

# ST. JOHN

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21329 Cienega Ave. Covina, CA 91724 Fax & Tel: (714) 592-8847 Tel: (714) 599-9075

## ALL ABOUT ANGELS

### Some Things the Bible Tells About Them



1. They were created by God. *Genesis 2:1*
2. There are several orders or classes. *Isaiah 6:2* (Some are "higher" or more important than others.)
3. They are immortal. (They don't die.) *Luke 20:36*
4. They worship God. *Philippians 2:9-11*
5. They are obedient. *Matthew 6:10*
6. They do not marry. *Matthew 22:30*
7. There are many thousands of them. *Deuteronomy 33:2*
8. Only three are actually named in the Bible—Gabriel, Michael, Lucifer.
9. Some are fallen. (They left God and decided to be bad angels. Lucifer is the only one whose name we know.)
10. They have personalities and are not just forces. *Luke 1:26*
11. They can appear in visible form. *Luke 1:12*
12. They help people. *Hebrews 1:14*



### St. John Coptic Orthodox Church

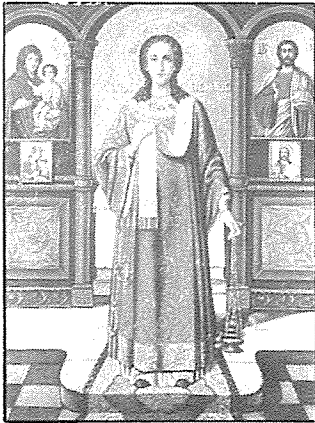
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**STEPHEN, SAINT**, the first of the followers of Jesus to suffer martyrdom, and therefore called the protomartyr (feast day: 1 Ṭūbah). His personality, activity, and death are described in the Acts of the Apostles, chapters 6–7.

As the number of Christians grew, there were increasing difficulties in attending to the needs of all of them, and the Greek-speaking converts protested that their widows were neglected in favor of the Hebrews'. The Twelve put seven men in charge of ministering to the needs of the Hellenists, that is, the converts to Christianity from among the Greek-speaking Jews resident in Jerusalem. These seven men are sometimes assumed to be deacons and ministers.

Stephen is the first of the seven mentioned in Acts and is described as "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit," indicating the excellent reputation he enjoyed among the Christians of Jerusalem. Because of his Greek name (Stefanos, "crowned"), he is considered to be of the same Hellenist origin as the other six. Stephen's activity was directed toward the conversion of the Hellenist Jews resident in Jerusalem and was accompanied by extraordinary or miraculous phenomena (Acts 6:8). This provoked the reaction of a group of Hellenist Jews from the Synagogue of the Freedmen, so called because it was apparently the place of worship of Jews from Rome, descendants of those led away as captives by Pompey, 63 B.C. This group provoked the arrest of Stephen and his trial before the Jewish authorities. During the trial the extraordinary incident described in Acts 6:15 occurred: "Those who sat there in the Council saw his face looking like the face of an angel." Stephen defended himself during the trial in the speech related in Acts 7:11–54. The accused presented a synthesis of the history of salvation and accused the Jews of having murdered Christ. This provoked the wrath of those present,

who on hearing Stephen declare that he was contemplating Christ in glory, stoned him. The narration in Acts ends by relating the presence and cooperation of Saul, and the attitude of Stephen, who commended his spirit to Christ, and also forgave his executioners.

The martyrdom of Stephen took place in Jerusalem in all probability in the winter of the year 36–37. In the autumn of 36 Pontius Pilate had left Judea for Rome, on the orders of Vitellius, in order to account for his administration of the area. The death of Stephen initiated a persecution of the Christians, causing their dispersal to other cities of Palestine. At a later date further legendary narratives of the life and martyrdom of Stephen were produced. They follow the story of Acts. The Georgian version of an original Greek text of a *Martyrium Stephani* is preserved in a tenth-century codex found in Mount Athos (PO 19, ed. N. Marr, pp. 689–99). In Coptic there is a *Life of Saint Stephen Protomartyr* transmitted in a codex in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (ed. Hyvernat, 1922) and some fragments in the Borgia collection (ed. Guidi [1888], trans. *Giornale della Societa Asiatica Italiana* 2), which contain the *Acts of Stephen* together with those of some apostles.

