to present the material in such a way, so that the reader might receive a comprehensive, clear and complete understanding of the opinions and assertions of this or that authority, speaking of or writing about the forthcoming fate of Russia. Namely, because of this objectivity in the presentation of the material in this book one may come across conflicting and at times contradicting opinions on one and the same question. Let the reader not be astounded by this. Disagreements about insignificant things were even had by saints, because each saint receives their own personal amount of revelation of the singular and total Divine Truth. In these cases the Compiler, not wishing to impose his opinion as to which prophesy is more trustworthy, has left it to be judged by the readers themselves.

The book does not contain any of the author's own personal text – it is simply a collection of separate quotations, which have been systematically set out according to themes as seemed appropriate to the Compiler. This has been done in order not to impose upon the reader his conception of Russian history and his understanding of the prophecies about the forthcoming fate of Russia.

¹ They are marked in this book by use of a smaller font. – **The Compiler**

Even so this book is not amorphous; for throughout it, standing out like a metaphoric red thread, passes the idea that the meaning of Russian history is to be faithful to Orthodoxy. We will explain this idea in more detail.

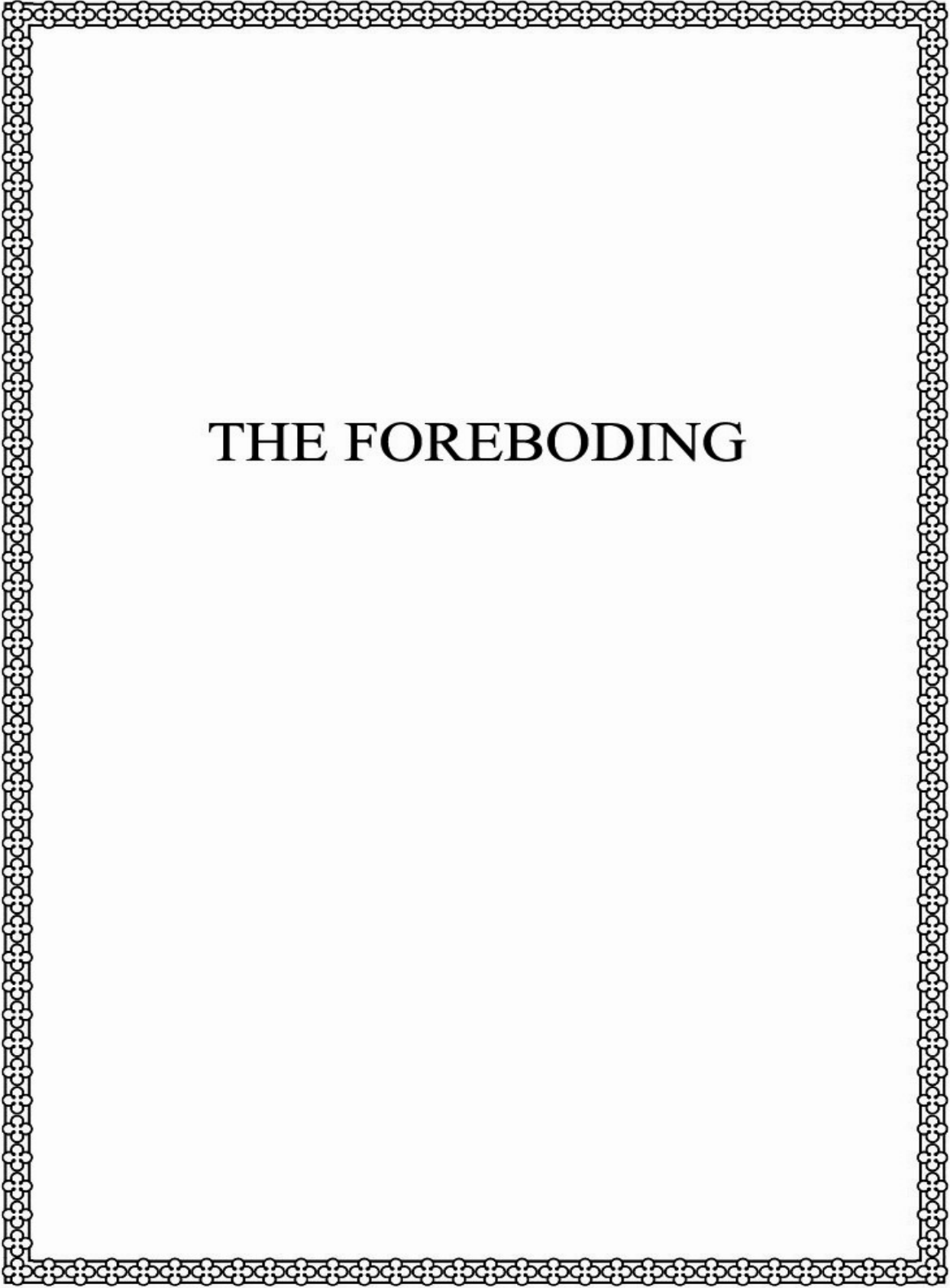
Throughout its existence of over a millennium, the Russian government never thought of itself as being outside the Orthodox faith. Without exaggerating it can be said that the history of Russia is first and foremost the history of Holy Rus, because just like Israel of the Old Testament, the fate of our Fatherland has always directly depended upon the moral state of the people. This was recognised as far back as the Kievan period by our chroniclers, who wrote with trepidation that the royal infighting, the forgetting of the moral principles and the tempering of faith will inevitably bring down the wrath of God upon the Fatherland. And when the prophesy was fulfilled and the Tatar Yoke established itself upon Russia, what else but the spiritual revival, beginning with St. Sergius of Radonezh and his disciples, served as the reason for the military and political triumphs – from the Battle of Kulikovo (1380) to the Great Stand on the Ugra River (1480) which ended the centuries of servitude to the Mongols? All subsequent milestones of Russian history illustrate the same biblical principle with indisputable clarity: imminent punishment follows the breaking of the Law of God, whilst repentance and prayer brings on a new regeneration. Even the contemporaries of the period in the beginning of the XVII century, known as the Time of Troubles, recognised the consequences of the moral barbarity and only through the intercession of the Mother of God was “the judgement of our Fatherland mitigated to mercy”, as was revealed by Arseny the archbishop of Ellassona and Dimonika (**Translators Note**; later archbishop of Suzdal, d. 1625). The obsession with French freethinking by the upper echelons of Russian society at the end of the XVIII – beginning of the XIX centuries ended with the invasion of Russia by Napoleon and the burning of Moscow. But the expulsion of the uninvited guests from the territory of Russia ended on Christmas day in 1812. Then later – a new round of turns of the historical spiral: the general pursuit of material wealth to the detriment of the spiritual at the end of the XIX century resulted in a new time of troubles – the bloody horrors of the years 1905-1917, leading to a new foreign yoke, which not without reason, by time and insufferable cruelty, can be

compared to the Babylonian captivity.... There is not enough time to speak about the Great Patriotic War (**Translators Note**; Russia in WWII), which was preceded by the “ungodly” Five Year Plan (by the year 1942 all churches in the USSR were to be shut), which ended on the 6th of May 1945 (St. George’s day): or about the Krushchev persecutions of the Church in the beginning of the 1960’s, which were accompanied by the Cuban crisis and economic turmoil and also to speak of many other things. Of course, a sceptic might see these events as random coincidence, but then one could ask: are there not too many coincidences? However, does that mean that the whole of Russian history transforms into a continuous chain of “coincidences”, which, nonetheless, through non-coincidental consistency witness the one fact that God is the Creator of history and that He has placed the immutable moral law as the foundation of the historical process?!

That same moral law extends, of course, unto the future fate of Russia. If the Russian people repent, return unto God and make the Orthodox faith the foundation of their life – then Russia will be saved, once again blossom and become a great power. If not, then it will disappear from the historical arena, dissolving among the other nations. That is probably the main idea of the collection of prophecies in this book and I would like to wish the reader not to delve so much into the separate details of the forthcoming, but more so to grasp as strongly as possible this particular fundamental idea. I would like to remind all who strive to see Russia as a great Orthodox power that the true revival of our Motherland does not depend on external factors – the arrangement of political forces, the battle of parties, her military and economic potential. Rather it depends on each of us, on our prayers and pious life.

Abbot ISAIAH

**Holy Trinity-St Sergius Lavra
3 January 1993**



THE FOREBODING

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life:”

(John 5:39)

**“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy,
and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.”**

(Revelation 1:3)

**“Search for the greater meaning in all things. Every event, which happens
around us and to us, has its own meaning. Nothing happens without a reason...”¹**

Hieromonk Nektary of Optina

**“If you know the signs of the antichrist, not only remember them yourself,
but generously inform all others”²**

St. Cyril of Jerusalem

**“...It is not for you alone to understand this, but for the whole world
through you, so that all of you, having established yourselves in the work of
God, could be of benefit to others”³**

St. Seraphim of Sarov

**“...Though the judgements of God are hidden from us, the Lord has
revealed beneficial things for those seeking salvation to his Saints, and they have
written much for our comfort and edification”⁴**

Abbot Nikon (Vorobiev)

**“When reading the ancient grace-filled prophecies, one has to remember
that not only is it impossible to foresee without special help from God, but even
hearing and reading the foretold is impossible, or in any case, very difficult to
understand. This concerns the description of external events, and to an even
greater extent, the inner condition of future generations of man”⁵**

Archbishop Nathaniel (Lvov)

1. The Gift of the Holy Spirit

“And *moreover*, we have the truest word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the morning star arises in your hearts: Knowing this first that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *it* as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1: 19-21)

From the beginning, all prophets were inspired by the Spirit of God. The charisma of the prophet – the charisma of revelation, gives a man to understand that, which through his own powers he would not be able to do. It has only one objective – the plan of salvation, which comes from unity in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1)

Doctor of Theology, Church historian I.M. Kontsevich (b.1893-d.1965) wrote: “The will of God is revealed directly through the prophet, and, therefore, his authority is without limit. The prophetic service is a particular blessed gift, the gift of the Holy Spirit (charisma). The prophet possesses special spiritual vision – foresight. The borders of space and time seem to open up for him, with his spiritual sight he not only sees present events, but also the forthcoming, seeing their spiritual meaning, he sees the soul of man, his past and his future. Such a high calling can only be conjoined with a high moral standard, with purity of heart, and personal holiness”¹

Jeremiah, who was sanctified out of his mother’s womb, (Jeremiah 1:5; Isaiah 49:1), speaks of “predisposition” (Jeremiah 20:7). Ezekiel feels the hand of God “strong” upon him (Ezekiel 3:14). For Jeremiah the calling awakens the realization of his personal weakness (Jeremiah 1:6); for Isaiah – the recognition of sin (Isaiah 6:5). It always leads to a specific mission, the instrument of which are the lips of the prophet: they will speak the Word of God (Jeremiah 1:9; 1:15; 1:19; Isaiah 6:5; compare Ezekiel 3:1).

The charisma of prophesy is also found in the apostolic Church (Acts 11:27; 13:1; 21:10). Foresight and prophesy became the general inheritance among the new people of God.

The designation of the prophet is not limited to only foretelling the future: he “speaks to the people through edification, counselling and comforting” (1 Corinthians 14:3).

Being guided by other prophets (1 Corinthians 14:32), and by the authority of the Church (1 Corinthians 14:37) the prophets never claimed to hold the central position in the community and the administration of the Church.

Apostle Paul warned that one should use the Gift of prophesy correctly and for the good of the whole community (1 Corinthians 14:29-32).

