

ЖИТІЄН ЖИЗНЬ, БЛЖЕНА БУЧІТЕЛН

НАШЕГО КОНСТАНТИНА ФІЛОСОФА ПРВАГО НАСТАВНИКА
СЛОВЕНСКОУ ЄЗЫКОУ . БЛВН . ШУЕ :-



ЖЕ МАТИ НАВННЩЕДРИИ , ОЖИДАЕН ПОИСКАНІЕУАТЬ
СКО . ДАКАШЕ ВЪЗЕМЪ ПСЕИИ БІАИ , И ВЪРАЗУМЪНІЕИ
ННЫИ ПРИШАИ . НЕХОЩЕ ПІЗЪЕМАРТИ ГРЕШНИ
КОУ , НЪ ПОИСКАНІЮИ ЖИВІТІУ , ДЩЕ ИМАИ ПАЧЕ
ПРИВЪЖИТЬ НАЗАШКОУ . НЪ НЕ ОСТАВАЩЕ ТУА РОДА
ШПАСТИ ОСЛАБЛЕНІЕМЪ . И ВЪСЪБЛАЖНА НЕПРИКАЗАН
ИМОУ ПРИИТИ ИТОГІБНОУТИ . НЪ НАКОВОМО,
ЛІБІТО ИВРІАМЕНА , НЕПРЪСПАДЕТЬ БЛГТІА ТВО
РЕ НАМЪ МНОГО . ІАКО ЖЕ НЕПРЪВА ДАЖЕ И
РОПНІА , ПА ПРІАРОХЪ ІЖЕ ПРЪВЪВНІШЦЫ . И
ПОПІХЪ ПРІСЫ . ИТОСНХЪ АПЛЫ , ИМАІСЫ .
И ПРАВЕДНЫИМИ МОУЖІИ ИОУЧИТЕЛИ . ИЖЕИ
РАЕНХЪ ШМНОГО МАТЕЖНАГО ЖИТІА СЕГО . ІНАДЕТЬСЯ

THE VITA AND LIFE OF OUR BLESSED TEACHER Constantine the Philosopher, the First Preceptor of the Slavic People

Bless us, Father

Merciful and compassionate is God, who awaits the repentance of Man and will have all to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth, for He wishes the sinner not death but repentance and life even if he be given to malice.¹ Neither does He allow mankind to fall away through weakness or be led into temptation by the Adversary and perish. Rather, in each age and epoch He has not ceased to grant us His abundant grace, even now just as it was in the beginning: at first through the Patriarchs and Fathers, and after them through the Prophets, then through the Apostles and Martyrs, and righteous men and teachers whom He chooses from amidst the tumult of this life.

1 Tim.
2:4

For the Lord knows His own, who are His, as He has said: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and I call them by name, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life." He did so also in our generation, having raised up for us this teacher who enlightened our nation, which did not wish to walk in the light of God's commandments,² and whose understanding was obscured by weakness and even more by the Devil's wiles.

John
10:27-28

Stated briefly, his *Vita* reveals what sort of man he was, so that hearing it, he who wishes — taking courage and rejecting idleness — can follow him. For as the Apostle has said: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

I Cor.
11:1

2 There was a certain noble and rich man named Leo in the city of Thessalonica who held the rank of *drungarios* under the *strategos*.³ He was, as Job once was, a pious man, and kept faithfully all God's commandments. He begot seven children of which the youngest, the seventh, was Constantine the Philosopher, our preceptor and teacher. And when his mother bore him, he was given over to a wet-nurse for nursing. However, until the child was weaned he would not take any other breast but his mother's. This was by God's design so that there be a good offshoot from a good root. And after this the good parents agreed not to lie with each other. They never once transgressed their vow, but lived that way in the Lord for 14 years, parting in death. And when that devout man was wanted on Judgment Day, the mother of this child cried, saying: "I am worried about nought save this one child and how he will be nurtured." Then he said: "Believe me, wife, I place my hope in God. He will give him for a father and steward one such as guides all Christians." And so it came to pass.

3 When he was seven the boy had a dream which he recounted to his father and mother, saying: "After the *strategos* had assembled all the girls of our city, he said to me: 'Choose her whom you wish as your wife and helpmate from among them.' Gazing upon them and taking note of each one, I discerned the most beautiful of all, with a radiant face, richly adorned in gold necklaces and pearls, and all manner of finery. Her name was Sophia, that is, Wisdom. I chose her."

When his parents heard these words, they said to him: "Son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light. Say unto Wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call Understanding thy kinswoman. For Wisdom shines even more than the sun.⁴ And if you then take her to yourself as your wife, you will be delivered from much evil through her." When they sent him for instruction, he

Proverbs
6:20,23
Proverbs
7:4

Wis. of
Solomon
7:29

surpassed all his fellow students in learning, as his memory was very keen. He was then a marvel.

As it was customary among the sons of the wealthy to take sport in the hunt, he one day took his falcon and went out to the fields with his companions. And when he released it, the wind rose by God's design, caught the falcon and carried it off. The boy became very despondent and dejected by this, and would not eat for two days. But in His love for Man, merciful God did not wish the youth to become accustomed to things of this world and He lured him easily: Just as He lured Placidus⁵ with a deer during a hunt long ago, so now He did Constantine with a falcon. Constantine thought to himself of the vanity of this life and repented, saying: "Is this life such that sorrow takes the place of joy? From this day forth I shall take a different path, a better one than this. But I shall not waste my days in the tumult of this life."

Taking up his studies, he remained at home and committed to memory the writings of St. Gregory the Theologian⁶. And making the sign of the cross upon the wall, he wrote the following eulogy to St. Gregory: "O Gregory, thou art a man in body but an angel in spirit. Thou, a man in body, appeared as an angel. For thy lips praise God like one of the Seraphim, and enlighten the universe with the teaching of the true faith. Therefore, accept me who comes to thee with love and faith and be my teacher and enlightener." To such things did he pledge himself.

He immersed himself in numerous discourses and in lofty thought but was unable to comprehend their profundity and fell prey to a great sadness. There lived a certain foreigner who knew grammar. Going to him and falling at his feet in humility, Constantine begged him to teach him thoroughly the art of grammar. But burying his talent, the man said to him: "Young man, do not trouble yourself. I have renounced teaching this to anyone for the rest of my life."

Again the youth begged him, saying in tears: "Take all the share due me from my father's house, but teach me." Since the man did not wish to listen further to him, Constantine returned home and prayed that he would gain his heartfelt desire. God soon fulfills the desire of them that fear Him. Upon hearing of the keenness, wisdom, and zeal for learning with which he was imbued, the Emperor's administrator, called the *Logothete*,⁷ sent for Constantine to study together with the Emperor. Learning of this, the boy joyfully set out. And on the way he knelt in prayer to the Lord, saying: "O God of our fathers, and Lord of mercy, who hast made all things with Thy Word, and ordained man through Thy Wisdom, that he should have dominion over the creatures which Thou hast made, give me Wisdom, that sitteth by

Psalm
145:19

Wis. of
Solomon
9:1-2
Wis. of
Solomon
9:4

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Psalms
145:19

Wis. of
Solomon
9:1-2
Wis. of
Solomon
9:4

Thy throne, so that I might understand what is Thy will and be saved. For I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid.”⁸ And in addition he recited the remainder of Solomon’s prayer and, rising, said: “Amen.”

Wis. of
Solomon
9:5
Psalm
116:16

4 When he arrived in the Imperial City⁹ he was entrusted to teachers to be taught. In three months he mastered grammar and began other studies. He studied Homer and geometry with Leo, and dialectics¹⁰ and all philosophical studies with Photius;¹¹ and in addition to that, rhetoric and arithmetic, astronomy and music, and all the other Hellenic arts. He mastered them all just as though he were mastering only one of them. For keenness joined with zeal, the one vying with the other, by which ability studies are perfected. But more than studiousness, a newly serene countenance became him. He conferred¹² with those who were more beneficial and turned from those who turned to malice, for he thought and acted only to acquire heavenly things in place of earthly ones and to quit his body and live with God.

When the *Logothete* saw that he was so disposed, he gave him control over his entire house and free entry to the royal palace. Sometime after this, he once questioned him, saying: “Philosopher, I wish to learn what philosophy is.”

With his quick mind, he replied immediately: “The knowledge of matters divine and human, to what extent man can approach God and how, through virtue, man is taught to be in the image and likeness of the One who created him.”

And the *Logothete* grew to love him even more, as he, this great and venerable man, questioned him about these things. Constantine made known to him the study of philosophy and in a few words showed great keenness of mind.

Living in chastity and pleasing God greatly, Constantine became ever more loved by all. And many desired and wished to be joined with him through love and, in accordance with their strength, to imitate as fully as possible his virtuous and godly way of life. For all simply loved his keenness of mind greatly. And the *Logothete* rendered him the highest honors and offered him much gold but he did not accept. Once, some time after this, he said to him: “More than anything else your keenness of mind and wisdom compel me to love you. I have a goddaughter whom I took out of the font.¹³ She is beautiful, wealthy and from a good and noble family. If you wish, I shall give her to you as your wife. And from the Emperor accept eminence, and a governorship. And expect even more, for soon you will be a *strategos*.”

Then the philosopher answered him, saying: “This is indeed a great gift for those who have need of it. But for me nothing is

greater than learning. Having acquired knowledge, through it I wish to seek the honor and wealth of my ancestors.¹⁴

Upon hearing his reply, the *Logothete* went to the Emperor¹⁵ and said: "This young Philosopher does not love this life. Let us not exclude him from the community but tonsure him and give him over to the priesthood and service. Let him be librarian to the patriarch in St. Sophia. At least in this way shall we keep him." And that was what they did with him.

After staying with them as such for a short time, Constantine left for the Narrow Sea and hid himself there in a monastery.¹⁶ They sought him for six months before they were able to find him. Unable to prevail upon him to accept that position, they convinced him to accept an academic chair and teach philosophy to his countrymen and foreigners with full assistance and aid. And he accepted this.

5 At that time John, who was Patriarch of Constantinople, started the iconoclastic heresy in the Imperial City¹⁷, saying that one should not honor the holy icons. Having convened a council, they charged him with speaking falsely and expelled him from office. He said: "They have expelled me by force but they have not convinced me, for no one can dispute my words." And when the Emperor together with the patricians had prepared the Philosopher, he sent him against John to whom he said: "If you can prevail over this youth, you will again receive your office." Perceiving that the Philosopher was young in body like those who were sent with him, he said to them: "None of you are worthy of being my footstool so why should I wish to dispute with you?"

The Philosopher said to him: "Keep not the ways of Man but heed God's commandments. For just as you are created by God from earth and spirit, so are we all. Therefore, O man, when gazing upon the earth, be not arrogant."

And John answered again: "It is not fitting to seek flowers in the fall nor to drive an old man to war, as Nestor the youth."¹⁸

The Philosopher answered him: "You are directing accusations at yourself. Tell me, at which age is the spirit stronger than the body?"

He said: "In old age."

The Philosopher then said: "And to which combat are we driving you, answer me, bodily or spiritual?"

He said: "Spiritual."

The Philosopher answered: "Now you wish to be stronger. Thus do not tell us such parables, for we are not seeking flowers out of season, nor do we drive you to war."

The old man was so shamed that he turned the conversation

to another matter and said: "Tell me, young man, why do we not worship a broken cross nor kiss it, while you are not ashamed to render honor to an icon though it be depicted only in bust-form?"

The Philosopher answered: "Because the cross has four parts, but if one of its parts is missing it no longer has its image. However, an icon of the face alone is an image and likeness of the one depicted. For whoever sees it, perceives neither a lion's face nor a lynx's but an image of the original."

Then the old man said: "Why do we worship a cross without an inscription when there are also other crosses? However, if an icon is not inscribed with the name of its image, why do you not render honor to it?"

The Philosopher answered: "Because each cross has the same image as the cross of Christ, but not all icons have one and the same image."

The old man said: "When God spoke to Moses He said: 'Thou shalt not make any likeness.'¹⁹ Why then do you make them and worship them?"

Exodus,
20:4

And to this the Philosopher replied: "Had He said: 'Thou shalt not make any kind of likeness,' you would be correct. But He said: 'Not any,' that is, any unworthy."

