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ARTICLE



Divine economy and repentance in Discourse 4 of *The Enlightener* by Iosif Volotskii

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the relatively neglected Discourse 4 of *The Enlightener*, Iosif Volotskii's famous treatise written to defend Orthodoxy against religious dissidents known to history as the "Judaizing" heretics. In Discourse 4, Iosif deals with the divine economy, the possibility of repentance, and with God's deviousness in achieving his purposes. In contrast to the other discourses of *The Enlightener*, here in Discourse 4 Iosif argues his case in a relatively non-polemical manner. The text has some significance for evaluating his work as a father confessor, and for his well-known severity towards heretics and apostates.

RÉSUMÉ

L'article examine le quatrième discours, relativement oublié, de *L'Illuminateur*, le traité célèbre de Joseph de Volokolamsk, une œuvre qui défendait l'orthodoxie contre les dissidents religieux connus sous le nom des Judaïsants. Dans ce discours, Joseph traite de l'économie divine, de la possibilité du repentir, et de la complexité de Dieu dans la réalisation des objectifs divins. Par contraste avec les autres discours de *L'Illuminateur*, dans le quatrième discours Joseph présente ses arguments d'une façon relativement non polémique. Le texte est important pour l'évaluation du travail de Joseph en tant que père confesseur et pour la représentation de sa sévérité bien connue envers les hérétiques et les apostats.

KEYWORDS

The Enlightener; Iosif Volotskii; Judaizers; heresy; repentance

The *Prosvetitel'* (*The Enlightener*), composed by Iosif Volotskii over a number of years in the volatile context of a struggle against the "Judaizers," a dissident religious movement that unsettled the Russian Orthodox Church and Muscovite society in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, has long attracted the attention of scholars of medieval Russia.¹ Typically, interest focuses on the work's reliability as a source for information about the "Judaizers," its relationship to the epistles and polemical tracts written by Volotskii, and the insights it gives into Iosif's role in shaping the religious mentality of the Russian Church of his day. The present study focuses on Discourse 4 of *The Enlightener*, which has largely escaped scholarly attention.² In that discourse, a doctrine of repentance emerges that seems at odds

with Iosif's well-documented severity with regard to heretics and apostates, who, in his view, feign repentance in order to escape punishment. He develops his doctrine of repentance based on his reflections on the meaning of the divine economy. For Iosif, the ultimate benefit of the divine economy for humanity is the possibility of forgiveness and a life of penance leading to perfection in the kingdom of heaven. Less polemically charged than most of the discourses in *The Enlightener*, here we find Iosif reflecting on a topic that would be of great practical use in his overlooked role of father confessor (*dukhovnik*).³ This article analyses in narrative form Iosif's method of arguing his case and establishes the salient features of Iosif's doctrine of repentance. While the article is not concerned with the "Judaizer" heresy per se, some comments on the heresy will help to contextualize the discussion. A brief summary of the contents of *The Enlightener* precedes the analysis of Discourse 4.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, a group of religious dissenters arose, first in Novgorod and then in Moscow, known to history as the Judaizing heretics or "Judaizers."⁴ The Novgorod group seems largely to have been drawn from the white or diocesan clergy, with a few members from the black or monastic clergy, whereas the Moscow dissidents were primarily laymen serving in the grand prince's chancery. Because very few original writings by the dissidents have survived, information about their membership and in particular their teachings and practices comes almost exclusively from their ecclesiastical opponents, chief among whom were Archbishop Gennadii of Novgorod and the hegumen of the Dormition monastery in Volokolamsk, Iosif Sanin (better known as Iosif Volotskii). According to these sources, the "Judaizers" rejected the fundamental Christian doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation; they repudiated the veneration of saints and icons; raised questions about the authority of sacred writings; and dismissed monasticism as ungrounded in the scriptures. They were also accused of following Jewish religious practices and abandoning the Orthodox sacraments, although the extent to which Judaism influenced the dissidents remains a much-disputed question. Two trials dealt with the heretics, one in Novgorod in 1490 and one in Moscow in 1504. Roughly during that same period, Iosif composed the various texts which later comprised *The Enlightener*.⁵ Although the number of dissidents was quite small when considered against the general Orthodox population, the impression given by the admittedly hostile sources is one of imminent peril to the integrity of Orthodoxy and of widespread confusion among all levels of society.⁶ Further complicating the religious map of the times was the anticipation of the end of the world in 1492, the year 7000 according to Rus' calculations.⁷

The Enlightener has been the standard title of Iosif's composition since the first third of the seventeenth century; however, Iosif referred to each of the discourses as a "Discourse against the (newly appeared) Novgorod heretics," and the whole work was known simply as "the book (or books) against heretics."⁸ There are two distinct redactions of *The Enlightener*, a brief and an extended redaction, each in turn demonstrating notable variations in their content; however, which redaction is the original remains contested. The brief redaction contains 10 or 11 discourses, while the fullest version of the extended redaction has 16 discourses.⁹ It is that version which is the basis for this article.¹⁰ In addition to questions about the extent of the work, debate continues as to the identity of the heretics against whom Iosif penned his defence of Orthodoxy. Although each of the discourses addresses the opponents with the rather vague nomenclature of "Novgorod heretics," or "those who Judaize," Iosif identifies by name

the instigator of the heresy, the Jew Skharia, who he claimed travelled to Novgorod in the suite of Prince Mikhail Ole'kovich in 1471. Iosif also names the priest Denis and archpriest Aleksei and the clerk Fedor Kuritsyn as adherents of a Judaizing form of Christianity indebted to the Jewish thinker and engaged in active proselytizing.¹¹

The Enlightener is a mosaic of patristic, canonical, and biblical sources, interspersed with Iosif's own reflections in such a way as to make distinguishing between original and non-original ideas difficult if not impossible. Iosif relied on compendia and collections of translated writings of such authorities as Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, Athanasius the Great, Ephrem, John Chrysostom, John of Damascus, Gregentios of Taphar, and others, including some pseudonymous works. He paraphrased, combined, and adapted his sources in order to convey the sense of the "divine writing" he employed to bolster his argument.¹²

