

GREAT SATURDAY

On Great Saturday the Holy Church remembers the sojourn of Jesus Christ in the flesh in the tomb, His sincere descent into Hades, the introduction of the thief to paradise, the sitting on the throne with the Father and Spirit and together with them will indicate beforehand the approach of the great event of the Resurrection of Christ. In the exclusive, special services of Great Saturday the Holy Church, pouring out tears of love and gratitude for the One Who laid down His life for His friends and enemies and Who in the flesh reposed in the tomb, calls out to everyone and all to this holiest and most precious tomb -- the expectation of all nations, calls out to both heaven and earth, both angels and men to Him; surrounds itself with the bright clouds of the ancient witnesses who had foreseen Him for a thousand years and with the councils of New Testament heralds, who here as if giving answer before the Crucified One in his universal sermons about His expiatory cross, death and resurrection. All the divine services of Great Saturday represent a wonderful, unexampled combination of the most opposed feelings - sorrow and joyfulness, grief and joy, tears and bright singing¹.

The Church divine services begin this day in late morning and continue successively up to its end, so that the last Sabbath hymns merge with the Resurrection and become fixed only at the sounds already beginning the most solemn "Christ is Risen"!

Troparia, tone 2 **The noble Joseph**, see Great Friday.

"Glory":

**When Thou didst descend to death to death, O Life immortal,
Then Thou didst slay Hades, with the splendor of Divinity;
When from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,
All the powers of heaven cried out:
O Lifegiver Christ our God, glory to Thee.**

"Both now": **To the myrrh-bearing women**, see Great Friday.

Kontakion, tone 6

**He who shut in the depths is beheld dead,
And wrapped in fine linen and spices.
The immortal One is laid in a tomb as a mortal.
The women have come to anoint Him with myrrh,
Weeping bitterly and crying:
This is the most blessed Sabbath,
On which Christ has fallen asleep,
To rise on the third day.**

Troparion, tone 8 (instead of the Cherubic Hymn)

**Let all human flesh keep silent,
And in fear and trembling stand,
And pondering nothing earthly-minded:
For the King who reigns and the Lord who prevails,
Comes to be slain and to give Himself as food to the faithful.
Before Him go the ranks of angels with all the Principalities and Powers,
And the many-eyed Cherubim,
And the six-winged Seraphim, covering their faces, and singing the hymn:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Great Saturday Matins

At the 7th hour (according to our time at 1 o'clock) of the night they toll "grave and great" and begin Matins according to custom. After the Six Psalms and the Great Litany, at "God is the Lord" is sung the troparia: "The noble Joseph", "When Thou didst descend to death" and "To the myrrh-bearing women". During the singing of these troparia the rector distributes candles to those standing with him. Then, all the clergy proceed through the Royal Doors to the middle of the temple and stand around the shroud and, holding candles in their hands, during the censuring, sing the burial hymns for the Divine Dead man. The church servers and all present, just as at a burial, also stand with lighted candles².

The burial hymns consist of the prophetically presaging of the suffering life of the Savior on earth in the 17th Kathisma (Psalm 118), divided into three stases. To each Psalm verse is added a hymn, or "praises" for the dead and buried Lord offering in its contents a marvelous connection of dogmatic intuition and sincere feelings, weeping and joy. That they glorify and magnify the unspeakable long-suffering, mercy, immense love for mankind of the Lord and His salvatory suffering, that they represent the horror, the shock of all creation, the reverent bewilderment and sacred trembling of heaven and earth in seeing the Lord reposing in the tomb; that in them are distributed the maternal plaint, the sincere wails of the Theotokos for the co-suffering Savior and His burial; that, at the end, a voice of faith resounds, foreseeing in the dark tomb the Victor over Hades and death, that was assumed in the bright chamber of the womb of the Immaculate body. Each stasis of the Kathisma ends with a little litany and an exclamation. After the first stasis the exclamation is: "For blessed be Thy Name and glorified be Thy Kingdom", after the second stasis: "For Holy art Thou, O our God, Who rests upon the throne of glory of the Cherubim, and unto Thee do we send up glory, together with Thine Unoriginate Father"; after the third stasis (i.e. after the troparia and the Little Litany): "For Thou art the King of peace, O Christ our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory, together with Thine Unoriginate Father". (These exclamations are printed in the Lenten Triodion. There is a censuring at each stasis.

After the third stasis, before the Little Litany, the Resurrectional Troparia are sung: "The angelic host was filled with awe" during which the censuring of the

