

Monomakh drank water from the river Don with his golden helmet. He conquered the entire Kuman land and drove away these accursed sons of Hagar.²

After the death of Prince Vladimir Monomakh, Khan Syrchan sent his bard, Oria, to his brother, Khan Otrok, who was still in the land of Abkhasia. And Syrchan told Oria to tell his brother: "Vladimir is dead. Come back, brother; return to your native land." And he added to Oria: "Tell these words I have spoken to my brother and sing him our Kuman songs. But, if he does not want to return, let him smell the fragrance of our prairie grass that is called wormwood."

When Khan Otrok wanted neither to return nor to listen to the songs of his brother's bard, the bard presented him a bouquet of wormwood from the prairie.

And when Khan Otrok inhaled the fragrance of the prairie wormwood, he began to weep, and said: "It is still better to die in one's native land than to win glory in a foreign one." And thus Khan Otrok decided to return to his native land.

² Following the Byzantine tradition, the Russians considered all nomads to be the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Hagar.

B. HOMILETIC AND DIDACTIC WORKS

18. METROPOLITAN HILARION: SERMON ON LAW AND GRACE

THE *Sermon on Law and Grace* is arranged in two distinct parts: "The Sermon on the Law of Moses Given to Him by God and on the Grace and Truth Brought to the Earth by Jesus Christ," and "The Eulogy to Our Kagan, Vladimir."

This famous sermon by Metropolitan Hilarion is the oldest Russian literary-philosophical work and one of the earliest Russian sermons preserved. It was written several decades before the *Primary Chronicle* and the most ancient Russian *vitae*, probably between 1037 and 1050. Its author, Hilarion, became in 1051 the first Russian (non-Greek) head of the Russian Church and Metropolitan of the city of Kiev. He was one of the most erudite and brilliant Russian preachers and writers of the Kievan age. Despite his clearly Byzantine cultural background, he manifests the Russian national spirit.

Besides the *Sermon on Law and Grace*, there has also been preserved Hilarion's *Confession of Faith*, in which he emphasizes the Trinitarian foundation of Christian dogma and the dual nature of Jesus Christ. In this work he wrote: "He suffered for me as a man. . . . He revived as God, . . . and after three days he arose from the dead, as a victor, Christ, my King."

In his *Sermon on Law and Grace* Metropolitan Hilarion reveals himself to be an astute preacher. The central idea of the sermon is the juxtaposition of the faith of the Old Testament with that of the New Testament. For the sake of comparison, he uses the story of the two sons of Abraham: the first, Ishmael, who was not free, but the son of Hagar, Sarah's handmaid; the second, who was free, being the son of Abraham by his wife, Sarah. For Hilarion, Christianity is the faith of freedom and liberation, whereas the religion of the Old Testament was one of law, compulsion, and strict obedience.

Hilarion's attitude toward the problem of salvation is very characteristic of early Eastern Christianity: salvation through "baptism and good deeds," through Christian mercy and charity. This is remote from Luther's and Calvin's teachings of salvation solely through faith and, concomitantly, moral behavior.

This sermon, despite its clear tendency to raise the prestige of the Russian nation and the Russian Church, was composed in a typical Byzantine style, and is saturated with repeated

parallels between Hagar and the Old Testament, and between Sarah and the New Testament. When Hilarion wrote that "Divine Grace announced to God" and that "the Father did as he was told by Divine Grace," he apparently referred to "Holy Sophia," that is, the Divine Omniscience of the three hypostases of the Trinity. The teaching of "Holy Wisdom," or "Holy Sophia," was widespread throughout Byzantium and Russia at that time, and is attested to by the fact that cathedrals in Constantinople, Kiev, and Novgorod were dedicated to "Holy Sophia."

Having adroitly presented his view of the fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, Hilarion turned to the destiny of the Russian people. In his eyes, when the Russians adopted Christianity they became the equal of all Christian peoples, including the Greeks. He regarded the Russian Church as having the same dignity, status, and rights as the Byzantine Church. It must be remembered that both Yaroslav and Hilarion attempted to liberate the Russian Church from Byzantine supervision and that Hilarion was the first native Russian to head the Russian Church and to defend its autonomy from Constantinople.

Hilarion ends his sermon with a highly rhetorical panegyric to Prince Vladimir, whom Russians consider a saint for having Christianized Russia. Optimistic, bright, even triumphant notes can easily be discerned in Hilarion's treatment of history. Russia had become enlightened by the Christian faith, and therefore its future would lie in Christ's hands.

The following translation is based upon the text of Metropolitan Hilarion's sermon published by A. B. Gorskii in *Pamiatniki dukhovnoi literatury vremeni velikogo kniazia Yaroslava I-ogo*, Moscow, 1844.

THE SERMON ON THE LAW OF MOSES GIVEN TO HIM BY GOD,
AND ON THE GRACE AND TRUTH BROUGHT TO EARTH
BY JESUS CHRIST

Blessed be the God of Israel, the God of Christianity who visited his people and brought them salvation. He did not disdain his creation, which was for ages possessed by pagan darkness and by worship of the devil, but he enlightened the Children of Abraham by giving them his Law tablets, and later he saved all nations, sending them his Son, his Gospel, and his Baptism, and by giving them resurrection to eternal life. . . .