The Enlightener begins with a provocative exposition about the newly appeared heresy, and with an outline of how Iosif plans to respond to the erroneous doctrines and practices being disseminated in ecclesiastical and princely circles. In Discourse 1, Iosif addresses objections to belief in the Trinity. He then turns to Christology in Discourse 2, discussing in turn the incarnation of the Son of God, his crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and second coming for judgment, all of which he believes were clearly foretold in sacred scripture. Discourse 3 moves into a consideration of the abrogation of the law of Moses in favour of the gospel. Discourse 4, as already mentioned, focuses on the divine economy. Discourses 5, 6, and 7 deal with objections to icon veneration and other devotional practices.¹³ Discourses 8 and 9 deal with eschatology and the reliability of sacred scripture and patristic authorities; a somewhat similar theme recurs in Discourse 10, where Iosif defends the writings of Ephrem the Syrian. Discourse 11 is a lengthy, four-chapter defence of monastic life, tendentiously and passionately argued. The five remaining discourses all deal with the problem of heretics and raise practical, canonical, and theological issues. Discourse 12 discusses the capacity of heretic bishops to pronounce efficacious sentences on accused persons. Discourse 13 considers the legitimacy of condemning heretics and apostates. Discourse 14 defends the use of interrogation and torture to uproot heresy and apostasy. In Discourse 15 Iosif argues that repentant heretics may be restored to communion only after fulfilling the canonical penalties. Finally, in Discourse 16 he reasons that heretics and apostates who repent after condemnation and penalties have been imposed are not to be trusted, but can be restored to communion only on their deathbeds. Where appropriate to his purposes, Iosif also touches upon Mariology, hamartiology, devotion to saints, ecclesiastical office, and the sacraments, particularly Baptism, Penance, and Eucharist. In sum, he covers most of traditional Orthodox theology in this work, which is the first comprehensive exposition of Orthodox belief in Russia.¹⁴ Iosif reflects on the authority of ecclesiastical tradition and "divine writings," which include not only the biblical texts, but also works by the church fathers, council decisions, canons, liturgical texts, and icons themselves, in short, anything that is in some manner "written" under divine inspiration. It is important to emphasize, however, that while at times he seems to regard each of these types of divine writings as equally authoritative, Iosif assigns the highest degree of authority to the biblical texts.

As is common with the other discourses of *The Enlightener*, Discourse 4 opens with a title summarizing the heretical opinion that Iosif will refute and a statement of the contrary Orthodox position. He adopts a method akin to the much more systematically elaborated scholastic *quaestio* (question) and *disputatio* (disputation) of the medieval West.¹⁵ The title reads:

Against the heresy of the Novgorod heretics who say “since God was not able to save Adam and those with him, and since he did not have heavenly powers and prophets and righteous men to send to fulfill his will, rather he himself descended non-possessive and poor, and became human and suffered, and thus outsmarted the devil. But it is not fitting for God to act this way.” Here is evidence from divine writings that all things are possible for God. No one can resist his divine power. But by the depths of wisdom¹⁶ and of his philanthropy, for our salvation, he thus deigned to become human himself and to suffer and go down into hell and lead Adam and those with him out of hell. And so by divine wisdom he outsmarted the devil and saved the whole world and saves until now.¹⁷

Since we do not have the writings of his opponents, it is not possible to determine if Iosif is in fact quoting from a now lost source or merely reporting a dissident theological opinion. Iosif claims here that the heretics disbelieve the foundational dogma of the Christian Church, the Incarnation and its meaning for humankind, on the grounds that it is incompatible with Divinity. He counters with the promise of proof from the divine writings that God’s plan of salvation is true and efficacious even to the present day. He will not examine in detail each of the stages of God’s plan for saving humanity, something which he already offered in Discourse 2, but rather he intends to reflect on the economy of salvation as a whole from the perspective of Divine wisdom. As the discourse unfolds, Iosif will develop the interesting idea of God’s “clever deceit”¹⁸ used to accomplish the divine economy and in particular to defeat the devil.

It is worth dwelling briefly on a detail from the title. According to Iosif, the heretics take issue with the phrase “he himself descended as a non-possessor and poor man (*nestiazhatel' i nishch*).” This may be a paraphrase of Philippians 2:6–7, which speaks of the self-emptying of Christ in the incarnation.¹⁹ The word *nestiazhatel'* would develop into a term to describe a segment of the Russian Church that rejected large-scale landholdings by monasteries and dioceses in favour of strict poverty or non-possession. Iosif, however, defended the ownership of lands farmed by peasant tenants as a means for monasteries to provide charity for the poor and to afford sumptuous liturgical celebrations. His monks were personally poor, but the monastery itself became wealthy and prosperous.²⁰ The use of this particular word would surely have leapt off the page for subsequent readers of the discourse, as the question of ecclesiastical landownership remained controversial throughout the sixteenth century.²¹

Iosif opens his refutation of the heretics’ position with the following statement: “The divine Paul, teacher of the inhabited world, says this about the mystery of Christ’s providence: ‘O the depth of the kindness and long-suffering of God! So unsearchable are his judgments and inscrutable his paths! Who understands the mind of the Lord? Or who is his counsellor?’”²² The quotation is inaccurate, but it well serves Iosif’s purposes in the discourse. St. Paul actually wrote, “O the depths of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!” Since Iosif referred to the “depths of wisdom and his philanthropy” in the title, he would presumably have Romans 11:33 in mind as he begins his argument. But, instead of the expected “riches and wisdom and knowledge,” his text reads

"kindness and long-suffering." These two divine characteristics are precisely what Iosif will develop in the discourse. The substituted phrase comes from Romans 2:4, which interestingly invokes the theme of repentance that Iosif develops as the discourse unfolds.²³

By citing St. Paul at the outset of his response, Iosif denies the heretics any exclusive claim on him as a support for their positions. On the one hand, the quotation subtly suggests that the heretics are incapable of understanding the divine economy because it originates in the incomprehensible wisdom of God, which no human being can grasp. On the other hand, Iosif here affirms his intention to respond to the heretics by appealing to the same unfathomable mystery of divine wisdom, but importantly, not by his own powers, but with the help and inspiration of authoritative teachers, chief of whom is St. Paul himself. In Iosif's view, the heretics do not have the benefit of such assistance but fabricate their doctrines from a tissue of misinterpretation. Where the heretics stumble in their attempt to interpret the Church's traditional doctrines because they rely too much on human rational powers, Iosif presents himself walking unwaveringly in the truth because he accepts limits to human reason. In fact, he goes on to make this point immediately after the Pauline reference, writing:

For how will the tongue be of service to thought? And how will the mind be imagined? For the word of comprehensible things is inadequate: it is necessary to see. Since the human mind is incapable of approaching the nature of motionless things, it is not possible to discover the nature of a word by what is in some way comprehensible.²⁴