Unable to contradict this, the old man fell silent, ashamed.

6 Afterward the Hagarites, who were called Saracens, blasphemed the single Deity of the Holy Trinity, saying: "How is it, O Christians, that you, while holding that God is one, further divide Him into three, saying He is Father, Son, and Spirit? If you can explain clearly, send us men who can speak of this and convince us."²⁰

At that time the Philosopher was 24 years of age. Having convened a council, the Emperor summoned Constantine and said to him: "Do you hear, Philosopher, what the nasty Hagarites are saying against our faith? Since you are a servant and disciple of the Holy Trinity, go and oppose them. And may God, the Accomplisher of all, Who is glorified in the Trinity, the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, grant you grace and strength in words. And may He reveal you a second David against Goliath whom he defeated with three stones,²¹ and return you to us made worthy of the heavenly kingdom."

Upon hearing this, Constantine answered: "I shall gladly go for the Christian faith. For what in this world could be sweeter for me than to live and die for the Holy Trinity!"

And they assigned the court secretary, George, to him and sent them.²²

When they came there they saw strange and vile things

which the God-fighting Hagarites did to deride and mock Christians. In these places all those living in piety in Christ were caused much grief. Thus on the outside doors of all Christians they painted images of demons playing games and grimacing. And they asked the Philosopher, saying: "Philosopher, can you understand what this sign means?"

Then he said: "I see demonic images and assume that Christians dwell within. However, the demons are unable to live with them and flee from them. But wherever this sign is not present on the outside, the demons dwell with those inside."

At dinner the Hagarites, a wise people, well versed in scholarship, geometry, astronomy and other sciences, tested Constantine and questioned him, saying: "Philosopher, perceive you the wondrous miracle, how the Prophet Mohammed brought us joyful tidings from God and converted many people; and how we all keep his law without transgressing in any way? But in keeping Christ's law, you act and do whatever pleases each of you, one this, another that."

To this the Philosopher answered: "Our God is like the breadth of the sea. Thus did the Prophet speak of Him: 'And who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living.' For the sake of this search many set out on this sea: And with His help the strong in mind sail across and return, receiving a wealth of understanding. But the weak in mind, some sink like those attempting to cross in rotten ships, while others flounder in impotent idleness, barely breathing from exhaustion. However, your sea is deceptive and self-serving, so that anyone, great and small can leap across. For it is not beyond the wons of man but something one can easily do. Now Mohammed forbade you nothing else. Since he did not restrain your anger and lust but allowed them, do you know into which abyss he will cast you? Let the sensible understand: Christ is not that way. Rather, He raises up what is difficult from beneath through faith and divine action. As the Creator of everything, He created man between the angels and beasts. For man is distinguished from beasts by his speech and intelligence, and from angels by his anger and lust. And he shall participate either in higher or lower realms in accordance with the realm he approaches."

Isaiah
53:8

And again they questioned him: "Since God is one, why do you glorify Him as three? If you know, explain this! For you call Him Father, Son, and Spirit. If this be so, give Him a wife as well, so that many gods might be sired by Him."

To this the Philosopher answered: "Do not speak such despicable blasphemies. For well have we learned from the prophets and fathers and teachers to glorify the Trinity, the Father, the Word

John 1:14

and the Spirit, three hypostases in one being. And the Word became flesh in the Virgin and was born for the sake of our salvation, as your prophet Mohammed bore witness when he wrote the following: 'We sent our spirit to the Virgin, having consented that She gave birth.' From this I apprise you of the Trinity."

Koran
Sura 19:17

Defeated by these words, they turned to another matter, saying: "As you say, O friend. But if Christ is your God, why do you not do as He commands? For in the Gospels it is written: 'Pray for your enemies, do good to them that hate you and persecute you, and unto them that smite you turn your cheek!'²³ You are not like that but, on the contrary, you sharpen weapons against those who treat you in such a manner."

Matthew
5:44
Luke
6:29
Matthew
5:39

In answer to this the Philosopher said: "If the law contains two precepts, who appears to fulfill the law? He who keeps one precept, or both?"

They answered: "Obviously he who keeps both."

The Philosopher then said: "God said: 'Pray for them which despitefully use you.' And He also said: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' We do this for the sake of friends, lest their souls be captured together with their bodies."

Luke
6:28
John
15:13

And again they questioned him, saying: "Christ paid tribute for Himself and others. Why do you not do as He did? And if you keep yourself from it, why do you not at least pay tribute for your brethren and friends to the great and powerful race of Ishmael? We ask little, only one piece of gold. And for as long as the entire earth endures, we shall keep peace among ourselves as no one else."

The Philosopher answered: "When Christ paid tribute which Empire existed, the Ishmaelite or the Roman?"

They answered: "Obviously the Roman."

Constantine said: "Therefore you ought not scorn us for we all pay tribute to the Romans."

After this they asked him many other questions, testing him in all the arts that they themselves knew. He explained everything to them. And when he had convinced them, they again said to him: "How do you know all this?"

The Philosopher said: "A certain man drew water from the sea and, carrying it in a bag, boasted to strangers, saying: 'See this water? No one has any except me!' To him came a man who lived by the sea and said: 'Are you not ashamed of what you are saying, boasting merely about this stinking bag? We have a sea of it!' You are acting the same way. All the arts have come from us."²⁴

And afterwards, playing games, they showed him a cultivated garden in which some of the things appeared to have at once

sprung from the earth. And when he explained to them how this came about, they further showed him all manner of wealth, and houses adorned with gold and silver and precious stones and pearls, saying: "Philosopher, behold the wondrous miracle! Mighty is the power and great the wealth of Amerumnin,²⁵ lord of the Saracens."

Then he said to them: "This is not wondrous. Glory and praise be to God who has created all these things and given them to man for his consolation. For these things are His and no other's."

And when they heard this from him, they became angry and resorted to their usual evil ways. Intending to poison him, they mixed a deadly potion and gave him to drink of it. But merciful God, who said to all who truly believe in Him, "and if you drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt you,"²⁶ preserved Constantine from harm from that fatal drink and returned him again to his native land in good health.

Mark
16:18

7 A short time after this Constantine renounced this life entirely, settled in a place away from the tumult and heeded himself alone. He kept nothing for the next day even for bodily nourishment but, upon receiving something, distributed it all to the poor, and placed his hope in God who cares for everyone every day.²⁷ Once, when his servant was downcast on a holy day and said, "we have nothing for this holy day," Constantine said to him: "He who once nourished the Israelites in the wilderness shall also give us food here."²⁸ Therefore, go and summon at least five poor men who are awaiting God's help."

And when the dinner hour came, immediately a certain man brought a great quantity of food and ten pieces of gold. And Constantine rendered praise unto God for all this.

He then went to his brother Methodius at Olympus²⁹ and remained there, praying incessantly to God and conversing only with the Scriptures. For he and his brother always, day and night, devoted themselves to this. And thus, exalting in his heart, he conducted his life honorably, adding labor upon labor and excelling greatly in godly virtues. But enough of this for now.

8 And then to the Greek Emperor came emissaries from the Khazars,³⁰ saying: "From the beginning we have known one God who is above all, and worshipped Him facing east. However, we keep other shameful customs. The Jews exhort us to accept their faith and ways, while on the other hand the Saracens, offering us peace and many gifts, press us, saying: 'Our faith is better than that of all other peoples.' Maintaining our former love and friendship, we therefore have come to you. For you are a great people

and your empire is from God. And in requesting your counsel, we ask of you a learned man. Should he prevail over the Jews and Saracens, we shall accept your faith.”

Then the Emperor sought the Philosopher and, after finding him, told him of the Khazars' words, saying: “Philosopher, go to these people, preach and answer for the Holy Trinity with Its help. For no one else is capable of doing this properly.”

He said: “If you command, lord, on such a mission I shall gladly go on foot and unshod, lacking all the Lord forbade His disciples to bring.”³¹

The Emperor answered, saying: “Well spoken; were you to do this! But bear in mind the imperial power and honor, and go honorably and with imperial help.”

He immediately set out on his way. After coming to Kher-son, he learned the Hebrew language and scriptures and translated eight parts of the grammar,³² from which he acquired understanding. A certain Samaritan living there would come to Constantine and debate with him. And he brought Samaritan scriptures and showed them to him. The Philosopher asked him for them, locked himself in his room and gave himself up to prayer. And having obtained understanding from God, he began to read the scriptures without error. When the Samaritan saw this, he cried out in a loud voice and said: “Verily, those who believe in Christ quickly receive Grace and the Holy Spirit.” His son was baptized immediately and he himself was baptized after him.

And Constantine found there the Gospels and the Psalter written in Russian letters.³³ And he also found a man who spoke that language. And having conversed with him and acquiring the power of his speech by comparing it to his own language, he distinguished letters, vowels and consonants, and offering a prayer to God, he soon began to read and speak. And they were amazed at him and praised God.

And when he heard that St. Clement was still lying in the sea,³⁴ he prayed and said: “I believe in God and place my hope in St. Clement, that I shall find him and take him from the sea.”

After persuading the Archbishop, they boarded a ship with all the clergy and pious men and set out for that spot.³⁵ A great calm came over the sea and they arrived and began to dig, chanting. And immediately a strong fragrance arose as if there were many censers, and then the holy relics appeared. To the glory of all the townsmen, they raised them with great reverence and carried them into the city, as Constantine writes in his *Discovery*.³⁶

A Khazar commander came with his troops, surrounded a certain Christian city, and laid siege to it. Upon learning of this, the Philosopher went to him without hesitation. Conversing with

him, he imparted his edifying words and calmed him. He promised Constantine to be baptized.

The Philosopher continued on his way. And while he was reciting the prayer of the first hour, Hungarians³⁷ fell upon him howling like wolves and wishing to kill him. But he was not frightened and did not forsake his prayers, crying out only, "Lord, have mercy!" for he had already completed the office. Seeing him, they were calmed by God's design and began to bow to him. And upon hearing edifying words from his lips, they released him and his entire retinue in peace.

9 Having boarded a ship, Constantine set out for the land of the Khazars by way of the Meotis Sea and Caspian Gates of the Caucasus Mountains.³⁸ The Khazars sent a cunning and resourceful man to meet him, who entered into conversation with him and said to him: "Why do you follow the evil custom of replacing one emperor with another of a different lineage?³⁹ We do this only according to lineage."

The Philosopher said to him: "Yet in place of Saul, who did nothing to please Him, God chose David, who was pleasing to Him, and David's lineage."

And furthermore the Khazar⁴⁰ said: "Why is it you hold the Scriptures in hand, and recite all parables from it? However, we do not do so, but take all wisdom from the heart as though it were absorbed.⁴¹ We do not pride ourselves in writing as you do."

And the Philosopher said to him: "I shall answer you in regard to this. If you meet a naked man and he says: 'I have many garments and gold,' would you believe him, seeing him naked?"

He said: "No."

Then Constantine said to him: "So I say unto you. If you have absorbed all wisdom as you boast, tell me how many generations are there from Adam to Moses, and how many years did each generation endure?"

Unable to answer this, the Khazar fell silent.

When Constantine came for the feast at the Kagan's⁴² and they wished to seat him, they questioned him, saying: "What is your station so that we may seat you according to your rank?"

And he said: "I had a great and very renowned forefather who stood close to the Emperor. But he voluntarily rejected the great honor granted him and was banished. He became impoverished after going to a foreign land, and there he begot me. Though I have sought my forefather's former station, I have not succeeded in obtaining it, for I am Adam's scion."

They then said: "O guest, you speak worthily and rightly." And from that moment they began to confer honor upon him.

Taking up his cup, the Kagan said: "Let us drink in the name of the One God who made all creation."

Taking up his cup, the Philosopher said: "I drink in the name of the One God and His Word, who by His Word made all creation and through Whom the heavens were established; and in the name of the life-giving Spirit through Whom all their power exists."⁴³

The Kagan answered him: "We say the same but maintain the following difference: you glorify the Trinity, while we, having obtained Scriptures, the One God."