entire temple and all the people is done, and then the Canon of Great Saturday is sung, one of the most marvelous and finest creations of ecclesiastical Christian poetry. This Canon is distinguished by an unusual solemnity of tone, by power of feeling and with deep dogmatic content. The Irmosi of its first four odes are composed by the Nun Cassia³, and the troparia of these odes are by Mark, Bishop of Hydruntum [Otranto] and the other parts of the Canon are by St. Cosmas of Maium. Not only the content and the spirit penetrating this canon, but also the very chant of its Irmosi operates with invincible power on the feelings and shades the soul of the faithful with quiet joy and touching affection. After the entire order of mournful memories of condemnation of the innocent, torture and murder of the Most Holy Righteous Man, the Holy Church in the Saturday Canon is now turned to view the very person of the Dead in the condition of His repose in the tomb. Here again, to the most extreme degree of His humiliation, under the cover of deadness, it both beholds and magnifies "Divine exhaustion". In the depth of this exhaustion it sees the shining light of glory of the Divine, illuminated at this time in the infernal regions of the earth. In such a way the Odes of the Canon direct the thoughts of the faithful to Divine worthiness and majesty of the Dead and Buried One for our sake, that complying with the feeling of grief; it already takes on a more reverent view of the wonder at the extreme condescension of the Son of God. The feeling of grief is already shown here in the quieter, more tranquil expression, without the wails of despair and groans of complaint, uncontrollably and inexhaustibly filled by the preceding services of Great Friday. More and more often this thought will come to the victory of the descent of the Crucified and Reposed from the tomb to Hades, combining with the joyful hope soon to be held and the light of His resurrection. And as the sounds of grief involuntarily interrupt the victorious proclamations, the tears of complaint naturally pass into tears of joyfulness. The Women, who came to anoint Jesus with myrrh, "cry bitterly" over His tomb, but at the same time they already cry out: "this is the most blessed Sabbath, on which Christ, having fallen asleep, will rise on the third day". Finally the Victor Himself over death and Hades calls all of creation to joy and gladness about His capture of Hades, His deliverance of Adam and Eve and about His Divine resurrection, crying out: "let creation rejoice, let all the earthborn be glad": "the enemy Hades is despoiled", "I am delivering Adam and Eve and all their offspring and on the third day I shall rise again". But especially in the most touching and most comforting final Ode of the Canon, He tells all believers of the high comfort in the consolation of His weeping Mother: "Weep not for Me, Mother, beholding Me in the tomb": "For I shall rise and be glorified, and as God I shall continually exalt those who magnify you in faith and love".

After the canon "Holy is the Lord" is sung three times in Tone 2 instead of the Exapostilarion. During the singing of the Canon the clergy go through the Royal Doors into the sanctuary. Then the Royal Doors are shut and all those standing about extinguish their candles.

During the singing of the Great Doxology the Royal Doors are again opened, the priest vested (during the canon) "in all priestly vestments" (at the assembly of

the servers the rector is in full vestments, the priests are vested "only in robes", and the deacon leave the sanctuary through the Royal Doors to stand before the shroud and censes around the shroud three times. Those standing before the shroud again light their candles. Then during the singing of the last "funeral" (stretched out singing) Trisagion, while all the bells are ringing, the most solemn action of Great Saturday Matins is the procession with the shroud around of the temple so vividly and evidently transferring our thoughts and feelings to that time when Joseph and Nicodemus, having forgotten any fear before the Judaic assembly, with careful love, with indestructible devotion, renders the final honor to the Crucified One, carefully removing His Immaculate body from the cross "wrapped it in fine linen" and placed it "in a new tomb"⁴. The priest takes the shroud on his head and, having the Holy Gospel on his chest, goes through the western doors around the church to the right, to the east⁵, preceded by the deacon with a censer, in front are two candle bearers and accompanied by people with candles⁶. They process once around the temple⁷, and there is a funeral tolling of the bell but when they enter the temple, there is a ringing of all the bells for a short time⁸. The priest with the shroud and Holy Gospel, enters the temple, goes to the Royal Doors, waits for the end of the singing of the Trisagion, then exclaims (standing under the shroud before the Royal Doors): "Wisdom! Attend", then, turning around and places the shroud in its former place as explained in the Tserkovnyi Vedomosti [Church News] 1897, 14, and then places the Holy Gospel on it. Then the choir, after the exclamation of the priest, sings "The noble Joseph" once slowly and during this singing of the Troparion the priest censes around the shroud three times (refer to the Tserkovnyi Vedomosti [Church News] 1897, 14). After the singing of the Troparion "The Noble Joseph", follows the Troparion of the Paramoea, the Prokeimenon, the Paramoea, the Epistle and the Gospel.

Paramoea: Ezek. 37:1-14 (About the dry bones which have come to life in the fields). **Epistle:** 1 Cor. 5:6-8, Gal. 3:13-14 (About our redemption from the curse of the law by Jesus Christ, Who Himself like us came under the curse). **Gospel:** Mt. 27:62-66; sel. 114 (About the sealing and protecting the tomb with a military guard).

All these readings are read before the shroud⁹. After the Gospel (after delivering the appropriate sermon of the day as accepted in some places) follows the Litany of Fervent Supplication beginning with "Let us all say"..., "O Lord Almighty [Pantocrator]", but for the special petition for the Litany of Fervent Supplication. After the dismissal (at the Royal Doors), during the singing: "O come let us bless Joseph" the faithful come to venerate the Shroud and First Hour is read as specified in the Triodion.

Great Saturday Divine Liturgy

On Great Saturday the **Vespers and Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great** is served. In this way the last church service, according to the common order, relates to the next day on which the Great Saturday incorporates the Resurrection

with its hymns. Therefore the liturgy of Great Saturday is revealed as the magnified conclusion of the passion services and at the same time as a direct, unimpeded Prefeast of the most magnificent Christian celebration, the most joyous pre-beginning of Pascha (for details see the Pravoslavnyi Sobesednik [Orthodox Companion] 1891, 4, pp. 422-465; 1893, 6, pp. 67-97, 7, pp. 191-229).