*True prophesy is understood in accordance with the differentiating of the spirits. In the ancient transcripts of the **Second century** – “**The Teachings of the Twelve Apostles**” (**The Didache**), pertaining to the times of when the Apostle John the Theologian was still alive and, perhaps, even other apostles – it says of the prophet: “And concerning every prophet that speaks in the Spirit you shall neither try nor judge; for every sin shall be forgiven, but this sin shall not be forgiven. But not everyone that speaks in the Spirit is a prophet; but only if he hold the ways of the Lord. Therefore from their ways shall the false prophet* and the prophet be known. And every prophet who orders a meal in the Spirit eats not from it, except indeed he be a false prophet; and every prophet who teaches the truth, if he do not what he teaches, is a false prophet. And every prophet, proved true, working unto the mystery of the Church in the world, yet not teaching others to do what he himself does, shall not be judged among you, for with God he has his judgment; for so did also the ancient prophets.”²*

Hermas, an apostolic man (First quarter of the Second century):
“How then, sir, say I, will a man know which of them is the prophet, and which the false prophet? – I will tell you, says he (the Shepherd – **The Compiler**)*, about both the prophets, and then you can try the true and

* Amongst these types, one can include: swindlers and imposters and the so-called “young elders”, the temptation of whom it is to exceed their authority and to deceive the inexperienced. – **The Compiler**

the false prophet according to my directions. Judge the man who has the Divine Spirit by his life. First, he who has the Divine Spirit proceeding from above is meek, and peaceable, and humble, and refrains from all iniquity and the vain desire of this world, and contents himself with fewer wants than those of other men, and when asked he makes no reply; nor does he speak privately, nor when man wishes the spirit to speak does the Holy Spirit speak, but it speaks only when God wishes it to speak. When, then, a man having the Divine Spirit comes into an assembly of righteous men who have faith in the Divine Spirit, and this assembly of men offers up prayer to God, then the angel of the prophetic Spirit, who is destined for him, fills the man; and the man being filled with the Holy Spirit, speaks to the multitude as the Lord wishes. Thus, then will the Spirit of Divinity become manifest. Whatever power therefore comes from the Spirit of Divinity belongs to the Lord. Hear, then, says he, in regard to the spirit which is earthly, and empty, and powerless, and foolish. First, the man who seems to have the Spirit exalts himself, and wishes to have the first seat, and is bold, and impudent, and talkative, and lives in the midst of many luxuries and many other delusions, and takes rewards for his prophecy; and if he does not receive rewards, he does not prophesy. Can, then, the Divine Spirit take rewards and prophesy? It is not possible that the prophet of God should do this, but prophets of this character are possessed by an earthly spirit. Then it never approaches an assembly of righteous men, but shuns them. And it associates with doubters and the vain, and prophesies to them in a corner, and deceives them, speaking to them, according to their desires, mere empty words: for they are empty to whom it gives its answers. For the empty vessel, when placed along with the empty, is not crushed, but they correspond to each other. When, therefore, it comes into an assembly of righteous men who have a Spirit of Divinity, and they offer up prayer, that man is made empty, and the earthly spirit tees from him through fear, and that man is made dumb, and is entirely crushed, being unable to speak”³

Venerable monks Saints Barsanuphius and John (VI century):
“...One should not always speak clearly about such things, because they bring harm to the speaker, rather than benefit,”... “For the believer (such types of answers) serve to enlighten them and for their benefit; for the unbeliever – they motivate them to mock us and thereby bring us benefit”⁴

Venerable St. Theophylactus the Confessor, Bishop of Nicomedia (b.842-d.845): “The prophets receive prophecies from God, but not as they want, but as the Spirit of God works; they would be fully conscious of, and understood, the prophetic word sent down to them, but they did not give explanations. The fact that the prophets recognized and understood the prophetic word that was sent down to them, knowing that they were receiving the transmitted word of the Spirit of God, is obvious from their willingness to submit and when they wanted to relay the message they did, whilst they remained silent when it was prudent. However, it was not so for the false prophets. During an action (*i.e. of a supernatural type* **Translator’s note**) they did not possess the ability to understand, but as if driven into a drunken rage, they did not know what was happening to them...It is evident from the following that the prophets did not prophesies in a frenzy. Both Old and New Testament prophesied in the same Spirit. Apostle Paul says: “If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.” (1 **Corinthians 14:30**). Thus, it is clear that the prophets voluntarily foretold, remaining in their natural state”⁵.

The Holy Hierarch Ignatius (Brianchaninov, b.1807 – d.1867), bishop of Stavropol: “It is an awesome thing to take on responsibilities that can only be fulfilled through the direction of the Holy Spirit, whilst at the same time, contact with Satan was yet to be terminated and therefore the vessel (*the body* **Translator’s note**) continuously being defiled by the actions of Satan (*i.e. the state of dispassion had not yet been achieved*). Such hypocrisy and pretension is terrible. It is disastrous for one’s self and for one’s neighbour, it is a crime before God, it is blasphemy”⁶

“Though demons, when appearing to people, take on the form of a bright angel in order to more easily deceive; though they sometimes attempt to assure that they are human souls and not demons; though they may even at times predict the future; though they reveal secrets: nevertheless one should in no way entrust one’s self to them. With them truth is mixed with falsehood, truth being used at times only to facilitate an easier deception. “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be

transformed as the ministers of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:14-15) says Apostle Paul”⁷.

The elder of Optina, **St. Barsanuphius (Plikhanov, b.1845 – d.1913)** wrote the following about the ability to “*see with the spirit*” to one of his spiritual children: “Apart from our physical eyes we also have spiritual eyes, before which the human soul is revealed; before a person begins to think, before a thought arises, we see it with our spiritual eyes, we even see the reasons why such a thought arose. Nothing is hidden from us. You live in Petersburg and think that I do not see you. When I wish, I see all that you do and think. For us there is no expanse or time...”⁸

These words receive an unexpected confirmation in the memoirs of the wife a famous Russian philosopher, **N.P. Kireyevskaya** – who, from the year 1833, was the spiritual daughter of the second great elder of Optina, **St. Macarius (Ivanov, b.1788 – d.1850)**. Only in the year 1846, her husband I.V. Kireyevsky, “...confessed to him for the first time: he wrote to batuishka from Moscow for the first time at the end of October 1846, as he told me” (i.e. N.P. Kireyevskaya – **The Compiler**):

“I wrote to batuishka, asking him many questions, which were especially important to me, deliberately not telling you beforehand, because, knowing your love for him I did not want you to write anything to him beforehand. I was curious to receive his reply. I admit that it would have been difficult for him to answer me.”

I thanked Ivan Vasilievich for telling me that he had decided to write to the elder and was certain that the elder’s answers would be surprising for Ivan Vasilievich.

Not an hour had passed, when he brought two letters from the Post office, written by the hand of the elder – one in my name and the other addressed to Ivan Vasilievich. Without opening it, he said:

“What does this mean? Father Macarius has never written to me!”

As he read the letter his expression changed and he said:

“This is remarkable! Astonishing! How can it be? All the answers to my questions are in this letter, even though I have just posted mine off to him.”⁹

The third great elder of Optina, **the Venerable St. Ambrose (Grenkov, b.1812 – d.1891)**, according to the words of one of his spiritual daughters, “always immediately grasped the essence of the matter, wisely beyond comprehension explaining it and giving an answer. Not only was more than one question resolved in the course of 10-15 minutes of such a discussion, indeed Fr. Ambrose was able to fill his heart with the whole being of the person – complete with his earthly attachments and wishes – his whole world both inner and outer. It was apparent from his words and directions that he (*i.e. Fr. Ambrose* **Translator’s note**) not only loved the person he was conversing with, but all the person’s loved ones, their life and all things that they held dear. When offering his decision, not only did Fr. Ambrose consider the matter itself, regardless of the multitude of possible consequences that could arise for both the person and others, he also had consideration for all aspects of the lives of those with whom the matter may have even slightly concerned. What sort of pressure on the mind must there be in order to resolve these types of problems. Problems and matters of this type were submitted to him by dozens of people, as well as inquiring monastics and hundreds of letters being sent and received daily. The elder’s words carried great authority, founded on his closeness to God, Who granted him pansophical knowledge. This was prophetic service”¹⁰

Nonetheless, the prophecies of the future fate of Russia had to be literally gathered up like tiny crumbs. It was obvious that there was an extremely cautious and

responsible attitude in Russia to the spoken and written word. “Before you begin to write dip your quill into the ink well seven times”¹¹ - *commanded hieromonk Nektarius (Tikhonov, b.1857 – d.1928).*

“A certain brother, imagining that the end of the world and the great day of the Second Coming of the Lord was nigh, came to ask **Father Seraphim** about this. The elder, seeing the thoughts of the brother and realising that he was being guided by idle curiosity, rather than the need to receive edification, did not wait for him to ask his question but replied to him: “My joy! You think too highly of the poor Seraphim; is it for me to know when the end of the world and that great day, when the Lord will come to judge the living and the dead will be and will reward everyone according to their deeds?” No, it’s impossible for me to know this.” Then the brother fell down at the feet of the prescient elder in awe. However, the elder helped him up and continued to say to him: “The Lord said through His most pure lips: *“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be!”* With this the elder sighed heavily and said: “We, who live in sin, have fallen away from the way to salvation, we are not disciplined, we do not observe the holy fasts, nor do we keep the Wednesdays or Fridays, we eat meat during Holy Lent, not thinking that we are breaking the Church’s and Apostolic canons, we anger the Lord, widely opening the doors of our evil hearts to the passions and vices, which are followed by the punishments of God. May the Lord have mercy on us! Let us love the Holy Orthodox Church, love the faith as our strong and blessed defence; may truth be our armour and piety our shield of salvation. With these Russia shall be glorious, strong and invincible, and the gates of hades shall not prevail over us!”¹²

*This is what the **Optina elder Nektarius** answered to the nun Nektaria, who, in 1924, asked him about the “end of the world”:* “He showed me letters, which had been sent to him; about visions of the Saviour, Who said that the end of the world is near; about excerpts from newspapers reporting that the Messiah had appeared in India, whilst Elijah was in America and the like.* He spoke much, but was smiling, and even before this, just as we met him, he said these words to us: “Why are you all turning to my feeble-mindedness – you should seek the advice of the Optina monks”. I smiled, but he said: “I say this in all seriousness, they will tell you all that is beneficial”.

* Many such signs were revealed in the book “Optintsy”, by the spiritual writer S. A. Nilus (b. 1862 – d. 1929), who was under the care of Fr. Barsanuphius of Optina – “He is close to the doors” (Sergiev Posad, 1917), the entire print editions of which were destroyed by the Provisional government. A new and updated edition, which was being prepared in the Holy Trinity – St. Sergius Lavra after the October Revolution 1917, never came to be – **The Compiler**

When I met with them they said: “If there are people who are busy seeking signs of the end of the world, but are not caring for their souls, then they are doing this for the sake of others’ (obviously to report about some sensational news). And thus, the monks told me that it is not good for people to know the time of the Second Coming: “Be vigilant and pray”, said the Saviour, which means one shouldn’t guess the future events, but that all will be revealed to the faithful at the appropriate time. Grandpa (Fr. Nektarius – **The Compiler**) was pleased with the monks’ answer, as he is also not a supporter of those who trust in various fantasies of this nature. I asked: “Father, they say that even St. John the Theologian will come?” He answered: “All this will be, but it is a great mystery”. And he added: “In the days of Noah, for over a century, the Lord warned that there would be a flood, but no one believed, no one repented and out of the multitude of people only one righteous man and his family were found”. And so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man” (**Matthew 24:37**)¹³.

And here is yet one other reason for the frugality of the elders toward prophecy. To the same nun Nektaria, Fr. Nektarius revealed that her son* has a talent, but did not specify what kind it was indeed, adding: “It is good not to reveal the talents, else they may be stolen”¹⁴. These words lead to contemplation... In an Orthodox country the prophecies, which undoubtedly carried the great authority of the elders, if they were to become widely publicised** may be used by the enemies of the government for their political manipulations. In what kind of way? Take for instance the announcement by a supporter of B.N. Yeltsin on television on 20 June 1991”, that the day of the election of the President of the Russian Federation – 12 June – had been prescribed by the prophecy of Nostradamus, who had become fashionable over the past few years.^{***}

There is the word that resurrects, but there is that which kills...

