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FEATURE

Schedule

Thanks!

St. John Chrysostom

A Ladder To Heaven

A N G E R

**Revelation's 3 Beasts
of the Satanic Trinity!**

GOD RUNS !

What a difference!

**PRAYER MOVES GOD'S
HANDS.....**

The Mouse And The Cheese

Festival Trumpet..

The Divine Justice

ST. JOHN

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MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME 5 NUMBER 47 NOVEMBER 1993

PRINTED BY GATEWAY...SHOHDY NAKHLA (714)921-2005

The **Schedule** of Meetings & Occasions November 93

SUNDAYS

- + English Liturgy 7:30 - 10:30 A.M.
- + Arabic Liturgy 8:00 - 11:30 A.M.

WEDNESDAYS

- + Liturgy 8:00 - 10:00 A.M.
- + Prayer Meeting 8:00 - 9:00 P.M.

FRIDAYS

- + Liturgy 8:00 - 10:00 A.M.
- The Deacons Meeting
- + Instructions & Alhan for deacons 6:30 - 8:00 PM.
- Friday Youth Meeting
- + Arabic Youth Meeting 7:30 - 9:30 P.M.

SATURDAYS

- + 1. The Youth leaders and Sunday School Teachers,
Service Preparatory Meeting . . 5:00 - 6:30 P.M.
- + 2. Vespers & Arabic Bible Study **6:30-8:30 P.M.**
followed by Confessions, Tasbeha.
- + 3. Saturday English Youth Meeting
7:00-8:30 PM. , then Midnight Praise.

Feasts:



1. **November 1, (Babah 22), the martyrdom of St. Luke, the Evangelist**
2. **Nov. 5, the Martyrdom of St. Timon the Apostle (one of the 70 Apostles).**
3. **Nov. 9: Consecration of St. Mark's Church.**

4. **Nov. 10: Departure of St. Cleopas the Apostle** (one of the 70- Luke 24:18).

5. **November 14, the 22nd Anniversary of the Enthronment of H.H. Pope Shenouda III.**

6. **Nov. 18, the Commemoration of the first Ecumenical Council of Nicea** (in the year 325 A.D., 318 bishops and priests from all churches proclaimed the Creed and confirmed the Divinity of Christ).

7. **Nov. 20: Departure of St. Anna, the mother of Virgin Mary.**

8. **Nov. 21: Commemoration of Archangel Michael.**

9. **Nov. 24, The martyrdom of St. Mina, the miracles' performer.**

10. **Nov. 25: Beginning of the Advent (43 day fasting before Christmas, and usually comes with the Thanksgiving day).**

11. **Nov. 26: Departure of St. John Chrysostom (Golden mouth).**

12. **Nov. 27: Martyrdom of Apostle Philip.**

13. **Nov. 29: Departure of St. Anianus, the 2nd Pope of Alexandria.**

14. **Nov. 30: Departure of St. Gregory, the miracle performer.**

Arabic Language Class

Mr. Adly Tawadrous, the Arabic teacher, will continue teaching the Arabic language every **friday & Saturday from 6 - 7 P.M.** The fees are \$10.00 per month. Please encourage the youth and the children to benefit of this opportunity.

Thanks!



- I'm deeply touched!
- I'm highly honored!
- I'm sincerely grateful!
- I'm simply speechless!
- I'm truly overwhelmed!

✓ — I'm all of the above!

In the Occasion of the
Thanksgiving Day

*“Bless the Lord,
O my soul;
and all that is
within me,
bless His holy
name.*

*Bless the Lord,
O my soul,
and forget not
all His benefits:*

*who forgives all
your iniquities,*

*who heals all
your diseases, who
redeems your life
from destruction,*

*who crowns you
with lovingkindness
and tender mercies,*

*who satisfies your
mouth with good
things, So that your
youth is renewed
like eagle's.*

(Psalm 103)

The Saint of the Month

St. John Chrysostom

“Golden - Mouthed”

(347 - 407 A.D.)