At this liturgy after the Little Entrance with the Gospel (about the Shroud) fifteen Paramoegas in which are collected almost all the main prophesies and prototypes relating to the person of Jesus Christ who ransomed us from sin and death by His death on the Cross and crowned by the great act of redemption by His most glorious resurrection¹⁰ are read before the Shroud. After the Sixth Paramoega, "For gloriously has he been glorified" is sung. The Paramoega reading includes the Song of the Three Youths: "Praise the Lord".

"As many as have been baptized into Christ" is sung instead of the Trisagion and the Epistle about the sacramental power of baptism is read. This singing and reading serve to recall the custom of the ancient Church to baptize catechumens on this day. After the reading of the Epistle are sung seven verses selected from the Psalms containing the prophecy of the power of the risen Lord, "Arise, O God, judge the earth", instead of the "Alleluia". During the singing of these verses the coverings of the holy altar table, the table of oblations and so forth are changed from the dark into the bright. The church servers will also change their vestments to bright robes¹¹.

The deacon in white robes, representing the first witness and messenger of the resurrection of Christ, the bright angel flown down to the tomb, goes out of the Sanctuary with the Gospel to the shroud and reads the all-joyful Gospel annunciation about the resurrection of Christ the Savior, as the Vespers on this day relates to the first day of the Bright Resurrection of Christ. In place of the Cherubic Hymn, the touching ode, "Let all human flesh keep silent" is sung. Before the entrance they sing the hymn up to the words: "before Him go", and after the entrance they begin with these words and sing up to the end (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1892, 37). The Great Entrance is done round the Shroud. Instead of "All of creation rejoices in you" the Irmos of the Ninth Ode of the Canon "Do not lament me, O Mother" is sung. At the appropriate time the Communion Hymn selected is: "The Lord awoke as one asleep". The Prayer before the Ambo is read before the Shroud. All the rest is done according to the Order of the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great.

The blessing of the loaves and wine is done immediately after the Dismissal of the Liturgy. This rite is the memory of the ancient Christian custom to await the approach of Pascha in the temple, listening to the reading of the **Book of the Acts of the Apostles**. In view of the strict fast which was observed the whole day before the feast of Pascha¹², and the present vigil, the Church supported the faithful with blessed bread and wine¹³.

See "the ecclesiarch must exercise caution that when the Liturgy ends it will be the second hour of the night" (i.e. 7 in the evening according to our time).

See in the Ustav [Typikon]: "If there are certain great needs there is no liturgy".

Paramoeya: 1) Gen. 1:1-13. 2) Ex. 60:1-16. 3) Ex. 12:1-11. 4) Jonah 1-4. 5) Jos. 5:10-15. 6) Ex. 13:20-14:32. 7) Zeph. 3:8-15. 8) 3 Kg. 17:8-23. 9) Is. 61:10-11, 62:15. 10) Gen. 22:1-18. 11) Is. 61:1-9. 12) 4 Kg. 4:8-37. 13) Is. 63:11-9, 64:1-5. 14) Jer. 31:31-34. 15) Dan. 3:1-51. **Epistle:** Rom. 6:3-11; sel. 91. **Gospel:** Mt. 28:1-20; sel. 115.

On the night of Pascha the Holy Church prescribes the **reading of the Acts of the Holy Apostles** as indisputable witnesses and loud heralds of the Divinity of Christ and His Resurrection. This watchfulness of the new Israel reminds one of the watchfulness of ancient Israel on the night of the deliverance of its firstborn from death in Egypt. Before the reading of the Acts the reader proclaims: "The reading from the Acts of the Holy Apostles", the priest replies: "Through the Prayers of the Holy Apostles, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us". According to the Ustav [Typikon], the Book of Acts should be read up to the 4th hour of the night, according to our reckoning up to 10 o'clock in the evening.

Great Saturday Midnight Office

Then, "all the lampadas" are lit and "they ring the bell"; **the Midnight Office is begun.** The priest serves this Midnight Office, as well as all the others, in only the Epitrachelion [stole]. The order of this Midnight Office, from the beginning up to the reading of Psalm 50, is the same as the Midnight Office of Resurrection [Sunday], then instead of the festal Canon, the Canon for Great Saturday is sung. The three-Ode troparia are not done, but after the Trisagion Prayers and its exclamation the Troparion: "When Thou didst descend" is sung. Then the shortened Litany of Fervent Supplication is said: "Have mercy on us, O God", and then the Dismissal. In this Midnight Office readings are prescribed after the 3rd and 6th Odes of the Canon and according to the Ustav [Typikon] are prescribed to begin 2 hours prior to Matins. But in parish churches these readings are usually dropped and that is why in these churches they begin the Midnight Office less than an hour before Matins. After finishing the Midnight Office all the church servers in full vestments silently, having censed around the shroud three times, transfer it from the middle of the temple to the sanctuary through the Royal Doors and place it on the altar table¹⁴, and again cense around the shroud three times and close the Royal Doors. Ordinarily during the transferring of the shroud placed in the Midnight Office of that day the singers sing, after the "Our Father", the Troparion "When Thou didst descend".

During the completion of this Midnight Office the change to the Resurrection vestments is used, as it already was vested during the Liturgy on Great Saturday.

The shroud, in representing the 40 day presence of the Lord on earth after the resurrection, lies on the altar table up to the Leavetaking of Pascha (see the Leavetaking of Passover below). This custom is considered current and obligatory

(see Tserkovnyi Vedomosti [Church News] 1897, 14; Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1892, 26; 1893, 15; 1894, 16; 1895, 5).

