



■ † Holy and Great Saturday

The Descent into Hades*



The Lord “sleeps” bodily in the tomb; in soul He has descended into Hades and preached salvation to the souls there.

The Old Testament Saints were not in Heaven, although they abode in the consoling faith that they would be brought there as soon as the Promised

One came to earth, since they had lived by faith in Him.

There also the Forerunner foretold His coming.

When the Lord descended, all who believed cleaved to Him and were lifted up by Him into Heaven. But even that Heaven is only the threshold of the true Paradise which will be revealed after the general resurrection and Judgement.

Although all of the New Testament Saints are also blessed in Heaven, they await an even more perfect bliss in the age to come, with a new Heaven and new earth (cf. Rev. 21:1), when God will be all in all (cf. I Cor. 15:28).



(*) St. Theophan the Recluse, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God.*