

#47 The Legs of Iron – Vladimir I of Kiev, and the Beginning of the Orthodox Church in Russia

After the fall of Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire, Moscow was declared to be the Third Rome in the late 1400's by the Muscovite Duke, Ivan III, the Great, who was also declaring himself to be the Emperor of all of Russia.

Question: Where did it all begin that the Greek Orthodox faith came to Russia in the first place, developing into the Russian Orthodox faith?

Answer: The answer is that the Russian Empire becoming an empire of the Greek Orthodox faith began 500 years earlier in Kiev, which is now the modern day capital of the Ukraine. [Kiev was the steppingstone from Constantinople to Moscow.]

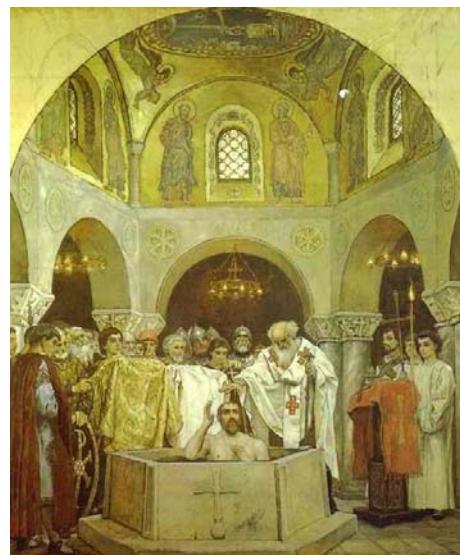
Key Understanding #1: *Vladimir I of Kiev and the beginning of the Orthodox Church in Russia.* The Russian Eastern Orthodox Christian Empire had its genesis with Vladimir I of Kiev in the 980's A.D. After the Fall of Constantinople in 1453 A.D., the mantle of the Third Rome easily and naturally fell upon the Russian Empire.



Vladimir I of Kiev. The story of Russia coming to be an Orthodox Empire through Vladimir I of Kiev (*pictured*) is one of the most humorous historical accounts on record. Vladimir was born a pagan of Viking origin. In 972, he became ruler of Novgorod in Russia, but had to flee for his life to Scandinavia. Later, he returned, and then defeated and killed his brother, who was ruling in Kiev. Vladimir became the grand duke of Kiev.

Baptism of Prince Vladimir
by Victor Vasnetsov

Vladimir I wanted to choose a religion for his new Kievan Empire. In a famous historical record of these events and times called the Chronicle, it is recorded that emissaries from different religions and countries and empires flocked to Kiev in 986-987 to present their faiths to Vladimir. The Russians heard from the Jews, Muslims, Roman Catholics, and those of the Greek Orthodox faith. They were dazzled by the Greeks and Constantinople. Vladimir I would select the Greek Orthodox faith for his kingdom. [As part of an even wilder story, he would soon marry Anna, the sister of the Byzantine Emperor at that time, Basil II. A good book on all of this is *Vladimir the Russian Viking*, by Vladimir Volkoff, © 1984. These events can be found on pages 175-218.]



Here is #47–Doc 1, a map of the Byzantine Empire in 1025 A.D., a few years after Vladimir chose the Greek Orthodox faith for his kingdom and married the sister of Byzantine Emperor Basil II.

[Click here for #47–Doc 1](#)

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Key Understanding #2: *The Russian Eastern Orthodox Christian Empire had its start with Vladimir I of Kiev in the 980's A.D. Because the Russian Eastern Orthodox Christian Empire had its start with Vladimir I of Kiev in the 980's A.D., after the Fall of Constantinople in 1453 A.D., the mantle of the Third Rome easily and naturally fell upon a Moscow-centered Russian Empire, as a major part of the fulfillment of the Leg of Iron of the Eastern Roman Empire of Daniel 2:40.* [So, Vladimir I of Kiev would marry the sister (Anna) of Byzantine Emperor Basil II in 988, and approximately 500 years later, Ivan III, the Great, of Moscow, would marry the niece (Sophia) of the final Byzantine emperor, Constantine XI, both events heavily impacting the fulfillment of Daniel 2:40. Overall, the Eastern Orthodox Church in association with the leading Russian Prince, beginning with the Kievan Russian Empire begun by Vladimir I, would last not quite 1000 years itself. It would end during World War I in the year 1917, when another Vladimir – Lenin – and the Bolsheviks would provide the final overthrow of Nicholas II, Tsar of Russia, and soon establish the USSR. The meaning of that comes later.]

Daniel 2:40 (KJV) And THE FOURTH KINGDOM SHALL BE STRONG AS IRON [the Legs of Iron Roman Empire, extending through the Western Roman Empire, which ended in 476 A.D., and the Eastern Roman Empire, which ended in 1453 A.D. **The Leg of Iron of the Eastern Roman Empire was further extended to include the life of the (Eastern Orthodox) Russian Empire**: *forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.*

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