¹"The Synaxarion of Great Saturday says, "Of all the days the Holy and Great Forty Day Fast is the most distinguished, but more than the Holy Forty Day Fast the Holy and Great Passion Week is exalted, and more than the days of Holy Week Great and Holy Saturday is the most exalted. This week is called great not because these days or hours are more exalted but because the great, portentous and extraordinary deeds of our Savior were accomplished during this week, but especially on this day.

Yet, as during the first creation of the world God created all creation in six days and on the sixth day he created the final and entirely perfect creature, Man, and then on the seventh he rested from all His work, thus sanctifying this day, calling it the Sabbath Day, which means rest. Thus He sanctified the workmanship of the intelligible world, all wonderfully done (the action of redemption), and on the sixth day (Friday) "refashioning" the corrupted man and renewing him through His life-bearing Cross and death. The Lord really rested again on the seventh day with the complete rest from His works, having reposed in a way that is life-producing and saving for our nature. Therefore God the Word descended into the tomb in the flesh and descended into Hades with His immortal and divine soul, which was separated from the body after death. He delivered His soul into the hands of the Father. He freely offered His own blood in order to bring about our deliverance.

But the soul of the Lord was not held captive in Hades as were the souls of the other holy ones. Why? Because He never participated in the curse of the Forefather as those did. Our enemy the devil did not even touch the blood by which we are redeemed even though he owned us as much as he could, and did not the devil like a predator seize the One sent from God, but God Himself? However, our Lord Jesus Christ was bodily placed in the tomb with His Divinity which was completely united with the flesh, but (at the same time) He was also in paradise with the thief and, as it is told, in Hades with His deifying soul, supernaturally co-presiding with the Father and the Holy Spirit, He was everywhere as the uncircumscribed (unlimited) God, and the Divinity did not suffer at all neither in the tomb nor on the cross. The Lord's body was tested and the corruption, i.e. the separation of the soul from the body, did not destroy the flesh and corrode its members" (S. Peterburgskii Dukhovnyi Vestnik [St. Petersburg Theological Messenger] 1896, 12-13).

The Right Reverend Theognostus, Archbishop of Novgorod says, "Our Lord Jesus Christ descended into Hades with His soul united with the Divinity, at this same time when He, after His removal from the cross, reposed with His body in the tomb. In Hades all the souls of the people who died suffered affliction up to the time of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. No ray of the heavenly light ever penetrated to them, they were alien to every joy; their destiny was continuous sorrow. The devil fully ruled over them and as a relentless tyrant tormented them with the various means peculiar to him. But here Hades suddenly shines with a wonderful light, the Pantocrator of heaven and earth and the infernal regions, our reigning King, Lord and Savior appeared in it. Before His Divinity the devil falls down into the ashes, his power fails, any authority he had over the souls imprisoned in Hades is taken away from him. All those who have accepted Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world are released from Hadean captivity. The seal of condemnation and renunciation gravitating over them is removed from them; they fall with their chains of eternal darkness and they follow with gladness on foot after the Savior and proceed from Hades into the region of light and blessedness, into the kingdom of heaven. The souls of the people confined in it are led out of Hades. The Lord Jesus Christ at the same time has given full opportunity for the future time, till the end of time, for dead souls to be released from captivity and Hadean tyranny. Up to the time of the death of the Savior on the cross the souls of all who died were led down into Hades. Even the Old Testament righteous men, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David, did not escape this part. But after this, as the Savior went down into Hades and broke the power of the devil, the souls who died in the faith and grace of Christians no longer go to Hades but are lifted up by Angels directly into heaven into the blessed mansion of the Heavenly Father. Having defeated the devil by His descent into Hades, the Savior has taken away from him his former authority even over the people living on the earth. Up to the death of the Savior on the cross the devil had full authority over people, sowed them like wheat, threw them from one pernicious way to another, all people, so to say, have been tied hand and foot by him and had no way to be released from his awful authority. Demon-possessed, represented in the Gospel, may serve as an example of how terribly the devil has tormented people. After, the victorious descent of Jesus Christ into Hades and His glorious resurrection from the dead weakened the influence of the devil over the people and already it became far from being what it was during Old Testament times. To tell the truth, even now the devil has authority to tempt people, i.e. through various clever actions he is able to lead them to iniquity and sin; but the devil has another action to use to take one in captivity, that is, so to say, in his jaws, and another action to test his sting, or to be exposed to temptation from him. During the time of the Old Covenant, people were perfect captives of the devil, now he can only wound us by his sinful stings or to tempt us. But also the opportunity is given to protect us from the stinging of the devil. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you", the Holy Apostle James appeals to Christians (Jas. 4:7). So, the Christian needs only to stand firmly under the sign of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is only necessary to oppose the devil mightily and with sincerity through faith in the crucified and risen Lord, and the devil will abandon him. "In my name they will cast

out demons." (Mk. 16:17), is just such a promise preached by the Lord Jesus Christ concerning those who believe in Him. The sweetest name of Jesus Christ, with firm and sincere faith and with the sign of the cross uttered by us, serves as strong armor against the devil. It frightens him and causes his forces to flee from us (Novgorodskiaia Eparkhialniia Vedomosti [Novgorodian Diocesan Messenger], 1894, 9).