* The son of nun Nektaria – Fr. Adrian (Rimarenko), who read the *Canon for the Departure of the Soul* for Fr. Nektarius, became Archbishop Andrew of Rockland (d. 12/07/1978).

** The book “The Great Diveev Mystery” by Righteous Monk St. Seraphim of Sarov was only published in the USA in 1969 with the blessing of Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Holy Trinity. Notwithstanding that its publication had been blessed by Archbishop Theophan of Poltava in the early 1930’s¹⁵.

*** “The 12th of June had arrived, the seventh month of the seventy fourth year of communist rule. At 2.00pm we raised our glasses and drank to the fulfilment of the prophecy of Nostradamus. One of the most despotic regimes throughout all history had legally come to an end. Yeltsin had won and so had Nostradamus!¹⁶ It seems that it was no coincidence that the timing of the August “rebellion” was chosen; In accordance with Nostradamus (as interpreted by V. Ionescu) the end of “communism” was to occur in 1991, more precisely on 9 June of that year. Here was yet another opportunity to guess the identity of those responsible for the events of 1991. By the end of XX and beginning of the XXI centuries (1991), Nostradamus foresees “him who descends from the fiery heavens” “the seditious man” ‘the ruler of the world’. In conjunction with this some interpreted as being “aliens from outer space’. However, these words were about the antichrist.

(1894): “Russia was formed through great asceticism, much faith and prayer. A difficult road befell her fate. She suffered many sorrows and hardships before she became the great nation that she is considered now. Troubles came from external evil enemies who desired her destruction; there were troubles from within, from internal unrest and discord. Often it was so difficult for the Russian people that it seemed all was lost — as if the total end of the nation was nigh. However, the Lord showed mercy on Russia and saved her through His power. The strength of Russia lay in the fact that she unwaveringly believed in God and if she sinned before Him she also repented before Him. And the Lord called out to her. He blessed her with a multitude of righteous people, all of whom were her intercessors and mediators before God. These righteous ones taught the people to toil, to be patient and surrender to the will of God. And Russia endured her hardships and struggled, yet when she was weak she called upon God’s help. That is the way she developed. Apart from the constant mercy shown to the Russian land the Lord gave her especial great signs. In her toughest days, according to her fervent prayers, the Lord sent wondrous miracles for the salvation of Russia”.¹

Holy Hierarch Ignaty (Brianchaninov): “Many labour, many suffer, many toil, only those who “struggle according to the law” will be saved. The true lawful struggle is in Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit, within the boundaries of the Eastern Church”.²

Eugeny Nikolaevich Noselvanin (Nogzhev b.1870 — d.1931), Russian spiritual writer (1900): “Great tribulations on Earth are usually endured by the chosen of God and via this path their malignant sides are cleansed, by which a boundless dedication to the will of God is created: all things trivial and frivolous depart from the soul — and it develops toward good in this harsh, but great school”.³

Reverend Father St. John of Kronstadt (b.1829 — d.1908): “Learn o Russia to believe in the ruler of the fate of the world, God Almighty, and learn from your holy forebears about faith, wisdom and courage... The Lord has entrusted unto us the great salvific talent of the Orthodox faith... Rise up ye Russian man!... Who has taught you disobedience and thoughtless rioting? Stop your insanity! Enough! Enough drinking from the bitter cup full of poison — for you and for Russia!...”⁴

2. “And so the year of the end has appeared...”

The first Christian writers *determined the question of the end of the world under the influence of Judaic tradition, according to which the present world was to exist only for 6,000 years*¹.

*This opinion can be found in the works of **Blessed Hippolyte**² and **Lactantius** (second half of the III century and first quarter of the IV century)*³

St. John of Damascus (d. 4 December c.777): “It is said that the time of this world shall be seven ages. So it is declared from the creation of Heaven and Earth. Even unto the universal end and resurrection of man”⁴.

The Solovetsky Chronicles XVII century: “And the Lord placed against the seven days 6000 years, but the eighth thousand has no end, as it is also the eighth day, known as the infinite and unending age which is one day”⁵.

*The sermon ‘concerning the Heavenly powers, for whose sake man was created’ attributed either to **Holy hierarch Kirill, Bishop of Turov (d. 28 April 1183), or to Righteous Monk Abraham of Smolensk (d. 21 August, no later than 1220):** “God has ruled that the time of man’s existence on Earth shall be 7000 years, and whatever so sum he chooses during those seven thousand years shall be the fulfillment of the angelic ranks which had fallen from Heaven”. (In this way the existence of man is linked to the goal of restoring the angels to their original sum)*⁶.

The year 1492

St. Cyprian, Metropolitan of Moscow, Wonderworker of All Russia (d. 16 September 1406) *in his epistle to Athanasy, Abbot of Vysotsk:* “Now are the last times and the end of years is approaching as well as the end of the age; the demon roars loudly, wishing to swallow all, in accordance with our laxity and laziness. For virtue has diminished, love has ended, spiritual simplicity has receded and envy, evil and hatred have become entrenched”⁷.

“The epistle from the Invisible Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ”, which forms part of the Horologion of Cyprian (XIV century): The years, the time and the days are ending and the Last Judgement is being prepared”⁸.

Holy Hierarch Photius, Metropolitan of Kiev (d. 2 July 1431): “This short-lived age is passing; the night of our cessation draws near, when nothing can be done by anyone. The seventh thousandth (**Translators Note;** seventh millennium); the eighth is approaching and will not be changed, and in no ways end. Blessed is he, who has prepared himself for the eighth thousandth, the future and the eternal, for which reason I implore you: let us do the deeds of light, whilst our life still remains”⁹.

The hagiographer Epiphany the Wise, monk of the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius monastery (2nd half of XIV – 1st quarter XV c.) wrote in the “*Life of St. Sergius of Radonezh*” that it was not without reason that such a beacon as the Venerable monk, shone throughout the Russian land toward the end of the seventh millennium. In “*The Epistle of Life and Teaching*” **St. Stephan of Perm:** “... certain others, lacking in thought, decided ... that from long ago there should not be the ability to read or write in Perm, and as such lived out their age without it; now at the end of the age, in the last years of the passing of the seventh thousandth, with very little time left, with only 120 years before the end of the age, it was decided that there should be the ability to read and write”¹⁰.

It is in *The Life* of the former, according to **V. Sakharov, a researcher of eschatological works**, that we learn, that “March was a fateful month, during which the end of the world would come about, as was thought then according to the testimony of the writer of *The Life*. And as attested to by the aforementioned writings, in March Adam was created, in March the Jews crossed the Red Sea, the Annunciation occurred in March, the death of the Saviour – as a result of which the end of the world should happen in March”¹¹.

Archbishop Theodosy of Rostov, later Metropolitan of Moscow (1461 – 1465) in his epistle of the year 1455: “... for now the last one hundred and 63rd year of the seventh thousandth has come forth”¹².

Timothy Benjamin, the transcriber, at the end of the year 1489, whilst completing a manuscript, containing the epistle of Athanasius of Alexandria, wrote: “I wrote toward the evening of the day, at the setting of the sun of, as I call it, the seventh age”¹³.

From the Paschalia of the middle of the XV c. the years 6965-6969 (1457-1461): “The year 6967 (1459), the 23rd cycle of the Sun, the 13th Lunar cycle. Indictus 7. Themelios 26. In that year the antichrist will be born and on his birthday an earthquake will occur. The like of which has never happened. Before that there will be a time of the accursed, the merciless and frightening. There will be a great sorrow over all the lands of the earth and a movement of stars in the heavens and a

wailing on earth. Woe, woe unto us sinners. In those days there will be a great sorrow. And in this year – here is fear, here is sorrow, here a great calamity. In it we await Your universal coming, O Master, transgression has multiplied on earth. Spare us O Master. May the heavens and earth be filled with Your glory. Spare us, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Spare us. O brethren, watch with knowledge and understanding. Whosoever wishes to be in that time should flee, run from unbelief”¹⁴.

“The exposition of the Paschalia of the seventh millennium’s last century”, belonging to the venerable monk Kyrill of Belozersk (ascribed to the year 1459): “Here is fear, here is sorrow, here a great calamity. In the cycle of the crucifixion of Christ this will happen and this year has come forth at the end in which we await Your universal coming. O Master, transgression has multiplied on earth. Spare us O Master. May the heavens and earth be filled with Your glory, spare us. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Spare us. O brethren, watch with knowledge and understanding. Whosoever wishes to be in that time should flee, run from the ignorant and unbelief. The Ishmaelites are amongst us, being here and there again”¹⁵.

The manuscript of the Paschalia middle of the XV c. under the year 7000: The end of the seventh millennium. This is what our Holy Fathers have established. Maintain the Paschalia until the 7th millennium. Some have said that is when the Second Coming of the Lord will be. * Apostle Mark says that no one knows the day or hour when that will be”¹⁶.

In one of the Greek Paschalias, the following is written concerning the year 7000: “Woe, woe unto those who have lived to the end of the age”¹⁷.

The Holy venerable Joseph, abbot of Volotsk, the Wonderworker (d. 9 September 1515) wrote in his *epistle to Niphon, bishop of Suzdal*: “... it is meet for all, especially now, that all should struggle unto death, in this the final year and the most awful of all time. The great Apostle Paul said about such: ‘Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there be a falling away first and that the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition’. Now, that falling away has come”¹⁸.

The Holy Hierarch Gennady, Archbishop of Novgorod (d. 3 December 1505) wrote in his *epistle to Archbishop Joasaph of Rostov*: “... it is important to continue the great struggle, until the age is finished, thus will God extend the life of the world. Various shall be the heretics and the Judaic-like thinker’s impudence, but for Christianity this shall be a great hindrance”¹⁹.

It is known that the Judaizers also thought that the end of the world would come after 7000 years. They did not expect it in 1492, because of a difference in calculation.

In the same epistle St. Gennady wrote: “... when three years have passed, the seventh millennium will come to an end. Various such I did hear from Alexis (one of the followers of Judaizer heresy - **Compiler**) “... and our divinity will be

* In this manuscript, under the year 6978, it is written: The beginning of the kingdom of the Antichrist. His name is Gog... **Compiler**

needed then. In hope, various heretics have worked it out and the book *Sixwings* contains such a teaching. In it one can find how the heretical calculations are recorded. From the time of Adam there have been 200, and 70, and 6 nine hundreds, where presently the 6th nine hundred is passing. This is how the Jews count the years, such as to be a temptation for Christianity. They wish to say that Christian chroniclers have undercounted the years. But ours continues. Or else, they wish their deception to be revealed. Thus our Paschalia is to be completed... different to those numbers which have been calculated; 200, 70, 6 nine hundreds from Adam till now, which would be 5000 and 200 and 28. And for this reason they do not have the Coming of Christ, rather they await the Antichrist, this is the great delusion”²⁰.

*Having become interested in how the Latins (Roman Catholics – **Translator**) and the Muslims, the **hierarch** was able to find out of the following, that the Latin calculations were ahead of the Russian by 8 years, whilst according to the Tatar count there remained another 102 years till the Second Coming*²¹.

*The **Holy Hierarch Gennady** compiled his own Paschalia for the 8th millennium only after the fateful year of 1492*²².

*In the prologue to another Paschalia for the 8th millennium, compiled by **Zosima, Metropolitan of Moscow (1491-1494)** with the advice of “the archbishops, bishops and abbots and the whole consecrated council of the **Russian Metropolia**”, it was said: “the humble Zosima, Metropolitan of All Russia, has steadfastly tried to write the Paschalia for the eighth millennium, during which we await the universal Coming of Christ”*²³.