In this somewhat opaque passage, Iosif comments on the insufficiency of human language to express divine realities, and even more so the incapacity of the human intellect to understand divine mysteries. Vision is necessary, which is perhaps Iosif's way of saying that the spiritual sight given as a gift of grace is the only means of gaining some degree of access to God's mind. Iosif cites a series of verses from other Pauline writings that refer to the mystery of Christ's incarnation and saving work before concluding, "And what is more mysterious than this mystery? And what is more supreme than this providence?"²⁵

The focus now shifts to patristic authorities and their attempts to respond to various difficulties of comprehension that arise when one reflects on the incarnation. What kind of flesh did Christ assume; if he truly became human, did he inherit our weaknesses; did the incarnation entail a change in the divine nature; is the incarnate one afflicted by passions? With the help of a text by Athanasius, Iosif can return to the theme of the incomprehensibility of God's ways by noting that the Mother of God "served that mystery without fully understanding the mystery, so how will you seek to learn it? For a man does not ever know that very nature, how he came to be a man. You there, tell me first about yourself, how you became human. Then try to do so about the divine incarnation."²⁶ In the end, Iosif reasons, it is futile to speculate on the mechanics of Christ's birth; what is more important is the reason for it:

For this reason, God himself became incarnate, since a human being was not able to save. An angel is not able to redeem, for it does not have such a redemption. God in the absolute²⁷ cannot suffer; for this reason, God himself became human. It befits the sinless one to set free from sins, for the immortal one to deliver from death, as the chief apostle Peter exclaims: "Christ suffered for us in the flesh, the righteous one for the unrighteous so

that he would lead us to God." So too does the blessed apostle Paul say, "as on account of Adam all die, so on account of Christ all are made alive." And thus do we too believe and reason.²⁸

Having given his explanation for the incarnation, Iosif now names the heretics against whom he campaigns, and summarizes their heresy. He alludes to the Jew "who uttered much nonsense and foul language"²⁹ (*bliadoslovia i gniloslovia*), or rather blasphemies," before reiterating the heretical statement cited in the title to the discourse.³⁰ With this, section one of the discourse ends.

Iosif begins the second section by repeating the second half of the discourse's title, which raises the themes of God's irresistible power and the use of deception to achieve the divine plan:

For we have evidence from divine scripture that all things are possible for God. No one can resist his divine power. But by the depths of wisdom and of his philanthropy, for our salvation, he thus deigned to become human himself and to suffer and go down into hell and lead Adam and those with him out of hell. And so by divine wisdom he outsmarted the devil and saved the whole world and saves until now.³¹

Once again, thanks to his opponent's objection, Iosif will probe deeper into the mystery of divine wisdom as the energy fuelling God's economy of salvation. The opponent concedes that God does arrange everything in keeping with his wisdom, but objects that it hardly seems worthy of God to use deception (*prekhyshchrenie*) to defeat the devil. In the opponent's view, this is tantamount to saying that God's power is actually limited, for God can only emerge the victor because he outsmarts (*prekhitrit*) his creatures. Iosif responds that God's power is indeed able to achieve its goals by itself but that repeatedly God made use of human beings instead of intervening directly. Moses tricked Pharaoh into giving the Egyptians' wealth to the Hebrews; Samuel deceived Saul so he could anoint David; and Judith used a ruse to kill Holofernes, to name a few examples. The reason for all this deviousness is the benefit of humanity:

He made Rebecca wise as to how to gain the blessing for Jacob instead of Esau by deception. He granted understanding to Rachel on how to trick Laban and to smash idols. And so too he strengthened Rahab with faith and caused her to deceive the people of Jericho, and by this to obtain her life. [...] And just as then he saved the Israelites and prophets by trickery and granted the kingdom to David by trickery, and saved Jael and Judith by trickery, [...] so too now by his divine wisdom and trickery did he save the human race and bring them out of hell. And there are many such deceits and cunning (*kovarstva*) in divine scriptures that the Lord God himself has done.³²

Iosif then outlines another type of divine cunning used by God for good purposes: he commanded his prophets to perform certain actions that were objectionable to them but good and pleasing to God:

Thus the Lord ordered Hosea to take a prostitute as a wife, and he ordered Isaiah to walk about naked and barefoot and prophesy, and Jeremiah to wear wooden hoops on his shoulders, and Ezekiel to lie on his left side for 108 days and on his right side for 40 days and to eat bread of human excrements; the prophet prayed that he not be defiled, and God ordered him to eat bread of animal dung.³³

All of these examples are problematic passages for scriptural exegesis; Iosif does not ask the questions that a modern interpreter would do, but accepts these occurrences at face

value and regards them as beneficial acts of divine cunning and further proof of the incomprehensible nature of Divine wisdom. He asserts, "For this reason it is not fitting to be disturbed on account of these ruses and deceptions, or to be offended or to stumble but only to believe in the measureless ocean of divine wisdom. For when God does something or orders something to be done, accept it faithfully and do not audaciously question."³⁴ Iosif here further supports his earlier contention that human intellectual powers cannot ultimately grasp the nature of God and his ways. The heretics do not understand this, and so raise questions and generate confusion by unnecessarily trying to rationalize what is ultimately beyond reason. Not only do they falsely read the Old Testament, they go so far as to discount even the possibility of the incarnation, which even the devil did not do:

For they say that having envied Adam, God drove him out of paradise for that reason; then during the time of Noah he exterminated humanity, burned the people of Sodom, drowned Pharaoh and wiped out the Canaanites vainly and not justly. And many other such things do they say, blasphemies and fables about which there is no need to speak now. Is this not a newer form of impiety? And is the insanity not manifest and the senselessness not plain which the heretics are now saying, that it is unbecoming of God to come down to earth himself and be born of a woman, to suffer in the flesh? For this has surpassed the devil's grandiloquence. For no one of sound mind has ever spoken thus, nor has anyone put it in mind or dared to pronounce it with the tongue.³⁵

As a remedy, Iosif proposes firm and steadfast belief in divine providence: "For with utter effort and zeal we believe in the providence of the Lord's incarnation, which he accomplished for our salvation." Here Iosif develops a very strong statement on the sufficiency of faith, not only for human salvation, but also for human comprehension of divine mysteries. It is not blind faith, however, but faith grounded in scripture:

We make the inquiry not with common words, but from holy writ itself we receive the solution to puzzling things. For whoever learns from divine writings the resolution of things unknowable has the truth itself for his teacher, as the divine Chrysostom says: "for this is the pearl about which the Lord spoke: a man finds it and because of joy he goes and sells everything he has and buys it."³⁶

In this important statement, Iosif claims that holy writ interprets itself, providing solutions to puzzling things.³⁷ He has offered an example of this principle of interpretation in the foregoing references to biblical actions that demonstrate divine deviousness and thus undermine the heretics' objections. In the scriptures one encounters truth itself as the teacher, and by implication there can be no higher authority; however, he also claims that truth itself is found in the divine writings, which is a larger category under which scripture but also patristic authorities are subsumed. To emphasize this point, Iosif offers as the ultimate guarantor of his hermeneutical strategy none other than John Chrysostom. With this, the second section of the discourse closes.