²The custom to stand with lighted candles during the continuation of the Matins worship services of Great Saturday and to process with them during the carrying of the shroud around the temple as a prophecy of the Light without Evening who is about to rise again from the tomb, existed among ancient Christians as St. Gregory Nazianzus bears witness to this, that on Holy Pascha the people teaching with such words: "although even yesterday we solemnly carried candles and candlesticks, but now the carrying of candlesticks is more glorious and more tolerable; wherefore yesterday's light was only a harbinger of the rising of the Great Light who is to rise again".

³The pious, noble and intelligent virgin nun Cassia or Hycasia (see the Lenten Triodion published in Kiev in 1813, sheet 447) was of noble origin, and shone with a beautiful and remarkable natural intelligence enhanced by a broad education. Among the 11 maidens presented to the court of Emperor Theophilus from which he would select his partner for life, the Emperor did not find her worthy to share the throne of the Byzantine state with him because of her boldness and presence of mind in answer. After this she built a monastery in Constantinople and lived in it up to her death, devoting her time to prayer, occupied with philosophy and composing the spiritually-poetic works distinguished by erudition and grace of style. Besides the specified Irmosi of Great Saturday, Cassia wrote the finest stikhera for the Nativity of Christ: "When Augustus reigned alone upon earth", and the most touching stikhera of Great Wednesday: "O Lord, the woman who had fallen into many sins" (Trudy Kievskoi Dukhovnoi Akademii [Works of the Kievan Theological Academy] 1878, 4).

⁴The bearing of the shroud around the temple and then placing it in the tomb in the middle of the temple during the singing of "The noble Joseph" represents the burial of the Lord and follows the words expressed in the Troparion "The noble Joseph": "wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices and placed it in a new tomb". This Troparion is sung both during the commemoration of the removal of the Lord from the cross and during the commemoration of His burial. Also similar to this in the Liturgy after the Great Entrance, the priest says the Troparion "The Noble Joseph" representing the removal of the Lord from the cross during the removal of the disks from the head of the deacon and the burial of the Lord during the censuring of the coverings and its placing on the Holy Gifts (Tserkovnyi Vedomosti [Church News] 1897, 14).

⁵ Concerning this in the Acts of the Moscow Council of 1667 (pages 231-232) it says:

"Also foreseeing this, that in Great Saturday Matins, when the entrance with the holy shroud is done around the church, similar also to the sanctification of a church when the entrance with the holy relics is done around the church, they do not go according to the custom of the Holy Eastern Church to the right, to the east, but to the left, to the West, considering that as the way the sun goes. And that they do not consider sensibly because it disagrees with the other rites of the church. Wherefore when the deacon, priest or hierarch is ordained, the person being ordained in the ordination rite walks around the holy table not to the left with the sun but to the right against the sun. Likewise the Little Entrance with the Holy Gospel and the Great Entrance with the holy gifts to the right against the sun instead of with the sun, and the order of censuring in the holy sanctuary around the holy table and in the church is similarly done. Therefore for whatever reason they do it differently, the entrance with the holy shroud on Great Saturday, and the entrance with holy relics at the sanctification of a church and in holy baptism and the rite of matrimony, what kind of special mystery does it show in these? There is none; only sophism and rebellion and schism. For in the holy church it is more comely to be in agreement rather than in schism. For it is necessary that the order be observed for the entrance with the holy gospel and with the holy gifts and in the ordination to the deaconate, the priesthood and hierarchy; likewise also it is necessary that the order be observed in the entrance with the holy shroud and with the holy relics in the sanctification of the church, and in holy baptism and in the rite of matrimony, that the sophists and schismatics of licentious tradition oppose, and that this will be in agreement with the Holy Eastern Church and with most other orders of ecclesiastical higher writings".

⁶ According to the explanation in the "Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1892, 29" nothing is said in the Ustav [Typikon] about the cross procession with the shroud around the church on Great Saturday and Holy Pascha with the holy cross and banners carried in front, but this cross procession is usually done together in this manner in the Orthodox Church and undoubtedly should also be done in this case.

⁷ In the Sviatogorsky [Holy Mountain] Dormition Monastery (Kharkov Diocese), after carrying the shroud around the church the procession stops at the western doors of the temple and all of the many people pass under the shroud.

⁸ Most Reverend Nicanor, Archbishop of Chersonese, has given such an explanation of the idea of the Vespers Divine Services of Great Friday and the Matins Divine Services of Great Saturday:

At Vespers of Great Friday before the completion of the sacred action representing the removal of the dead God-man from the cross, the pre-death hymn of the righteous Simeon the God-receiver, who predicted to the Immaculate Mother of God of that terrible hour when Her soul will be pierced with the death-bearing spear is sung or read, and further the Trisagion hymn and the Lord's Prayer, as this is usually sung over the dead man being carried from the house. After the censuring of the image of the reposed Savior is completed and after the hymns about the noble Joseph taking down the Immaculate Body of Christ from the tree, "wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices and placed it in a new tomb", the Divine Cross-bearer in the image of the shroud is lifted up and will be carried out for the veneration of the faithful, then the sacred action of Joseph and Nicodemus continues, who, having taken down the Lord from the tree of the cross, carried it from the top of Golgotha to the Skete of the Golgotha garden in going to the tomb where Jesus Christ was buried. This corresponds to the carrying out of every Christian departed one from the house to the church for final burial service.

