**Excerpts from "Tales of Times Gone By" [*Povest' vremennykh let*]  
The Russian Primary Chronicles**

Sources: *Pamiatniki literatury Drevnei Rusi* (Dmitrii Likhachev, etc., eds. MVA:1978) and  
A. S. Orlov et al., eds., *Khrestomatiia po istorii Rossii s drevneishikh vremen do nashikh dnei* (MVA:1999), in close consultancy with  
extended English translations in [CPC](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/glos.htm#CPC) & [ZNC](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/glos.htm#ZNC), and  
excerpts in [DMR](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/glos.htm#DMR2) | [KRR](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/glos.htm#KRR) | [RRC](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/glos.htm#RRC1) | [VSB](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/glos.htm#VSB),1 & [ZMR](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/glos.htm#ZMR2)  
SAC editor has entered boldface font, hypertext links and bracketed summaries and transitions, better to fit these texts to our course

1.  
**Invitation to the *Rus'***

860-862 (6368-6370) [The four tribes who had been forced to pay tribute to the Varangians--Chuds, Slavs, Merians, and Krivichians] drove the Varangians back beyond the sea, refused to pay them further tribute, and set out to govern themselves. But there was no law among them, and tribe rose against tribe. Discord thus ensued among them, and they began to war one against the other. They said to themselves, "Let us seek a prince who may rule over us, and judge us according to custom [*po nravu*]". Thus they went overseas to the Varangians, to the Rus. These particular Varangians were known as *Rus'*, just as some are called Swedes, and others Normans and Angles, and still others Gotlanders, for they were thus named. The Chuds, the Slavs, the Krivichians and the Ves then said to the Rus, "Our land is great and rich, but there is no order in it. Come reign as princes, rule over us". Three brothers, with their kinfolk, were selected. They brought with them all the *Rus'* and migrated. The oldest, Rurik, located himself in Novgorod; the second, Sineus, in Beloozero; and the third, Truvor, in Izborsk. From these Varangians, the Russian land received its name [*prozvalas’ Russkaia zemlia*]. Thus those who live in Novgorod are descended from the Varangian tribe, but earlier they were Slavs. Within two years, Sineus and his brother Truvor died. Rurik gathered sole authority into his own hands, parceling out cities to his own men, Polotsk to one, Rostov to another, and to another Beloozero. The Varangians in these cities are colonists, but the first settlers in Novgorod were Slavs; in Polotsk, Krivichians; in Beloozero, Ves; in Rostov, Merians; and in Murom, Muromians. Rurik had dominion over all these folk. Two of Rurik’s men [Askold and Dir] who were not of his tribe but were warriors [*boyare*] sought permission to go to Tsar’grad [Constantinople] with their tribe. They thus sailed down the Dnepr, and in the course of their journey they saw a small city on a hill. They asked, "Whose town is this? " The inhabitants answered, "There were three brothers, Kii, Shchek and Khoriv, who built this burg, but they have since died. We who are their descendants dwell here and pay tribute to the Khazars [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#737)". Askold and Dir remained in this city, and after gathering together many Varangians, they established their dominion over the country of the Polianians. Rurik ruled in Novgorod.

2.  
**The missions of Kiril [Cyril or sometimes Konstantin] and Mefodii [Methodios]**[**[ID]**](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#863)

[...] Slavs were altogether one people [*edin narod slavianskii*], including those Slovenes [*slaviane*] who were settled along the Danube River where they were ruled by Magyars [*Ugry* or Hungarians [(ID)](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#895:959)], and including Moravians [*moravy*] and Czechs [*chekhi*] and also including the *poliaki* and *poliane* who are today [14th century] called *Rus'*. For these, that is for the Moravians, the original alphabet [*bukvy*] was created and designated the Slavic script. This script was taken up by the Russians and by the Danube Bulgarians.