“... terrifying was the night – wrote **S.P. Shevyrev** (d. 20 may 1864 – **Translator**), – of 25 March 1492. After the completion of the fateful three year reign of the antichrist (which, according to widespread opinion, began in the year 1489 – **Compiler**), which was discovered in the teachings of Skhariya the Judaizer and his followers in Novgorod and Moscow by his contemporaries, timid people with fear and trepidation awaited the universal sound of the trumpet of Archangels Michael and Gabriel. One can imagine with what joy these people awoke on the feast of the Annunciation...”²⁴

The Russian Orthodox Church was destined to repeat in some measure the path of early Christians. According to the words of **Archimandrite Cyprian (Kern, b. 1899 – d. 11 February 1960)**, “Christianity was not destined to close itself up into some sort of eschatological sect. Waiting for the Parousia (Greek *παρουσία* meaning arrival - **Translator**) could not go on for centuries. In the hearts of Christians of the III century, it was supposed to materialize in the apocalyptic anticipation of the last hour of history. One had to accept this history, enter its rhythm and further live on this planet for an unspecified time. ‘The new heaven and the new land on which truth resides’, become the anticipation for this day. ‘Let this world pass’ (the *Didache*) are the words by which the early

Christian prophets of ecstasy prayed. Later, however, their 'Maranatha' would be replaced by Tertullian with a different prayer 'for the delay of the end'"²⁵.

Saint Theophan (1815-1894), Recluse of Vyshensk: "Many times have there been predictions that the end of the age is nigh. And all were inaccurate. - The Saviour said that no one knows the time. Therefore, it is senseless to guess and be embarrassed by the fortune-telling of others. Undoubtedly, the Second Coming will be. And there is no doubt that it will happen suddenly, - preceded by all the great omens. All that is left for us is to wait for the Lord incessantly, and prepare for the meeting, not guessing about the time"²⁶.

3. Outgoing fire

*"..The global atmosphere has been spoiled
as far back as the XVII century"¹.*

Fr. Pavel Florensky

The elder of the Pskov Spaso-Eliazar monastery, Filofey — To the Grand Duke of Moscow Vasily III Ivanovich (1479-1533): "He Who is from the highest and from the most powerful, the all-encompassing right hand of God, from Whom kings reign and from Whom greatness is magnified and the strong write the truth, to your highness and occupier of the great throne, Sovereign Grand Prince of the Orthodox, the Christian tsar and the ruler of all, who holds the sanctified reigns of the altar of the Holy, Ecumenical and Apostolic Church of the Most Holy Mother of God and Her Glorious Assumption, Which shines in place of Rome and Constantinople. The old Church of Rome fell because of faithlessness and the Apollinarian heresy, whilst the doors of the Second Church of Rome, that of the city of Constantinople, were cleaved open by the sickles and axes of the descendants of Hagar^{*}. This is now the Third new Rome, the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church of your sovereign kingdom, the orthodox faith which shines brighter than the sun from the ends of the universe throughout the whole of the under heavens. And may the whole of your dominion know, o pious tsar, that all of the kingdoms of the Orthodox Christian faith have come together in your one kingdom. Throughout all of the under heavens you are the only tsar for Christians. Do not transgress, O king, the commandments laid down by your great forefathers: the great Constantine and the blessed Vladimir and the great God-chosen Yaroslav and other blessed saints, their the same root is up to

^{*} "But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers. They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled by casting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground." (Ps. 73, 6-7) - Comp

you... watch and hearken, pious king, because the whole Christian kingdom has come together in your one, because two Romes have fallen*, whilst the third stands, and a fourth there will not be: for your Christian kingdom will not be inherited by others, according to the Great Theologian"².

In the message to the Pskov government official, Misur (Mikhail – Translator) Munekhin: "All of the Christian governments have come to an end and have come together into the one kingdom of our sovereign, according to the prophetic books, that is, the Russian kingdom: two of the Romes have fallen, but the third still stands, and a fourth there will not be. The Christian kingdoms were drowned by the infidels, only the one kingdom of our sovereign stands by the grace of Christ"³.

Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople (Tranos, d. 1595) – to Tsar Theodore Ioannovich (1561-1582): "In truth, the Holy Spirit dwells in you, pious tsar, and from God will such a thought be put into action by you, for Ancient Rome fell because of the Apollinarian heresy, and the second Rome, Constantinople, is possessed by the descendants of Hagar, the godless Turks: your great Russian kingdom, the Third Rome, has surpassed all through piety, and all the pious kingdoms have gathered into your kingdom, and you alone under heaven are called the Christian tsar throughout the whole universe by all Christians"⁴.

Patriarch Nikon of Moscow and All Russia (1605 – d. 17.8.1681) understood the III Rome, "as a task to be fulfilled, and not as something already fulfilled"⁵. According to prof. M.V. Zyzikin, "we can add his (Patriarch Nikon's - **Comp.**) system to the hierocratic system, according to which the state sets for itself, as a distant ideal, never achievable, its transformation into the Church; this system is the opposite of the Protestant, dissolving the Church within the state, as happened under Peter I. Nikon warned the state against self-liberation from church principles"⁶.

N.F. Kapterev, church historian (1912): "Alexey Mikhailovich considered himself the successor of the ancient Greek emperors not only in matters of faith and piety, but also as the legitimate heir of their kingdom, he believed that he or his successors were destined in the future to rule over Constantinople itself and all of the Orthodox peoples languishing under the Turkish yoke <...> The tsar was no stranger to the idea of becoming a liberator of Orthodox nationalities from under the Turkish yoke and to seize Constantinople as his heritage, and he considered church unity the first and a most necessary step to future political unity"⁷.

* Thus, the fall of the First Rome occurred through the ritual and dogmatic apostasy of Catholics; the fall of the Second was due to the capture of Constantinople by the Hagarites. The statement of the Old Believers that the removal from society of the 'Buckler' (**2 Sol. 2, 7**) due to the Tsar's departure from Russian piety is easily refuted by examples of the falling away into heresy of many Roman Caesars. - **Comp.**

Paisius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in a letter to Tsar Alekei Mikhailovich (1649): "May the Most Holy Trinity multiply You above all kings, safely vouchsafe You to receive the most exalted throne of the great Tsar Constantine, Your forefather, may He liberate the peoples of the pious and Orthodox Christians from hands of the impious, may You be a new Moses, may You deliver us from captivity, as he delivered the children of Israel from Pharaoh's hands."⁸.

It is noteworthy that in 1666 the Tsar asked to send him from the East a "a Legal Charter" and "A Ritual Book of the complete Royal rank of the former Greek ceasars"⁹, which indicates a practical preparation for the coronation to the Throne of Byzantine Emperors.

Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich (*after the departure of the Antiochian Patriarch Makarius*) – *to the boyars*: "I pray to God that before I die to see him among the four patriarchs serving in the (church of - **Translator**) Holy Sophia and our patriarch as fifth together with them"¹⁰.

Even 100 years before the Baptism of Rus, Patriarch of Constantinople, Photius (ca. 820 – d. ca. 891) developed and formalized the doctrine of the relationship between church and state powers, which was reflected in the Epanagoge - a Byzantine legislative collection of an official nature, extracts from which were later included in the Slavic Rudder. The basics of the social system of Byzantium is reflected in Chapter 7 of Title III of the Epanagoges: "Since the state, in the likeness of a person, consists of parts and members, the most important and necessary parts are the Tsar and the Patriarch, and that is why the peace and prosperity of the subjects depend on the unanimity and consent of the Royal and Patriarchal powers"¹¹. *Thus we are talking about the Symphony between the Ecumenical Tsar and the Ecumenical Patriarch (the first by diptych, i.e. by commemoration at the divine service).*

M.V. Zyzykin considered: "Symphony is reliant upon the achievement of agreement between representatives of the spiritual and secular authorities in all matters, but it does not eliminate the obligation for a representative of either authority to obey the other in the sphere of this other power"¹².

"The Tsar," writes **Prof. V. Sokolsky (1894)**, *who researched the Epanagoge*, - is regarded as a legitimate dominant power, manifesting as a common good for all subjects, not punishing out of hatred, nor rewarding out of hatred. The Tsar, as a dispassionate resolver of disputes, rewards everyone according to their merits (*Epanagoge, II, 1*). At the same time, one of the most important tasks of the Tsarist government is the preservation and increase of social forces. In the end, the main purpose of the Royal power is to do good, which is why the Tsar is called the benefactor. When the activity of the Tsar in relation to the performance of good deeds weakens, the very nature of the Royal power is perverted (*Epanagoge, II, 2 and 3*). The Tsar is the judge and guardian of Divine and secular law, of all that is written in the Holy Scriptures, which is established as dogma by the seven Ecumenical Councils and which is determined by the Roman laws. Finally, the most important duty of the Tsar is recognized as being the protection of orthodoxy and piety. <...> Chapter 5 of Title II, contains a detailed definition as to how the Tsar must believe in the Holy Trinity, how to confess the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ and the union in Christ of two natures, Divine and human, and, accordingly, two wills and two potencies. The Tsar must stand out above all by his zeal for God. Thus, summarizing what has been said, the Tsar is the lawgiver, the supreme ruler and judge of people, and in relation to the Church he is the guardian of piety and orthodoxy. In relation to his subjects, the Tsar enjoys unlimited power, but this power finds its boundaries in regards to religious and moral law, which is established by the Supreme Legislator and Judge, Christ <...>.

The position of the Ecumenical Patriarch of the New Rome is highly regarded in the Epanagoge. <...> Chapter 8 of Title III recognizes the Patriarch as a member of the church-state equal to the Tsar. The Patriarch, as stated in Chapter 1 of this Title, is a living and animated image of Christ, by deeds and words expressing truth. <...> The duty of the Patriarchal authority is recognized as such: firstly, to preserve in piety and moral rigor the lives of the entrusted to him from God, then convert all heretics (i.e. heretics, as defined both in the laws and in the canons, those who do not have recourse with the Catholic Church), as far as possible, to Orthodoxy and unity with the Church, and finally, through the example of his positive and wonderful works to entice the unbelievers to become imitators of faith (*Epanagoge, III, 2*). The purpose of the existence of the Patriarchal power is defined by the Epanagoge as being the salvation of souls entrusted to the Patriarch, a life in Christ and a co-crucifixion for the world (*Epanagoge, III, 3*). The properties of the powers of the Patriarch are defined as follows: It is proper for the Patriarch to be a teacher, to treat everyone equally, both the high and the humble, to be meek in the administration of justice, to be accusatory of the antagonistic, and to speak in defence of the truth and dogmas, without embarrassment, to Tsar directly. Just as the interpretation of the norms of civil law belongs to the Tsar, the interpretation of the rules established by the Holy Fathers and Holy Councils belongs solely to the Patriarch (*Epanagoge, III, 5*). <...>

Subsequent time develops the principles set forth by Photius in the Epanagoge. Byzantium is a church-state body with two leaders – **the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Ecumenical Tsar**. According to the Greeks, this church-state body should gradually embrace the entire Orthodox world, and the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Ecumenical Tsar should

become in reality the Patriarch and Tsar of all Orthodox Christians throughout the universe. The rulers of other Orthodox countries and peoples can never compare themselves in dignity and rights regarding the Church with the holy Tsar autocrat, who is "concerned about the external construction of the Church in the whole universe." They are only local rulers and in the field of ecclesiastical affairs their will must obey the universal will of the holy Autocrat"¹³.