If sections one and two have located the discussion within a decidedly historical, this-worldly context, section three moves the discussion into a cosmic, mythical dimension in which humankind alone of all creatures finally received the revelation of God's saving plan for his creation. That plan remained a distant and unclear hope for countless generations but when Christ became incarnate, he "granted to us [salvation]."³⁸ That

small phrase “granted to us” (*darova nam*) is designed to remind his readers of the immense benefits that Orthodox Christians enjoy. The unspoken implication is that the newly appeared heresy is impoverished by comparison.

Iosif then turns to give his retelling of the creation of the universe, and, like the biblical account in Genesis, his version also has two distinct moments. Iosif first focuses on the cosmos as the creation by Christ together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, who

created everything out of nothing, things visible and invisible, first the heavenly invisible angelic powers of an innumerable multitude, and then this visible world, the heaven and the earth and the sea. Having shone with his light he adorned it, the heavens with the sun and the moon and the stars, the earth with every form of vegetation and flowers and diverse animals, and the sea with very large kinds of beasts and fish. All these things He spoke and they came to be, he commanded and they were created.³⁹

He then rehearses the traditional account of the fall of the angels, adding that turning away from God is irrational, a form of madness. Since he has earlier described the heretics as mad and insane, their diabolic nature has by implication a lengthy pedigree. Because of the failure of the first rational creatures, God chose to place on the earth “another angel” as the second creation, who would rule over all creatures.⁴⁰ Free will is the first gift received by the second creation. Endowed with every virtue and glory, receiving woman as a helpmate fashioned from his own being, and protected by a law regarding diet, this new human creature was tasked with leading a virtuous life and at the end given perfection and immortality, replacing the fallen angels in heaven. After they too fell, “a cruel darkness encompassed our race in those times, and over all people death reigned by the torments of the devil, and all descended into hell.”⁴¹ The review of the fall allows Iosif to reflect on the problem of sin by citing St. Paul’s famous lament “that I do not the good that I want, but the evil that I do not want, this I do.”⁴² The impossibility of not sinning and the inability of humans to effect healing by their own power is resolved by the incarnation of the Son of God, the one sinless human being, who offers the chance for redemption but does not force it on anyone, not even on the devil:

However, he did not wish to force the human away from the devil by coercion. Since God is righteous and legislates justice himself, and torments the unrighteous, how would He himself do injustice and by necessity and coercion lure from the devil the human being who was freely subjected to the devil? It would mean that the Divinity was among transgressors, which is not so, for Divinity is sinless. For God does not want to do injustice even to the devil himself; for if by divine power he were to defeat the devil since he is the Mighty One, the devil could begin to make excuses: “just as I am unrighteous, so God does not have justice but he does everything by necessity and coercion. For I defeated humans, and God himself has defeated me, and by necessity and lawlessness he enticed humans away from me,” and the devil would be in the right.⁴³

So how does God defeat the devil? Here Iosif’s argument about divine deviousness comes to the fore, as he retells the patristic soteriological parable of the fishhook:⁴⁴ when the Son of God became human, he hid his divinity inside his humanity, leading the devil to believe him to be only a human being like all others. When Christ was swallowed up in death and descended to hell, the devil thought he had taken one more human into his kingdom, but instead, like a fish swallowing a baited hook, the devil met his doom, his dark realm destroyed by the radiance of the Sun of Justice, the

incarnate Son of God.⁴⁵ The way for all humans to benefit from Christ's deception of the devil and the resultant liberation from sin's bondage is to accept baptism. Baptism is an immensely powerful gift in Iosif's view:

For in truth the height and glory of Christ was the cross. For by it they imagined to condemn him, by this he condemned the enemy and freed humans from the enemy's tyranny, which is to sin by necessity and torment and by the will, and he delivered us who had been enslaved to the devil. And having purified us of every sin by holy baptism and having given us the remission of sins, he gives us the authority to do good if we would only want to, and no one must by necessity be drawn to evil, if we do not desire to sin by our will.⁴⁶

Henceforth, people need not sin; but Iosif knows that even after baptism, people commit sin, and that indeed from one's youth evil desires afflict the human being. Thus, the second baptism was given, namely, the commandment of repentance, which in Iosif's view "purifies us not only from sins but also from passions, and we become holy and righteous again."⁴⁷ The proof of repentance's purificatory powers is the miracles that people have performed. His opponents, however, reject that claim and maintain that miracles no longer take place. Iosif objects and notes that even giving a cup of cold water will be rewarded at the judgment.⁴⁸ What matters is zeal for obeying the divine ordinances, in particular, repentance, constant prayer, practising asceticism, and with unwavering faith clinging to Christ.⁴⁹ Not everyone displays the same feats, because people have different constitutions, but the sincerely repentant need not doubt their salvation at the last judgment. St. Paul again stands behind this thought, as Iosif writes that "there are many stars in the sky but they shine unequally, as Paul says 'one star exceeds another in glory.'" ⁵⁰

Next comes an important section on repentance itself, which begins with a quotation from Matthew 13:8, "some have yielded 100 fruit, others 60, and others 30" and Romans 4:5, "to one not doing good deeds, trusting in the one who justified the dishonourable, his faith is reckoned as righteousness." Iosif develops what can only be described as a maximalist position on the power of repentance. He first notes the value of such traditional ascetic practices as fasting, keeping vigils, and almsgiving, but then states rather startlingly,