The legendary tales of the martyrdom of Stephen were probably developed in the fifth or sixth century, following the supposed discovery of the relics of the saint in 415 by the priest Lucianus of Kēfar-Gamlá. Lucianus' Greek account of his discovery was soon translated into Latin by Avitus of Braga, and this is the oldest version still extant (PL 61, cols. 807–18). There are Syriac and Armenian versions of the narration, and a longer recension in Greek. Everything would seem to indicate that it was a popular tale throughout Christendom and that it gave a considerable stimulus to the cult of Saint Stephen, although this cult already existed, as can be seen from numerous sermons in honor of Saint Stephen from earlier times (cf., e.g., *Gregory of Nyssa*, PG 56, cols. 701–36; Asterius of Amasea, PG 40, cols. 337–52). There is no known evidence to substantiate either the account of Lucianus or the authenticity of the relics.

The Coptic church celebrates the feast of the Invention of the relics of Saint Stephen on 1 Ṭūbah, coinciding with other Eastern churches, such as that of Constantinople. In the Syriac martyrology, however, it is celebrated on 26 December. A further celebration was the feast of the translation of the relics on 15 Tūt. There are indications that in the middle of the sixth century, under the direction of Bishop Theodorus, the pronaos of the Temple of Isis at Philae was transformed into a sanctuary dedicated to Saint Stephen (cf. Revillout, 1874).



# ANIMAL HEADLINES



Some Of The World's  
Best Animal Stories



Locusts Invade .....	Exodus 10
Viper Bites Missionary .....	Acts 28:3-6
Serpent Tempts First Lady .....	Genesis 3:1-15
Pigs Commit Suicide .....	Matthew 8:32
Ram Saves Boy's Life .....	Genesis 22:13
Lions Ignore Fresh Flesh .....	Daniel 6
Foxes Gully of Arson .....	Judges 15:4, 5
Donkey Speaks .....	Numbers 22:28
Bears Eat Children .....	2 Kings 2:23-25
Dogs Devour Queen .....	2 Kings 9:30-37
Fish Swallows Prophet .....	Jonah 1:17
Hornets Clear the Way .....	Exodus 23:28
Ravens Airlift Food .....	1 Kings 17:6
Donkey's Jawbone Is Fatal Weapon .....	Judges 15:14-17
Floating Zoo Survives Flood .....	Genesis 8
Swine Tended by Rich Man's Son .....	Luke 15 11-24
Lion Bites Off More Than He Can Chew .....	Judges 14:5-6
Frogs, Gnats, Flies Attack .....	Exodus 8
Worm Exposes Prophet .....	Jonah 4:7
Fish Pays Taxes .....	Matthew 17:27



## Only One Life To Live

A little boy entered a candy store. He wandered from one show case to another studying carefully each assortment of candy. His mother grew tired of waiting for him to choose. "Hurry up, son," she said. "Spend your money. We must be going."

To this the boy replied, "But mother, I have only one dime to spend, and I've got to spend it carefully." This little boy had learned a great lesson. If he had had a pocketful of dimes, he could have afforded to be careless in the spending of one. But he had only one. And he had to spend it carefully.

The same applies to life. If we had ten lives to live, we could afford to spend one of them in merely having a good time, or in only making money. There is nothing wrong in making money or in having a good time, but when a person spends his whole life doing only this, and has no time for God, for the Church, for prayer, for the family, then there is something wrong.

We have only one life to live, so we must be careful how we spend it. One day we shall have to appear before God to tell Him exactly what we did with the one life he gave us.

You must ask yourself: "How can I best use the one life God has given me?"

Many years ago a person met a young priest on a train. He learned that the priest had volunteered for missionary service in the Congo-Africa.

- "I am on my way home," he said, "to see my mother for the last time."
- "Why for the last time?" asked the passenger.
- "Because," replied the priest, "the average life span of a missionary in the Congo is three years."
- "But why are you going? Why go to the Congo?"
- The young priest replied by quoting the words of St. Paul:

*"The life I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*

ONLY ONE LIFE TO LIVE  
ONLY WHAT'S DONE FOR

IT WILL SOON BE PASSED  
CHRIST, THAT WILL LAST

**Do  
not be  
overcome  
by Evil. but**  
~~~~~  
**overcome  
evil with Good.**  
~~~~~  
Romans 12:21

# EIGHT THINGS WORTH THINKING ABOUT

Do you like to daydream... or just think great thoughts and let your mind play with super ideas? God's Word tells us that our thought time can be best spent on some of the things in this list. The original list is found in Philipians 4:8.