Anthony IV, Patriarch of Constantinople (1393): "The Holy Tsar (Caesar – **Translator**) holds a high place in the Church; he is not like the others, local princes and sovereigns. From the beginning, the Tsars strengthened and confirmed piety in the universe; the Tsars gathered the Ecumenical Councils; they also confirmed by their laws the observance of what the divine and sacred canons say about the truth of dogmas and about the improvement of Christian life, and struggled immensely against heresies; finally, the Tsars, together with the Councils, by their decrees they determined the order of the episcopal cathedras and established the boundaries of metropolitan districts and episcopal dioceses. <...> To this day, the Tsar receives the same decree from The Church, according to the same ritual and with the same prayers, is anointed with the great myrrh and is appointed the Tsar and autocrat of the Romans, i.e. all Christians. In every place where there be Christians, the name of the Tsar is commemorated by all Patriarchs, metropolitans and bishops, and none of the other princes and local rulers have this privilege. <...> Listen to the supreme apostle Peter speaking in the first Conciliar epistle: "Fear God, honour Caesar", he did not say "caesars", so that no one would misunderstand this as meaning those who are called kings among different peoples, but - "the Caesar", indicating the fact that there is only one Caesar (Tsar – **Translator**) in the universe. <...> For even if other Christians have appropriated the name of the caesar unto themselves, then all these examples are in essence something unnatural, illegal, more the work of tyranny and oppression"¹⁴.

"We — writes the same **Ecumenical Patriarch Anthony IV to Grand Duke Vasily Dimitrievich (1393)**, — are the guardians of the Divine laws and canons, and are obliged to act in this way in relation to all Christians, especially in relation to noble people - princes of peoples and local rulers, of which your highness is one <...> And as I am placed as the universal teacher for all Christians, I have an indispensable duty, if in case I hear about your nobility doing something that harms your soul, to write to you about it, as your father and teacher, instructing and encouraging toward improvement. <...> Surely you know that the Patriarch represents Christ, by Whom he is placed upon the episcopal throne <...> Therefore, my son, I write to you, teach you and advise your highness to revere the Patriarch as Christ Himself"¹⁵.

*The same Prof. Vl. Sokolsky explains the special position of the Ecumenical Patriarch on the basis of Byzantine law in the following way: in the Epanagoge (III, 8) it is stated that "being adorned by the Empire, the Patriarchal Throne of Constantinople, is recognized by conciliar resolutions as the first, and that, according to the holy laws, disputes arising in other Patriarchates are to be submitted before this throne for resolution. <...> The other Patriarchs do not have the same importance that was assigned by the Epanagoge to Constantinople. The other Patriarchs are only **local hierarchs**. This is what they are called in the Epanagoge. <...> This view is the peculiar view of Photius and his adherents. In general, a different view prevailed among the Greeks, according to which all five Patriarchs were considered equal to each other. The Greeks compared the Church to the human body, and the five Patriarchs with five senses"*¹⁶.

*Over time, the Tsar of Moscow took the place of the Caesar of the Greeks. "In 1561, — writes **Prof. V. Sokolsky**, — the Grand Duke of Moscow Ivan IV, who had been crowned in 1547, was confirmed in the rank of Tsar by the conciliar epistle of the Ecumenical Patriarch Joasaph and the clergy of the Eastern Church. In this charter, the Tsar of Moscow is considered to be in the same relation to the Church as the Greek Caesars were previously. It is remarkable that the Patriarch and the Council call Ivan their Tsar. "This, - we read in the contemporary translation of the epistle, - our pious epistle, which is unshakable and firm, is given to **our** pious, God-crowned and Christ-loving **Tsar** and Lord Ivan." At the same time, as can be seen from this quoted text, the Church reveres him in the same way as the Greek Caesars were called revered: as pious, God-crowned and Christ-loving. Furthermore, from the negotiations and communications that preceded the council's works, it is clear that, at Ivan's insistence, his name began to be commemorated throughout the Orthodox world: in the same way as the names of the Byzantine Caesars were remembered before"*¹⁷. "The view that the Russian Tsar, was the successor of the Byzantine Caesars and the Ruler of the whole Orthodox Christian World" was reflected in the correspondence of the **Patriarch of Jerusalem Dositheus Notaras (1641-1707)** with the Moscow government"¹⁸.

The same Patriarch Dositheus viewed the Moscow Patriarch, "as having in certain cases a pan-Orthodox, universal significance, due to his proximity to the Head of the entire Orthodox world - the Tsar, and the ability to influence the Tsar in one direction or another." Although the Ecumenical Patriarchate was not transferred to Moscow, and "The Moscow Patriarch was recognized only as the fifth Patriarch and by the appointing epistle of the Eastern Patriarchs he was

charged with the prime duty and care of the Apostolic See of Constantinople, nevertheless, his importance is completely different than of the other local Patriarchs. He is the Patriarch of the regally adorned city of Moscow, the Third Rome, the Patriarch remaining at the side of the Universal Tsar"¹⁹.

*And yet, the Patriarch of Moscow, though "coupled" in Symphony with the Tsar, but being only the fifth in order, strictly speaking, had no rights. The resulting Russian symphony (not officially fixed) could only exist so long as the **union of love** between The Tsar and the Patriarch was preserved. It is characteristic that the case of Patriarch Nikon itself, reflected in the "Rules of the Four Patriarchs", confirmed the unequalled place in the diptych of the local Patriarch of Moscow and the Tsar of Moscow, who is at the same time the Ecumenical Tsar, the direct heir of the holy Greek autocrats"²⁰.*

Prof. M.V. Zyzykin assumed that Patriarch Nikon "cherished a dream, that the canonical position of the Moscow Patriarch in the future will be reviewed by the Supreme Ecclesiastical authority and that the first place in the future among the five patriarchal thrones in the church of the Resurrection will belong to the Moscow The Patriarch, however, nowhere in any of his statements can it be seen that he adopted this place for the Moscow Patriarch of his time. Furthermore, his hopes could have been grounded in the motivation of the canons of the II and IV Ecumenical Councils, which put forward the Patriarch of Constantinople, namely as the Bishop of the New (ie. Second – **Comp.**) Rome; consequently, with the loss of the political position of their cities, the Patriarchs could in the future lose their primacy of honour."²¹.

It is interesting that in his last published article (1944), **Patriarch Sergius of Moscow and All Russia (Stragorodsky, b.1867 - d.15.5.1944)** hinted at the possibility of reviewing the question of the translation the Patriarchal Throne of Moscow to the first place according to the diptych in the near future. Such a statement at that time could only appear, of course, in agreement with J.V. Stalin, who had his own views on Constantinople. «...In practice, - wrote His Holiness, - every group of people, in order to systematically and successfully fulfil some common cause, is usually headed by some single person as the head leader. It seems that the external structure of the Church has historically developed in this direction. The initial cells - small, but, in fact , independent bishoprics gradually merged into groups: dioceses, metropolitans, exarchates, etc., until they formed of themselves the five patriarchates, together with which large associations appeared in the form of national churches. At the head of each church group is certainly one of the bishops, whom the other bishops of the

group "shall honour like the head and shall not create anything exceeding their power without his consideration" (**Apostolic Canons c. 34**). Perhaps there will be nothing violating the described course of development of church life nor unacceptable if the entire universal earthly Church were also headed by a single primate or a leader as, for example, the chairman of the ecumenical council, but, of course, not as the vicar of Christ, but only as the head of the church hierarchy; and also if such a head turns out to be the bishop of some type of world capital"²².

*When elected to the Moscow Patriarchal Throne (1652) **Nikon** demanded a solemn promise from everyone to obey him in all things as a pastor and father²³, by which he attempted to restrain the aspirations of secularization of the age. Having received the title "The Great Sovereign"*, the "special friend" of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, he spoke as follows about the relationship between church and state authorities: "Some people think that the Tsar is above the bishop <...> Others argue that the bishop is above the Tsar <...> The episcopal authority is spiritual and the things of the spirits are subject to it, but the power of the Tsar is worldly, and temporal things are subject to it <...> the Lord God, when he created the earth, commanded two luminaries to shine upon it - the sun and the moon - and through them showed us the episcopal power and the royal power <...> Episcopal authority over the days, that is, over souls, and the royal - over the things of this world <...> In spiritual things the great bishop is above the Tsar, and every Orthodox person must be in obedience to the Patriarch, because he is our father in the Orthodox faith and the Orthodox Church is entrusted to him."²⁴ And furthermore, "for where the Church is under the secular power, there is no church, house of men, a den of robbers"^{25†}.*

In 1658, the gap between the Tsar who broke the oath and the Patriarch becomes inevitable.²⁶

* With the reunification of Ukraine and Belarus with Russia, the following was added: "All Great and Small and White Russia".

† Analyzing the Greek-Bulgarian feud and "the church affairs in Serbia", **V.S. Solovyov** noted : "...The dogma of the subordination of the Church to the state <...> must inevitably be recognized

*The essence of the division was expressed by **Patriarch Nikon** himself:* "In regards to ourselves we do not know any other law-giver, except Christ, Who gave us the power to bind and loose. Is it not this privilege that the Tsar gave us? No, he stole this from us, as his lawless deeds testify. Which ones? He possesses the Church, though the sacred coffers he gets rich and is nourished, he is famous for the fact that all churchmen - metropolitans, archbishops, priests and all clerics submit to him, give dues, work and fight for him; he owns the courts and taxes"²⁷.

"For the multiplication of iniquity, the lives of many will dry up <...> What iniquities? The ones, when someone takes that which does not belong to him, such as the sovereign, the Tsar taken the Church and all its possessions unto his government illegally, and therefore hates us, as an adulterer can never love a legitimate husband, but always thinks evil about him..."²⁸

"Nowhere, even in the Royal laws, is it written that the Tsar should elect bishops and other (church - **Comp.**) authorities <...> And it is true that the Royal Majesty has expanded over the Church, contrary to divine laws, and even inflamed Himself over God through the breadth of his eagle"²⁹.

"Has there not now come a departure from the Holy Gospel and from the Tradition of the Holy Apostles and Holy Fathers? Has there not appeared the man of sin, the son of perdition?.. What can be more ruinous, than having abandoned the Law and the Commandments of God, they preferred the traditions of man, that is, a stacked book* full of sorrows and lies? The Antichrist will prepare many others <...> He will sit in the temple of God not in Jerusalem alone, but everywhere in the Churches, that is, he will also take power over all Churches and church pastors <...>"³²

"The episcopacy is good in all law and honour, and it is necessary to weep about the last national events. When the faith of the Gospel began to be sown and the episcopacy was honoured in the Christian kingdoms, then these kingdoms themselves were honoured; but when the anger of pride spread and the

...where the boundaries of the Church and the state coincide, for it is impossible to combine two independent authorities shut up within the boundaries of one and the same territory." And again: "once the principle of nationalities is introduced into the Church as the main and predominant principle, once The Church is recognized as an attribute of the people, it follows by itself that the state power ruling the people should also rule the Church belonging to the people. The national Church is necessarily subordinate to the national government, and in this case a special church authority can exist only for the sake of appearance, for the sake of greater solemnity of festive prayer services"³⁰.

* The Patriarch called these laws, according to which the Tsar possessed the Church, "the Antichrist legislation"³¹, contrasting them with the "The Rudder", which included the Byzantine civil legislation of the Nomocanon, blessed by the Church. - **Comp.**

episcopal honour changed, then, alas, the kingdoms began to fall and came into dishonour, as is known about the Greeks."³³.