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, SAINT (c. 347–407), patriarch of Constantinople and doctor of the church (feast day: 13 November in the East, 13 September in the West). John Chrysostom was born in Antioch, where he studied law and theology. For some years he devoted himself to monastic life, part of the time as a hermit. He was a deacon under the bishop Flavian, who ordained him a priest in 386 and appointed him to preach. His name Chrysostom means “golden-mouthed.” He was made patriarch of Constantinople in 398 against his will.

Chrysostom's stern moral stance and tactless efforts to reform the corrupt court and city led to conflict with the empress Eudoxia and with Saint THEOPHILUS, patriarch of Alexandria, who was jealous of him. Theophilus took the occasion of Chrysostom's having received the Tall Brothers, Origenist monks from Egypt, to have him condemned for Origenist views at the Synod of the Oak in Chalcedon in 403. The synod, through the intervention of the empress, had him deposed and exiled to the Caucasus, where he died in 407.

This article will concentrate on Chrysostom's important position in Coptic literature. It is surprising that despite his conflict with Theophilus, he was enthusiastically taken up by Coptic tradition, both as an author of homilies and as a saint. This process was achieved without compromising the position of Theophilus. In fact, the earliest Coptic sources and those that are most authoritative concerning Chrysostom omit his relations with Theophilus, attributing the cause of all his tribulations to Eudoxia. Thus a Coptic history of the church defines him as a “wise man of God, full of faith, wisdom and charity,” and after a long account of his literary works it attributes his misfortunes solely to his dispute with the wicked Eudoxia. The text of the so-called *Memoirs of Dioskoros* (Johnson, 1980, pp. 88–90) speaks in similar terms.

Prayer Moves The Hand That Moves The World

By

Mary Habib



Out of personal experience through bitter moments, we firmly believe how true the above statements proved to be. No pen or paper can express the gratitude we cherish towards all and everyone of our friends, sisters and brothers in Jesus for their continuous prayer for us during our perilous trauma of sickness and suffering we endured from the time we were with you in California to the time we settled back home.

We want you all to know that on the wings of your prayers we were carried back home safely. Your loving and fervent prayers have definitely moved the hand that moves the world. Blessed be the name of the Lord. You have proved the saying which says:

**When all we can do is pray,
prayer is enough.**

Indeed it is and we ask the Lord to reward you all for your love and kindness and most of all for your precious prayers which proves:

**Pray on the child of God, pray on,
This is your duty and your task.
To God the answering belongs;
Yours is the simpler part to ask.**

God Runs!

**“But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and RAN and fell on his neck and kissed him”
(Luke 15:20)**



Here is an imaginary letter sent to the father by the lost son:

Dad---

I found your letter to me here on the desk. Perhaps you didn't want me to read it... But I'm glad I did. I thank you for your patience, for your understanding and love, for your mercy and forgiveness. I thank you also for the wonderful celebration on my return. But Father, it was not the best robe...not the ring...not the shoes...it was the thought that you, from your safe righteousness, could run to your unworthy son. Father not the music nor the singing, the feast, nor those who came, showed me your secret, and in part your long sight and your anguished heart. Your friends and neighbors reverencing your ways, might marvel at the thing. But, I, my Father, I, your son, a great way from you, saw you **RUN.**”

This is the only time in the Bible that God is pictured as running. It is done to show us that when we take one step to return to God after we have sinned, He runs to welcome us.

So, if you fall into sin, don't give up-get up and return to the Father as did the lost son. God will take us back not as criminals but as honored guests!

“There is no one like God, who rides the heavens to help you, and in His excellency on the clouds. The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deuteronomy 33:26, 27).

A mother who had a large family was asked once which of her children she loved the most? She answered, “I love most the one who is away until he returns; the one who is sick until he is well; the one who is hurt until the hurt disappears; the one who is lost until he is found.”

The Lord Jesus told us the story of the lost son to show us that our heavenly Father loves most the child who is lost until he is found.