## THINK ABOUT THINGS THAT ARE:

**TRUE** (sure, reliable, real, trustworthy)

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**HONEST** (noble, genuine, sincere)

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**RIGHT** (just, blameless, fair, honorable)

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**PURE** (innocent, faultless, clean)

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**LOVELY** (perfect, flawless, radiant, beautiful)

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**ADMIRABLE** (edifying, of good report or character)

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**EXCELLENT** (virtuous, moral, righteous)

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**PRAISEWORTHY** (exemplary, things of wonderful quality)

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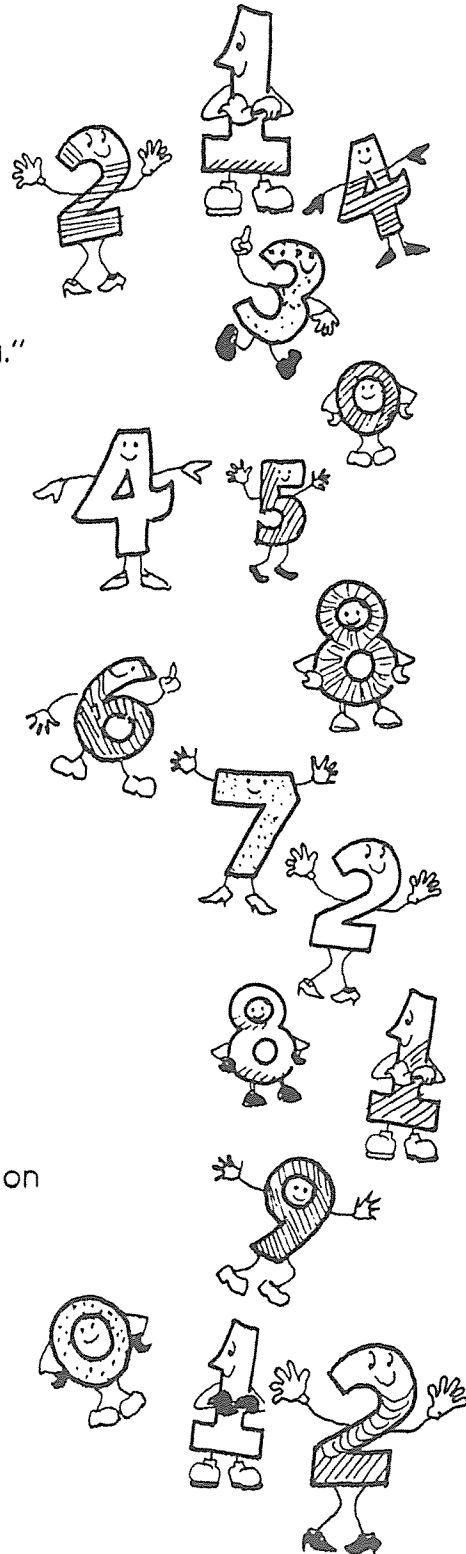
Under each item in the list, you might like to write one real thing related to that idea which you could enjoy thinking about. Look up in a dictionary the words you don't know. They are all good words to understand.

There is one special person who is all of these things.  
If you know His name, write it here.

# NUMBER KNOWLEDGE

Fill in each space with the correct number!