Then the Philosopher said: "The Scriptures proclaim the Word and the Spirit. If someone renders honor unto you but will not honor your word and spirit, whereas yet another will honor all three, which of the two renders greater honor?"

He said: "The one who honors all three."

And the Philosopher answered: "Thus, we do more by revealing it in deeds and obeying the prophets. For Isaiah said: 'Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am the first, I am for ever. And now the Lord, and His Spirit, hath sent me.'"⁴⁴

Isaiah
48:12
Isaiah
48:16

Then the Jews standing around Constantine said to him: "Tell us now, how is it possible for a woman to bear God in her womb upon whom she may not even look, let alone⁴⁵ give birth to."

And pointing his finger at the Kagan and his first counsellor, the Philosopher said: "If someone says: 'The first counsellor cannot entertain the Kagan'; but furthermore says: 'The latter's lowest slave can entertain the Kagan and render honor unto him,' what are we to call him, tell me, insane or sensible?"

And they said: "Very much insane."

Then the Philosopher said to them: "Which of the visible creatures is the most honored of all?"

They answered him: "Man, for he was created in the image of God."⁴⁶

And again the Philosopher said to them: "Indeed, are they not raving who say it is not possible for God to be contained in man, since He was contained in the bush and in the cloud, in the whirlwind and smoke, having appeared so to Moses and Job.⁴⁷ Otherwise how can the sick be healed? For when mankind comes to perdition, from whom can it further await renewal if not from the very Creator Himself? Answer me! If a doctor wishes to apply a plaster to the sick, would he or would he not apply it to a tree or to a stone? And will he be able to heal a man by this?"

"And how could Moses in his prayer through the Holy Spirit say with outstretched arms, 'In the thunder of stones and in the voice of trumpets reveal yourself unto us no more, merciful Lord, but having removed our sins, abide inside us.'" For thus

speaks Aquila.⁴⁸ And thus they departed from the feast after setting a day when they would speak about all this.

10 When he sat down again with the Kagan, the Philosopher said: "I am the only man among you without kin or friends. We are debating about God in whose hands all things are, even our hearts. While we are speaking, let those of you who are strong in words say, of what they comprehend, it is so, but of what they fail to comprehend, let them ask and we shall explain."

The Jews then answered and said: "We observe both the Word and Spirit in the Scriptures. Tell us, which law did God first give to man, the law of Moses or the one you observe?"

The Philosopher said: "Do you ask this because you observe the first law?"

And they answered: "Yes, for one should observe the first."

Then the Philosopher said: "If you wish to observe the first law, then totally reject circumcision."

Then they said: "Why say you so?"

And the Philosopher said: "Tell me truthfully, was the first law given with circumcision or without circumcision?"

They answered; "We think with circumcision."

Then he said to them: "After the commandment to Adam and his apostasy, gave not God first the law to Noah, calling the law covenant? For He said unto him: 'Behold, I establish my covenant with you and with your seed, and the entire earth,' which is contained in three commandments: 'Eat everything as the green herb, as much as there is in the heavens, upon the earth and in the waters. Only ye shall not eat flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof.' And, 'whoso sheddeth man's blood, let his own be shed in his stead.'⁴⁹ What say you? Do you observe the first law?"

Genesis
9:9

Genesis
9:3-4,6

The Jews answered him: "We observe the first law of Moses which God did not call law but covenant, just as at first to man in Paradise He called one thing a commandment, and another thing something else to Abraham, that is, circumcision and not law.⁵⁰ For one is law while the other is covenant, and the Creator called the two by different names."

Then the Philosopher answered them: "But I would give the following explanation concerning this. The law is called covenant, for God said unto Abraham: 'I give my law in your flesh,' and He called it a token, 'and it shall be betwixt me and you.' And He also cried out unto Jeremiah: 'Hear this covenant and speak,' He said, 'unto the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and say unto them: Thus saith the Lord God of Israel; Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant which I commanded your fathers in the day I brought them

Genesis
17:11

Jeremiah
11:2-4

forth out of the land of Egypt.' ”

And the Jews answered him: “We too maintain that the law is also called covenant. And of the many that have observed the law of Moses, all have pleased God. We who also keep the law think the same applies to us. But you are trampling God’s law, having established another Law.”

The Philosopher said to them: “We do rightly. For had Abraham not accepted circumcision but observed Noah’s covenant, he would not have been called the Friend of God;⁵¹ nor would have Moses, rewriting the law afterward, had he not observed the first law. Thus, we too follow their example. And having received the law from God, we observe it so that God’s commandment remains firm. For when the law was given to Noah, He did not say unto him, ‘I will give another law,’ but said that it shall remain forever in the living soul. Likewise, having given Abraham the promise He did not proclaim unto him, ‘I shall give Moses another law.’ Do you then observe the law? And God cried out through Ezekiel: ‘I will change it and give you another.’⁵² For Jeremiah clearly said: ‘Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Judah and the house of Israel: Not according to the covenant that I made with your fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; because they abide not by my covenant and I began to hate them. But this shall be my covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws within their minds and write it upon their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.’⁵³ And again the same Jeremiah said: ‘Thus saith the Lord: Stand ye in the ways, and see the true path and walk therein, and ye shall find purification for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. I set watchmen over you saying, Harken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken. Therefore hear ye nations and pastors of the flock among them.’ And then, ‘Hear, O earth: behold I will bring evil upon this people, the fruit of their apostasy, because they have not hearkened unto my words; and my law, that the prophets proclaimed, they have rejected.’⁵⁴ Indeed, not only by this alone shall I show that the law has ceased, but clearly by other proofs as well.”

Jeremiah
31:31-33

Jeremiah
6:16-19

The Jews answered him: “Verily every Jew knows that it shall be so, but the time for the Anointed One has not yet come.”

And the Philosopher said to them: “How can you declare this, seeing that Jerusalem was destroyed and that sacrifices have ceased, and everything the prophets prophesied about you has come to pass? For Malachi cried out clearly: ‘I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going

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Malachi
1:10-11

down, my name shall be glorified among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.' ”

Then they said: “You are saying: All Gentiles wish to be blessed and circumcised in the city of Jerusalem.”

The Philosopher said: “Then why does Moses say: ‘If ye shall obediently obey and in every way keep the law, your borders shall be from the Red Sea to the Philistine Sea,⁵⁵ and from the wilderness to the River Euphrates.’⁵⁶ But we Gentiles are blessed in the seed of Abraham, having come forth from a shoot of Jesse,⁵⁷ and in the one called the hope of the Gentiles and light of all lands and islands. Illuminated by the glory of God, the prophets cry out loudly but not according to the same law nor place. For Zechariah said: ‘Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: behold thy king cometh unto thee; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.’ And furthermore: ‘He shall destroy the arms from Ephraim and the warhorse from Jerusalem, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from the ends of the earth to the ends of the universe.’⁵⁸ And Jacob said: ‘The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawgiver from between his feet, until he comes who is predestined, and he shall be the hope of the people.’⁵⁹ Since you have seen all this accomplished and fulfilled, whom else do you await? For Daniel, who was instructed by an angel, said: ‘There shall be seventy weeks until Christ the Vicar, that is, four hundred and ninety years to seal up vision and prophecy.’⁶⁰ Of whose iron kingdom,⁶¹ in your opinion, did Daniel think in the vision?”

Zechariah
9:9-10

Genesis
49:10

They answered: “The Roman.”

Then the Philosopher asked them: “Who is the stone that was cut out from the mountain by no human hand?”⁶²

They answered: “The Anointed One.” And they said further: “If it be interpreted according to the prophets and other things that He has come already, as you say, why does the Roman Empire still retain its dominion?”

The Philosopher answered: “It does not retain it, for it is gone just as the others according to the image in the vision. Now our kingdom is not Roman but Christ’s, as the prophet said: ‘The God of Heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and His kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.’ For is it not a Christian kingdom that is now called by Christ’s name? The Romans, however, revered idols. But they – now from one nation and tribe, now from another – rule in the name of Christ,⁶³ as the prophet Isaiah reveals speaking to you:

Daniel
2:44

'Ye have left your name in plenitude unto my chosen: for the Lord shall slay ye, and call His servants by a new name, which will be blessed over the entire earth. For they shall bless the true God, and those who swear upon the earth, shall swear by God in heaven.'⁶⁴

Isaiah
65:15-16

Have not the prophecies of all the prophets who have spoken plainly of Christ been fulfilled already? For Isaiah announces His birth from a virgin saying thus: 'Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel: which, being interpreted, is, God with us.' And Micah said: 'And thou, Bethlehem, the land of Judah, art not the least among the rulers of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth a ruler unto me that shall tend my people Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth.'⁶⁵ And Jeremiah said: 'Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Alas! that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.' And Isaiah said: 'Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a manchild.' "

Isaiah
7:14
Matthew
1:23
Micah
5:2-3
Matthew
2:6

Jeremiah
30:6-7

Isaiah
66:7

And again the Jews spoke: "We are of the blessed seed of Shem, blessed by our father Noah, but you are not."

Explaining this to them, Constantine said: "The blessing of your father is nothing more than praise to God, neither does it pertain to Shem. For it is thus: 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem.' But to Japheth, from whom we descend, he said: 'God shall enlarge Japheth and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.'"

Genesis
9:26-27

And explaining to them from the Prophets and other Scriptures, Constantine did not leave them until they themselves said: "It is just as you say."

And they spoke: "Why, having hope in man, do you pretend to be blessed when the Scriptures curse the like of you?"

The Philosopher answered: "Is David cursed or blessed?"

They said: "Most blessed."

And the Philosopher said: We also have hope in the One in whom he hoped. For it is said in the Psalms: 'The man of my peace,⁶⁶ in Him have I hope.' And that man is Christ, and God. But he who has hope in an ordinary man, we also consider him cursed."

Psalms
41:9

And again they put forth another example, saying: "How can you Christians reject circumcision when Christ did not reject it but performed it according to the law?"

The Philosopher answered: "But He who once said to Abraham: 'Behold, this is a token betwixt me and you,⁶⁷ having come, fulfilled it and maintained it from that time to this.'⁶⁸ However,

Genesis
17:11

He did not allow it to continue henceforth, but gave us baptism.”

And they said: “Then why were there once others who pleased God, and yet did not accept this token but Abraham’s?”

The Philosopher answered: “Because none of them, it appears, had two wives save Abraham. Therefore He circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, setting a boundary not to be transgressed further; however He set an example for others to follow in accordance with the first period of Adam’s life. And He did the same unto Jacob, having shrunk the sinew of his thigh for taking four wives. He named Jacob Israel, that is, the mind that sees God, after he understood the reason for which this was done unto him. For, it appears, he was no longer to have relations with a woman. But Abraham did not understand this.”⁶⁹

And again the Jews questioned: “How can you who worship idols pretend to please God?”

The Philosopher answered: “Learn first to distinguish the nouns, what an image is and what an idol, and considering this, do not assail Christians. For in your language there are ten nouns for this term. Therefore, I now ask you: Was the tabernacle which Moses carried down the mountain an image or an image of an image, a comparable image which he skillfully made with taches and skins and twined linens and extraordinary cherubim?⁷⁰ And since he made it in this way, do we say that you for this reason render homage and worship wood, skins and twined linens rather than God who at that time had given such an image? The same is true of Solomon’s temple, since it had figures of cherubim and angels and images of many other things.⁷¹ Thus, we Christians also make images of those who pleased God, distinguishing good from demoniac images, and thereby render like honor. For the Scriptures condemn those who sacrifice their sons and daughters to devils.”⁷²

And the Jews said: “How is it that by eating the meat of swine and hare you do not oppose God.”⁷³

He answered them: “Because the first covenant commands, ‘Eat all things even as the green herb.’ For unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled, even their conscience is defiled. And God speaks in Genesis: ‘Behold, everything is very good.’⁷⁴ But because of your greed, He withheld some things from you. ‘For Jacob ate,’ he said, ‘and was sated, and His beloved forsook Him.’⁷⁵ And furthermore: ‘The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.’ ”

Genesis

9:3

Titus

1:15

Genesis

1:31

Exodus

32:6

Thus, having condensed this from much, we set it down briefly for remembrance sake. And he who wishes to seek the actual discussions in their entirety can find them in Constantine’s writings, which our teacher, Archbishop Methodius, translated and divided into eight discourses.⁷⁶ And there one shall see the power

of words inspired by God's grace, which like a flame burns opponents.