These Slovenes had been for some time baptized Christians when their princes Rastislav [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#863), Sviatopolk and Kotsel sent [emissaries] to Byzantine Emperor [*tsar*] Michael with the following message. "Ours is a baptized land, but we have no teacher who can guide and teach us, or interpret the holy books. We do not even know Greek or Latin. One person teaches us one thing and another something else. The result is we do not know how to write or interpret the written word. Please send us teachers who can tell us about written books and their meaning." Hearing this, Emperor Michael assembled all the philosophers [scholars] and communicated to them everything the Slavic princes said. [The philosophers recommended two talented scholars who knew the Slavic language, Mefodii and Konstantin.] When these two brothers arrived [in the lands of Rastislav, Sviatopolk and Kotel in the year 863] they set about the task of devising a Slavic alphabet and translating the Acts of the Apostles and the Bible. And the Slavs were joyous to hear of God's grandeur in their own language. [...] Some people condemned the Slavic books, arguing that it was not right for any nation to have its own alphabet except the Hebrews, the Greeks and the Latins. Pilat wrote on the placard affixed to the top of Christ's cross only in these languages. The Pope in Rome got word of this complaint and rebuked those who criticized the Slavic books. [But as the rivalry intensified between western and eastern Christianity, the Pope turned against the Orthodox use of vernacular languages [[EG]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#879) in the mass and in holy texts.]

3.  
**The first Varangian attack on Constantinople**

863-866 (6371-6374) Askold and Dir deployed their armed forces against the Greeks, appeared there in the fourteenth year of the reign of the [Byzantine] Emperor Michael. The tsar [Emperor Michael] at that time was leading a campaign against the agarians [Islamic Arabic Saracens on the eastern frontiers] and had reached the Black River. The eparch [high church official] sent tsar Michael word that the *Rus'* were approaching Tsar’grad [Constantinople]. The tsar turned back [from the serious engagement with Arabian power and returned to defend his capital]. Upon arriving inside the [Bosporus] strait, the *Rus'* killed many Christians and laid siege to Tsar’grad with two hundred boats. The tsar got himself back in his city with great difficulty and prayed all night with the Patriarch Photius [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#855c) at the Church of the Holy Virgin in Blachemae. They sang hymns and carried the sacred vestment of the Virgin and dipped its hem into the sea. The weather was still, and the sea was calm, but a windstorm suddenly arose. Great waves quickly scattered the boats of the pagan *Rus'*. The storm threw them upon the shore and broke them up. Few escaped such destruction to return to their home.

[1420:Earliest known MAP of Constantinople](http://watermarked.heritage-images.com/2480465.jpg)

4.  
**Kievan Prince Oleg’s attack on Constantinople**

904-907 (6412-6415) [911se02:Actual date of treaty] Oleg attacked the Greeks. leaving [his son, the heir to the princely throne] Igor in Kiev. He took with him a multitude of Varangians, Slavs, Chuds, Krivichians, Merians, Derevlians, Radimichians, Polianians, Severians, Viatichians, Croats, Dulebians, and Tivertsians, who are known as Tolmachians. The Greeks label all these folk collectively as "Great Scythia" [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#971). With all of these, Oleg attacked on horseback and in ships, and the number of his vessels was two thousand. He arrived before Tsar’grad [Constantinople], but the Greeks closed the strait and fortified the city. Oleg disembarked upon the shore and began to fight. They waged war in the outskirts of the city and killed many Greeks. They also destroyed many palaces and burned churches. Of the prisoners they captured, some they beheaded, some they tortured, others they shot, and still others they cast into the sea. The Russians inflicted many other woes upon the Greeks after the usual manner of enemies.

Oleg commanded his warriors to make wheels and to fit the ships with wheels. When a favorable wind rose up, they spread sail and bore down upon the city by land. The Greeks were frightened to see this and sent an embassy to Oleg saying, "Do not destroy the city, and we will pay whatever tribute you desire". Oleg ordered his armies to halt. The Greeks then brought food and wine to him, but he would not accept it, because it was poisoned. The Greeks were frightened, and said, "This is not Oleg, but St. Demetrius, whom God has sent upon us". So Oleg demanded that they pay tribute for his two thousand ships at the rate of twelve grivnas per man, with forty men to a ship.