A Chinese artist decided to paint the story of the prodigal son. His first painting showed the father standing, waiting at the gate for his son who was seen coming from far away. When the artist showed his picture to a Christian friend, his friend replied, “Oh, no, you don't have it right. The father shouldn't be standing, waiting. He should be running to meet his son.”

“But no Chinese father would do that!” said the artist.

“That is just the point,” said the friend. “No human father would do that, but that is the amazing story of a father that tells us about God's unbelievable love-He loves us like that!”

“I see,” said the artist.

The next picture he painted showed the father running to meet his son, and, in his great hurry, he had put on shoes that did not match!

A Ladder To Heaven

By

Fr. Augustinos Hanna

After sunset, in the desert, where Jacob spent the night, he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head- as a pillow- and lay down to sleep. *“He dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it....”* (Gen.28:10-19).

God is so great, high and holy that tiny and sinful man could never reach Him nor build a ladder to get to be where God is. The 20th century man could fly through a rocket in the outer space and reach the moon, but he is still very far from the third heaven where God is! Yet man always craved to be with God because something inside him told him that he was made for God and could find happiness only in Him. God in His great love decided to build a great ladder to come down to man!

What do you think is the ladder God used to come to us? And why was that ladder for?

God does not need a ladder because God is Omnipresence, He is everywhere in heaven and on earth. The angels do not need a ladder, because they have mighty wings and can fly. But the ladder was for Jacob, for me and you, for every sinner who wants to ascend to heaven to live with God.

1. This ladder was God incarnate in Christ:

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the ladder, through His birth in Bethlehem, *“the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”* (John 1:14).

The Scriptures, from thousands of years, announced that. Isaiah expressed his earnest desire saying, *“Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down”* (Isa.64:1) Solomon the wise King and Prophet inquired, *“Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son’s name, if you know?”* (Proverbs 30:4).

At the fullness of the time, Jesus said, “I Am the Way” and answered these questions and desires saying, *“No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven”* (Jn.3:13).

St. Paul explained that also and said:

“Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifested in the flesh....received up in glory” (1 Tim.3:16, 17). He added:

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil” (Heb. 2:14-17).

2. Jesus descended to lift us up to heaven:

One of the church fathers, John Climacus, wrote a book “Ladder of Divine Ascent” in which he talked about the steps we can take to go to God.

These steps that lead to God are:

- (1) Faith (2) Baptism (3) Repentance

The Mouse And The Cheese

By

Dalia Attalla



- 4) Obedience (5) Love (6) Prayer
- (7) The Bible (8) Confession (9) Holy Communion
- (10) Holy life & purity of heart. (11) Humility
- (12) Good works, serving God and people.

3. The Angels of God are descending and ascending on this Ladder to serve us:

Jesus explained the symbol of Jacob's ladder-dream explicitly on Himself saying, "*You shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man*" (John 1:51).

As the angels served Jesus, so they also serve His believers. They ascend to heaven to carry our prayers to the throne of God, and ascend to us carrying the response and the blessings.

Here are some Biblical examples:

+ "*Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. And he was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne*" (Revelation 8:3,4).

+ "*The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him and deliver them*" (Ps.34:7).

+ "*For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone*" (Ps.91:11).

+ "*So it was that Lazarus, the beggar, died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom*" (Lk. 16:22).

+ "*Are they (the angels) not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*" (Heb.1:14).

When we fear God, worship and serve Him, the angels will help us, take care of us, serve us and rejoice with us (Acts 8:26 & 10:3,4 & Lk.15:10).

There once was a man who owned a famous gourmet cheese store. This cheese store sold all kinds and types of cheeses. One morning, the owner of the store discovered a small mouse hiding in a tiny whole. This mouse would sneak out every night and feed on the cheese. When the owner realized he was losing money and cheese due to this mouse, he decided to set a trap for him, using the very object of his desire....cheese!

The naive and unsuspecting mouse, was lured in by the cheese, and within seconds he was caught by the trap!

We too, are constantly being lured in by similar traps that are set by the devil. The devil uses our desires and lusts against us. By making such things look good to us, he can string us along, until we are caught in the trap and we have committed the sin.