If someone because of some disaster or weakness does not acquire the aforesaid things, still He who died for human sins, Jesus the Lord, will accept repentance in words, and confession on the lips he will not sweep aside. For to us who have greatly sinned and repented he will pour out the sea of his mercy, quenching the fire of our evils. For he says, "If my fury flows out against someone, I shall heal him again."⁵¹ For the God who created us will accept from those wanting to be saved not only the suffering of martyrdom and a life of fasting but also grief that comes because of sins and the striking of the forehead and beating the breast and genuflecting and lifting the hand with heartfelt compassion. [He will accept] the one who is mournful in voice over sins, or sighs from the depth of the heart, [as well as] sorrowful sobbing, drops of tears, a conscience crying with pain and the vocal fruit of those who confess the name of the Lord Jesus, and the mouth which says, according to David, "I have sinned against my Lord and have done evil before him."⁵² Great is the power of repentance, great too the salvation it works for the penitent: "it makes like snow and whitens like wool."⁵³

Two things seem important here. First, for repentance to be effective it must be sincere, the interior disposition manifested by external gestures of remorse. Second, there is no

limit to divine mercy, provided only that the sinner repent and seek restoration. Iosif, however, does not discount entirely the performance of good works which are empowered by faith. Citing John Chrysostom and John of Damascus, he even urges the performance of specific good works, such as offering prayers for the deceased, as a means of procuring salvation.⁵⁴ "You are wonderful, Master, and marvellous are your works, and we praise your unspeakable compassion because you always incline towards the love of humankind, you teach us with your favoured ones to practice good deeds for the sake of others," he writes.⁵⁵ This optimism leads the opponent to a final objection, lamenting that "if this is the case, then all are saved and no one will miss the mark."⁵⁶ Referring to Matthew 18:14 and 25:34, Iosif affirms the truth of his opponent's assertion.

The final section of the discourse is an elaboration of the concluding statement from the title, "and so by divine wisdom he outsmarted the devil and saved the whole world and saves it up to the present." Iosif explores the final consummation of the economy of salvation from the perspective of divine hospitality. The Son of God became incarnate and endured all the many hardships, including death on the cross, in order to prepare a kingdom for those whom he has called, which is everyone. Iosif asks why anyone makes preparations if not to have others join the celebration:

For in hosting a banquet and inviting friends who does not want everyone to come to be satisfied with his good things? Why else did he prepare a banquet if not to host his friends! And if among us this is dear, how much more for the Munificent One alone by nature the all-blessed and philanthropic God, who in giving rejoices more than in receiving. See, listener, the one Munificent One by nature, the all blessed and philanthropic God, how he desires and wants that all be saved and that no one miss the mark, and the all blessed Lord rejoices over this and is glad, that no one shall perish.⁵⁷

He then notes that until the preaching of the gospel, very few people were saved, but now "it is easier to count sand and the stars of heaven than the saints who have been saved because of his incarnation."⁵⁸ All peoples are invited to join the multitude of the redeemed, and indeed even the people of Rus' are now part of that band. The good things that humanity now enjoys thanks to the incarnation include the grace to endure suffering of all kinds for the sake of faith, to adopt the ascetic life, no longer to fear death, and with bodies made pure by repentance to perform miracles. He writes:

For long ago we were deceived by the devil and expelled from paradise, we fell away from the angelic way of being, and destroyed life. But now because of his mercy and kindness, in place of paradise we ascend to heaven, and in place of an angelic way of being we have been called into the Son's position, in place of the present life we have inherited the heavenly way of life on earth, and by the honourable cross he gives victory over demons. And having died in the body, we live by the soul. Those in holy bodies display miracles: for how can dead flesh work miracles, expel demons, enlighten the blind, and cleanse lepers? And he himself has risen and will raise us up and make us partakers with him in the heavenly kingdom.⁵⁹

Iosif's understanding of the meaning of the divine economy is reducible to a simple reality: the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Son of God brought the gift of repentance to the human race, the practice of which realizes for the individual believer Christ's victory over the devil. Repentance delivers believers from captivity to sin and sets them back on the path towards holiness of life. Far from a mere restoration of the original blessed angelic state of the first human beings, repentance brings the elevation of its practitioners to the status of the Son of God himself, as adopted children. Iosif has also responded to the claim that

miracles no longer happen, anchoring their reality in the eschatological fulfilment enjoyed by the saints. Iosif's theology thus is firmly grounded in Orthodox tradition, the only surprising element being perhaps his maximalist understanding of repentance and forgiveness. Such a doctrine of repentance would presumably make Iosif a desirable spiritual guide, one keenly aware of the injurious effect of sin, and equally convinced that an effective cure was available in repentance.

Indeed, some letters composed by Iosif to individuals show him offering such assistance. In his letter to Prince Iurii Ivanovich, brother of Grand Prince Vasillii III Ivanovich, Iosif responds to the prince's request for guidance in dealing with two particular moral issues: a conflict with his brother, and his struggle with the sin of fornication.⁶⁰ Iosif does not discuss the details of the conflict but he reminds Prince Iurii of the obligation to forgive others and show them mercy, something particularly binding on those in positions of authority. He tells the prince to "be a brother to your brother, good, merciful of heart, meek and humble..."⁶¹ The second matter elicits a much fuller response from Iosif. As a monk, Iosif placed a very high value on chastity, not just for monks themselves but also for laity in general and the unwed in particular.⁶² Prince Iurii was unwed and, judging from Iosif's response, he clearly struggled. After describing the shameful after-effects of fornication, Iosif then encourages the prince to seek forgiveness and begin again.

For wicked is the sin of fornication and the disease of fleshly impurity, it brings great and many woes, and harms fleshly and spiritual nobility, making it filthy and stinking; for nothing can so drive people away from God like fleshly desire and lust, and fornication's passions and impurities. For every fornicator, it is said, or impure and covetous person has no share in the kingdom of heaven;⁶³ [...] it is proper to flee the fornicating and impure people and to live with the chaste and pure; for the Preacher says, "Do not dwell with the wicked and the impure, lest you follow his path."⁶⁴ And David says, "Be upright with the upright and separate yourself from the crooked."⁶⁵ In the town in which you live and in other surrounding towns search out one person who fears God and serves him with all his strength, and imitate that man in soul and body. If you find such a man, then be sorrowful no longer, for you have found the key of the kingdom of heaven; follow him in everything and pay heed to his blessed words. For blessed is that which is taught by blessed teachers, and that one will be your leader towards every virtue, brotherly love and purity.⁶⁶