The Greeks assented to these terms and sued for peace in order to keep Oleg from conquering the land of the Greeks. Retiring a short distance from the capital, Oleg began to negotiate about peace with the Greek tsars [emperors] Leo and Alexander. Oleg sent into the capital to them Karl, Farlaf, Vermud, Rulav and Stemid with the demand, "Pay me tribute". The Greeks replied, "What is it you wish us to pay?" Oleg demanded that they give his forces twelve grivnas per oar on his two thousand ships. In addition they should pay tribute to the Russian cities, first of all to Kiev, then to Chernigov, Pereiaslavl, Polotsk, Rostov, Liubech, and other towns. These were the cities of the grand princes [*velikie kniaz’ia*] subject to Oleg [according to the Kievan system of *mestnichestvo* [(ID)](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#1015)]. "When Russians come here, provide support for as many emissaries as they wish. When merchants come here, grant six months of supplies in grain, wine, meat, fish, and fruit. Baths shall be prepared for them whenever they require. When the Russians leave to return home, they shall receive from your tsar food, anchors, cordage and sails, and whatever else they need". The Greeks accepted these obligations. The [Byzantine] tsars and all [their] boyars said, "If Russians come here for some other reason than to trade, they shall receive no supplies. In fact, the Russian prince will order by personal decree that Russians who come here shall commit no violent acts in the towns or upon our territory. Russians who come here will stay in the neighborhood of the Church of St. Mamas. Only after our government has sent agents to record their names shall these Russians receive their monthly supplies, first those who come from Kiev, then those from Chernigov and Pereiaslavl, then those from other cities. They will be allowed to enter the city through only one gate. They will be escorted by the tsar’s [the Byzantine emperor’s] men, and they will be unarmed and in groups of fifty at a time. They may engage in whatever trade they wish without paying any tax".

[[MAP](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/images/frn.MPR.1054%20KIV.RUS%20Hmnd.jpg)]

Thus tsars Leo and Alexander made peace with Oleg. After agreeing upon the tribute, they bound themselves by mutual oaths. The tsars kissed the cross, while Oleg and his men took oaths in accordance with Russian law, swearing by their weapons and by their god Perun [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#980), as well as by Volos, the god of cattle. Thus the peace treaty was confirmed. Oleg then said, "Fashion sails of silk for the Rus, and sails of linen for the Slavs". And it was done! The Russians hung their shields upon the gates as a sign of victory, and they left Tsar’grad. The Russians spread their silken sails. The Slavs spread sails of linen, but the wind tore them. Then the Slavs said, "We’ll stay with our simple sails; linen sails are not for Slavs". So Oleg returned to Kiev, bearing gold, linen, fruit and wine, along with every sort of adornment. The people called Oleg a "Prophet", but they were pagans and unenlightened.

[...]

And Oleg lived as prince in Kiev, keeping peace with all lands. One autumn Oleg remembered his horse which he had some time back decided never again to ride. He ordered that the horse be put to pasture forever. This happened because Oleg consulted sorcerers [*volkhi*] and fortune-tellers [*kudesniki*], asking them to tell him "What will cause my death".  One of the fortune-tellers answered, "Prince! Your beloved horse, the one you ride, he will cause your death". These words sank into Oleg's soul, and he said, "I will never again sit upon that horse. I will never look upon him again". And he ordered that the horse be put to pasture and never again saddled for him. Several years passed without seeing his favorite horse, not even as he campaigned against the Greeks. Four years passed after he returned to Kiev, and then in the fifth year Oleg remembered the horse which the sorcerer had predicted would cause his death. And he summoned his senior stable master. "Where is that horse of mine which I ordered you to put out to pasture and to protect?" The stable master replied, "He died". Oleg laughed and reproached the fortune-teller, saying, "The sorcerers did not speak the truth. Everything was a lie. The horse died, and I live on". He ordered that [his current] horse be saddled for him. "I want to see that horse's bones." And he rode to that place where the bare bones and fleshless skull lay. He dismounted from his steed and laughed. "Was it this skull that was supposed to cause my death?" He stood upon the skull with one leg. A snake slithered from the skull and bit him on the leg. He soon fell ill and died. Everyone wept great tears for him. They carried him onto the mountain called Shchekovits and buried him there.