"Seeing the Holy Church in persecution, after listening to the words of God: "If you are persecuted in the city, run in the city", I have retired and moved to live in the desert, but he did not find peace here either. Truly the prophecy of John the Theologian has now come true about the wife whose child the serpent wanted to devour, and the child was taken to heaven to God, and the wife fled to the desert, and the great serpent was deposed on earth, the ancient serpent. Theologians understand the woman to represent the Church of God, for which I now suffer for the sake of the commandments God: for there is no greater love than this, except if anyone lays down his soul for his friends; and we, seeing our brethren beaten, complained to Your Nobility, but we received nothing but vanity, reproach and humiliation; then we retired to an empty place. But the evil one The evil serpent does not leave us alone anywhere; now he slanders us with his chosen vessel, Roman Babarykin, who took possession of the church land deceitfully. We pray your meekness to get rid of anger and leave the rage. Where did you get such audacity to investigate us and judge us? What laws of God dictate to power over us, God's slaves? Is it not enough for you to justly judge the people of the kingdom of this world? In your order a new directive is written - to take the peasants of the Resurrection Monastery: according to what regulation is this? Listen, for the Lord's sake, what happened in ancient times for such insolence to Egypt, to Sodom, to Nebuchadnezzar the king? The Theologian was banished to Patmos: there he was vouchsafed a better grace to write the gospel and the Apocalypse; John Chrysostom was exiled and was returned to his throne again; Philip the metropolitan was exiled, but returned again to stand before the face of those who insulted him; and what else should we add? If you are not moved by these reminders, then even if I offered you the whole of Scripture, you would not believe it. If it pleases Your Nobility, then I run, shaking off the dust from my feet in order to witness on the Day of Judgment? I am no longer called a Great Sovereign, and what kind of contradiction am I doing to you? Your hand possesses all which belongs to the episcopacy: it's scary to say, but it's impossible to tolerate, what rumours reach here, that by your decree, the bishops are consecrated, archimandrites, abbesses, priests are ordained and in their certificates they write as equal to the Holy Spirit as follows: by the grace of the Holy Spirit and by the edict of the Great Sovereign: it be not enough Holy Spirit consecrate without your decree! But if anyone blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, he has no forgiveness: if this did not frighten you, then what can frighten you when you are no longer worthy of

forgiveness for your boldness? Besides, everywhere, in the Holy metropolias, dioceses, monasteries, without any advice and blessing, you take things mercilessly by violence both movable and immovable and all the Laws of the Holy Father and the pious kings and grand princes of Greece and Russia you have considered as naught, also your father, Mikhail Feodorovich, and your own charters and statutes; even in the legislative book, although written in passion for the sake of popular embarrassment, it is also commanded there: in the Monastery Statute archimandrites, hegumens, protopriests, priests and revered elders are ordered to sit by order of rank; but you have abolished all this: secular judges judge and pillage, and for this reason you have gathered a great council of those who will cry out about your unrighteousness on the Day of Judgment. You preach fasting to everyone, and now it is unknown who does not fast for the sake of scarcity of bread; in many places they fast to death because there is nothing to eat. There is no one who would be shown mercy: the poor, the blind, the lame, widows, the monks and the nuns – all are taxed with heavy tributes, everywhere there is weeping and contrition, everywhere there is suffering and sighing, there is no one rejoicing in these days. We would like to declare a simple speech: On January 12, 1661, we were at matins in the Church of the Holy Resurrection (in the New Jerusalem monastery - **Comp.**); after reading the first kathisma, I sat down on the one hundred and took a little nap: suddenly I see myself in Moscow, in the cathedral of the Holy Assumption,* the church is full of fire, there foremost are the ever-memorable departed hierarchs; Metropolitan Peter got up from his tomb, went to the altar and placed his hand on the Gospel, and so did all the other bishops and I. And Peter began to say: Brother Nikon! Tell the King why has he harmed the Holy Church, shamelessly wanted to take all immovable things, collected by us, and it's not good for him; say unto him, let him return what he took, for he has brought the wrath of God upon himself for the sake of it: there was a pestilence twice, how many people died, and now he has no one with whom to stand against his enemies. I answered: he will not listen to me, it would be good if one of you appeared to him. Peter continued: the destinies of God did not command this to be, you say; if he does not listen to you, then if one of us appeared, he would not listen to him, but here is a sign to him, look: by the movement of his hand, I turned to the west to the royal palace and I see: there is no church wall, the whole palace is visible, and the fire that

*This vision acquires a particularly symbolic meaning if we remember that the Nikon's ascension to the Patriarchal Throne is connected with the Assumption Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin Ia. Being elected out of 12 candidates, Nikon initially refused. Then in the Assumption Cathedral in front of the relics of St. Philip, who, along with St. Nikon especially revered John Chrysostom, the Tsar fell at his feet, "prostrating himself on the ground and shedding tears," begged him to take the throne.³⁵ - **Comp.**

was in the church gathered, directed toward the royal court, and it became ablaze.* "If he does not remain chaste, more of the first punishments of God will be applied," Peter said; and another grey-haired man said: "Now the courtyard that you bought for the churchmen, the Tsar wants to take and make a mammon's guest house in it for his own sake; but he will not rejoice about his profit". All this was so, from God, or a dream - I don't know, but it was so; if anyone thinks in human terms that I planned it myself, then this fire that I saw will burn me."³⁴.

The vision of Patriarch Nikon in the Resurrection Monastery in 1661, according to the scroll of the Moscow Synodal Library: "In 1661, on a Sunday, His Holiness Nikon by the grace of God The Patriarch, being in the complex he had built in honour of the Life-bearing Resurrection in New Jerusalem, on the Sunday being in the Holy Church with Archimandrite Gerasim and with the rest of the brethren, when, as per the rubrics the aforementioned Archimandrite Gerasim began the reading after the first kathisma (ie. The explanation of the Holy Gospel), as is the custom, then His Holiness Nikon the Patriarch sat in his place tired after much work and fell into a light sleep and found himself in the Great Church of Moscow, where the robe The Lord lies. And he sees a great ineffable light in the Church, and in horror of such indescribable he becomes afraid; and in fear he sees both sides of the temple and sees all the bishops rising from their tombs and those who lay to right side of Cyprian and Photius and Philip the Holy Martyr, and from the left side of Metropolitan Jonah and all the others. After following this, he sees a blessed youth walking from the altar from the northern door the with many bright ones following him, as happens during the entrance with the Holy Gospel, and that bright young man carrying in his arms a royal crown; and with those bright youths all the Bishops, united in prayer, go forward to the holy altar through the holy and great doors that have been opened. And the most holy young man places the royal crown on the altar table in front of the Holy Gospel. The same, Nikon, His Holiness the Patriarch, in fear follows them, and finds himself on the right hand side of the altar table, and again sees the indescribable light, and in that light he sees the risen Peter Metropolitan of the capital, the Great Wonderworker, together with Gennady approaches the aforementioned bishops, who also have deigned to honour him by giving him primacy. The same Metropolitan Peter standing in the usual first place at the holy altar and through

* "... And I will draw fire from among you, which will devour you..." (Ezek. 28,18). – **Comp.**

the royal crown stretched out his hand onto the Holy Gospel and a spoke unto His Holiness Nikon the Patriarch: We testify to you brother, Nikon, **with this Holy Gospel, go, and say unto the tsar, for what reason has he subjugated the holy churches and holy monasteries, and many of the immovable holy things he has made movable through his royal commands, and he has not been satisfied by his royal powers, but has extended them over the bishop's court, and by numerous penalties and numerous measures he has impoverished and continues to impoverish many monasteries.** And His Holiness Nikon Patriarch in great fear answered: you great bishops of the first-see bear witness to this, that I the humble one have spoken and written about this to the tsar, and being unbending to obedience, has appeared even more aggrieved, boasting of my martyrdom and exile into prison. And Peter the Great wonderworker answered: For you, brother, in this life, it is fitting to bear witness and suffer about this even unto blood; for if the tsar does not want to believe this speech of ours and does not accept your testimony, and, together with the other bishops he stretched out his hands toward the western side and said: See what will happen after this. And he saw a white light in the great Church, and he turned into an unspeakable flame of fire and with a loud noise he entered the royal palaces, and everything was seen to be aflame. And in that great fear he, His Holiness Nikon Patriarch, barely come to himself and beheld the abovementioned archimandrite Gerasim standing him, having sat after the customary blessed litany, already after the second kathisma had been completed. And His Holiness Nikon the Patriarch immediately at that hour confessed the terrible vision to all those vigilant with Archimandrite Gerasim and the rest of the brethren of every rank and age. And after matins had been completed with his right hand he wrote down this vision and sent it to the most pious lord tsar; and even unto this day nothing has been changed or forgotten. And this is the vision of His Holiness Nikon the Patriarch which occurred that same night"³⁶.

Before his death, in his will, the Tsar asked the Patriarch for forgiveness, and the new Sovereign Theodore Alekseevich made the decision to return Nikon to his dignity, asked him to return to the New Jerusalem Resurrection monastery, which was founded by him (on the way to which the hierarch died on August 17, 1681). But it was too late to fix anything...

"Nikon's refusal to forgive," - according to **M.V. Zyzikin**, - remained forever a protest against the humiliation of the Church by the secular authorities"³⁷.

After the unjust seizure of church property from the resurrection monastery on Sunday on 25.6.1663, Patriarch Nikon sang a prayer service to the Lifegiving Cross in the church, recited a prayer and psalms 68 and 108, which, according to the rules of Athanasius of Alexandria, which is supposed to be read by those who endure violation.

The English researcher Palmer, writes M.V. Zyzykin, in the 70's of the XIX century. compared "the words of Psalms 68 and 108 with what happened to the family of the Tsar sees in these events the fulfilment of the wrath of God. The words of Psalm 68 say: "Pour out on them (my enemies) Let Thy fury and may the flame of Thy wrath overtake them. Let their dwelling be empty, and let there be no living in their tents... let them be blotted out from the book of the living, and let them not be written with the righteous." And in Psalm 108: "They surround me everywhere with words of hatred, arm themselves against me for no reason. For my love they are at enmity with me, and I pray; they reward me for good with evil, for my love with hatred... May his days be short (Tsar Alexei died in 1676 before the age of 47) and let another take his dignity; let his children be orphans, and his wife a widow (the children of the Tsar Alexei were prematurely orphaned and, together with their mother, his second wife, were exposed to dangers and misfortunes after his death); may his children wander and beg and ask for bread from their ruins (his son Peter, left without his father's care, wandered among the wicked foreigners, begging for poison from them like bread, and was a wanderer far from God and his country looking for food from the devastated places where bread did not grow); may the lender seize everything he had, and let strangers plunder his labours (his kingdom was impoverished by the war and the fruits of his early victories were seized by foreigners, and his work and his successors were absorbed by the German infidels); may there be none to show mercy on his orphans, may his offspring perish, and may his name be blotted out in the following generation (there was no one: Matveev was in exile when his presence was especially needed, being exiled by the relatives of Tsar Alexei himself; Theodore died, just when he was old enough to do good; Peter was spiritually exhausted and spiritually murdered by his own sister Sophia and he turned, thanks to his poor upbringing, into a monster, capable only of developing the consequence of his father's sins. The right of hereditary succession left the descendants of Alexei, and the heir was put to death by his own father, the son of Alexei, and in the second generation his name disappeared from the male generation). Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the Lord (John III and IV) and let not his mother's sin be blotted out (his mother's family and his relatives the Streshnevs). May they always be in the sight of the Lord and may He destroy their memory on earth (it did disappear from the earth: neither his mother's family nor the family from his first wife exist any longer)." <...>

We cannot but dwell on Palmer's reflections on the punishments sent by God for public sins, as concerning the one on whom such punishment can fall, and in relation

to what this punishment entails, in his opinion, for Russia for its attitude to the Church. "The punishments for public crimes and sins can be public and personal. Social punishment falls on the nation, society or class, or rank, or on the institution itself, sometimes soon, sometimes after a long interval, destroying even future generations. This public punishment often falls, seemingly, upon that the ruler and his descendants, who are personally innocent, may not even be aware of the guilt of their predecessors, as if showing the difference between purely personal and public acts and between personal and public reward and punishment. So it was in England, that the fault of those Tudors who in the XVI century rebelled against God and His Kingdom and enticed an entire nation with their tyrannical violence into schism and heresy, was punished a century later through the kings of another family, against whom the people rebelled at that time, just as the kings had earlier rebelled against God; they were overthrown and exiled, and one of them was even beheaded through the subsequent development of the same heresy that they first imposed on the people... Also in France, ambition and pride, with which Louis XIV waged war and inflicted grievances on the Church, and the immorality of the regent and Louis XV were punished in the next generation with the horrors of an atheistic and deadly revolution in which the innocent and virtuous Louis XVI, his queen, his sister and his son were beheaded or put to death with even greater torment".