We must be aware of the devil's traps and not follow the desires and lusts of this world. As St. John said in his First Epistle, "*Do not love the world or the things in the world, for all that is in the world is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lusts of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever*" (1 Jn.2:15-17).

God should be our only goal and desire. We must ask His help and guidance on the righteous path that will lead us to Him and to heaven.

Bible Study on Revelation

THE IDENTITY OF THE BEASTS REVEALED

I. Three beasts of the Satanic Trinity

- A. The Dragon that fell from heaven, Rev. 12:3-4, 7-12 the victory over him has been won, but he releases his fury until the final consummation.
- B. The Beast that comes from the sea, Rev. 13: 1-10, esp. 1-3.
- C. The Beast that comes from the earth, Rev. 13. 11-18.

II. The Beasts are Human Agents of Cosmic Evil Forces: Comparison with Texts not written in the Apocalyptic Style:

- A. The number of a human: *"Here is the wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it the number of a man: His number is 666 "* (13:18).
- B. *" They are seven kings "* (17:10).
- C. Called the "Antichrist" in Epistles of St. John.
 - 1. 1 John 2:18-27 (esp.vv. 18, 22) *"Little children, it is the last hour ; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.....Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ ? He is Antichrist who denies the Father and the Son".*
 - a. It is now the last hour, from the Resurrection until the Second and Glorious Advent.
 - b. Antichrists have and will come.
 - c. He who denies the Father / Son is the Antichrist: Jews, pagans.
 - d. The Christians have been sealed.
 - e. Christians are exhorted to maintain the faith, and the Father and the Son will remain with them, and they will receive the promise of eternal life.
 - 2. 1 John 4:1-6 (esp. vv.3f.): *The Antichrist is already in the world, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world...and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come int he flesh is Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world."*
 - 3. 2 John 7 : a) Many Antichrists, or deceivers , have come.
 - b) They are those who deny that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.
"If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your

house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds” (2 Jn. 10,11).

D. Called the “Man of Lawlessness” in St. Paul’s Epistles: 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12

1. He takes on divine names.
2. He works by the power of Satan.

III. Commentary on Chapter 13

A. Verse 1

1. “Horns” are explained in 17:12, *“And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast”*.
2. “Blasphemous names”: divine pretensions, like the devil who, from the beginning, rebelled against God and wanted to be worshipped himself (the temptation of Christ).

B. Verse 3: lethal wound healed.

1. As a baby, Nero was found with a snake in his cradle.
2. Nero was decapitated June 9, 68.
3. Rumor was very widespread that he had not died but had escaped to Parthia and would return.
4. Several years after Nero’s execution, several individuals did pretend to be Nero; they did attract a following and even small armies.

C. Verse 10: “Endurance” this is the thesis of this chapter and of the book.

D. Verse 14: 1. The mad Emperor Caligula (37-41) is described as a “beast” or “monster” in history.

2. Caligula not only allowed but demanded that he be worshipped.
3. He had the heads of all statues of gods in the Empire replaced with a figure of his own.
4. Those who refused to worship were executed.
5. Nero wanted to be flattered for his music, acting and chariot racing, but he did not insist that people worship him before his death.
6. Height of emperor worship came with Domitian (81-96), who wanted to be called “Lord and God”.
7. Domitian was known as “Nero Redivivus”.

E. Verse 17: (1) One could not buy or sell or operate a business unless he had a certificate of sacrifice to Caesar; violation was punishable by imprisonment and death.

(2) Legal documents and bills of sale had to be marked with the image of emperor, his name and the year of his reign.

F. Verse 18

1. The mark of the beast is identified with his number.
2. Cryptograms known as gematria (Hebrew) or isopsephid (Greek) involved adding up numerical values of the letters that made up a name.
3. Greek / Roman gods were commonly referred to by the numerical values of their names (e.g., Jupiter or Zeus known as "717").
4. "666" designates three-fold evil. "777" designates total perfection. "888" designates superabundant or supernatural or divine perfection.
5. Rev. 19:16 says the Name of the Word of God is "King of Kings, Lord of Lords" In Aramaic, this adds up to "777".