5.  
**Kievan Princess Olga takes her revenge**[The following account is taken largely from [CPC](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/glos.htm#CPC).  
It has not yet been checked against the Russian text and properly hypertext linked to [SAC](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#945:962)]

945 (6453): [When the Derevlians killed Kievan Prince Igor, his wife Olga ruled as princess in the place of her son, the young heir Sviatoslav.] The Derevlians said, "We have killed the *Rus'* Prince. Let us take his wife Olga to be wife of our Prince Mal, and then we shall gain control over Sviatoslav and shape him to our ends". With that plan they dispatched their best men, twenty in number, to Olga by boat [...]. Olga was informed that the Derevlians had arrived, and summoned them to her presence with a gracious welcome. When the Derevlians had thus announced their arrival, Olga replied with an inquiry as to the reason for their coming. The Derevlians then announced that their tribe had sent them to report that they had slain her husband, because he was like a wolf, crafty and ravening. But, they continued, their princes who had protected the land of Dereva were good. Olga should come and marry their Prince Mal. [...] Olga made this reply, "Your proposal is pleasing to me. Indeed, my husband cannot rise again from the dead. But I desire to honor you tomorrow in the presence of my people. Return now to your boat, and remain there. Put on a show of great arrogance. When I send for you tomorrow, say that you will not ride on horses or go on foot. Insist that my people carry you to me in your boat." [... After the Derevlians left, Olga ordered that a deep ditch be dug in the reception hall where she planned to receive the Derevlians. The next morning, as Olga instructed them, the Derevlians  insisted that they and their boat be carried by those sent to fetch them.] The people of Kiev then lamented, "Slavery is our lot. Our Prince is killed, and our Princess intends to marry their prince". So they carried the Derevlians in their boat. The latter sat on the cross-benches in great robes, puffed up with pride. Thus they were borne into the court before Olga. Once inside, the men dropped the Derevlians and their boat into the trench. Olga bent over and inquired whether they found this honor to their taste. They answered that it was worse than the death of Igor. She then commanded they they should be buried alive, and thus they were.

[From what follows, you might conclude that the Derevlians were slow to get the message. But it is possible that what follows is an alternative way of telling the story just above, but with a different ending. It is possible the chroniclers could not resolve just which story was correct, so they told them both. The second story holds that, when the Derevlians required Olga to appear before them, she insisted that they select their most distinguished men to come get her, otherwise, she said, her people would not let her go. And the Derevlians dispatched their most distinguished men.]

When the Derevlians arrived, Olga commanded that a bath should be made ready, and invited them to appear before her after they had bathed. The bathhouse was then heated, and the Derevlians entered in to bathe. Olga's men closed up the bathhouse behind them, and she gave orders to set it on fire from the doors, so that the Derevlians were all burned to death.

[Olga quickly set out for the Derevlian lands with the ostensible goal of mourning the death of her husband. When she arrived, the Derevlians did express curiosity about what happened to the delegation of their most distinguished men. She told them not to worry. The distinguished men were following some distance back. In the meantime she requested a great feast. Olga and her retinue pressed great amounts of drink on the gullible Derevlians. Then she ordered her retinue to slaughter the drunken revelers. 5000 were killed.]

946 (6454): [Next year, Olga went against the Derevlians with a great army. She and her very young son Sviatoslav rode at the head. Sviatostlav cast the first spear. He was but a child, and the spear struck his horse in the ear and foot. A brave but inauspicious beginning for the future warrior [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#962). The siege wore on for a year, so Olga pretended to sue for peace, asking as tribute only pigeons and doves from every home. These she quickly fitted out with flammable materials, ignited them, and set them loose to return to each of the homes from which they had come. The Derevlian fortress city burned to the ground.]