Regarding Russia, Palmer says that, "if we think only about public acts, then, since everything was done in the Nikon case in the name of the Tsar, and not by the boyars as a class (although they bear the main blame for the persecution Nikon), and the Church was enslaved to the Tsar, then it was necessary to wait for the main punishments for the crown. "If only you were afraid of God," Nikon said to the tsar at the trial after an explosion of anger at him, while reading some passages from his confidential letter to Patriarch Dionysius, "you wouldn't acted toward me like that," and after reading it he said: "May God be your judge." And in the dining room of the palace, when Nikon was leaving the Cathedral, he stood in the middle and, turning to the Tsar, shook the dust from his feet for the third time (1st in 1658, 2nd in 1664) and said to the Tsar: "Let my blood and the common sin be on you her head." Palmer has already mentioned the fulfilment of these prophecies, when speaking about the fate of the children of Tsar Alexei. He sees the fulfilment of Nikon's predictions, made by him at the trial, about the destruction of Moscow, because all this was fulfilled with the destruction of the boyars, as a class, the Streltsy, on the Reigning Dynasty, and on the clergy, and on the fire of 1812, which destroyed the old capital, which had apostatised. Curious are the external parallels given by Palmer about the forty years that Nikon spoke about to fulfil the prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem. From the time of the Council of 1660, when the Council approved the assumption of spiritual power by the Tsar, committed in 1658, until the death of the last Patriarch Adrian in 1700, when the Tsar also destroyed the external form of canonical primacy, 40 years had also passed; from the death of Patriarch Nikon in 1681 to the creation of

the Most Holy Governing Synod in 1721, 40 years had also passed. But this was not enough. Palmer was waiting (in the 1870s! - **Comp.**) for a further fulfilment of the prophecy. "The governments, - he says, which once had apostatised do not easily go back; they are going to destruction.".. Palmer asks: "Will Russia go towards German materialism and eventually the loss of the very name of Christianity?.. or will there be an Orthodox reaction?"* The tail cannot lead the head, but the head and the backbone of Russia is German. The Orthodox Church is tied to the German principle of secular supremacy, like the tail to the spine of a dog. The tail should follow the head. Individuals, even if they themselves, or their fathers, have sinned, can repent, but history does not know an example of a nation that once retreated from a higher religious position to a lower one, would restore itself, by its own inner effort of repentance... But the impossible for man is possible for God."

And in another place he says: "When liberalism will throw off the existing barrier by achieving religious freedom, when the Russian Church will be delivered by its own resources, <...> then, in search of self-preservation and especially against Catholics, she will discover that her real defender and representative was Nikon"³⁸.

M.V. Zyzykin (1934): "In 1664, Nikon had a special foundation to believe that the tsar was well disposed towards him. If at the first time the elder Aaron, devoted to Nikon, wanted to bring him together with the tsar, then for the second time the attempt to bring them together, in full confidence that a personal meeting would help the tsar's new agreement with Nikon, came from the boyar Nikita Alekseevich Zyuzin, who was completely devoted to Nikon <...>

The only reason why he did not consider it possible for him to return to the throne, the royal wrath, making it impossible for him to canonically rule the Church[†], became irrelevant. He was informed that the tsar would not resist him it and that, having left the throne, Nikon must finish this matter, i.e. return, since the tsar no longer resists him and now shows love to him, asking him to come back. The letter very plausibly depicted the position of the tsar, who could not personally address

* The reigns of Emperors Alexander III and Nicholas II were an attempt at "Orthodox reaction". - **Comp.**

[†] According to the "**Apostolic Canons**" (**XI, XXXIV**): "The Tsar is engaged only in military affairs, taking care of war and peace, and guards *the body*, while the bishop engages in Godly priesthood and deflects *the body and soul* from danger. So, as much as the soul is superior to the body, the priesthood surpasses the kingdom in always, for it binds and looses those worthy of punishment and forgiveness." **From the decree of the IV Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon 451**: "No pragmatic decree contrary to the canons should have force; *the canons of the fathers should prevail.*" **St. John of Damascus (December 4, ca. 777)**: "We obey you, Emperor, in what relates to the affairs of our life: in serving our duties, the collection of taxes and duties, in which the management of our affairs is entrusted to you; but for the organization of church affairs, we have pastors who have spoken the word to us and transmitted the church law." **Saint Theodore the Studite (d. 11 November 826)**: "It is necessary to insist on the exact observance by the state authorities not only of the teachings, but also of the canons. In case of its evasion from the first and violation of the latter, it is necessary to apply disciplinary penalties or penances existing in such cases, as they are applied by the church to all other members"³⁹.

Nikon because of the possibility of embarrassment in case of failure with the invitation of Nikon. Nikon was in great perplexity. He did not believe that the situation under the tsar had changed so much in his favour, and twice returned the letters to Zyuzin, but after the third he finally agreed, did not return the letters and promised to arrive. The decision and **the fact of the arrival of Nikon are very important, because they are indeed a confirmation of the multiple statements Nikon that he did not abdicate the throne, but only from the rebellious flock, by which were meant the first son of the Church — the tsar and the boyars around him.** <...> The message from Zyuzin coincided with intensified reflections of Nikon on the state of the Patriarchal Throne, which began from the beginning of the Christmas Fast of 1664. Nikon began to pray in solitude in order to find a way out of the impasse that the church matters had reached. Here is how Nikon himself reports about what finally prompted him to go to Moscow:

"Hearing the confusion and the great rumour about the Patriarchal Throne, I retired on November 14 to the desert, outside the monastery, to pray and fast, so that the Lord would inform what should be; I prayed for a long time with tears and there was no revelation to me. In December from the 13th day of in pain before the Lord God sending prayer to prayer and tears to tears and vigil to vigil, and fasting to fasting, and fasting even until the 17th day; I began fasting from Tuesday and fasted until Saturday, did not eat anything, did not even drink water, but replaced bread by prayer and drinking with tears, I did not go to bed, but only, totally exhausted, sat down for an hour a day; but I worked and prayed with tears, until the Lord God informed me what is appropriate to do and what is pleasing to His holy will. From much toil, I sat down in my place in the church, and since I did not go to bed for four nights and three days, I dozed for a little while and I see, that I am in the Cathedral; there none amongst the living present, but there were formerly departed prelates and priests in the holy vestments, standing along the sides where the tombs of metropolitans and patriarchs are; one of them, a man of wondrous brightness and adorned with grey hair the saint went amongst the hierarchs, presented them with charters and a cinnabar pot with cinnabar, and with it they all signed. In awe I approached the bearer of the charter and asked him: "What are you signing? If it be of truth, show me." He showed me, and I saw that it was true, and I asked him: will you sign? - I have already signed and showed me what was written about him. I looked with attention and found: it is truly written on two and a half lines: "Humble By the grace of God, Metropolitan Jonah, I sign it with the fear of God." But I, having taken boldness, went to the place and wanted to step up, but I found a Hierarch standing on the spot in the bishop's vestment and was astonished. He said to me: "Be horrified, brother, because this is the will of God, ascend your throne and tend to flock of Christ, which the Lord has entrusted to you. And immediately he became invisible, I, having gathered myself, left. The standing Hierarch, it seems to me, was Peter the Wonderworker."

This vision was described in Nikon's letter to the Tsar, which was handed to him immediately upon arrival at the Holy Assumption Cathedral. Nikon indeed did what Zyuzin advised him, and arrived in Moscow that night, right at the Holy Assumption Cathedral, proceeded to the Patriarchal place, having venerated the icons, and the confused clergy, headed by the locum tenens of the Patriarchal throne Jonah, the successor of Metropolitan Pitirim since the summer of 1664, approached him asking for a blessing.

In the palace, according to the description of Ligarides, there was a terrible commotion; the spiritual authorities were hastily gathered, where Ligarides gave a cry out to demand from Nikon an explanation as to why he so boldly encroached on the Patriarchal throne, and to tell him to wait for a decision from the Ecumenical Patriarchs. The Tsar ordered Metropolitan Pavel of Sar to go to the cathedral, the boyars - Prince Odoyevsky, Y.A. Dolgoruky, Rodion Matveevich Streshnev, and the clerk of the Duma Almaz Ivanov and to say to Nikon: "You have left the Patriarchal throne arbitrarily, promising not to be a Patriarch in the future, and moved to a monastery to live there, about which was written to the Ecumenical Patriarchs, and now for what have you come to Moscow and entered the cathedral church without the knowledge of the great Sovereign and the Holy Council?" and Nikon answered them: "I stepped down, not persecuted by anyone, and came to my throne, not invited by anyone, in order that the great Sovereign stop the bloodshed and install peace; I am not running away from the judgment of the Ecumenical Patriarchs, but I have come according to the vision," and handed over a letter to the tsar, where the vision that had been shown to him was described. Without the tsar's permission the letter was not taken from him, but, having received permission, they took the letter and on behalf of the Tsar they ordered him to leave and go back. Nikon handed over the letter and said, "If the great Sovereign does not need my arrival in Moscow, then I will go back to the monastery, but until I receive an answer from the great Sovereign I will not leave the cathedral." The letter was carried to the tsar and Nikon's explanation was read.

Nikon wrote that he had fulfilled the reason for his departure, that he had thought about what he had done, and now he had come to see the most radiant face of the tsar and bow down to the throne of his kingdom; he came in meekness and humility and brought with him the peace that the Lord gave to the disciples and apostles and bishops that followed acting in the Holy Church according to them, saying: I will leave my peace to you, I give you my peace. To them also The Lord commanded: enter into whichever city or house first and say: Peace be upon this house, and if there be the son of peace, then peace will rest upon him. But if, writes Nikon, your royal majesty wants to hear and learn more of this, then we will not refuse to say: do you want to accept Christ Himself? We will show your nobility how the Lord testifies: He who receives you receives Me and he that listens to you listens to Me. Whatever your nobility wills, it will be done, or in the name of the Lord, accept us and open the doors to the house so that your reward be not cancelled according to that

which is written. I did not write this to your royal majesty from myself, but I speak of Christ from God before God. The Tsar listened and ordered Metropolitan Pavel to go once again to Nikon and say that his letter had been reported and that he should return to the monastery. When the matins was over, Nikon venerated the icons, took the staff of Metropolitan Peter and headed for the exit. The boyars demanded he leave the staff, but Nikon said, "take it away by force," and left. Getting into the sled, Nikon shook the dust from his feet and said the gospel words: "If they do not accept you, leave that city, and shake off the dust that has stuck to your feet." D.A. Dolgoruky and Artamon Matveev went to escort Nikon by order of the tsar. Matveev said, "We will sweep up this dust." **"It will sweep you up, — said Nikon, pointing to the comet, — "this broom: a tailed star that has appeared in heaven."**⁴⁰.

*Peculiarly, the participants of the Council of 1917, who restored The Patriarchate, went to the New Jerusalem Monastery (twice), where, after the memorial service for Patriarch Nikon, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) gave a lecture about him*⁴¹. However the very idea of restoring the Patriarchate showed itself with particular strength in 1905. The Holy Synod, which met on March 22, unanimously spoke out for the restoration of the Patriarchate. Even in winter, the members of the Holy Synod, headed by the primate of St. Petersburg Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky d. 1912) met with **Emperor Nicholas II**, who, according to an eyewitness, said:

"It has come to my knowledge that now between you in the Synod and in society there is much discussion about the restoration of the Patriarchate in Russia. This question resonated in my heart and interested me extremely. I thought about it a lot, got acquainted with the current literature on this issue, with the history of the Patriarchate in Russia and its significance during the great troubles of the interregnum, and came to the conclusion that the time is ripe, and that for Russia, experiencing new troubled days, the Patriarch is necessary for both the Church and the state. It seems to me that you in the Synod would be no less than myself interested in this question. If so, what is your opinion about it?