Law was the precursor and the servant of Grace and Truth. Grace and Truth were the servants of the future life and immortal life. Law led its people of the Old Testament toward the blessing of Baptism, and Baptism led its sons to the life eternal.

Moses and the prophets announced the coming of Christ, but Christ and the Apostles announced resurrection and the future age. . . .

And what could the Law achieve? And what could Grace achieve? First was the Law and then Grace. Hagar and Sarah are the pictures of Law and Grace: Hagar was a handmaid and Sarah was free. First comes the handmaiden and then the free woman. And he who reads (the Bible) must understand this. Abraham, since his youth, had Sarah for his wife and she was free and not a slave, and so God decided before all ages to send his Son into the world that Grace might appear through him (but sent him to man only later). But Sarah was restrained from bearing children, since she was unfruitful. But she was not actually unfruitful, but was chosen by Divine Providence to bear in her old age. The wisdom of God was not revealed to anyone, but concealed from both angels and men. This wisdom was not shown, but was concealed to be revealed at the end of the age.

It was Sarah who said unto Abraham: "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children; go in to my maid; it may be that I shall obtain children by her."

And so the Divine Grace (of the Son) announced to God, the Father: "It is not yet my time for descending to the earth and to save the world. Descend to Mount Sinai and give them the Law."

And, just as Abraham did as Sarah told him and went into Hagar, so God, the Father, did as he was told by the Divine Grace and descended to Mount Sinai.

And Hagar, the handmaid, bore from Abraham a servant (not a truly free man), and Abraham gave him the name Ishmael. And Moses brought from Mount Sinai the Law and not the Grace, the shade and not the Truth.

When Abraham and Sarah were old, God appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. And he ran to meet him, and bowing lowly to the earth, he hastened into the tent (to Sarah). And so, when the end of the age was nearing, God appeared to the humankind, descended to the earth, and blessed the womb of the Virgin. And he was received by the Immaculate Virgin into the tent of the flesh. And the Virgin said to the angel: "Behold I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word."

Once the Lord gave Sarah to bear a child, and she begat Isaac, the free son of a free mother. And, when once more our Lord visited the humankind, he appeared unknown and hidden

from men and then was born Grace and Truth, but not the Law. And now it was the Son and not the servant.

And the child grew up and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. And when Christ was upon the earth Grace did not reveal itself and Christ was hiding himself until he was thirty. And when he had grown and was weaned, then there, in the river Jordan, Grace was revealed by a man. And Our Lord invited many and made a great feast and offered up the fatted calf of the age, His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and God then called to this feast many of heaven and earth and they the angels and men into one (Church). . . .

This blessed faith spreads now over the entire earth, and finally it reached the Russian nation. And, whereas the lake of the Law dried up, the fount of the Gospel became rich in water and overflowed upon our land and reached us. And now, together with all Christians, we glorify the Holy Trinity, while Judea remains silent. . . .

THE EULOGY TO OUR KAGAN VLADIMIR

Rome, with voices panegyric, praises Peter and Paul through whom they came to believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God; Asia, Ephesus, and Patmus praise John the Theologian; India praises Thomas; Egypt, Mark. All lands, cities, and men honor and glorify their teacher who brought them the Orthodox Faith. Thus, let us, through our own strength, humbly praise our teacher and mentor, the great Kagan of our land Vladimir, the grandson of Igor of yore and son of glorious Sviatoslav, who ruled in their day with courage and valor, becoming famed in many lands for their victories and fortitude. And they did not reign in a poor and unknown land, but in Russia, which is known and celebrated by all to the ends of the earth. . . .

A good attestation of your devotion, blessed one, is the Holy Church of the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God, which you build on the Orthodox foundation and where your valorous body now lays at rest and awaits the archangel's trumpet.

A good and certain attestation is your son, George (Yaroslav's Christian name), whom God has made the heir to your throne, who does not destroy your laws, but confirms them, who does not diminish works of piety, but extends them, who does not undo, but strengthens, who finishes that which you have left unfinished even as Solomon finished the works begun by David; who has built a great and holy temple to God's omniscience that it may hallow your city; who has embellished with all manner of things beautiful,

with gold and silver and precious stones
and with sacred vessels;
so that the church is a wonder to all surrounding lands
and so that the like cannot be found in all the northern land,
nor in the east nor the west;
who has given your famous city of Kiev the crown of glory,
who has turned your city and its people
to all-glorious Mother of God,
who is always ready to succor Christians
and for whom he has built a church with doors of gold
in the name of the first Holy Day of the Lord of the Annun-
ciation,
that the veneration, which the archangel will offer to the
Virgin,
may also be upon this city.
To her he speaks, saying:

"Rejoice, Blessed One, the Lord is with you!"