In such a manner the Great Vespers of Great Friday ends late, and the Great Saturday Matins should begin, according to the church Ustav [Typikon], in deep morning soon after midnight, that is all evening and morning, with the necessity for a break for bodily rest. The divine services in its totality also makes present the ancient Christian Panakhida, a memorial all-night vigil. The Great Saturday Matins makes present the final burial-service of the reposed as the sleep of death of the God-man: it is especially dedicated to glorifying the descent of the Savior into Hades, when He, the Immortal Life, descended to death and, having destroyed Hades with the shining of His Divinity, raised all the dead from the ages and restored those from the infernal regions. With the dawn of the morning of Great Saturday, after the exclamation of glory to Him Who has shown us the light, the image of the dead Lord Jesus Christ, is lifted to the throne of the Lord, in commemoration that on this day, will be "in the tomb with the flesh, in Hades with the soul as God", the Savior was and is in paradise with the repentant thief, and by the throne with God the Father. Finally, during the funeral chain-peal of the bells we carry the shroud around the temple, seeing off the reposing Divine Chief-shepherd with the Trisagion Hymn as we do for the final repose of all Christians, accompanying Joseph and Nicodemus in the final bearing of the reposed Divine Sufferer to the mouth of the tomb in the garden at the foot of Golgotha, to the very bed of death.

Thus, according to the thought of the Most Reverend Nicanor, the appointed Church services and completing the sacred actions in them are "not any different than following the rite of burial of the Lord Jesus Christ", and it is from where "all the rites of Christian burial, each of our burials come" (see details in the Pouchenie Nikanora, Archiepiscopa Khersonskago [Lectures of Nicanor, Archbishop of Chersonese], vol. 2, pp. 222-230, 240).

It should be understood by this that the similarity of the designated church services church with the office of Christian burial is only external. According to the essence of the subject the designated services and the office of burial of a Christian is completely different among them. The Order of the Burial-service has Prayers for the departed. In the services of Great Friday and Great Saturday the unspeakable love of the God-man for the people is done in glorification. During a burial-service those circled around the departed pray for him that he be received into the heavenly mansion. During the services of Great Friday and Great Saturday taking place in the temple they glorify the Lord in songs, who died for the sins of the world, praying before the holy Shroud (see details in Tserkovnyi Vedomosti [Church Messenger] 1888, 16).

⁹ According to our Ustav [Typikon], after carrying the Shroud "the rector with the Gospel goes through the royal doors and places the Gospel on the holy altar table, the shroud is placed on the prepared table in the image of a grave". In view of this remark of the Ustav [Typikon], some assert (see Moskovskiiia Tserkovnyiia Vedomosti [Moscow Church Messenger] 1896, 27), that the Gospel in Matins of Great Saturday is to be read in the sanctuary and not before the shroud. All the ancient Ustavi [Typikons] and the contemporary Constantinopolitan Typikon have this reading. Even according to the Novgorod Ustav [Typikon] according to which the Shroud remains in the middle of the temple up to the dismissal of pre-paschal Midnight Office, the Gospel is read in the sanctuary. According to this same opinion, and they incorrectly hold to this, where they place the Gospel on the Shroud for the entire time of its existence in the middle of the temple until the end, explaining that this is some kind of parallel with the Burial of a Priest. According to our observations above (see p. 549 and p. 555) as explained by the "Tserkovnyi Vedomosti [Church News], the Holy Gospel is placed on the shroud, and as explained by the "Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger", on Great Friday and Saturday, when the shroud is in the middle of the temple, the Litanies, Entrances, the Readings of the Epistle and Gospel and the Entrance Prayers are done everywhere before the Shroud (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1890, 2).

¹⁰ The line of paramoebas (see them below) is opened by the narrative of Moses about the first three days of the creation of the world, which was the prototype of the new beneficial creation in Christ, ending with the three-day resurrection of Christ.

In second Paramoea the Holy Church in the spirit of the Prophet Isaiah, already beholds a new world of grace, or of their spiritual children, born from the incorrupt seed by the word of the living God. "Shine, shine,

Jerusalem", the prophet exclaims, seeing a God-enlightened view to the New Jerusalem, "for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you"; "Lift up your eyes about and behold your children gathering together: your sons shall come from far, and your daughters shall be carried on the shoulders".

In the third Paramoea the narrative about the establishment of the Old Testament Passover transfers the thoughts of believers to the New Testament Passover [Pascha], but in the words of the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 5:6,8), which is Christ sacrificed for the sins of the world.

The Prophet Jonah, from whose book the fourth Paramoea is taken, the three-day abiding in the belly of the whale prefigured the three-day resurrection of the Redeemer.

Then the Holy Church beholds its Savior and Leader in the image of the archistrategus power of the Lord, manifested within the walls of Jericho (fifth Paramoea), and in the image of Moses, leading the Israelites through the Red [Vermillion] Sea (sixth Paramoea).

This last Paramoea concludes with the victory song of Moses after crossing the Red Sea. During the reading of this song, each verse being accompanied by the singing of its first verse as a refrain, "let us sing to the Lord, for gloriously has He been glorified", the Royal Doors remain opened, in the image of the mystical transition of the redeemed from death to life, from the Hadean prisons to the Heavenly mansions.