Hearing his sweet and seemly words, the chieftains said to him: "You were sent here for our edification by God, and from Him learned all the Scriptures; you have spoken properly, delighting each of us in full with the mellifluous words from the Holy Scriptures. But we are an illiterate people and believe you are from God. Moreover, if you wish to bring peace to our souls, explain everything to us with parables in the order we ask them of you."

And thus they parted in order to rest.

11 When they gathered on the following day they spoke to him, saying: "O venerable man, demonstrate to us through parables and reason which faith is best of all."

The Philosopher answered them: "Two newly-weds lived in high esteem with a certain king and were much loved. However, because they sinned, he banished them, and sent them away from the land. Living in exile for many years, they begot children in poverty. The children gathered together and took counsel concerning the way in which they could regain their former station. One of them spoke this way, another that, and still another gave different counsel. Therefore, which counsel is worthy of support? Ought it not be the best?"

And they said: "Why say you this? Surely each considers his own counsel best, the Saracens too, and others theirs.⁷⁷ Tell us, which of these is the best opinion?"

The Philosopher then said: "Fire tests gold and silver; but through reason man distinguishes a lie from the truth. Therefore tell me: What was the reason for the First Fall? Was it not for beholding the sweet fruit as well as craving divinity?"

And they said: "That is so."

The Philosopher then said: "And if harm befell someone who ate honey and drank cold water, and a doctor came and said to him: 'Eat more honey and you will recover.' And to the one who will have drunk the water he says: 'Drink your fill of cold water and stand naked in the frost and you will recover.' But another doctor speaks otherwise and prescribes the opposite treatment: 'Instead of honey drink something bitter, and fast; and instead of cold, drink something tepid and warm yourself.' Which then of these two treats more skillfully?"

They all answered: "The one who prescribes the opposite treatment. For it is fitting to destroy lustful sweetness with the bitterness of life, and pride with humility, treating everything with its opposite. And we also say: 'The tree which is first to put forth a thorn will be last to bear sweet fruit.'"

And again the Philosopher answered: "Well spoken.⁷⁸ For Christ's Law reveals the austerity of a godly life which afterwards, in the eternal dwellings, brings fruit one hundredfold."

Then one of them, who knew well the malice of the Saracens, asked the Philosopher: "Tell me, O guest, why do you not support Mohammed? For he praised Christ highly in his writings, saying: 'He was born of a virgin, a sister of Moses, the great prophet,' and that, 'He resurrected the dead and with great power healed all sickness.'" ⁷⁹

And the Philosopher answered him: "Let the Kagan judge between us. Tell me though, if Mohammed is a prophet, how can we have faith in Daniel? For Daniel said: 'Unto Christ all vision and prophesy shall cease.'⁸⁰ How can he who appeared after Christ be a prophet? For if we call him a prophet, we reject Daniel."

Then many of them spoke: "What Daniel said was said through the spirit of God. As for Mohammed, who spewed forth his greatest deceptions from malice and dissoluteness, we all know him to be a liar and the bane of everyone's salvation."

And the first counsellor among them said to the friends of the Saracens: "With God's help this guest has dashed all the pride of the Jews on the ground, but yours has he cast to the other side of the river like filth."

And now Constantine spoke to all the people: "Just as God gave the Christian Emperor power ⁸¹ over all nations and consummate wisdom, so He entrusted also to them the faith without which none can live eternal life. Glory be to God forever!" And in tears the Philosopher said to all: "Brethren and fathers, friends and children! Behold, God has given all understanding and an appropriate answer. And if there is still someone who is opposed, let him come forth and be convincing, else he be convinced. And he who heeds this, may he be baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity. He who does not desire this, from his sin am I removed; but he himself will see Judgment Day when the Ancient of Days shall sit in judgment of all nations as God." ⁸²

They answered: "We are not our own enemies; but gradually, he who can, for thus do we command, may he be baptized voluntarily, if he wishes even from this day. But those among us who bow to the west, or pray in the manner of Jews, or keep the Saracen faith, shall soon be put to death by us."

And thus they parted joyfully.

At that time about two hundred of these people were baptized, having cast off heathen abominations and lawless marriages. And the Kagan wrote the following epistle to the Emperor: "Lord, you have sent us a man who in word and deed has shown us that the Christian faith is holy. We are convinced it is the true

faith and, in the hope that we too shall attain it, we have commanded all to be baptized voluntarily. We all are friends of your Empire and are at your service wherever you require it.”

Seeing the Philosopher off, the Kagan offered him many gifts, but he did not accept them, saying: “Give me as many Greek captives as you have here. That means more to me than all your gifts.”

Having gathered about two hundred captives, they gave them to him. And he went on his way, rejoicing.

12 When they reached a waterless, barren region, they could not endure the thirst. Though they found water in a salt marsh, they could not drink of it for it was like gall. And when they all separated to search for water, Constantine said to Methodius, his brother: “I can endure the thirst no longer. Scoop up some of this water. For He who once turned bitter water into sweet for the Israelites shall also bring us comfort.”⁸³

Scooping it up, they found it sweet like honey, and cold. And they both drank, praising God for accomplishing this for His servants.

While supping with the archbishop in Kherson, the Philosopher said to him: “Pray for me, Father, as my own father would.” And when some of them asked him in private why he had done this, the Philosopher answered: “Verily, on the morrow he shall leave us and depart unto the Lord.”

And so it was; these words came to pass.

In the land of Phoullae stood a great oak which had grown together with a cherry tree, and under it sacrifices were offered.⁸⁴ It was called Alexander, and women were not permitted to approach it or the sacrifices. When the Philosopher learned of this, he did not hesitate to betake himself to them. And standing among them, he said to them: “The Hellenites inherited eternal torment for having worshiped as God the heavens and the earth as well as all creation. How then shall you who worship a tree, a worthless thing intended for burning, escape the eternal fire?”

And they answered: “We have not just begun to do this, but have taken it from our fathers. All our requests are fulfilled by it, most of all rainfall, and much else. How can we do that which none has dared to do? For if someone were to dare this, he will then see death, and furthermore, we will not see rainfall until the end.”

The Philosopher answered them: “God speaks of you in the Scriptures. How can you deny Him? For Isaiah cried out in the name of the Lord, saying: ‘Behold, I am coming to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of

them unto the nations, to Tarshish, and to Pul and Lud and Mo-soch, and to Tubal and Javan, and to Helladas, and to the isles afar off, that have not heard my name, and they shall declare my fame among the Gentiles.’⁸⁵says the Lord Almighty. And again: ‘Behold, I will send many fishers and hunters, and they shall hunt you from the hills, and out of the holes of the rocks.’⁸⁶ Brethren, know the God who created you. Behold the Gospel of God’s New Covenant in which you too were baptized.”

And thus, having persuaded them with sweet words, he commanded them to cut down and burn the tree. Their elder bowed, came forth and kissed the Holy Gospel, as did all the others. Upon receiving white candles from the Philosopher, they walked toward the tree, chanting. And seizing an axe, Constantine struck the tree thirty-three times. Then he commanded all to chop and uproot it, and burn it. That very same night God sent rain and watered the earth. And with great rejoicing they praised God, and God rejoiced greatly over this.

13 The Philosopher then went to the Imperial City. After seeing the Emperor, he took up residence in the Church of the Holy Apostles and prayed to God. In St. Sophia there was a chalice, the work of Solomon, made of precious stone. On it were inscribed words in Hebrew and Samaritan letters which none were able to read or explain. Taking it up, the Philosopher read and explained. It was as follows: “Prophesy thusly the while, O star: Be a drink unto the Lord, the First-Born, during His vigil at night.” And after this, other words: “For the Lord’s tasting of His creation from another tree, drink, be drunk with joy and cry out ‘Hallelujah!’ ” And after this, a third part: “Behold the Prince, and the entire assembly shall see His glory and David among them.” And after this, a number was written: “Nine hundred and nine.” Calculating precisely, the Philosopher discovered that from the twelfth year of Solomon’s reign to the birth of Christ is nine hundred and nine years. This is a reckoning about Christ.⁸⁷

14 While the Philosopher was rejoicing in God, yet another matter arose, and a task no less than the former. For Rastislav, the Prince of Moravia,⁸⁸ through God’s admonition, took counsel with his Moravian princes and appealed to Emperor Michael, saying: “Though our people have rejected paganism and observe Christian law, we do not have a teacher who can explain to us in our language the true Christian faith, so that other countries which look to us might emulate us. Therefore, O lord, send us such a bishop and teacher; for from you good law issues to all countries.”

And having gathered his council, the Emperor summoned

Constantine the Philosopher and had him listen to this matter. And he said: "Philosopher, I know that you are weary, but it is necessary that you go there. For no one can attend to this matter like you."

And the Philosopher answered: "Though I am weary and sick in body, I shall go there gladly if they have a script for their language."

Then the Emperor said to him: "My grandfather and my father, and many others have sought this but did not find it. How then can I find it?"

And the Philosopher answered: "Who can write a language on water and acquire for himself a heretic's name?"⁸⁹

And together with his uncle,⁹⁰ Bardas, the Emperor answered him again: ⁹¹ "If you wish, God may give you this as He gives to everyone that asks without doubt, and opens to them that knock."⁹²

The Philosopher went and, following his old habit, gave himself up to prayer together with his other associates. Hearing the prayer of His servants, God soon appeared to him. And immediately Constantine composed letters and began to write the language of the Gospel, that is: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and so forth.

John
1:1

The Emperor rejoiced, and together with his counsellors glorified God. And he sent Constantine with many gifts, after writing the following epistle to Rastislav: "God, who will have all men come unto the knowledge of the truth and raise themselves to a greater station, having noted your faith and struggles, arranged now, in our time, to fulfill your request and reveal a script for your language, which did not exist in the beginning but only in later times, so that you may be counted among the great nations that praise God in their own language. Therefore, we have sent you the one to whom God revealed this, a venerable and pious and very learned man, a philosopher. Thus, accept this gift which is greater and more valuable than all gold and silver, precious stones and transient riches. And strive zealously with him to strengthen his work, and with all your heart to seek God. And do not reject universal salvation. Convince all not to be idle, but to take the true path. so that, having led them to divine understanding through your struggles, you too shall receive your reward – both in this age and the next – for the souls of all who wish to believe in Christ our God now and evermore. Thus shall you leave your memory to future generations like the great Emperor Constantine."⁹³

I Tim.
2:4

15 When Constantine arrived in Moravia, Rastislav received him with great honor. And he gathered students and gave them over to

Constantine for instruction. As soon as all the church offices were accepted,⁹⁴ he taught them Matins and the Hours, Vespers and the Compline, and the Liturgy. And according to the word of the prophet, the ears of the deaf were unstopped, the Words of the Scriptures were heard, and the tongues of stammerers spoke clearly.⁹⁵ And God rejoiced over this, while the Devil was shamed.

Because God's Word was spreading, the evil envier from the days of creation, the thrice-accursed Devil, was unable to bear this good and entered his vessels. And he began to rouse many, saying to them: "God is not glorified by this. For if this were pleasing unto Him, could He not have ordained from the beginning that they should glorify Him, writing their language in their own script? But only three languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, were chosen as appropriate for rendering glory unto God."

These were the cohorts of the Latins speaking, archpriests, priests, and their disciples.⁹⁶ And having fought with them like David with the Philistines,⁹⁷ Constantine defeated them with words from the Scriptures, and called them trilinguists, since Pilate had thus written the Lord's title.⁹⁸

And this was not all they were saying, but they also were teaching other impieties, saying: "Underground live people with huge heads; and all reptiles are the creation of the Devil, and if one kills a snake, he will be absolved of nine sins because of this. If one kills a man, let him drink from a wooden cup for three months and not touch one of glass." And they forbade neither the offering of sacrifices according to the ancient custom, nor shameful marriages.