6.  
**Kievan Grand Prince Vladimir declared Christianity official**

987 (6495): Vladimir summoned together his vassals and the city elders, and said to them: "Behold, the [Volga] Bolgars came before me urging me to accept their religion [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#922). Then came the Germans [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#879) and praised their own faith [Catholicism]; and after them came the Jews [most likely rabbis from the receding Khazar khaganate [(ID)](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#737)]. Finally the [Eastern Orthodox] Greeks appeared, criticizing all other faiths but commending their own, and they spoke at length, telling the history of the whole world from its beginning. Their words were artful, and it was wondrous to listen and pleasant to hear them. They preach the existence of another world. 'Whoever adopts our religion and then dies shall arise and live forever. But whosoever embraces another faith, shall be consumed with fire in the next world.' What is your opinion on this subject, and what do you answer?" The vassals and the elders replied: "You know, O Prince, that no man condemns his own possessions, but praises them instead. If you desire to make certain, you have servants at your disposal. Send them to inquire about the ritual of each and how he worships God." Their counsel pleased the prince and all the people, so that they chose good and wise men to the number of ten, and directed them to go first among the Bolgars and inspect their faith. The emissaries went their way, and when they arrived at their destination they beheld the disgraceful actions of the Bolgars and their worship in the mosque; then they returned to their own country. Vladimir then instructed them to go likewise among the Germans, and examine their faith, and finally to visit the Greeks. They thus went into Germany, and after viewing the German ceremonial, they proceeded to Constantinople where they appeared before the emperor. He inquired on what mission they had come, and they reported to him all that had occurred. When the emperor heard their words, he rejoiced, and did them great honor on that very day.

On the morrow, the [Byzantine] emperor sent a message to the patriarch to inform him that a Russian delegation had arrived to examine the Greek faith, and directed him to prepare the church [Hagia Sophia (Greek for Holy Wisdom) [W#1](http://www.sacred-destinations.com/turkey/istanbul-hagia-sophia) | [W#2](http://www.greatbuildings.com/buildings/Hagia_Sophia.html) | [W#3](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hagia_Sophia)] and the clergy, and to array himself in his sacerdotal robes, so that the Russians might behold the glory of the God of the Greeks. When the patriarch received these commands, he bade the clergy assemble, and they performed the customary rites. They burned incense, and the choirs sang hymns. The emperor accompanied the Russians to the church, and placed them in a wide space, calling their attention to the beauty of the edifice, the chanting, and the offices of the archpriest and the ministry of the deacons, while he explained to them the worship of his God. The Russians were astonished, and in their wonder praised the Greek ceremonial. Then the Emperors Basil and Constantine invited the envoys to their presence, and said, "Go hence to your native country," and thus dismissed them with valuable presents and great honor. Thus they returned to their own country, and the prince called together his vassals and the elders. Vladimir then announced the return of the envoys who had been sent out, and suggested that their report be heard. He thus commanded them to speak out before his vassals. The envoys reported: "When we journeyed among the Bulgars, we beheld how they worship in their temple, called a mosque, while they stand ungirt. The Bulgarian bows, sits down, looks hither and thither like one possessed, and there is no happiness among them, but instead only sorrow and a dreadful stench. Their religion is not good. Then we went among the Germans, and saw them performing many ceremonies in their temples; but we beheld no glory there. Then we went on to Greece, and the Greeks led us to the edifices where they worship their God, and we knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. For on earth there is no such splendor or such beauty, and we are at a loss how to describe it. We know only that God dwells there among men, and their service is fairer than the ceremonies of other nations. For we cannot forget that beauty. Every man, after tasting something sweet, is afterward unwilling to accept that which is bitter, and therefore we cannot dwell longer here." Then the vassals spoke and said, "If the Greek faith were evil, it would not have been adopted by your grandmother Olga [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#957), who was wiser than all other men." Vladimir then inquired where they should all accept baptism, and they replied that the decision rested with him.