As if in the explanation of the prototypical values of this Paramoea, directly after it is read the prophecy of Zephaniah, which, beholding the Church of Christ in the prophetic spirit, exclaims: "Rejoice exceedingly, O daughter of Zion, preach, O daughter of Jerusalem, be glad and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord has removed your iniquity, He has delivered you from the hands of your enemies; the Lord reigns in your midst and you shall see evil no more".

Further in the eighth and ninth Paramoeas the Holy Church beholds the symbols of the triumph of Christ over death and the general resurrection of the dead in the raising of the son of widow of Zarephath by Prophet Elijah and the son of the Shunamite by Prophet Elisha.

In the tenth Paramoea all the New Testament Church is prophetically foreseen in gladness, for the Lord Himself vests her in the robe of salvation.

In sacrifice of Isaac (the eleventh Paramoea) the Holy Church points out to us the prototype of death of the Savior on the cross which serves as the seal of the new covenant.

In the twelfth and thirteenth Paramoeas Prophet Isaiah prophetically foresees the mission of the Messiah on earth for the salvation of the spiritually suffering and of His majesty.

The fourteenth Paramoea from the book of the Prophet Jeremiah proclaims that the new covenant will be impressed on the hearts of the people by God and will consist in the perfect atonement of the person with God, Who speaks through the prophet: "I will be merciful to their iniquity and I will remember their sins no more".

The last Paramoea taken from the book of the Prophet Daniel about the three youths delivered from the fiery furnace prototypically represents the descent of the Redeemer into Hades and His releasing of all who have accepted His redemption from the bonds of death. The Paramoea concludes with the reading of the victorious song of the saved youths done in the same manner as the reading of the victorious song of Moses, i.e. with the refrain after each verse of its first verse of the song: "Sing to the Lord, and exalt Him for ever". The Royal Doors also remain opened at this time.

With the ending of the Paramoeas, Vespers also ends.

¹¹ The changing of the vestments of the church servers in the Liturgy on Great Saturday is a rather ancient rite received from the Greek Church. It serves as a reminder for the believers of the solemn baptism of catechumens which often occurred on the eve of Pascha. The significant number of Paramoeas also points to the custom of the ancient Church to do the baptism of the catechumens on this day. The fifteen Paramoeas were read while the church servers went to the baptistery to read prayers over the water, do the baptism of the catechumens and anoint them with myrrh. The change of clothing from the dark to the bright is also directly tied to the baptism of the catechumens. Undoubtedly, that the clergymen changed their vestments from the black lenten to the bright festal vestments in order to direct them to the baptistery, and they did so for the reason that they intended to do the baptism of the catechumens which is that kind of sacrament that the priests should not do differently now than they did in Christian antiquity, as the white vestments represented by these signs the joy of the Holy Church of the purchase of new lost sheep in baptism (Lk. 15:4-10). But, besides what has been pointed out, there is another source of joy for Christians on Great Saturday; there is another deeper basis for the church servers to change from the dark, mourning to the bright, festive robes before the reading of the Holy Gospel. The custom to baptize catechumens on the eve of Holy Pascha has ceased for a long time. But the change from the mourning to the festive vestments at the Liturgy on Great Saturday continues to exist not only out of custom and not only because the echo is silenced, but often was the great power of the baptismal practice, but in the quality of the appearance that each time summoned genuine joy into the hearts of the faithful. The reason for the latter is included in that the Holy Church by singing the verse, "Arise, O God, judge the earth" as if it begins to solemnly celebrate "the saving splendid night and splendid day".

The Gospel in the Liturgy on Great Saturday tells us about the resurrection of the Savior. This joyful message about the resurrection of Christ, who endows the earthborn life to all and wants to express our Orthodox

Church in such a visible image would be equally clear who for all who are present in the temple for the liturgy on Great Saturday. And the Holy Church quite achieves its purpose: when we see the Holy Gospel announced and all the rest of the church servers in vestments changed from the dark to the bright that we are involuntarily filled with sincere joy and in our minds we remember the appearance of the heavenly messenger of the resurrection to the myrrh bearers, the "scene", which "was like lightning, and the clothes were white as snow" (Rukovodstvo dlia Seljskikh Pastirej [Manual for Village Pastors] 1894, 15).

¹² Besides the strict fast, the passing of the day of Great Saturday in antiquity was distinguished by special internal concentration and solemn tranquility in church life. "What is this?" asks St. Epiphanius in his homily on Great Saturday. "Today deep silence and repose rules on earth. Deep silence because the King reposes. The Earth is frightened and abides in repose because God in the flesh reposes and the Dead God in the flesh awakes those who through the ages have reposed, and Hades trembles. God died for a short time to wake those who are in Hades".

