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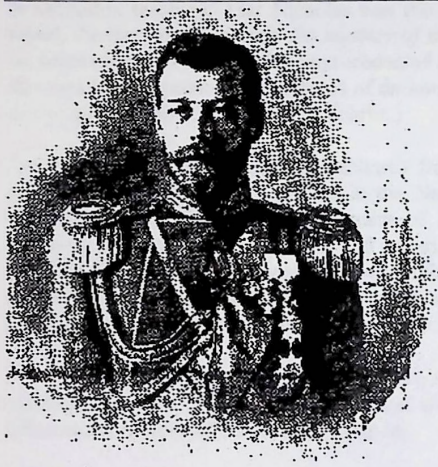
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Orthodox America

This is amazing!

God's Anointed Sufferer Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II



The battle against Tsar Nicholas II was clearly bound up with the battle against God and faith . . . He became a Martyr, having remained faithful to the Ruler of those who rule, and accepted death in the same way as the martyrs accepted it.
Archbishop John Maximovitch

Very soon after Russia accepted the seed of the Gospel (in the year 988) her soil was sanctified by the blood of martyrs. The pure young sons of Grand Duke Vladimir, Boris and Gleb, accepted death at the hands of a political assassin in order to save their people from civil war and terrible upheaval. They became sufferers for righteousness (I Peter 3:14); being conformed to the innocent suffering of Christ, they became true "Passion-Bearers.

As in the beginning of Holy Russia, so at the end: it pleased God to reveal Himself to the Russian people through the innocent suffering of Saints Boris and Gleb; now, in these latter times, He has again unveiled Himself through the purifying suffering of a Tsar, the Anointed of God and supreme Protector of Christ's Church in Russia, Nicholas II.

Western writers do not understand Orthodox monarchy. And because America rebelled against the

King of England; Americans in particular have no sympathy for the idea of Monarchy. Indeed, it is almost a sacred tradition to applaud any nation that "comes to its senses" and overthrows its king! The Tsars of Russia are viewed in this same man- centered rather than God-centered light.

But; in Orthodox Russia there once existed a society composed not of "church and state" (such as existed in medieval Europe) but of "government and priesthood"-a holy commonwealth. The Tsar was never placed outside the Church or "above the law," but always *within* the Church and subject to the law of Christ. He was very much the "servant of the Gospel": he was required to live by it and rule by it in order to be worthy of the blessings of God upon himself, his family, and his nation. Such a righteous Father to his people was the last **Tsar, Nicholas II**. And now, in this year of grace, 1981, in spite of more than 60 years of Marxist deception, it pleases God to reveal Nicholas and those that suffered with him, to the Church and to the whole world (if only the world will hear it!).

Blessed Archbishop John Maximovitch has written: "Why was **Tsar Nicholas II** persecuted, slandered and killed? Because he was Tsar, Tsar by the Grace of God. He was the bearer and incarnation of the Orthodox world view that the Tsar is the servant of God, the Anointed of God, and that to Him he must give an account for the people entrusted to him by destiny..."

✱ In Orthodox teaching, Tsar Nicholas was the last representative of lawful Christian authority in the world, the last one to restrain *the mystery of iniquity* (2 Thess. 2:27). (And, indeed, from the time of his martyrdom can be dated the unprecedented lawlessness, godlessness, and apostasy of this final age: the complete unleashing of the forces of darkness, which now threaten to completely engulf the world as a preparation for the reign of Antichrist.)

An Orthodox monarch receives his authority from God, but by what means and in what manner does it come to him? Authority to govern in the Name of God and perform the highest earthly ministry descends upon a Tsar in the Sacrament of Anointing, at the time of his **coronation**. After the crowning he is told that "this visible and material adornment of thy head is to thee a manifest sign that the King of Glory, Christ, invisibly crowneth thee." The Anointing takes place after the reading of the Gospel in Divine Liturgy. The chief hierarch anoints the Tsar with Holy Chrism on the brow, eyes, nostrils, lips, ears, breast, and hands, saying each time: "The Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

Thus, Nicholas II received his authority through a Sacrament. The Holy Spirit was upon him! "By rejecting the Tsar, the people blasphemed the Sacrament and trampled upon the grace of God" (*Illustrated History of the Russian People*).

✱ In 1917 Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow saw in a vision the Saviour speaking to Tsar Nicholas: "You see," said the Lord, "two cups in my hands: one is bitter for your people, and the other is sweet for you." In the vision the Tsar begged for the bitter cup. The Saviour then took a large glowing coal from the cup and put it in the Tsar's hands. The Tsar's whole body then began to grow light, until he was shining like a radiant spirit. Then the vision changed to a field of flowers, in the middle of which Nicholas was distributing manna to a multitude of people. A voice spoke: "The Tsar has taken the guilt of the Russian people upon himself and the Russian people is forgiven." Nicholas himself once said: "Perhaps an expiatory sacrifice is needed for Russia's salvation. I will *be that sacrifice*. May God's will be done!

He had a very strong sense of his destiny as an Orthodox ruler. Although he had an opportunity to flee the country with his family and seek refuge outside Russia, he and his Empress deliberately chose to stay and accept whatever awaited them. He had been born on the feast of the Prophet Job and because

of this he often remarked to his advisors: "I have a secret conviction that I am destined for a terrible trial, that I shall not receive my reward on this earth." No wonder that our Russian Bishops Abroad wrote (in 1968): "Job the Much-Suffering, on the day of whose commemoration the Tsar was born, said in his grievous suffering, concerning the day of his conception: 'As for that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days of the year' (Job 3:6). *Terrible was the night of the murder of the Tsar!*"

On that unspeakable night, "the prisoners were all in a deep sleep when they were awakened and ordered to dress in order to leave the city.... The Imperial Family descended to the basement where the Sovereign sat down, with his ill son, on a chair in the middle of the room. The Duchesses, the doctor, and three dedicated servants were seated around him. Every one was waiting for the signal to depart. At the executioner's announcement (which stunned all the prisoners) of the impending execution, the Empress succeeded in crossing herself. She was killed instantly, together with the Sovereign. God spared them from hearing the groans of the Tsarevitch and the cries of the wounded Grand Duchess Anastasia. The first bullets did not bring death to the youngest ones and they were savagely killed with blows of bayonets and gun-butts and with shots at point-blank range. The *most innocent and holy had suffered the greatest torture*"? (*Illustrated Russian History*).

In the words of Fr. Dimitry Dudko, one of the first of that wave of modern confessors to speak out against the betrayal of the Church in Russia: "The Tsar is a saint and, moreover, one of the greatest saints. O great saint of Russia, Great-Martyr Nicholas, pray to God for us!"

"St. Seraphim prophesied in clear words about the tragic fate foreordained by God for the Tsar who would be present at the Sarov solemnity of faith, when there would be Pascha in the midst of summer (the glorification of St. Seraphim in 1903). According to his prophecy, if there would be repentance in the Russian people, God would yet have mercy on her, but first He would allow for a time the triumph of lawless men: the Tsar would be overthrown and killed, so that the people might know in experience what life was like under the Tsar anointed by God, and under the rule of men who have trampled underfoot the law of God. St Seraphim, by revelation from God, wrote in his own hand a letter to the Tsar who would come to Sarov and Diveyevo, entrusting it to his friend Motovilov, who gave it to Abbess Maria, who in turn handed it personally to Emperor Nicholas II in Diveyevo on July 20, 1903. What was written in the letter remains a secret, but one can suppose that the holy elder saw all that was to happen and warned against the frightful events to come...

(Abbot Seraphim, Peking, 1920, in *Orthodox Russia*, 1981, No.1)

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