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ loaves and \_\_\_\_\_ fishes
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ Hebrew boys in a furnace
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ times around Jericho
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ disciples
- E. \_\_\_\_\_ lepers healed and \_\_\_\_\_ says, "Thank you."
- F. \_\_\_\_\_ commandments given to Moses
- G. \_\_\_\_\_ tribes of Israel
- H. \_\_\_\_\_ pieces of silver to betray Jesus
- I. \_\_\_\_\_ days and nights of rain
- J. \_\_\_\_\_ plagues for the Egyptians
- K. \_\_\_\_\_ times a day, Daniel prayed
- L. \_\_\_\_\_ books in the Old Testament
- M. \_\_\_\_\_ books in the New Testament
- N. \_\_\_\_\_ members of the Godhead
- O. \_\_\_\_\_ fed with a boy's lunch
- P. \_\_\_\_\_ times Naaman dips in the River Jordan
- Q. \_\_\_\_\_ books in the Bible
- R. \_\_\_\_\_ days and nights in the belly of a whale
- S. \_\_\_\_\_ sons of Jacob
- T. \_\_\_\_\_ sons of Noah
- U. \_\_\_\_\_ thieves crucified with Jesus
- V. \_\_\_\_\_ days and nights from death to Resurrection
- W. \_\_\_\_\_ spies hidden in Jericho by Rahab
- X. \_\_\_\_\_ foolish virgins
- Y. \_\_\_\_\_ wise virgins
- Z. \_\_\_\_\_ true God



## ANSWERS:

A. 5, 2 B. 3 C. 7 D. 12 E. 10, 1 F. 10 G. 12 H. 30 I. 40 J. 10 K. 3  
 L. 39 M. 27 N. 3 O. 5,000 P. 7 Q. 66 R. 3 S. 12 T. 3 U. 2 V. 3  
 W. 2 X. 5 Y. 5 Z. 1

## *From Paradise of the Holy Fathers:*

### *St. John the Dwarf*

Abba John said, "I think it best that a man should have a little bit of all the virtues. Therefore, get up early every day and acquire the beginning of every virtue and every commandment of God. Use great patience, with fear and long-suffering, in the love of God, with all the fervour of your soul and body. Exercise great humility, bear with interior distress; be vigilant and pray often with reverence and groaning, with purity of speech and control of your eyes. When you are despised do not get angry; be at peace, and do not render evil for evil. Do not pay attention to the faults of others, and do not try to compare yourself with others, knowing you are less than every created thing. Renounce everything material and that which is of the flesh. Live by the cross, in warfare, in poverty of spirit, in voluntary spiritual asceticism, in fasting, penitence and tears, in discernment, in purity of soul, taking hold of that which is good. Do your work in peace. Persevere in vigil, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, and in sufferings. Shut yourself in a tomb as though you were already dead, so that at all times you will think death is near." Such was the work of the monks of Scetis; they inspire fervour in those who are in the conflict and do violence to themselves to win others to do good.

### **Are You My Friend?**

My friend, I stand in the judgment now      You taught me many things, that's true  
And I feel that you're to blame somehow      I called you "friend" and trusted you  
On earth, I walked with you day by day      But I learn "now" that it's too late  
And never did you point to the way      You could have kept me from this fate

You knew the Lord in truth and glory      We walked by day and talked by night  
But never did you tell the story      And yet you showed me not the light  
My knowledge then was very dim      You let me live, laugh, love, and die  
Because you failed to mention Him      You knew I'd never live on high

Though we lived together on the earth      Yes I called you "friend" in life  
You never told me Repent live the new birth      And trusted you through joy and strife  
And now I stand this day condemned      And yet on coming to the end  
Since you did'n mention Jesus the best friend      I cannot "now" call you my friend



## Prayer of St. Augustine

Lord, Lord, make me an instrument of Your Peace where there is hatred, let me bring Love where there is injury, let me bring Pardon where there is doubt, let me bring Faith where there is despair, let me bring Hope where there is darkness, let me bring Light where there is sadness, let me bring Joy!!

Lord, Lord, help me to help by word and by deed Lord, Lord, help me to help the person in need help me to show, that I understand Help me to want, to offer my hand help me to be where, I find a need there To comfort the man, who suffers alone forgetting that I, have needs of my own!!

Lord, Lord, I ask You Lord to help me believe Lord, Lord, it is in giving that we receive so, help me to Love, when I'd rather be loved to Understand, when I'd be understood to try to do unto, as I would be done to and then will I know, the true meaning of Dying to me, BUT LIVING TO LOVE !!!

## Delay

*I loved Thee late  
Too late I loved Thee, Lord,  
Yet not so late  
But Thou dost still afford  
The proof that Thou wilt bear  
With winning art,  
One sinner more  
Upon Thy loving heart.  
And may I prove,  
When all my warfare's past,  
Though late I loved Thee,  
I loved Thee to the last.*

—Saint Augustine

