



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Department for External Church Relations

English version of Archbishop Hilarion's book "Christ the Conqueror of Hell. The Descent into Hades from an Orthodox Perspective" comes off the press

St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, New York, published an English version of the book "Christ the Conqueror of Hell. The Descent into Hades from an Orthodox Perspective" by Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for external church relations.

Christ's descent into Hades is a most mysterious event in the New Testament history. The book includes texts from the New Testament, apocrypha, and early Christian poetry dealing with the theme, a review of the relevant works by the Holy Fathers and a short discourse into the Western theological tradition. Hymns by St. Ephraem the Syrian and St. Romanus the Melodist that have formed the basis of other liturgical texts and are still used in the Orthodox Church are reviewed, as well as the liturgical texts from the Octoechos, the Lenten Triodion, and the Festal Triodion telling about Christ's descent into Hell and His victory over death. The author's studies into the dogmatic contents of the texts are very important to the comprehension of the Orthodox faith, as the dogmas become an object of contemplation in prayer for Christians rather than abstract speculative truths.

There are many Greek, Syrian, and Latin texts never translated into Russian in the book. Some of them have not been used by the authors working on the theme of Christ's descent into Hell.

The book was first published in Russian in 2001 and reprinted in 2005. It has been translated into Italian and Romanian.

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