Cutting all this down like thorns, Constantine burned them with the fire of Scripture, saying: "Offer unto God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High. Send not away the wife of thy youth. For if having begun to hate her, thou send her away, wickedness covers not thy lust, saith the Lord Almighty. And take heed to your spirit, and let none leave the wife of thy youth; and that which I hated ye have done, because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, whom thou hast forsaken: Yet is she thy companion and the wife of thy covenant.⁹⁹ And in the Gospel the Lord says: 'Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.' And furthermore: 'But I say unto you: That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.' And the Apostle said: 'What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.'"

Psalm
50:14
Malachi
2:14-15

Matthew
5:27-28

Matthew
5:32

Matthew
19:6

Constantine spent forty months in Moravia, and then left to ordain his disciples. On the way Kocel,¹⁰⁰ Prince of Pannonia, received him and took a great liking to the Slavic letters. He learned them himself, and gave him about fifty students to be taught them. He rendered him great honor, and accompanied him. But Constantine took neither gold nor silver nor other things from either Rastislav or Kocel. He set down the word of the Gospel without sustenance, asked only for nine hundred captives, and released them.

16 When he was in Venice, bishops, priests and monks gathered against him like ravens against a falcon. And they advanced the trilingual heresy, saying: "Tell us, O man, how is it that you now teach, having created letters for the Slavs, which none else have found before, neither the Apostle, nor the pope of Rome, nor Gregory the Theologian,¹⁰¹ nor Jerome, nor Augustine? We know of only three languages worthy of praising God in the Scriptures, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin."

And the Philosopher answered them: "Does not God's rain fall upon all equally? And does not the sun shine also upon all? And do we not all breathe air in the same way? Are you not ashamed to mention only three tongues, and to command all other nations and tribes to be blind and deaf? Tell me, do you render God powerless, that He is incapable of granting this? Or envious, that He does not desire this? We know of numerous peoples who possess writing and render glory unto God, each in its own language. Surely these are obvious: Armenians, Persians, Abkhazians, Iberians, Sogdians, Goths, Avars, Turks, Khazars, Arabs, Egyptians, and many others.¹⁰² If you do not wish to understand this, at least recognize the judgment of the Scriptures. For David cries out, saying: 'O sing unto the Lord, all the earth: sing unto the Lord a new song.' And again: 'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.' And likewise: 'Let all the earth worship Thee, and sing unto Thee; let it sing to Thy name, God on High.' And furthermore: 'O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him, all ye people. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord.' And in the Gospel according to John it says: 'But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God.' And again in the same Gospel: 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in Me through their word, that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee.'

Psalm
96:1
Psalm
98:4
Psalm
66:4

Psalm
117:1
Psalm
150:6
John
1:12
John
17:20-21

And Matthew said: 'All power is given unto Me in heaven, and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Matthew
28:18-20

Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of time. Amen.'

And Mark says again: 'Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues.'

Mark
16:15-17

And unto you also is said, teachers of the law: 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.'

Matthew
23:13

And furthermore: 'Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in, ye hindered.'

Luke
11:52

And Paul said to the Corinthians: 'I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth, than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. Now, brethren, if I come unto you, speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification. Therefore, if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh, a barbarian, and he that speaketh, shall be a barbarian unto me. Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. Wherefore, let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue, pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say, Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: Yet in church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand

I Cor.
14:5-40

words in an unknown tongue. Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore, tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not; but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe. If therefore, the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth. How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church: and let him speak to himself, and to God. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently, and in order.'

And again he says: 'And that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' Amen."

Phil.
2:11

And with these words and many more, he shamed them and went away, leaving them.

17 Upon learning of Constantine, the Pope of Rome sent for him. And when he came to Rome, the Apostolic Father himself, Hadrian and all the townspeople came out to meet him, carrying

candles. For he was carrying the relics of St. Clement the Martyr and Pope of Rome.¹⁰⁴ And at once God wrought glorious miracles for his sake: a paralytic was healed, and many others were cured of various maladies. And even captives were at once liberated from the hands of their captors when they invoked Christ and St. Clement.

Accepting the Slavic Scriptures, the Pope placed them in the Church of St. Mary called Phatne.¹⁰⁵ And the holy liturgy was celebrated over them. Then the Pope commanded two bishops, Formosus and Gauderich,¹⁰⁶ to consecrate the Slavic disciples. And when they were consecrated they at once celebrated the liturgy in the Slavic language in the Church of the Apostle Peter. And the next day they celebrated in the Church of St. Petronilla, and on the following day in the Church of St. Andrew. And then they celebrated the entire night, glorifying God in Slavic once again in the Church of the Apostle Paul, the great universal teacher. And in the morning they again celebrated the liturgy over his blessed grave with the help of Bishop Arsenius, one of the seven bishops, and of Anastasius the librarian.¹⁰⁷

The Philosopher and his disciples did not cease to render due praise unto God for this. And the Romans did not cease to come to him and question him. And if someone wished to ask about these things, they received double and triple explanations to their questions from him, and would joyfully return to their homes again. Then a certain Jew, who would come and debate with him, said to him once: "Christ has not yet come according to the number of years when the One, of whom the prophets speak, shall be born of a virgin."

Calculating for him all the years from Adam by generations, the Philosopher told him precisely that He has come, and the number of years from then till now. And having instructed him, he dismissed him.

18 And his many labors overtook him, and he fell ill. Enduring his illness for many days, he once had a divine revelation and began to chant the following: "When they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, my spirit rejoiced, and my heart was gladdened."

Psalm
122:1

Having put on his venerable garments, he thus spent that entire day rejoicing and saying: "Henceforth I am neither a servant of the Emperor nor of anyone else on earth, but only of God Almighty. I was not, and I came to be, and am forever. Amen."

On the following day he put on holy monastic dress and, receiving light to light,¹⁰⁸ called himself Cyril. He spent fifty days in that dress.¹⁰⁹ And when the hour to repose and remove to the eternal dwellings approached, he raised his arms to God and, in tears, prayed, saying thus: "O Lord, my God, who hast created

all the ranks of angels and incorporeal powers, stretched out the heavens and founded the earth, and brought all things into being from non-being, who hast always heeded those that work Thy will, fear Thee and keep Thy commandments, heed my prayer and preserve Thy faithful flock which Thou appointed to me, Thy useless and unworthy servant. Deliver them from the godless and heathen malice of those speaking blasphemy against Thee, and destroy the trilingual heresy belief. Increase Thy church to a multitude, gather all together in unanimity, and make a chosen people of those who are of one mind in Thy true faith and just confession. And inspire in their hearts the Word of Thy Son, for it is Thy gift. If Thou hast accepted us, unworthy ones, to preach the Gospel of Thy Christ, then those who are striving for good deeds and doing what pleases Thee, whom Thou hast given to me, I return to Thee as Thine. Guide them with Thy firm right hand and shelter them with the cover of Thy wings, so that all might praise and glorify Thy name, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.”

He kissed everyone with a holy kiss and said: “Blessed be God, who hath not given us as prey into the teeth of our invisible enemies, but hath smashed their snare and saved us from their corruption.” And thus he reposed in the Lord at 42 years of age, on the 14th day of the month of February, of the second indiction, the 6370th year from the creation of this world.¹¹⁰

Psalm
124:6

And the Apostolic Father commanded all Greeks residing in Rome, as well as Romans, to gather with candles, chant over him and join his funeral procession, as they would for the Pope himself. And this they did. Then Methodius, his brother, entreated the Apostolic Father saying: “Our mother adjured us that the one of us first to pass away be brought to his brother’s monastery to be buried there.”

And the Pope commanded that he be put into a coffin and that it be nailed shut with iron nails. He kept him this way for seven days, preparing for the journey. But the Roman bishops said to the Apostolic Father: “Though he travelled through many lands, God led him here, and here He received his soul. Thus, it is proper that he be buried here as a venerable man.”

Then the Apostolic Father said: “For the sake of his saintliness and charity I shall transgress¹¹¹ Roman custom and bury him in my tomb, in the Church of the Holy Apostle Peter.”

And his brother said: “Since you do not heed me and do not give him up, let him, if it pleases you, rest in the Church of St. Clement, for he came here with him.”

And the Apostolic Father commanded that this be done. Gathering again with all the people who wished to join the proces-

sion of honor, the bishops said: "Let us unnaïl the coffin and see whether anything has been taken from him."¹¹²

After much effort, they were unable to unnaïl the coffin, by God's command. And thus they put him with the coffin into a tomb to the right of the altar in the Church of St. Clement,¹¹³ where many miracles began to occur. When the Romans saw these miracles, they became even more attached to his saintliness and honor. Painting his icon over the tomb, they began to light candles over it day and night and praise God, who thus glorifies those who glorify Him. Unto Him glory, honor, and reverence forever. Amen.

Notes to the *Life* of Constantine

- 1 The initial passage is a paraphrase from Paul's first epistle to Timothy (I Tim. 2:4).

In the *Vitae* of Constantine and Methodius the influence of the particular school of spirituality to which the author belonged is seen in the frequent use of scriptural quotations, paraphrases, and allusions. This is a common stylistic device in hagiographical writings.

Cf. also Ezekiel 33:11.

- 2 The clause, "and I call them by name," is an emendation to the quoted passage from John 10:27. Cf. Revelation 21:24.
- 3 During the first half of the ninth century the area of Thessalonica constituted a Byzantine administrative division called a theme (*thema*). A theme was ruled by a *strategos* who possessed supreme power in both military and civilian matters. (See George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, 95–97, 193–95.) *Drungarios* was the title of a high-ranking military officer. He was subordinate to the *strategos*.

It is curious that the name of Constantine's mother is not given. We assume, however, that it was Mary, the name by which she is called in later legends.

- 4 This passage paraphrases the Wisdom of Solomon 7:9, which reads: "For she [wisdom] is more beautiful than the sun,..."
- 5 The reference to Placidus is perhaps best explained by summarizing the *Legend of Saint Eustathius*. It is set during the reign of the Roman Emperor Trajan (98–117) and deals with Placidus, a wealthy nobleman and general widely known for his military prowess. Once while hunting deer, Placidus noticed a large stag standing at a distance and began to stalk it. Moving in for the kill, he discerned a cross and the figure of Christ in the stag's antlers and heard a voice, questioning why he was stalking Christ whom he unconsciously revered. He fainted. When he came to his senses, he heard the same voice again, which now commanded him to be baptized with his wife and two sons and to return in order to learn of his fate. Taking

the name Eustathius, he is baptized and returns to the stag from which he learns that he will be tested severely, lose everything, but in the end gain glory. His tribulations begin at once. Plague descends upon his house and destroys his servants and livestock; his home is looted; he is separated from his wife and sons—his wife is taken away by a sea captain and his sons are carried off by wild beasts. Fifteen years hence, the Emperor dispatches men to search for Placidas, whom they find and recognize by a distinctive scar on the neck. Reinstated to his former position, he leads the Roman army to victory against the barbarians, is miraculously reunited with his wife and sons, and returns to Rome. To celebrate the victory, the Emperor wishes to make a sacrifice to Apollo, but Eustathius refuses, admitting that he is a Christian. For this he and his family are condemned to death and perish in a furnace. The unconsumed bodies of the martyrs are then buried with honor.

The Greek and Latin texts of the *Legend of Saint Eustathius* are in J.P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, Series Graeca, Vol. 105, cols. 375-418. For a discussion of the *Legend*, see Hippolyte Delahaye's article, "La Legende de Saint Eustachi," *Mélanges D'Hagiographie Grecque et Latine* (Brussels, 1966), 212-39.

It is difficult to say why the biographer compared Constantine to Placidas. Perhaps it was because both heroes were party to incidents which occurred during a hunt and marked an important turning point in the life of each. Placidas rejected paganism and was converted to Christianity, i.e., to a new way of life, while Constantine rejected mundane pleasures and began to contemplate the vanity of this life. Both became committed to Christ, Placidas through a stag, Constantine through a falcon. However, it is curious that the hagiographer should draw an analogy for his spiritual hero from a myth based on a popular Greek secular tale.