After a year had passed, in 988 (6496), Vladimir marched with an armed force against Kherson [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/ggr.htm#Kherson), a Greek city, and the people of Kherson barricaded themselves therein. Vladimir halted at the farther side of the city beside the bay, a bowshot from the town, and the inhabitants resisted energetically while Vladimir besieged the town. Eventually, however, they became exhausted, and Vladimir warned them that if they did not surrender, he would remain on the spot for three years. When they failed to heed this threat, Vladimir marshaled his troops and ordered the construction of an earthwork in the direction of the city. While this work was under construction, the inhabitants dug a tunnel under the city wall, stole the heaped-up earth, and carried it into the city, where they piled it up in the center of the town. But the soldiers kept on building, and Vladimir persisted. Then a man of Kherson, Anastasius by name, shot into the Russian camp an arrow on which he had written: "There are springs behind you to the east, from which water flows in pipes. Dig down and cut them off." When Vladimir received this information, he raised his eyes to heaven and vowed that if this hope was realized, he would be baptized. He gave orders straightway to dig down above the pipes, and the water supply was thus cut off. The inhabitants were accordingly overcome by thirst, and surrendered.

Vladimir and his retinue entered the city [Kherson], and he sent messages to the Emperors Basil and Constantine, saying: "Behold, I have captured your glorious city. I have also heard that you have an unwed sister. Unless you give her to me to wife, I shall deal with your own city as I have with Kherson." When the emperors heard this message, they were troubled, and replied: "It is not meet for Christians to give in marriage to pagans. If you are baptized, you shall have her to wife, inherit the kingdom of God, and be our companion in the faith. Unless you do so, however, we cannot give you our sister in marriage." When Vladimir learned their response, he directed the envoys of the emperors to report to the latter that he was willing to accept baptism, having already given some study to their religion, and that the Greek faith and ritual, as described by the emissaries sent to examine it, had pleased him well. When the emperors heard this report, they rejoiced, and persuaded their sister Anna to consent to the match. They then requested Vladimir to submit to baptism before they should send their sister to him, but Vladimir desired that the princess should herself bring priests to baptize him. The emperors complied with his request, and sent forth their sister, accompanied by some dignitaries and priests. Anna, however, departed with reluctance. "It is as if I were setting out into captivity," she lamented; "better were it for me to die here." But her brothers protested: "Through your agency God turns the Russian land to repentance, and you will relieve Greece from the danger of grievous war. Do you not see how much evil the Russians have already brought upon the Greeks? If you do not set out, they may bring on us the same misfortunes." It was thus that they overcame her hesitation only with great difficulty. The princess embarked upon a ship, and after tearfully embracing her kinfolk, she set forth across the sea and arrived at Kherson. The natives came forth to greet her, and conducted her into the city, where they settled her in the palace

By divine agency, Vladimir was suffering at that moment from a disease of the eyes, and could see nothing, being in great distress. The princess declared to him that if he desired to be relieved of this disease, he should be baptized with all speed, otherwise it could not be cured. When Vladimir heard her message, he said, "If this proves true, then of a surety is the God of the Christians great," and gave order that he should be baptized. The Bishop of Kherson, together with the princess's priests, after announcing the tidings, baptized Vladimir, and as the bishop laid his hand upon him, he straightway received his sight. Upon experiencing this miraculous cure, Vladimir glorified God, saying, "I have now perceived the one true God." When his followers beheld this miracle, many of them were also baptized.

Vladimir was baptized in the **Church of St. Basil**, which stands at Kherson upon a square in the center of the city, where the Khersonians trade. The palace of Vladimir stands beside this church to this day, and the palace of the princess is behind the altar. After his baptism, Vladimir took the princess in marriage. Those who do not know the truth say he was baptized in Kiev, while others assert this event took place in Vasiliev, while still others mention other places.