Iosif offers sound advice, nourished by the conviction developed in Discourse 4 that God's will is to save everyone. There is no limit to the forgiveness available nor to the number of times one can repent and begin again.⁶⁷ That same conviction is likewise expressed in five letters addressed to spiritual children of Iosif. In these letters, however, a personal rapport with his spiritual children, so evident in the letter to Prince Iurii, is lacking; the emphasis instead falls on the performance of various disciplinary measures imposed on the spiritual children by Iosif in his capacity as spiritual father.⁶⁸

The final four discourses (13–16) of *The Enlightener* present a far less optimistic scenario and reflect the charged atmosphere surrounding the heresy trial of 1504. The change in approach stems from Iosif's frustration with the lax treatment of heretics during the latter part of the reign of Ivan III Ivanovich.⁶⁹ Iosif now urges the strict enforcement of canonical penalties, the use of torture, and lifelong imprisonment, leaving for the deathbed the possibility of repentance and readmission to communion. Iosif has two concerns: the preservation of the integrity of the believing community, and the quality of repentance expressed by heretics and apostates. He does distinguish various degrees of culpability, noting that heretics are not as

guilty as apostates are, and that those born into a heresy are less culpable than those who adopt a heretical position in adulthood, whereas the most heinously guilty are apostates who as mature Christians renounced their faith.⁷⁰ Both threaten the spiritual welfare of other believers and must be avoided at all costs. Heretics of all stripes can be restored through education, by showing them the error of the doctrines they accept for true, and by giving them the chance to repent. But it is a lengthy process, and only after all of the canonical penalties have been completed and the fruits of repentance are evident may they return to communion with the Church.⁷¹ Apostates present a much more difficult and dangerous case; having had the truth, they abandoned it for falsehood. The only reasonable solution, in Iosif's view, is to remove the apostates from any possibility of contact with the faithful, either through the extreme measure of capital punishment or the less severe but nonetheless harsh punishment of lifelong incarceration. Depending on circumstances, heretics may also be subject to imprisonment, but after the penalties have been paid, they may be readmitted to society, though one senses Iosif's unease with such an eventuality.

Underlying that unease is his second concern, the quality of repentance. Is it possible to trust repentant heretics and apostates, he asks. His answer is unequivocally negative:

And if they themselves were to begin to repent before being accused, and were to confess their apostasy themselves, then their repentance would be acceptable, but this they do not do. Rather, when they have been accused and condemned to death, then do they begin to repent, which is why their repentance is not acceptable.⁷²

Only by demonstrating the good fruits of repentance do they deserve to be restored to the community. The fruit of repentance, however, is lifelong penance and Iosif notes that this can be demonstrated in jail, where the constraints on life encourage contrition.⁷³ Iosif alludes to the repentant Manasseh as his scriptural support for his argument. 2 Kings 21:1–16 and 2 Chronicles 33 remember Manasseh as one of the most idolatrous kings of Judah. 2 Chronicles 33:10–13 recounts his repentance while in prison, and the apocryphal “Prayer of Manasseh” purports to record his contrite confession of sin and plea for forgiveness. Iosif comments, “When Manasseh was not only in prison but also locked in a bronze bull, God heard his repentance.”⁷⁴ Clearly, Iosif envisions a particularly narrow path of restoration. At the same time, however, he remains true to his understanding that sincere repentance will remit any sin whatsoever. In Discourse 16 he expresses this view in this way:

Does not the divine writing say: “as I live, says the Lord, I do not want the death of a sinner, but that he return and be restored to life.”⁷⁵ There is no unforgivable sin, excepting only unrepentance. Again, the Lord says, “I did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”⁷⁶ And there are many such things about this in the divine writings. As I confess that I am a man, whose life is passing and whose nature is corrupt, for this reason do I receive this gladly and I bow down to the one who gave it and to others I hand it on.⁷⁷

In conclusion, in Discourse 4 of *The Enlightener* Iosif Volotskii has elaborated a sophisticated even though traditional doctrine of penance. Interestingly, he developed this teaching based on his reflections on the meaning of the divine economy. He has insisted that no sin is unforgivable, provided the sinner sincerely repents and maintains a penitential disposition.⁷⁸ A secondary doctrine espoused in this discourse concerns the manner in which God sometimes chooses to intervene in human history by indirection for the ultimate good of people. This he calls divine deviousness or cunning, the most powerful example being the incarnation of the Son of God and his death on the cross,

by which the devil was defeated. At the same time, God's deviousness serves to bolster Iosif's teaching about the mystery of God, which cannot be grasped by the rational methods favoured by the heretics, but only through a firm belief in the providence of God. Although his experience with combatting heresy caused him to insist on a very strict application of penitential discipline, his teaching on repentance remained unchanged. The discourse reveals Iosif to be a competent theologian motivated by a zealous concern for the spiritual welfare of his co-religionists, including those who espoused errant versions of Orthodoxy.