- 6 Saint Gregory of Nazianzus (?330–395) earned the appellation "Theologian" after delivering five discourses on the Trinity. He is considered one of the founding fathers of the Eastern Church. Under his leadership Orthodoxy prevailed over the Arian heresy (see notes 26 and 27 to the *Vita* of Methodius). Perhaps it was his poetic works which inspired Constantine to compose his eulogy.
- 7 *Logothete* was an important administrative post corresponding to a modern-day member of the cabinet. Theoctistus was the *Logothete* of the Drome under Empress Theodora who ruled from 842–856 in place of her underaged son, Emperor Michael III. There is an obvious anachronism in the biographer's assertion that Constantine was sent for in order to study with the Emperor, since in 842, the year Constantine arrived in Constantinople, Michael was three years old. Perhaps they had the same teachers.

For the sake of clarity, the name Constantine is inserted at times for the third-person singular pronoun.

- 8 The clause, "so that I might understand what is Thy will and be saved," is an emendation of the quoted passage from the Wisdom of Solomon 9:5 and Psalm 116:16. At the beginning of this quotation the Slavic

text substitutes “our” for “my,” viz.: “O God of our fathers” instead of “O God of my fathers” (see Wisdom of Solomon 9:1).

- 9 The traditional Slavic name for Constantinople was *cesar' grad*”, which translated verbatim means the Imperial City.
- 10 It is clear from other manuscripts of the *Vita* that the form *diačice* is a distortion of the word *dialektika* (dialectics). Indeed, the distortion of foreign words is one of the most frequently encountered errors in medieval texts.
- 11 Leo was the Archbishop of Thessalonica. After the defeat of the iconoclastic movement (842), he came to Constantinople where he gained the appellation “Mathematician” and a teaching position in the church. In fact his fame as a mathematician spread beyond the borders of Byzantium, for it is reported that Caliph Mamun invited Leo to visit Bagdad. When Emperor Michael III came to power (856), his uncle Bardas reorganized the Imperial University and placed Leo at its head.

Photius was a brilliant scholar and theologian. He became Patriarch of Constantinople after Ignatius was deposed and held this position from 858–867 and again from 878–886. The biographer is able to lend weight to his statements concerning Constantine’s genius by mentioning that as a young man he studied with Leo and Photius.

The studies mentioned here usually made up the curriculum of the trivium and quadrivium of medieval schools.

- 12 The personal pronoun and verb “He conferred” are omitted in the original. The correction was made on the basis of other manuscripts of the *Vita* (see Lavrov, *Materialy*, p. 42).
- 13 The phrase *ot kr'stila izex'* (I took out of the font) seems to be a circumlocution meaning “be godparent to” or “sponsor at baptism.” The *Logothete* apparently was a eunuch and had no children of his own.
- 14 The meaning of this statement is not entirely clear. Of what honor and wealth is Constantine speaking? Perhaps he is referring to regaining Paradise after the expulsion of Adam and Eve. This assumption is based on Constantine’s subsequent reply to the Khazars concerning his rank, “Though I have sought my forefather’s former station, I have not succeeded in obtaining it, for I am Adam’s scion” (see p.). Thus, “honor and wealth” perhaps symbolizes the state of grace before Original Sin.
- 15 This statement is inaccurate historically because the Emperor Theophilus died in 842. The *Logothete* undoubtedly spoke with Empress Theodora (see note 7). It is possible, however, that this “inaccuracy” is the result of a scribal error—perhaps due to an unclear abbreviation—since other manuscripts of the *Vita* have Empress (*cesarica*) instead of Emperor (*cesar'*).
- 16 The Narrow Sea (*Uskoe more*) seems to be the Slavic circumlocution for strait. Indeed, Constantine had left for the Bosphorus. The Greek word translates literally as “ox ford” and is derived from the mythological tale about Io, who crossed the Bosphorus of Thrace in the form of a heifer.

It is possible that Constantine hid at the Kleidion Monastery, where the iconoclast patriarch John was later imprisoned.

17 John VII, known as John Grammaticus, was Patriarch of Constantinople from 837–843. He was a confirmed iconoclast and played an important role in composing the acts of the Synod of 815, which repudiated the Second Council of Nicaea (787) and accepted the decision of the iconoclast council of 754. As a result icons were ordered destroyed. John was also tutor to Theophilus who became emperor and an ardent iconoclast. However, after Theophilus' death, his wife Theodora and her supporters, *Logothete* Theoctistus and Bardas (see note 7), deposed John and restored the veneration of icons. John was exiled to a monastery on the Bosphorus.

Dvornik has pointed out that the disputations between John and the youthful Constantine may be imaginative, since there was still a strong iconoclastic movement in Constantinople and it is unlikely that they would be given an opportunity to defend their position in a debate (see F. Dvornik, "The Patriarch Photius and Iconoclase," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 7 [1953], 69–97). However, there are others (Vasica et al) who feel that this disputation is a faithful echo of such an event, and similar "echoes" are found in Byzantine literature dating from the time of the iconoclastic controversy.

18 It is not clear which Nestor is being referred to. The passage seems to allude to the figure of Nestor mentioned in the *Odyssey* and *Illiad*, who in his old age exhorted young warriors to battle. However, it is also possible that it may refer to the Christian martyr Nestor, of whom mention is made in the *Life of Demetrius* (see Note 74 in the *Vita* of Methodius). Here Nestor engages and defeats in single combat the gladiator Lyacus (see Dvornik, *Byzantine Missions*, 340–41).

19 This passage alludes to Exodus 20:4, which reads: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."

20 As used by the Christians, Hagarite is a pejorative designation for the ancestors of Hagar, the Arab peoples. According to the Bible (Gen. 16:2–15; 21:2–14), Sarah was barren and Abraham lay with her slave woman Hagar, who bore him a son, Ishmael. However, after Sarah bore Isaac, Hagar and Ishmael were driven out. Thus, Hagarites are also outcasts.

The term "Saracens" is of unknown origin. It was another medieval designation for the Arabs as well as for all others who professed Islam.

By the ninth century the Arabs had succeeded in whittling away extensive portions of the Byzantine Empire and were advancing toward Sicily. Apart from their military campaigns, they also waged a polemical war against basic Christian doctrines, especially the Trinity, which caused considerable concern in Constantinople about Christians living under Arab rule. This resulted in a proliferation of apologetical literature directed against Islam, an echo of which is found here.

21 According to I Samuel 17:40, David "chose him five smooth stones out of the brook..." In the present context the three stones are meant apparently to symbolize the Trinity.

22 The translation of this passage follows a correction suggested by Dummier

and Miklosich, i.e., instead of *Priposlaše že s'' nim'' assigkrita i Georgia polašu*, translate *Pristaviše že k'' nemu asikrita Georgija i poslaše ja* (see E. Dummier and F. Miklosich, *Die Legende vom hl. Cyrillus* [Vienna, 1870], p. 217). The exact meaning of this passage as recorded in the manuscript is unclear because of the word *polašu*. It is obvious from the above correction that his word was not considered a proper noun. On the other hand, Dvornik in his book *Les Legendes de Constantin et de Methode, Vues de Byzance* (Prague, 1933), 93–97, viewed as similar the words *polasa* (?) and *polaca* (palatine), and concluded that a palatine, perhaps Photius himself, may also have taken part in the mission to the Arabs. However, Dvornik rejected this interpretation in a later reprint of this volume (Hattiesburg, 1969, xiv) as well as in another work, *Byzantine Missions Among the Slavs: SS Constantine-Cyril and Methodius* (New Brunswick, 1970), p. 287, where this passage is translated: "They attached to him the ascrete George and sent them." Since the word *polaša* has never been attested, it is possible that it resulted from a scribal error or interpretation.

- 23 This passage consists primarily of paraphrases from Matthew 5:39 and 44, and Luke 6:29. However, the opening words, "Pray for," is a Slavic emendation. In both Matthew 5:44 and Luke 6:27 we read: "Love your enemies..."
- 24 Constantine is referring to the fact that Greek culture nurtured other cultures, since it was one of the first to develop the various arts. Besides, the Arabs themselves emulated the Greeks: they studied Greek philosophy, mathematics, science, and medicine, and copied Greek architecture.
- 25 The form *amerumnin* is evidently a corruption of the Arabic appellation for the caliph, *amir al-mu' minin*, or "commander of the faithful." This title was first accepted by Omar II (717–720) and its usage was continued by subsequent caliphs. At the time of Constantine's mission to the Arabs the reigning caliph was Al-Mutawakkil (847–861). He was intolerant of other religions and persecuted Jew and Christian alike. For example, he is known to have forced Jews and Christians to live within pales and adopt distinctive dress (see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (London, 1963), III, p. 786.
- 26 This is not a verbatim quotation from Mark 16:18, which reads: "And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."

The attempt on Constantine's life indicates that the mission was a failure. This contention is supported by the fact that there was a war between the Greeks and Arabs from 851–853.

- 27 Judging by another manuscript of the *Vita* (cf. Lvov) where instead of *nadeždq v''zlagae* (place hope) we find *pečal' v''zmetae* (cast care), this passage seems to allude to I Peter 5:7, which reads: "Casting all your cares upon Him; for He careth for you." (See Lavrov, *Materialy*, p. 48.)
- 28 The allusion here is to Exodus 16:2-15. The political upheaval of 856 gave Bardas (see Note 91) control of the government after the Empress Theodora was removed from the throne and forced into a convent, and the *Logothete* Theoctistus—Constantine's friend—was murdered.

Perhaps this occasioned his withdrawal into solitude and apparent financial difficulties.

- 29 Mount Olympus was one of the many monasteries in Bithynia, located in the inaccessible mountainous districts of northwest Asia Minor. Such monasteries were referred to as "Holy Mountains," and were important religious centers for Byzantium.
- 30 The Khazars were a Turkic people who lived north of the Caucasus Mountains in the region between the Azov and Caspian Seas. Little is known about them. They are first mentioned in sixth-century historical works and thought to stem from the East Turkic people, the Uigurs, who migrated westward and settled in Eastern Europe around the fifth century. There they founded the Khazar Empire which lasted for several centuries before being overrun by the Russians (see D.M. Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars* [Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1954]). It is generally assumed that Khazar royalty converted to Judaism around the year 800. However, they did not force their religion on their subjects and tolerated a variety of religions. As concerns Constantine's missionary work, no historical corroboration of his mission to Khazaria has been found. Nevertheless, there is little reason to doubt the possibility of such a trip, even though the epistle from the Khazars to Michael III can hardly be considered authentic. It is most unlikely that the Khazars would admit to having "shameful customs," or that the Jews would be engaged in converting the Khazars at that particular time (ca. 860), since Judaism had already been accepted. Perhaps the biographer was aware of accounts dealing with the disputations preceding the conversion to Judaism of Khazar royalty and simply embellished his own work with a similar occurrence. In fact the tradition of religious disputations at the Khazar court is well attested. A rather detailed account of such a disputation is given by the Spaniard Bakri (see Dunlop, p. 90). Since religious disputations were common in Khazaria, the author of the *Vita* may be describing what actually took place in a confrontation between a Christian, Jew, and Muslim. Additional information concerning the Khazars can be found in Imra Boba's *Nomads, Northmen and Slavs* (The Hague, 1967), and in M. I. Artamanov's *Istorija Xazar* (Leningrad, 1962).
- 31 Constantine's words allude to Matthew 10:9–10: "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves."
- 32 Constantine undoubtedly would have been interested in learning Hebrew before confronting the Khazars. The grammar which he translated consisted only of eight parts. The reference is probably to a translation of a Hebrew grammar into Greek.
- 33 There are a number of theories concerning the actual meaning of this passage, but opinions remain divided. When the *Vita* was first published by Dobrovský, scholars were rather surprised by the statement that Constantine found Scriptures written in "Russian letters." To accept it as valid would have necessitated a complete reassessment of Russian linguistic history, since it would mean that the Russians had an orthography preceding and independent of either the Glagolitic or Cyrillic

scripts. It would also mean that there were Christian converts among the Russians—who converted to Christianity in 988—before the Moravian mission. Thus, scholars began to question the meaning of the enigmatic phrase “Russian letters.” One of the earliest hypotheses had Gothic as the possible point of reference. However, the French Slavist André Vaillant refuted the Gothic interpretation by noting that Constantine referred to the Goths (*Gotfy*) while in Vienna. Indeed, why should the biographer refer to the Goths by two different names (see “Les ‘Lettres Russes’ de la Vie de Constantin,” *Revue des Études Slaves*, XV [1935], 75-77). Vaillant in turn advanced his own theory, explaining that the “letters” were Syriac, a name which was simply inverted to Russian by a copyist: cf. the roots *sur’ / rus’* in the words *sur’skimi* (Syriac) and *rus’skimi* (Russian).

