

**Title:** Demons in the Descent into Hell  
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The Museum of Russian Icons has over six hundred Russian Icons. Among them are many which depict demons. These are exemplified mainly in the Descent into Hell, the Last Judgment, and the Ladder of Divine Ascent. And, clearly, the dragon in St George and other saint icons signify an evil spirit. The majority of these demons are represented graphically as anthropomorphized angels, naked, with wings, pointed hair, claws on hands and feet, and usually painted black.

The focus of this paper, however, is on a set of four unusual icons of the Resurrection and Descent into Hell which have very different iconographic representations of demons. The focus of the talk will be on three distinctive features of these icons—the depictions of the shape of the Jaws of Hell where, in these icons, it is located on top of the *head* of the Jaws in the form of a human head rather than the typical representation of the jaws of a whale. In addition, I will also describe two other features which distinguish these four icons, namely, the geometrical form for the walls of Paradise, and the representation of other demons. I will then interpret these images in the context of Orthodox belief and Apocrypha and suggest possible models and sources for them.