We, of course, hastened to answer the Sovereign, what is ours to me This completely coincides with all that He has just expressed to us

— And if so, — the Sovereign continued, — then you have probably already outlined a candidate for Patriarch among yourselves? We hesitated and answered the Sovereign's question with silence.

After waiting for an answer and seeing our confusion, he said:

— And what if, as I see, you have not yet managed to outline a candidate for yourselves or are having difficulty in the choice, so what if I offer it to you myself — what do you say to that?

— Who is he? — we asked the Sovereign.

"This candidate," he replied, "is me! By agreement with the Empress, I will leave the Throne to my Son and establish a regency for him out of the Empress and

my brother Michael, and I myself will accept monasticism and holy orders, together with this I offer myself to you as Patriarch. Am I acceptable to you, and what do you say to that?

It was so unexpected, so far from all our prepositions, that we could not find what to answer and ... remained silent. Then, after waiting a few moments for our answer, His Majesty looked at us intently and indignantly, stood up in silence, bowed to us and left, whilst we were left, as if crushed, ready, it seems, to tear our hair out for not finding in ourselves and not being able to give a decent answer. We should have bowed at his feet, bowing before the greatness of the feat He was taking to save Russia, and we... remained silent!

<...> It was too late and irreparable: the great moment was not understood and forever missed — "Jerusalem did not know the time its visitation"... (**Lk. 19:44**)"^{42*}.

*As a result of the reflections after this meeting and the disagreements that arose in the church environment at the Synod report on **March 31, 1905** there was a **resolution issued by the Sovereign**: "I recognize the impossibility to complete such a great thing in the current troubled times, which requires both calmness and deliberation, what is the convocation of the Local Council. I leave it to myself, that when the time is favourable for this, according to the ancient examples of the Orthodox emperors, to give this cause movement and convene a council of the All-Russian Church for canonical discussion of the subjects of faith and administration"*⁴³.

*However, already on **December 27, 1905, the Emperor** addressed a letter to Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky): "Now I consider it quite timely to make some changes in the structure of our national Church... I suggest that you determine the time of the convocation of this council."*⁴⁴.

* In the unpublished diary (GARF. F. 634. On. 1. E. H. 27. L. 25-26 vol.) of the major ideologist of the Orthodox Monarchy **L.A. Tikhomirov**, there is a record of a visit by him to Sergiev Posad in 1916 by S.A. Nilus, who told him this story. Tikhomirov found it unconvincing. The author of the diary was sure that if this story had taken place, at that time he would certainly have been told about it. (Information G. Nikolaev). However, the truth of the events reported by S.A. Nilus is confirmed in his memoirs by Comrade Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod, Kn. **N.D. Zhevakhov** (vol. II. Novy Sad. 1928. pp. 385-388).

The Pre-Council Committee, which began its work on March 6 1906, ended with the Council of 1917-1918 and the restoration of the Patriarchate. The Emperor Nicholas II had his own cross...

Father Lev Lebedev: "...The condemnation of Patriarch Nikon <...> was something like the end of the world in the sense that the world of Russian life ended, where the main and central in everything was what is conventionally designated by the capacious understanding of Holy Russia! Therefore, it is mystically not accidental that the council, which condemned Patriarch Nikon (and at the same time - the Old Believers!), opened not otherwise than in the year 1666! The number six hundred and sixty-six, as it is known, is the number of the name of the antichrist, the last destroyer of the human race, who should reign over the world at the end of the earthly history of mankind. The coincidence of the date with this number - 1666 - was given appropriate attention by contemporaries, though in truth, interpreting the meaning of such a coincidence in different ways. They paid attention to the very spirit of what was happening in Russian society as to corresponding to end of the world. Very obvious words in this regard were said also by Patriarch Nikon; he, too, felt the approaching end of something very fundamental in Russian life and worried that it was a spiritual catastrophe for the whole country. In other words, the ultimate destinies of all mankind were modelled on Russia of the XVII century. Similar simulations, which have the meaning of signs, prophetic images, had occurred before and not only in Russia. They also happened later, in including, and above all, in Russia. But what happened here in the XVII century was the most nodal for the future destinies of the Fatherland. The life of the world, where the all-defining and all-organizing beginning was the Russian Orthodoxy of the holy fathers, had ended; together with Patriarch Nikon, it went as if into a certain exile. From the noise of the capital - into the desert of folk life, folk faith, into the recesses of spiritual experience"⁴⁵.

"The seventeenth century in the history of Russia is the era of the fundamental, deep fracture, which with a strikingly direct regularity leads to the seventeenth year... and through it - to the present and possible future"⁴⁶.

The inevitability of God's judgment on the Dynasty, and hence on Russia, is evidenced by the inability to plea for Alexander III by the great intercessor of Russia, Righteous Saint Fr. John of Kronstadt.

I.K. Sursky (Archpriest Iakov V. Ilyashevich, t 23.3.1953), spiritual writer (1938): "In his dying illness Emperor Alexander III invited Fr. John, who laid his hands on the head of the dying Tsar and the Tsar said to him: "When you hold your hands on my head, I feel a great relief, and when you take them away, I suffer very much, do not take them away." Fr. John replied to the Tsar that it was because he came right after the celebration of the sacrament of the Eucharist at early mass. Fr. John continued to hold his blessing hands theirs are on the head of the dying King

until the King surrendered his righteous soul to God. For many, it probably begs the question: why such a great miracle worker as Fr. John, could not heal the King admired by the people? One deeply religious and pious archpriest, an academic, who spent 20 years as an inspector of seminary for 25 years and a had been priest for 25 years, expressed to me, that Fr. John did not heal the Tsar with his prayers, because his death had been decided in the eternal Council of the Most Holy Trinity. To this I can add that the Lord did not always fulfil the prayers of even his First-born Apostle Paul <...>. thus, the power of the prayer of Fr. John did not become dissipate when he was in Livadiya, and indeed he could not change the fate of the Great Tsar, predestined in the inscrutable ways of God. Gregory Karpovich Sukholentsev writes to me from Alvern in Germany: "During my active service, when our Batyushka-Tsar Alexander III fell ill and died, I personally read in the newspaper about what Fr. John of Kronstadt wrote: "I have raised the dead, but the life of Batyushka-Tsar Alexander I could not beg of the Lord. May His Holy will be done in everything"⁴⁷.

Abbot Seraphim (Kuznetsov, d. 22.2.1959) (1920): "So in The Eternal Heavenly Council it had been predestined for many years about the martyrdom of the sorrowful and pious Emperor Nicholas II, who followed Emperor Alexander III. If it were not for the will of God, then no enemies could have done anything, for it is said: "Delighted, that evil did not change his mind, or treachery did not seduce his soul" (Book of Wisdom 4:11)⁴⁸.

ON THE PATH
TO REVOLUTION

4. Russia and Europe

The Monk Maxim the Confessor (582 d. 662): "I do not want heretics to suffer, and I do not rejoice in their evil. God forbid! – but I am especially glad of their conversion. For what can be dearer to the faithful than to see the scattered children of God gathered together. I have not lost my mind so as to advise that one appreciate inhumanity over the love of mankind. On the contrary, I advise you with attention and diligence to do good to all people and to all the faithful to be all for those in need. But at the same time I say: one cannot help heretics in the affirmation their crazy beliefs, but here you need to be harsh and irreconcilable. For I do not call it love, but misanthropy and falling away from Divine love when someone supports heretics in their delusion to their imminent destruction"¹.

The Monk Theodosius (c. 1036-1091), Abbot of the Kiev Caves: "I, Fedos, a poor man, a slave of the Most Holy Trinity, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, born into the pure and Orthodox faith and brought up in goodness and taught in the faith by father and mother, who instructed me in the good law: to not be seduced by the Latin faith, not to hold to their customs, and to avoid their communion, and avoid all their teachings, and to abhor their morals, and to protect my daughters: not to give them away to them and not to take any from them. [One cannot] fraternize with them, bow to them, kiss them, eat or drink from the same dishes with them, or take their food. To those who ask us, for God 's sake, for food or drink, give, but in their own dishes; if they do not have dishes, then give in one's own, and then, after washing it, pray. All this is because their faith is wrong, and they live uncleanly <...> My father told me: you, child, beware of the heterodox and all their conversations, so that our land will not be filled with that evil faith. And those, wish to save, will save their souls who live in the Orthodox faith; there is no other faith better than ours, since our Orthodox faith is pure and holy - those who live in this faith will get rid of their sins and will avoid eternal torments, and they will partake of eternal life and will be with the saints forever. And those who live in another faith - whether in the Latin, or Saracen, or Armenian – will not see the eternal life. It is not fitting, child, to praise someone else's faith. If anyone praises someone else's faith he turns out to be a blasphemer of his own faith. If he incessantly praises both his own and someone else's, then he turns out to be a bigot, and he is close to heresy. You, my child, beware of them, and praise your own faith incessantly. Do not socialize with them, but avoid them and strive in your faith

with good deeds, and give alms not only to your co-religionists, but also to strangers. If you see someone undressed, or hungry, or suffering from cold or from some kind of trouble, whether it's a Jew, or a Saracen, or a Bulgarian, or a heretic, or a Latin, or any pagan, have mercy on everyone and deliver them from trouble, if you can, and you will not be deprived of God's reward. After all, God Himself now he takes care of the pagans as well as the Christians. God protects the pagan gentiles in this age, but in the next they will be deprived of virtue. We, who live in the Orthodox faith, are protected by God here, and in the next age we will be saved by our Lord Jesus Christ"².

Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov, 1782[^]1868), Moscow and Kolomensky: "Love your enemies, fight the enemies of the Fatherland and hate the enemies of Christ"^{3*}.

The Venerable Nile of the Holy Athos (XVI century.)[†]: "Now is the autumn of monasticism, and the queen of perdition will take possession of it. You ask: what kind of autumn is this? Autumn is the time in which we find ourselves now. (The Venerable Monk prophesied about this in 1817 - **Comp.**)

Now it is autumn, in which the grace (i.e. fruitfulness) of monastic life is perishing. But hold on <...> hold on to what you still have, so as not also to become guilty of ruin of monastic Life <...> It is now autumn! Grace is withering away, the beauty of the soul, i.e. the former beauty of the ascetic souls of monasticism. Winter is coming!

The queen of perdition heard that monastic life was desolate, called the seven-headed beast of iniquity, ascended upon this beast and commanded him: "Take

* "He who hates his mental enemies with perfect hatred," *says* the **Venerable Evfimiy Zigaben**, - is one who does not sin by movement, action, or thought, which means the greatest and extreme dispassion. And the enemies of the Lord are unclean spirits and idolaters, heretics and lawless people"⁴.

[†] The memory of the Venerable Nile the Myrrhbearer is revered in the East and is celebrated on May 7 (old calendar) – the finding of his relics and on November 12 (old calendar) — the day of his blessed death. (on May 7/20 the memory of Venerable Nile Sorsky is also celebrated, and on November 12/25 - the memory of the Venerable Nile the Faster). Venerable Nile the Myrrhbearer lived and struggled on Holy Mount Athos in the XVI century and is known as an ascetic glorified by the Lord, a zealous expositor of the deviation of the Athonite monks. According to an undoubted testimony, on 18 January 1817 (old calendar), Venerable Nile appeared to the simple Athonite monk Theophan, and in a long conversation under the guise of an elder, he uttered these "Announcements" to him, which the monk Theophan, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, then recorded in writing in detail with the help of his literate friend Fr. Gerasim. They finally completed their manuscript of the "Announcements" in 1819. Subsequent circumstances forced them to leave the holy Mountain, the reading of their manuscript caused fierce attacks on them by the brethren. By command Venerable Monk they moved to the monastery of St. Sava in Palestine, where they took their original manuscript with them, where, according to available information, it is still kept in the monastery library.