This theory was rejected by the Russian historian George Vernadsky who suggested instead that the Russians may have adopted Armenian or Georgian script to their language. He argued that according to the *Vita*, Constantine acquired the language in question quickly and compared it to his own, i.e., the Slavic dialect spoken in Thessalonica. This would explain why he was able to converse with the man who spoke Russian but still had to study the writings (see *Ancient Russia* [New Haven, 1943], 347-50).

Subsequently the eminent Slavist Roman Jakobson (see “Saint Constantin et la Langue Syriacque,” *Annuaire de l’Institut de Philologie et d’Histoire Orientales et Slaves*, VII [1939–1944], 181-86) accepted Vaillant’s hypothesis and reinforced it by indicating another work in which this inversion is found. Thus, in a twelfth-century Bulgarian copy of Khabr’s treatise, “On Russian Letters,” the word Assyrian (*assur-*) is replaced by Russian (*rus-*) (see Lavrov, p. 165). Furthermore, in a prologue version of the *Vita* of Constantine, the fact is mentioned that Constantine knew four languages—Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Hebrew (see Lavrov, p. 101).

More recently another American Slavist Horace Lunt pointed out still another example of the inversion *sur’sk-* to *rus’sk-* in the *First Chronicle of Novgorod* (see “Again the rus skymi pismeni,” *Cercetări de lingvistică*, III [1958], 324-26).

It is interesting to note that the authors of the two standard reference sources on Constantine and Methodius, Franz Grivec, *Konstantin und Method: Lehrer der Slaven*, and Francis Dvornik, *Byzantine Missions Among the Slavs*, accept the Syriac hypothesis. However, it has not been accepted by a number of East European Slavic scholars. The Bulgarian Slavist Emil Georgiev believes the form *rus’skimi pismeni* is correct as it stands and does not necessitate further theorizing on other linguistic possibilities (see *Kiril i Metodij, osnovopoloznici na slavianskite literaturi* [Sofia, 1956], 60-62). The Polish Slavist Tadeusz Lehr-Spławinski favors the Gothic hypothesis but considers Emil Georgiev’s theory possible (see *Zywoty Konstantyna i Metodego* [Poznań, 1959]). The Russian Slavist V.A. Istrin rejects all hypotheses which argue in favor of an inversion. He points out that all the extant copies of the *Vita* contain

the expression "Russian letters." Istrin's major argument for accepting the text as it stands is based on historical sources. He sees nothing surprising in the possibility that there were Russian converts to Christianity living in the Kherson area before the Moravian mission. Moreover, he points out that neither Gothic nor Syriac are mentioned in the *Vita* as languages which Constantine knew. In fact he finds the Syriac hypothesis most objectionable because this language, in his opinion, cannot be connected with the Crimea of that time. Finally, he finds it hard to believe that Constantine would be interested in Syriac Scriptures, since the Syrian Church was largely heretical. Constantine's interest in "Russian letters" can be explained as resulting from his knowledge of a second Slavic language. Consequently Istrin accepts Georgiev's view that the Gospels and Psalter were written in an early Slavic script which is no longer extant. To bolster his argument, he introduces several historical sources including the Russian Chronicles (see *1100 let slavjanskoj azbuki* [Moscow, 1963]).

In the present work the phrase is translated as it is found in the manuscript.

- 34 According to his *Life* (circa 5th century) St. Clement, the Pope of Rome, died a martyr's death in the Crimea. Thus was engendered a tradition concerning St. Clement that became well known in the East and West. And when Constantine made his discovery on 30 January 861, he sincerely believed that he had found his relics. However, the author of the *Vita* confused Clement with another saint, and the entire tradition is legendary.
- 35 Dvornik points out that the relics of St. Clement were thought to be hidden in the ruins of a church on a small island near Kherson (see *Byzantine Missions*, 66-67).
- 36 Constantine wrote a work entitled *Discourse on the Discovery and Translation of the Relics of Saint Clement*. The main source of information about the *Discourse* is a letter written by Anastasius, who was personally acquainted with Constantine in Rome, to Gauderich, Bishop of Velletri (see note 105). In the letter Anastasius speaks of Clement's martyrdom and mentions Constantine's work, which he translated from Greek into Latin (see *Monumenta Germaniae historica: Epistolae*, VII, 435-38).

Curiously the Slavic and Latin translations of the *Discourse* have survived but the original has been lost. Unfortunately the Slavic text, which presumably was translated from the Greek, is very difficult to decipher. Indeed, it would be nearly unintelligible if not for the Latin translation. In this regard, the renowned Slavist Nicholas Van Wijk concluded that the unintelligibility of the Slavic text was largely due to the translator's lack of skill and poor knowledge of Slavic (see "O jazyke na prenesenie mošcej sv. Klimenta," *Byzantinoslavica*, I [1929], 10-15).

The Latin and Slavic texts of the *Discourse* can be found in J. Vašica's "Slovo na prenesenie moštem preslavnego Klimenta neboli legenda Chersonska," *Acta Academiae Velehradensis*, XIX (1948), 38-80. Because of the lexical information contained in the *Discourse*, Van Wijk

believes that it represents one of the earliest Slavic translations.

- 37 The Church Slavic form of the word for Hungarians *ogri* (Old Russian *ugri*) forms the basis for the name of a people who called themselves Magyars. Professor Imra Boba traced the Slavic word to the Altaic tribal name of the Onogurs. The Onogurs and Magyars were separate peoples of Altaic origin who merged only at the end of the ninth century. Since both the Onogurs and Magyars lived in the Pontic Steppe, it is quite possible for either to have attacked Constantine.
- 38 The Meotis Sea is today's Sea of Azov, and the Caspian Gates is the pass at Derbent (Derbend). It is not known where Constantine actually met the Khazar Kagan. Dvornik believes that they met near Derbent at Semender, the summer residence of the Kagans (see *Byzantine Missions*, 65–66). Girvec also places the meeting at Derbent (see *Konstantin und Method*, p. 50).
- 39 Apparently among the Khazars succession was determined by heredity, whereas in Byzantium political and military power often superseded blood lines.
- 40 To avoid ambiguity, "the Khazar" has been inserted for the third person singular "he."
- 41 The Slavic text reads: *n" ot pr'sei v"se mudrosti, jako pogl'sč'se, iznosim' ie...*, which, translated verbatim, means "We take all wisdom from the chest as though it were swallowed."
- 42 Kagan was the title given to Khazar rulers. It was widely used among Altaic peoples and later adopted by Russian princes. For example in Hilarion's *Sermon on Law and Grace*, both Vladimir and Jaroslav are given this appellation. The title itself was first found in an inscription dating back to 293 A.D. Numerous examples of its usage can be found in Orkhon Turkic inscriptions of the seventh and eighth centuries. The Mongol version of it is Khan (*xan*).
- 43 This passage loosely paraphrases Psalm 33:6: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth."
- 44 The phrase, "I am for ever," is a Slavic emendation of Isaiah 48:12, which reads: "Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called. I am he, I am the first, I am also the last."
- 45 "Let alone" is omitted from the original manuscript, but added on the basis of other manuscripts of the *Vita* (see Lavrov, *Materialy*, p. 51).
- 46 This is an allusion to Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he Him..."
- 47 The biblical passages referred to here are: Exodus 3:4: "God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, 'Moses, Moses...';" Exodus 34:5: "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there..."; Job 38:1: "The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind,..."; Exodus 19:18: "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire..."
- 48 Aquila was a Jew who translated the Old Testament into Greek (circa 11th century A.D.). Constantine is apparently quoting from Aquila's translation of Exodus 19:16 and 34:9 (see Grivec, *Konstantin und Method*, p. 50), which does not correspond with the text in the King James

- 49 These are not verbatim quotations from Genesis 9:3–4, 6.
- 50 The translation here expands on a highly elliptical passage which reads: *Jako že pr'vée zapověd' člku v" rai i k" Avraamu inako obrězanie a ne zakon'.*
- 51 The biblical allusion in this passage is to James 2:23: "And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God."
Cf. also II Chronicles 20:7, Isaiah 41:8, and Genesis 9:16.
- 52 There is no such quotation in Ezekiel. However, the passage perhaps alludes to Ezekiel 16:19: "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you;..." See also Ezekiel 36:26.
- 53 These are not verbatim quotations from Jeremiah 31:31–33.
- 54 These are not verbatim quotations from Jeremiah 6:16–19.
- 55 The Philistine Sea is a medieval designation for the Mediterranean.
- 56 This quotation is perhaps an allusion to Deuteronomy 11:22–24: "For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, and to cleave unto Him; then will the Lord drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves. Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread, shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be."
- 57 This passage seems to allude to Isaiah 11:1: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."
- 58 These are not verbatim quotations from Zechariah 9:9–10.
- 59 Since this passage paraphrases Genesis 49:10, the more figurative phraseology of the King James Version has been retained. A more literal rendering of the Slavic would be: "The prince shall not disappear from Judah nor the leader from his thighs."
- 60 If Constantine is referring to Daniel 9:24, as he seems to be, the passage in the Bible reads: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision of prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." It seems that Constantine interpreted the passage to mean seventy weeks (or years) until Christ is Vicar.
- 61 The reference to the "iron kingdom" is from Daniel 2:40: "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron..."
- 62 Constantine is alluding here to Daniel 2:45: "Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king, what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."
- 63 The reference seems to be to the Christian emperors from the various dynasties that ruled the Empire.
- 64 This passage is not a verbatim quotation from Isaiah 65:15–16.
- 65 Though Constantine claims to be quoting from Isaiah and Micah, he is

actually taking passages from Matthew 1:23 in the first instance, and Matthew 2:6 in the second, and mixing them together with passages from Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2-3 respectively.

- 66 It would appear that this passage alludes to Psalm 37:37; "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: For the end of that man is peace."
- 67 See Genesis 17 for an account of the renewal of the covenant.
- 68 That is, from Abraham until Christ.
- 69 The biblical references in this paragraph are to Genesis 17:24, 30, and 32:22-32.
- 70 See Exodus 25-27.
- 71 See Kings 6: 23-32.
- 72 This passage apparently refers to Leviticus 20:2, where we read: "...who-soever he be of the children of Israel or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel; that giveth any of his seed unto Molech, he shall surely be put to death..." Cf. also Psalm 106:37.
- 73 This reference is to the dietary law as set forth in Leviticus 11:6-8: "And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the swine, though he divide the hoof and be cloven-footed, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you. Of their flesh shall ye not eat..."
- 74 The passage from Genesis reads: "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."
- 75 It is assumed that *reče* (he said) in the sentence *s'hñest bw, reče, lakwy' i nasytise, i otvr'žeše v''zljubljennyi* refers to Moses and that the passage itself alludes to Moses' song in Deuteronomy (here Deut. 32:15): "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." Therefore, "His" and "Him" have been added to the elliptic Slavic phrase, *i otvr'žeše v''zljubljennyi* (and His beloved forsook Him).
- 76 It can be assumed from this statement that these discourses existed at one time in Slavic, since the biographer's admonition is addressed to Slavic readers. Unfortunately, however, no Slavic texts have been found to date.
- 77 Since this passage refers to the counsel given by the Jews and Saracens (cf. page), it would seem that a specific reference to the Jews has been omitted. This assumption is strengthened by the fact that other manuscripts of the *Vita* include such a reference (see Lavrov, *Materialy*, p. 22).
- 78 The sentence: "And again the Philosopher answered: 'Well spoken'" is omitted in the original manuscript, but added on the basis of other manuscripts of the *Vita* (see Lavrov, *Materialy*, p. 57).
- 79 For references in this passage see *The Koran*, Sura 3:35, 3:48, and 19:27.
- 80 See reference to Daniel 9:24 in Note 60.
- 81 The word "power" is omitted in the original manuscript, but added on the basis of other manuscripts of the *Vita* (see Lavrov, *Materialy*, p. 57).
- 82 The "Ancient of days" is mentioned in Daniel 7:9, 7:13, and 7:22.
- 83 See Exodus 15:22-25.