Hereupon Vladimir took the princess and Anastasius and the priests of Kherson, together with the relics of St. Clement and of Phoebus his disciple, and selected also sacred vessels and images for the service. In Kherson he thus founded a church on the mound which had been heaped up in the midst of the city with the earth removed from his embankment; this church is standing at the present day. Vladimir also found and appropriated two bronze statues and four bronze horses, which now stand behind the Church of the Holy Virgin, and which the ignorant think are made of marble. As a wedding present for the princess, he gave Kherson over to the Greeks again, and then departed for Kiev.

When the prince arrived at his capital [Kiev], he directed that the idols should be overthrown and that some should be cut to pieces and others burned with fire. He thus ordered that Perun should be bound to a horse's tail and dragged along Borichev to the river. He appointed twelve men to beat the idol with sticks, not because he thought the wood was sensitive, but to affront the demon who had deceived man in this guise, that he might receive chastisement at the hands of men. Great art thou, O Lord, and marvelous are thy works! Yesterday he was honored of men, but today held in derision. While the idol was being dragged along the stream to the Dnepr, the unbelievers wept over it, for they had not yet received holy baptism. After they had thus dragged the idol along, they cast it into the Dnepr. But Vladimir had given this injunction: "If it halts anywhere, then push it out from the bank, until it goes over the falls. Then let it loose." His command was duly obeyed. When the men let the idol go, and it passed through the falls, the wind cast it out on the bank, which since that time has been called Perun's Shore, a name that it bears to this very day [[ID]](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.0000.1682.htm#vs-pagan).

Thereafter Vladimir sent heralds throughout the whole city to proclaim that if any inhabitant, rich or poor, did not betake himself to the river, he would risk the prince's displeasure. When the people heard these words, they wept for joy, and exclaimed in their enthusiasm, "If this were not good, the prince and his boyars would not have accepted it." On the morrow the prince went forth to the Dnepr with the priests of the princess and those from Kherson, and a countless multitude assembled. They all went into the water: some stood up to their necks, others to their breasts, the younger near the bank, some of them holding children in their arms, while the adults waded farther out. The priests stood by and offered prayers. There was joy in heaven and upon earth to behold so many souls saved. But the devil groaned, lamenting: "Woe is me! how am I driven out hence! For I thought to have my dwelling place here, since the apostolic teachings do not abide in this land. Nor did this people know God, but I rejoiced in the service they rendered unto me. But now I am vanquished by the ignorant, not by apostles and martyrs, and my reign in these regions is at an end."

When the people were baptized, they returned each to his own abode. Vladimir, rejoicing that he and his subjects now knew God himself, looked up to heaven and said: "O God, who hast created heaven and earth, look down, I beseech thee, on this thy new people, and **grant them, O Lord, to know thee as the true God, even as the other Christian nations have known thee**. Confirm in them the true and unalterable faith, and **aid me, O Lord, against the hostile adversary**, so that, hoping in thee and in thy might, I may overcome his malice." Having spoken thus, he ordained that churches should be built and established where pagan idols had previously stood.**He thus founded the Church of St. Basil** on the hill where the idol of Perun and the other images had been set, and where the prince and the people had offered their sacrifices [[lxt](http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/images/KIV.Otsiuda.poshla.est'.russkaia.zemlia-Kashirin.jpg)]. **He began to found churches and to assign priests throughout the cities, and to invite the people to accept baptism in all the cities and towns. He took the children of the best families, and sent them to schools for instruction in book learning. The mothers of these children wept bitterly over them, for they were not yet strong in faith, but mourned as for the dead.** When these children were assigned for study, there was thus fulfilled in the Russian land the prophecy which says, "In that day, the deaf shall hear the words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see" (Isaiah, xxix, 18). For these persons had not ere this heard words of Scripture, and now heard them only by the act of God, for in his mercy the Lord took pity upon them, even as the Prophet said, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious" (Exodus, xxxiii, 19).

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