Notes

1. The most thorough historiographical survey is by Alekseev, *Religioznye dvizheniia*, 215–50. Important early studies are Bulgakov, *Prepodobnyi Iosif Volokolamskii*; Khrushchov, *Issledovanie*; Makarii, "Prepodobnyi Iosif Volokolamskii"; and Zhmakin, *Mitropolit Daniil*.
2. An exception is Seebohm, *Ratio und Charisma*, 257–65. Brief mention in Zimin and Lur'e, *Poslaniia Iosifa Volotskogo*, 69–70; and in Goldfrank, "Litigious," 96. The dissertation by Irene Holzwarth was inaccessible to me. Holzwarth, "Der Prosvetitel'."
3. A brief discussion of Iosif as father confessor in Smirnov, *Drevnerusskii dukhovnik*, 143–4. As he observes, Iosif served as spiritual father typically for local princes and boyars, and by correspondence with aristocratic women. The topic merits a fuller investigation than is possible in the present article. For Iosif's contributions to theology, see Lisovoi, "Prepodobnyi Iosif."
4. The conventional designation of the Novgorod heretics as Judaizers has been criticized: Lur'e, *Ideologicheskaia bor'ba*, 77; Pliguzov, "Archbishop Gennadii," 269, among others. It is true that the term has an ancient pedigree in Christian anti-heretical polemical literature, and Iosif would have found it used often in his sources. To indicate its contested status as a useful term, I will enclose it in quotation marks. For a detailed overview and analysis of the sources relating to the heresy, see Alekseev, *Religioznye dvizheniia*, 251–496. Other important works are Kazakova and Lur'e, *Antifeodal'nye ereticheskie dvizheniia*; Seebohm, *Ratio und Charisma*; Pliguzov, "Archbishop Gennadii"; Pliguzov, *Polemika*; and Dmitriev, "Struktura antiideiskogo diskursa," with extensive bibliography.
5. I concur with Alekseev that discourses 4 and 13 belong to the core of *Prosvetitel'* and were composed between 1499 and 1502, while discourses 14–16 date to 1502–06. See Alekseev, *Sochineniia Iosifa Volotskogo*, 204–314; he recapitulates and expands this discussion in *Religioznye dvizheniia*, 301–82; Alekseev, "O pervenstve." Other views: Lur'e, *Ideologicheskaia bor'ba*, 95–127; Lur'e, "Kogda byla napisana," and Pliguzov, "Kniga na eretikov'."
6. The sources name between 50 and 54 adherents. Dmitriev, "Struktura antiideiskogo diskursa," 105.
7. According to Archbishop Gennadii of Novgorod, some of the heretics made much of the discordant calendars used by Latin Christians and Jews in their attempts to discredit the Orthodox Church's teaching on the second coming of Christ and the doctrine of the incarnation itself. See "Poslanie arkhiepiskopa Gennadiia novgorodskogo loasafu, byvshemu arkhiepiskopu Rostovskomu," Kazakova and Lur'e, *Antifeodal'nye ereticheskie dvizheniia*, 318. For issues with calendars, see Romanova, *Drevnerusskie kalendarno-khronologicheskie istochniki*, and Beliaikov and Beliakova, "O peresmotre eskhatologicheskoi kontseptsii."
8. Alekseev, *Iosif Volotskii*, 326–7, n. 61.
9. A full discussion of the problems concerning the two redactions in Alekseev, *Sochineniia Iosifa Volotskogo*, 204–315, and Alekseev, *Religioznye dvizheniia*, 301–78. See also Goldfrank, "The Anatomy."
10. I use *Volotskii*, *Prosvetitel'*. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

11. This information is found in the introductory tale about the emergence of the heresy, the principal adherents and doctrines, and an outline of the *Prosvetitel'*, 27–54. Also available in two redactions in Kazakova and Lur'e, *Antifeodal'nye ereticheskie dvizheniia*, 466–77, 477–86. Scholars disagree on the reliability of *Prosvetitel'* as a source for the “Judaizers,” best typified by the divergent estimations in the studies by Lur'e and Alekseev. See also Khoulett, “Svidetel'stvo arkhiepiskopa Gennadiia,” and Pliguzov, “Archbishop Gennadii.”
12. See Špidlík, *Joseph de Volokolamsk*; Kriza, “Vizantiiskie istochniki (Chast' pervaiia),” 161–87, and Kriza, “Vizantiiskie istochniki (Chast' vtoraia);” *Monastic Rule*, 69–70, 226–7, n. 13.
13. Discourse 7 differs formally from the other discourses of *Prosvetitel'* in that its title does not directly attack the Novgorod heretics. Instead, the discourse offers a positive exposition of various types of veneration expected of Orthodox Christians. Deserving veneration are icons, the Gospels, sacred vessels, the sacraments, relics, and churches. Additionally, fellow Orthodox are worthy of respect, including rulers; the culmination of the varieties of veneration that Iosif discusses concerns the worship owed God.
14. Roughly contemporaneous with Iosif's work are the following treatises that deal with fundamental topics of Orthodox theology in a similarly polemic fashion: “Poslanie na zhidy i na eretiky” by the monk Savva. See Lur'e, “Savva”; Ermolai-Erazm, “Kniga o Troitse,” in Popov, “Kniga Erazma.” See Dmitrieva, “Ermolai-Erazm”; Otsenskii, *Istiny pokazanie*. See Bulanin, “Zinovii Otsenskii.”
15. For Iosif's method of argumentation, see Seebohm, *Ratio und Charisma*; Goldfrank, “Adversus Haereticos Novgorodensis”; and Goldfrank, “Iosif's Disputational Technique.” For disputation techniques current in Iosif's day and their historical pedigree, see also Ostrowski, “Debate with Iosif.”
16. Cf. Romans 11:33.
17. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 139–40. The idea that God's saving action is still operative recurs in Iosif's writings, including when he defends the on-going reality of miracles, signs, and wonders. See Discourse 10 in the Extended Rule, *Monastic Rule*, 227.
18. Although Iosif elaborates this theory relatively fully in Discourse 4 (see below), scholars have fixed their attention on Discourse 14 and the related text “Slovo o 'blagopremudrostnykh kovarstvakh'” in their discussions of the *Prosvetitel'*, ignoring Discourse 4. See Kazakova and Lur'e, *Antifeodal'nye ereticheskie dvizheniia*, 498–503, and Alekseev, *Religioznye dvizheniia*, 356–8.
19. The Greek text reads *oukh harpagmon hegesato to einai isa theoi, alla heauton ekenosen morphen doulou labon, en homoiomati anthropon genomenos kai skhemati heuretheis hos anthropos etapeinosen heauton* . . . The passage presents many difficulties for translators, but the old Russian captures nicely the nuances of two key phrases: *oukh harpagmon hegesato* (he did not consider it something to be seized) and *etapeinosen heauton* (he humbled himself). *Nestiashatel'* has the sense of “not clinging to, amassing, holding onto,” and *nishch'* has the sense of “humble, humiliated” in addition to its basic meaning, “poor.”
20. The vita of Iosif written by Savva Chernyi makes this clear. English translation, Smith, *Volokolamsk Paterikon*, 143–92.
21. There is considerable scholarly discord on the question of ecclesiastical and monastic landholdings in Muscovy. An excellent review of opinions given in the context of an analysis of the much-discussed “Pis'mo o neliubkakh” is Ostrowski, “Letter concerning Enmities.”
22. Romans 11:33, 34. Iosif's version differs from the Greek, which reads “O bathos ploutou kai sophias kai gnoseos Theou. Hos anexerauneta ta krimata autou kai anexikhniastoi hai hodoi autou” (O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God. How inscrutable are his judgments and how untraceable his paths).
23. “Or do you despise the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience? Do you not realize that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?”
24. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 140.
25. *Ibid.*, 141.
26. *Ibid.*, 144.