Caesar Nero			Jesus		
Q	Ϟ	100	I	I	10
S	Ϛ	60	E	H	8
R	ϛ	200	S	Σ	200
N	Ϟ	50	O	O	70
R	ϛ	200	U	Y	400
W	ϛ	6	S	Σ	<u>200</u>
N	Ϟ	<u>50</u>			888
		666			

6. Some manuscripts say that the number of the beast is "616". This fact practically proves that the cryptogram was intended and understood as standing for Nero, since we know that his name was spelled as either "Neron" (value 666) or "Nero" (value 616).

The Difference

By
Wanda Guirgis

I got up early one morning,
and rushed right into the day.
I had so much to accomplish,
that I didn't have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me,
and heavier came each task.
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered,
He answered "You didn't ask."

I wanted to see joy and beauty,
but the day toiled on gray and bleak.
I wondered why God didn't show me,
He said, "But you didn't seek."

I tried to come into God's presence,
I used all my keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided,
"My child, you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning,
and paused before entering the day.
I had so much to accomplish,
that I had to take time to pray.



ANGER

By
Fr. Augustinos Hanna

From mild irritation to uncontrolled rage, anger wears many faces and plays numerous roles in our life. Sometimes justified, often not, anger is one of our emotions that must be kept under the dominating control of the Holy Spirit.

Like fire, it can either be of benefit or cause permanent damage. This power deserves our full attention, and God's full control.

Are you tired of losing the war with wrath? Have you been more irritated in recent days? Is your initial reaction to opposition a clenched fist? Would you rather fight than switch? It is of great importance to our spiritual survival to know how to win victory in the hot arena of everyday demands, difficult people and irritating circumstances.

Some time ago a man sat in my Bible study and poured out his anguish. He had battered his wife the night before. She was too humiliated and bruised, to come with him. Both, by the way, were Christians!

A psychologist once said, "while I was sitting in the Orange County jail with a young father, his face was buried in his hands. Tears ran through his fingers as he told me of his temper. He had just killed his infant daughter with his own hands, in an uncontrollable rage! He had been irritated by the baby's crying as he was listening to music!"



Other young man hit his wife with his belt and caused her to divorce him, just because he returned home tired and couldn't tolerate his baby's laughter!

Another gentleman, in his wrath, threw his mother-in-law's clothes into the garbage and was about to destroy all his family life because of some of her foolish remarks!

What Is Anger?

It is not easy to find a definition for anger, but we can say, "Anger is an emotional reaction of hostility that brings personal displeasure, either to ourselves or to someone else".

People who study psychology tell us that there are various phases of anger. All of us have experienced some of them.

1. Anger can begin with mild irritation, which is nothing more than perhaps an innocent experience of being upset. A mild feeling of discomfort brought about by someone or something.

2. It may turn from irritation to indignation, which is a feeling that something must be answered; there must be an avenging of that which is wrong. But both irritation and indignation can go unexpressed.

3. If fed, indignation leads to wrath- which never goes unexpressed. Psychologists tell us that wrath is a strong desire to avenge.

4. Then, if increased, anger becomes fury. The word suggests violence, even a loss of emotional control.

5. The last phase of anger is rage. Obviously, rage is the most dangerous form of anger. Rage is a temporary loss of control involving acts of violence. The angry person scarcely realizes what he has done, just as that man in Los Angeles

who admitted, some time ago, that he drowned his four children in a fit of rage!

Does The Bible Surprise You?

In Ephesians 4:26, 27 we have two verses that relate to anger.

“Be angry, (or as in other virgin: “when angry,) and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.”

Do you imagine that God is saying to you, “Get mad!” If that were the end of verse 26, we would put an exclamation point after the word “angry”. Be angry! How about that! When’s the last time you obeyed the Scriptures and “blew your cool”?