And to the city he speaks, saying:

"Rejoice, faithful city, the Lord is with you!"

Arise from your grave, venerated prince,
arise and shake off your sleep.
You are not dead,
but only sleep until the day of resurrection of all.
Arise! You are not dead,
for it is not right that you should die,
for you have believed in Christ,
the Sustainer of the whole world.
Shake off your deep sleep
and lift up your eyes
that you might see what honor the Lord has granted you,
and you still live upon this earth,
unforgotten through your sons.
Arise! behold your son George, your child, your beloved one!
whom God has brought forth from your loins.
Behold him embellishing the throne of your land.
Rejoice and be of good cheer!
Behold the pious wife of your son, Irina.
Behold your grandchildren
and your great-grandchildren.
Behold how they live and how they are cared for by God.
Behold how they preserve devotion in your tradition,
how they partake of the Sacraments of the Holy Church,
how they glorify Christ,
and how they venerate his Holy Name.

Behold your city radiant with majesty.
 Behold your blossoming churches,
 behold Christianity flourishing.
 Behold your city gleaming,
 adorned with holy icons and
 fragrant with thyme,
 praising God and filling the air with sacred songs.
 And beholding all this, rejoice and be of good cheer, and
 praise the Lord, the Creator of all . . .

19. CYRIL OF TUROV: SERMON ON THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Among Russian writers of the Kievan period, Cyril, Bishop of Turov, was probably the most accomplished master of Orthodox theology and the Byzantine style of writing. He had an excellent command of Greek and his literary achievements surpass those of any other Russian man of letters of that era. He wrote numerous epistles, prayers, and sermons, all of which are distinguished by their elegant and elaborate style. They show clearly the author's gift for composition and his extensive knowledge of the Bible and early Church history. In his works he quotes the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament with unusual adroitness for that time. Though full of symbolism and allegory, his writings are nonetheless lucid and fully comprehensible, and they gained the admiration of endless generations of Russians. Even as late as the seventeenth century, many of Cyril's stylistic patterns were still popular with writers of the conservative literary tradition. Of all his works, Cyril's sermon with the triumphant description of spring as the symbol of the Resurrection was the most popular.

Very little is known of the author's life except that he lived in the middle of the twelfth century and was Bishop of Turov. His best-known works are eight sermons delivered on the occasion of the eight Sundays beginning with Palm Sunday. The *Sermon on the First Sunday After Easter*, his most famous single work, is offered here in a translation by Leo Wiener.

The Church needs a great teacher and a wise orator to celebrate the holiday properly, but we are poor in words and dim in mind, not having the fire of the Holy Ghost—the enjoyment of words useful to the soul; yet for the love of my brethren who are with me, we shall say something about the renewal of the Lord's Resurrection. In the past week of the Easter there were joy in heaven and terror in the nethermost regions, a renewal of

life and liberation of the world, a destruction of hell and victory over death, a resurrection of the dead, and annihilation of the enticing power of the devil; a salvation of the human race by the Resurrection of Christ; an impoverishment of the Old Testament and enslavement of the Sabbath; an enrichment of the Church of Christ, and enthronement of the Sunday.

Last week there was a change of all things, for the earth was opened up by heaven, having been purified from its satanic impurities, and the angels with their wives humbly served at the Resurrection. All creation was renewed, for no longer are the air, the sun, the fire, the springs, the trees, thought to be gods; no longer does hell receive its due of infants sacrificed by their fathers, nor death its honors, for idolatry has come to an end, and the satanic power has been vanquished by the mystery of the Cross. The Old Testament has become impoverished by the rejection of the blood of calves and sacrifices of goats, for Christ has given himself to the Lord as a sacrifice for all. And with this, Sunday ceased to be a holiday, but the Sunday was sanctified on account of the Resurrection, and Sunday is now supreme, for Christ arose from the dead on that day. . . .

Today the heavens have been cleared from the dark clouds that enshrouded them as with a heavy veil, and they proclaim the glory of God with a clear atmosphere. . . .

Today the sun rises and beams on high, and rejoicing warms the earth, for there has arisen for us from the grave the real sun, Christ, and he saves all who believe in him. Today the moon descends from its high place and gives honor to the greater lights. The Old Testament, as had been prophesied, has stopped with its Sabbath, and with its prophets gives honor to the Testament of Christ with its Sunday. Today the winter of sin has stopped in repentance, and the ice of unbelief is melted by wisdom. Today spring appears spruce, and enlivens all earthly existence; the stormy winds blow gently and generate fruits, and the earth, giving nurture to the seed, brings forth green grass. For spring is the beautiful faith in Christ which, through baptism, produces a regeneration of man, and the stormy winds are the evil, sinful thoughts that, being changed to virtue through repentance, generate soul-saving fruits; but the earth of our being, having received the Word of God like a seed, and, passing through an ecstatic labor, through the fear of him, brings forth a spirit of salvation.

Today the newborn lambs and calves frisk and leap about joyfully and returning to their mothers gambol about, so that the shepherds, playing on their reeds, praise Christ in joy. The