92 84 Vernadsky (*Ancient Russia*, p. 352) places Phoullae in the northeast part of the Crimean mountain range. Since the Crimea was populated by a multitude of peoples, little specific information is available on the people of Phoullae. As concerns the worship of trees, this phenomenon was very common in primitive religious observance. For example, it is mentioned several times in Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. Furthermore, the Greek Emperor Constantinus Porphyrogenitus (913–959) notes that Russians made animal sacrifices before a huge oak on an island named after St. Gregory (see *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. Gy. Moravcsik, tr. R.J.H. Jenkins [Budapest, 1949], 56–63). Apparently this tribe had been christianized but still retained some of its pagan customs.

85 In his nearly verbatim quotation from Isaiah 66:18–19, Constantine cleverly connects the land of Pul (*Ful*) with Phoullae. From this connection, E.H. Mins concluded that Constantine knew Hebrew so well that he could use it brilliantly in his polemics. Hence, Constantine chose the homophonous Hebrew name (Pul) over the Greek (Phud) in order to force a connection between the two lands (see “S. Cyril Really Knew Hebrew,” *Melanges P. Boyer* [Paris, 1925], 94–95).

The text has the Greek form *fud* (Phud), which seems to indicate that it was subsequently brought into line with Greek Scriptures. The translation is based on the form found in King James, which is attested in other manuscripts of the *Vita* (see Lavrov, *Materialy*, p. 59).

86 The quotation from Jeremiah 16:16 is somewhat abbreviated and altered.

87 The Byzantine scholar Ihor Sevcenko has identified what he believes to be the Greek source for the text on the chalice (see “The Inscription on Solomon’s Chalice,” *To Honor Roman Jakobson III*, 1806–1817). Cf. also Ezekiel 34:24.

It has been pointed out by Grivec that this calculation is inaccurate and should read 960. Besides, there was no such prophecy about Christ.

88 Rostislav, the Prince of Moravia, ruled from 846–870. There is little doubt that both Rostislav and Emperor Michael III (842–867) saw political advantage in the spread of Byzantine Christianity to Moravia. Rostislav saw Byzantium as a political ally against the Franks and Bulgars whom he feared, and Michael wished to spread Byzantine influence to a country which lay outside the boundaries of the Roman Empire.

89 Josef Bujnoch explains that the phrase “to write on water” is a Greek expression meaning “to do something useless” (see *Zwischen Rom und Byzanz*, [Graz, 1958], p. 171).

The meaning of the passage in which the Emperor refers to the search for a script (alphabet) is obscure. It would have been very easy for him to determine whether such a script existed simply by asking the delegation.

90 This passage reads as follows: *otvešća emu paky crb, i s’ Vardoju i umom svoim...*” The word *umom* (mind, reason) not only strains the intelligibility of this passage but appears to be out of place, given the fact that other manuscripts of the *Vita* have the word *ujem* (uncle), and historically Bardas (*Varda*) was the Emperor’s maternal uncle. Evidently the fifteenth-century copyist misunderstood the word for uncle. In fact, one manuscript distorts both this word and the proper noun *Varda* which becomes

pravda (truth) and reads: "Again the Emperor answered him truthfully and wisely" (see Lavrov, p. 27).

- 91 Bardas, the uncle of Michael III, was a powerful political figure during his nephew's reign. He seems to have been instrumental in planning the murder of the Logothete of the Drome, Theoctistus, and the abduction of Michael's mother Theodora. Ostrogorsky states categorically that during Michael's reign Bardas was "the real ruler of the Byzantine State" (see *History of the Byzantine State*, p. 223).
- 92 The Emperor's words to Constantine paraphrase loosely Matthew 7:7–8: "Ask, and it shall be given to you: seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Cf. also Luke 11:10.
- 93 That is, the first Byzantine Christian ruler, St. Constantine the Great.
- 94 It should be noted that several manuscripts of the *Vita* have the word "translated" (*prělož'*) instead of "accepted" (*priem'*) in the passage about the church offices. This would make more sense given the nature of Constantine's mission. The meaning of "accepted" is not at all clear. Dvornik mentions that the form "accepted" has been taken to indicate that Constantine accepted the Latin rite after his arrival in Moravia. However, this should not be used as proof thereof (see *Byzantine Missions*, p. 107).
- 95 The Scriptural reference is to Isaiah 35:5: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped..." and 32:4: "...and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly."
- 96 The reference here is to the Frankish clergy who were naturally opposed to Constantine's mission to Moravia. They objected most vigorously to his use of the vernacular for the translation of Scripture and holy books. Besides, they feared the consequences of Constantine's success in a land where they themselves had largely failed as missionaries.
- 97 See I Samuel 17.
- 98 In other manuscripts of the *Vita*, Constantine refers to the cohorts of the Latins as "Pilatists (*pilat'ny*) and trilinguists," which qualified more clearly the following reference to Pilate. Since "Pilatists" is omitted from the text, the passage contains a non sequitur.
- In John 19:19–20, there is a reference to the inscription on the cross written in three languages: "And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews...and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin." Those who opposed the use of the vernacular used this inscription as a biblical corroboration of their view, viz., that God should be worshipped in three languages only, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.
- 99 The quotation from Malachi 2:14–15 is inverted and somewhat altered. The last line of this passage contains a quotation from Matthew 19:6 that is attributed to the Apostle. These words, however, are those of Christ.
- 100 Kocel, the son of the Slavic Prince Pribina, was the ruler of Pannonia,

a country bounded on the north and east by the Danube, on the west by the Alps, and on the south by Croatia. It covered territory now occupied by Austria and Hungary. He was killed in 876, fighting off an invasion from the south led by the Croatian Prince Domagoj.

Cf. Matthew 10:9.

- 101 The reference here is incorrect and should read Gregory the Dialog (Gregorios Dialogos), the other name for Pope St. Gregory the Great.
- 102 Both Dvornik and Grivec have noted that the list of peoples quoted by Constantine is arbitrary. It includes nations which possessed writing systems and praised God in their own language as well as nations which did not. For example, Armenia was converted to Christianity in the third century and worked out a written language by the fifth century; the Ibérians (Georgians) embraced Christianity in the fourth century and developed a system of writing in the following one; the Goths (i.e., the Crimean Goths) accepted Christianity in the third century and had their own written language by the sixth century. Of course, the Persians have a long history of script. The oldest inscriptions in Persian date from around 500 B.C. The sacred writings of the Zoroastrians, the *Avesta*, represent the codification of Persian from the fourth through sixth centuries A.D. The Arabs and Egyptians certainly praised Allah in their own language. Sogdian, the one-time lingua franca for the whole of Central Asia, was an Iranian language (now extinct) spoken on the territory of modern-day Samarkand and Bukhara. It also had an ancient written tradition and is preserved in numerous inscriptions, the majority of which date from the eighth and ninth centuries (see A. Meillet and Marcel Cohin, eds., *Les Langues du Monde* [Paris, 1952], p. 29). However, Abkhazian, a language still spoken in the Caucasus, has no attested written tradition. Books were first published in this language during the nineteenth century in a modified Cyrillic alphabet (see *Les Langues du Monde*, p. 242). There is no linguistic evidence to support Constantine's assertion of literacy among the Avars. Indeed, very little is known about this people, its language or culture. Only a few proper names and titles of Avar origin have survived. As regards the Khazars, practically nothing is known of their language (see Note 30). It is unclear which Turks Constantine had in mind. If it was the Turks who lived in the Crimea, his reference would again be inaccurate, since no written tradition was known among these people. Constantine could not have been aware of the so-called Ujdur script developed by the Turks of Central Asia, since the earliest manuscripts in this script date from the tenth century.

Cf. Matthew 5:45.

- 103 It is interesting to note that the author of the *Vita of Constantine* does not indicate which pope invited the brothers to Rome, whereas the *Vita of Methodius* and the so-called *Italian Legend* mention Pope Nicholas (858–867) as the source of the invitation. Curiously, it is not made clear in the *Vita of Methodius* that it was not Pope Nicholas but Pope Hadrian II (867–872) who received the brothers in Rome, while in the *Vita of Constantine* mention is made of the fact that Pope Hadrian received them, which leads one to assume mistakenly that he was also

responsible for the invitation. The *Italian Legend* clarifies this point in Chapter IX: "Sed cum ante non multos dies supradictus papa Nycolaus transisset ad Dominum, secundus Adrianus, qui ili in pontificatu successerat..." (see the *Italian Legend*, ed. Paul Mayvaert and Paul Devos, *Analecta Bollandiana*, 73 [1973], 455–461).

104 See Note 34.

105 The Latin name of this church is S. Maria ad Praesepe. Curiously, the biographer used the Greek designation Phatne (Manger), which led Dvornik to conclude that while the brothers and their disciples were in Rome, they lived with Greek monks (see *Byzantine Missions*, p. 141).

106 Gauderich was Bishop of Velletri. He seems to have received the brothers well and did not object to their missionary work among the Slavs. Very different were the feelings of the Bishop of Porto Formosus, who was known for his hatred of Greeks. In fact, he played an important part in Rome's attempt to convert Bulgaria (see Steven Runciman, *A History of the First Bulgarian Empire* [London, 1930], 109–113). Formosus was also a bitter enemy of Hadrian II. It must have been particularly distasteful for him to have had to consecrate the disciples of the Greek brothers Constantine and Methodius.

107 Arsenius was Bishop of Orti. Dvornik has pointed out that the mention of Arsenius is important for dating the ordination of the Slavic disciples. It is known that Arsenius left Rome shortly after 10 March 868, so that the ordination took place sometime before his departure and after Hadrian became pope on 14 December 867 (see *Byzantine Missions*, p. 139).

Anastasius the Librarian was actually secretary to the pope. He seems to have been an admirer of the brothers.

108 There is some controversy in regard to this passage. The translation retains the form *svět'* (light) and assumes that the reference is to the Byzantine Christian tradition in which the Sacrament of Baptism and monachal vows were considered "light" (phos). Thus, by becoming a monk, Constantine received another "light." However, Dvornik feels that this word should not read *svět'*, but *s'vet'* (counsel), which would change the meaning to indicate that Constantine took two monachal vows (see *Byzantine Missions*, 143–144).

Previously Constantine was tonsured and made librarian (*chartophylax*) to the patriarch, a position that was usually filled by a deacon. He was not ordained a priest at that time, since ordination into the priesthood during the ninth century could not take place until age 30 (see Chap. 4).

109 It seems that Constantine died fifty days after becoming a monk.

110 That was 862. The biographer is using a calendar based on the number of years from the Creation. Under this system the Nativity took place in 5508. By subtracting this number from the number in the text (6370), one arrives at the above date. Note, however, that the text inexplicably omits the last numeral, (3) from the date. Constantine died on the day and month stated in the text, but in the year 6377 (869).

111 Since the verb *priš'd'* (came) hardly makes sense in the present context,

it is assumed to be a scribal error and should read *prēs'd'* (transgress) instead.

- 112 Evidently they wished to learn whether Constantine's body had begun to decompose. It is typical of many Vitae that the body of a saint would remain intact after death.

It is of interest to note that the mystical numeral "seven" or its multiples have played a rather conspicuous role in this work. It will be recalled that Constantine's father had seven children; that he himself was the seventh; that his parents lived in sexual abstinence for 14 years; that at age seven he had his dream which symbolized his mystical espousal to Sophia (Wisdom); that his father died when he was 14; that he himself died at age 42 on the 14th of February, in the year 6370/7 (910/11); and finally that his body was kept by the pope for seven days. It would seem therefore that this numeral should be accepted with caution.

- 113 The Church of St. Clement was ravaged by the Normans in the eleventh century. The fresco or icon that the biographer refers to was found in the nineteenth century, and relics of the saint were discovered in 1963 by Leonard Boyle. "The Fate of the Remains of St. Cyril," *Cirillo et Methodios i santi Apostoli degli Slavi Rome* (1963), 159–94.

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