We can see three important things in these verses:

(1) Anger is a God-given emotion:

There’s something inhuman about a person who never gets angry. He has a strange makeup. We would be quick to say that one who does not show compassion really does not have a heart. And one who doesn’t love, there’s something terribly wrong with him. The same is true of anger. When God says, “Be angry”, He does not prohibit us from expressing this emotion which He gave us. But the Prohibition is focused upon sinning during anger.

(2) Anger is not necessarily sinful:

God says, “Be angry, and yet do not sin.” Not every expression of anger is wrong. It is like saying to our children, “When you go out tonight, enjoy yourself. But don’t misuse your humor.” Or it’s like the Lord when He says, “I want you to love, but don’t love the world. I want you to love, but restrict that love to certain things.” This is the same thought. Be angry, but don’t carry that anger to the point where it becomes sin.

In the Old Testament “the anger of the Lord” is mentioned no less than twenty times. And in the New Testament we have some classic examples of Jesus’ anger! When those moneychangers were in the temple, He didn’t walk in and say, “Now listen, guys, I don’t want to offend you, but what you are doing isn’t very good.”

Rather, he plaited together a whip of thongs and physically drove them out of the temple. His emotion was an expression of real indignation!

And the Lord Jesus never spoke more angrily to anyone than He did to the religious hypocrites in Matthew 23, where in one case after another He said, “Woe to you.” he even called them “Whitewashed tombs” and “serpents”! There are times when anger is very appropriate.

(3) Anger must have safeguards:

Notice the two safeguards St. Paul gave us right in this passage?

1. “Do not let the sun go down on your anger” (Ephesians 4:26). Don’t prolong anger into the night. In Paul’s day, the setting of the sun was the closing of the day and the beginning of the next. By the end of the day, make sure your anger problem is solved. I believe this is to be taken very literally.

But one of the church fathers, John Cassian, talking about a high level of Christianity, interpreted it spiritually or symbolically, saying, that St. Paul meant, “the Sun of Righteousness” (Christ), or else it would mean that he allows anger to stay until sunset!” He supported his view by the teaching of the fathers and elders when they never allowed anger to stay in their hearts for one moment.

We practice this in our homes. If there have been times of disagreement or anger throughout the day, clear them up immediately or at least by evening.

The Church 4th Annual Festival

When you lay your head on your pillow, make sure those feelings of anger have been resolved. Be certain that there is forgiveness, a clearing out of that conscience. **Husbands and wives, don't go to sleep back to back.**

Every once in a while, a Christian brother or sister tells me of an experience when they got mad with someone and couldn't sleep, they were in the wrong situation. Then they say, "I had to get up, turn the light on, and make a phone call... or get dressed, go over to this person's house, and talk with him face to face to clear it up."

This exactly what happened one day with Abba Abram, Bishop of Fayoum and Giza, Egypt, when he yelled at the church guard one day, and couldn't sleep until he went to him at mid-night to reconcile him and ask for forgiveness!

2. "Do not give the devil an opportunity" (Eph.4:27). Do not allow your anger to be expressed in such a way that you are weakened and the devil reproduces his character through you.

You see, Christ loves to reproduce His character through us. When we are under the control of the Holy Spirit, then the character of Christ flows freely, His love, His gentleness, His compassion, His joy, His concern for others. But the devil is a master of counterfeit, and when we are given over to the things of Satan, he aims to make us behave like Him.

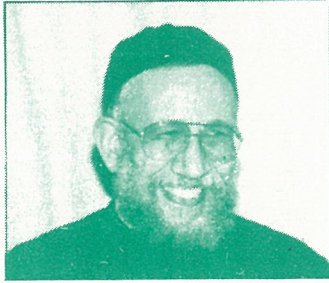
That's Paul's whole point. Don't let anger get hold of you and weaken you so that other areas of sin, or even satanic involvement, can come into your life. Keep that in mind if you are prone to get angry.

Uncontrolled anger offers the enemy of our souls, a golden opportunity and an open door to push us to commit more and more serious sins.