27. Literally “naked, bare.”
28. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 145. Citing 1 Peter 3:18, and 1 Corinthians 15:22.
29. Cf. Ephesians 4:29, which has the phrase “gniloe slovo” rendering the Greek “logos sapros.”
30. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 146. As an anonymous reviewer of this article pointed out, this entire argument, not to mention many other sections of the *Prosvetitel'*, may have as its source a disputation between Archbishop Gregentios of Taphar and the Jew Herban. See *Life and Works*, 466–9, and Nikon Chernogorets, *Pandekty* 51:415–16.
31. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 146.
32. *Ibid.*, 148.
33. *Ibid.*, 149.
34. *Ibid.*, 149.
35. *Ibid.*, 149–50. Of course, many people have indeed rejected these doctrines and beliefs; this is simply a rhetorical device used by Iosif to emphasize what he regards as the extraordinarily heinous nature of the Judaizers’ beliefs and their threat to Orthodoxy.
36. *Ibid.*, 150.
37. This is the operating hermeneutical principle of Origen and subsequent generations of biblical interpreters. See for example Origen’s preface to his commentary on Psalms 1–25, in Trigg, *Origen*, 69–71.
38. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 151. The passage reads, “they foresaw what would be the salvation of the whole world and that our Lord Jesus Christ granted to us by His advent.”
39. *Ibid.*, 151. This passage closes appropriately with Psalm 33:9; but since one of the themes of the entire discourse is divine omnipotence, the verse reinforces Iosif’s claim against his opponents that all things are possible for God, even the act of creating everything that exists, and nothing can resist God’s word.
40. If, as seems likely, Iosif means Adam, it is an unusual choice to call him “another angel.” In Orthodox tradition, monks and nuns are said to have adopted the angelic life, and according to Matthew 22:30, Mark 12:25, Luke 20:36, men and women will be like angels in heaven. John the Baptist, a model for the monastic life, frequently appears as a winged angel in icons.
41. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 153.
42. Romans 7:17.
43. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 153–4.
44. The theory of the deception of the devil arose very early in the patristic era. Gregory of Nyssa introduced the image of the bated hook. See Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio catechetica*, 24. A translation is available in Meredith, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 81. On the theme of the divine deception of the devil, see Costas, “Last Temptation of Satan.”
45. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 156–7.
46. *Ibid.*, 157–8.
47. *Ibid.*, 158.
48. This thought, and indeed his entire reflection on the meaning of repentance, appears to be inspired by John Chrysostom’s homilies on penance, especially Homily 3. See Chrysostom, “De paenitentia homiliae 1–9,” *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4333; in English, St. John Chrysostom, *On Repentance and Almsgiving*, 28–42. Chrysostom uses the same example of the cup of cold water (32), citing Matthew 10:42. Iosif dealt with practical aspects of repentance in his Monastic Rule. An anonymous reviewer drew attention in particular to Discourse 6 of the Brief Redaction of the Rule, and Discourse 4 of the Extended Redaction. *Monastic Rule*, 142–3, 199–200.
49. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 159–60.
50. *Ibid.*, 160. Citing 1 Corinthians 15:41.
51. Cf. Hosea 6:1.
52. Cf. Psalm 51:4.
53. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 161–2. The final phrase paraphrases Isaiah 1:18.
54. Somewhat reminiscent of the system for commemorating the dead at Cluny, Iosif elaborated the practice of receiving memorial donations from lay and ecclesiastical patrons in

- return for prayers offered by the monks for the deceased. See Steindorff, *Memoria in Altrußland*, 1994; *Das Speisungsbuch von Volokolamsk*, 1998; for Iosif's instructions and comments on the efficacy of prayer for the deceased, see *Sinodik Iosifo-Volokolamskogo monastyria*, 2004, 127–31; in English, *Monastic Rule*, 309–11.
55. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 164.
 56. *Ibid.*, 164.
 57. *Ibid.*, 165.
 58. *Ibid.*, 166.
 59. *Ibid.*, 168.
 60. Although it is not entirely certain, the consensus holds that the letter is directed to Prince Iurii Ivanovich. Zimin and Lur'e, *Poslaniia Iosifa Volotskogo*, 282–3.
 61. *Ibid.*, 233.
 62. See his "Second letter to a Prince about a tonsured man," Zimin and Lur'e, *Poslaniia Iosifa Volotskogo*, 149. "It is written, my lord, in the canons of the holy fathers that everyone who loves Christ ought to have concern for his household servants and before all else, for their purity. If there were a boy of 15 years and a girl of 12, their master is to ask them, and if they wish to be tonsured, then he is to let them. If they do not want it, then he is to marry off the boy and give the girl in marriage. And if they do not act thus, my lord, then they must give answer to God, if the boy or the girl falls into a sexual sin."
 63. Cf. Ephesians 5:5.
 64. Cf. Proverbs 4:14.
 65. Cf. Proverbs 2:20; or paraphrasing Psalm 18:20–30.
 66. Zimin and Lur'e, *Poslaniia Iosifa Volotskogo*, 233–4.
 67. In his "Letter about an unfrocked monk," Iosif gives another example of his maximalist understanding of repentance. "With all your power fortify yourself not to fall – for it does not befit a sturdy athlete. But if it happens that you fall, leap up right away and begin again in the good struggle. And if it happens in the 10,000s of times, after the hiding of grace, let him still get up 10,000s of times, even unto the very end." Zimin and Lur'e, *Poslaniia Iosifa Volotskogo*, 147.
 68. The letters are published in Smirnov, *Materialy*, 224–34. Although Smirnov regarded all five to be authentic, Pliguzov argued that only three are Iosif's own compositions. See Pliguzov, "O khronologii poslanii," 1059–60.
 69. For a brief summary of this period, with further literature, see *Monastic Rule*, 33–6.
 70. He elaborates the distinction in Discourse 15, *Prosvetitel'*, 511–13, 514–15.
 71. Discourse 15: "if he reveals his heresy and confesses his sins with tears and a contrite heart, and performs alms, and demonstrates other such saving works, let him be received." *Ibid.*, 523–4.
 72. *Ibid.*, 530.
 73. Discourse 16: "If any of them desires to repent, it is possible to repent in prison; for God will hear all the more those who repent in pains and woes." *Ibid.*, 536. It is important to keep in mind, however, that Iosif believes that *all* Christians should live their lives in a state of repentance, not just accused and condemned heretics.
 74. *Ibid.*, 536.
 75. Ezekiel 18:32, 33:11.
 76. Luke 5:32.
 77. Volotskii, *Prosvetitel'*, 534.
 78. One can reasonably wonder whether this doctrine of repentance also grounded Iosif's refusal to be reconciled with Archbishop Serapion of Novgorod. For the canonical issues at play in the conflict, see Smith, "Iosif of Volokolamsk."

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