¹³ According to the explanation of the Most Reverend Nicanor, Archbishop of Chersonese, the blessing and distribution blessed bread and wine which is now done is undoubtedly an apostolic tradition. The Holy Apostles partook of the Old Testament paschal lamb together with Lord Jesus Christ in the night from Great Thursday to Great Friday. According to tradition, on Great Friday they remained without taste of food at all from deep grief. Meanwhile on Great Saturday, under the ruling of the high priests, Passover was celebrated by all Jews. The Jewish Ordo required on the first day of Passover to partake, except for the Passover lamb, unleavened bread with bitter grasses and of cooked sweet fruits: figs, dates and grapes, and to drink a cup of wine mixed with water. When the Passover day of Great Saturday was fading into the evening, they returned to their oppressing sorrow from the given horror, exhausted from their two-day fast, the Holy Apostles remembered their crucified, dead and buried Teacher with a prayer for the departed, mixed with the singing of the Passover Psalms, including Psalm 118: "Blessed are the blameless in the way", which is also sung by us over the tomb of Christ on the morning of Great Saturday, and with the paschal meal, only still without the paschal lamb, which they already ate from Great Thursday to Great Friday. And all this rite of the Old Testament Passover [Pascha] was now terminated by the prototype of the sacrifice of the divine Lamb. Thus our offering and tasting of this blessed bread and wine on this great day and hour, which the Holy Apostles partook on this day and hour, there is a memorial canon for our Lord Himself buried by us and reposing in the tomb. This is the origin also of the placing in the church the memorial kutiya [koliva] made from wheat grains, decorated sweet fruit, and of the mourning cup. In our churches on Great Saturday as this was forgotten and the sweet dried fruits together with blessed bread and wine were removed from the usual custom. But the monastic Ustav [Typikon] rules to give the brethren watching the tomb of the Lord a piece of bread, six figs or dates and a cup of wine, just as this was required by the apostolic tradition. It is not any different in the memorial custom of the paschal apostolic meal after the Lord reposed (Pouchenie Nikanora, Archiepiscopa Khersonskago [Lectures of Nicanor, Archbishop of Chersonese], Vol. 2, pages 240-241).

¹⁴ Specifying for Matins of Great Saturday to carry out the Shroud and the Gospel from the sanctuary after the Great Doxology, our Ustav [Typikon] observes that after this carrying out the Shroud is placed in the middle of the church until such time it should remain here, but does not specify where and with what ritual action it is then to be removed, and the practice decides this action variously.

In one of the temples the shroud is removed to its usual place on Great Saturday after the Liturgy and is removed without any solemnity.

In other temples, instead of the shroud being removed this way, it is placed on a little table in the middle of the temple; the other shroud of smaller dimensions and of thin material, ("on or of the altar table") which during singing of the Canon in the pre-paschal Midnight Office is brought with censing into the sanctuary and is placed on the altar table where it lies until before Ascension when after the Liturgy, without any ceremony it is removed to the vestry.

The old printed Ustav [Typikon], as well as the present ones, does not answer the questions posed by us. But in the Ustavs [Typikons] written in earlier times, there are instructions relating to the given subject.

According to the ancient (16th century) Constantinopolitan Typikon, accepted in its time "by all the Metropolias", as well as under the present Constantinopolitan Typikon, but also according to the Ustav [Typikon] of monasteries: the St. Joseph of Volokalamsk (16th century), the Trinity-St. Sergius (17th century), St. Anthony's (17th century) and the Dormition Cathedral (17th century), the shroud is placed on the altar table in Matins of Great Saturday, after the entrance with it from the sanctuary, and the Ustav [Typikon] of the Volokalamsk and Siya Monasteries specify that it should lay here for about one week until Thomas Sunday (it is removed after the Liturgy on the Saturday of Pascha).

According to the Ustav [Typikon] of the Resurrection-New Jerusalem Monastery (17th century), given by its founder Patriarch Nikon, "the bier with the Shroud stands in the middle of the temple up to the liturgy" of Great Saturday. In the Liturgy, at the Little Entrance, the archimandrite and priests take the Shroud from the tomb, bring it into the Sanctuary (behind the deacon who carries the Gospel) and places it on the altar table where and it lies until the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women when it is removed to its place.

According to another Ustav [Typikon] the Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery (the contribution of Elder Abraham Palitsyn in 1611) the shroud remains in the middle of the temple up to the Great Entrance in the Liturgy of Great Saturday when it is brought by the deacons on their heads into the sanctuary.

According to the Ustav [Typikon] of the Novgorodian St. Sophia's Cathedral, after carrying the Shroud around the temple, it is not brought into the Sanctuary, but remains in the middle of the church up to the Dismissal of the pre-paschal Midnight Office which the priest and the deacon serve. "And after the Dismissal of the Midnight Office", it says in the Ustav [Typikon], "the Archpriest and the brethren will be vested" and everyone exits to the middle of the temple, to the tomb of the Lord. There the hierarch approaches from his place and "are signed by the Icon of the Holy Passion at the tomb of the Lord". The Archpriest preceded by the Protodeacon with his candle, censes the "festal" icon, the tomb, the hierarch and clergy, after which the archpriest and priests lift up the Shroud from the grave of the Lord on to his head and carries it into the Sanctuary and places it on the altar table, (and, after placing all of the Shroud on the altar table, the Archpriest receives the censer, censes the altar table, the priests and the deacons. And with the censer he exits again to the tomb of the Lord and censes the tomb and they carry it to the aforesaid place near the Royal Doors where it was before". The hierarch, all the clergy, and two deacons censing accompany tomb. When they place the tomb in its place, the bishop [hierarch] and all clergy will venerate and kiss it.

In such a way the directions of the written Ustavs [Typikons] variously solve the questions posed above concerning when and how to carry away the holy shroud on the altar table and to remove it from the altar table. According to them there are no directions to remove the shroud during the pre-paschal Midnight Office (see details in the Moskovskiiia Tserkovnyia Vedomosti [Moscow Church News] 1896, 27).

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900), pp 0551-0559.
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