FR. TADROS YACOUB TALKS ABOUT NAYROUZ AND THE CHILDREN SING FOR THE MARTYRS

St. Athanasius The Great
FESTIVAL TRUMPETS



Edited by: Fr. Matthias F. Wahba

The holy Psalmist commands us saying, *“Blow the trumpet in the new moon, on your solemn feast day”* (Ps. 81:3). The trumpets were used by Moses to call the children of Israel to the feasts of the Old Testament. The Lord spoke unto Moses saying, *“Make to yourself two trumpets; of silver you shall make them, and they shall be for you to call the congregation”* *“In the day of your gladness, and in your feast, and your new moons, you shall blow the trumpets”* (Numbers 10:1,2,10). St. Athanasius comments that the instruction about the trumpets is a wonderful and awesome thing for Israel to remind the people of the shock of the voices they heard on Mount Sinai (Exod.19:16).

St. Athanasius asserts that the law and events of the Old Testament “were typical and done as in a shadow”. Therefore he advises, “Let us pass on to the meaning, and henceforth leaving the figure at a distance, come to the truth”. The silver trumpets of Moses point to “the priestly trumpets of our Saviour”

Let us discuss some of these trumpets:

1. One of the trumpets calls us to spiritual war:

The blessed Paul says, *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places”* (Eph. 6:10-12).

2. Another trumpet calls us to the grace of the Holy Spirit: *“On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, ‘If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water’. But this He spoke concerning the Holy Spirit.”* (John 7:37-39).

3. A third trumpet calls us to fasting and repentance: Listen as in a figure, to “the prophet blowing the trumpet; and further, having turned to the truth, be ready for the announcement of the trumpet, for he says, *“Blow you the trumpet in Zion: sanctify a fast”*. This is a warning trumpet, and commands with great earnestness, that when we fast, we should hallow the fast. For not all those who call upon God hallow God, since there are some who defile Him; yet not Him - that is impossible - but their own mind concerning Him; for He is holy, and has pleasure in the saints. And therefore the blessed Paul accuses separation from those who pollute the fast, he saith here, *“sanctify a fast.”*

4. Finally, the Lord’s trumpet calls us to spiritual food: When the soul listens, it will be nourished by virtues, by righteousness, by temperance, by meekness, by endurance, as St. Paul says, *“Being nourished by the word of truth”* (1 Tim.4:6) Such was the case with our Lord, who said, *“My food is to do the will of him who sent Me, and to finish His work”* (John 4:34). Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, being heavenly bread, is Himself the food of the saints, according to this, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day”* (Jn.6:53,54).

IS THERE A DIVINE JUSTICE?

FR. TADROS Y. MALATY

During the past month I met with some of our young people who are having a rough time dealing with their faith. They have encountered some atheists and non-believers who raised some questions challenging the existence of the Lord. They were in great doubts about the Divine care for the human race. Some of these questions were:

1. Why do disasters like droughts, floods, earthquakes and volcanoes take place? And why do millions of people, particularly young children perish in these disasters?

2. Where is the Divine justice when a child is born in poverty, with a bad temper and inherits crippling and serious illnesses that last him a lifetime? Meanwhile, another child is born healthy and wealthy and inherits superior social and cultural capabilities?

3. Why is a child born handicapped?

4. Where is the Divine justice when young children lose their parents in accidents or because of fatal illnesses?

5. Where is the Divine care when people are living with enormous pain and suffering from diseases like cancer and AIDS?

6. Why should a person suffer from his violent acts which are due to a nervous disease that he acquired or inherited?

7. Why doesn't the Lord destroy the evil spirit that ruin the lives of many?

8. Why doesn't the Lord eliminate evil from the world so that every one can live in peace?

Some people think that through these questions they can destroy the foundations of the Divine faith. They also think that they can demolish every religious view of the Lord's justice and His Divine care. They have ignored the following facts:

OUR PRESENT EXISTENCE AND OUR ETERNAL EXISTENCE

When man is over burdened with the bitterness of pain, the world becomes so tight around him and he feels that everyone had left him; even his closest relatives, his parents or his spouse, that they do not share his pains or his sufferings. Then he looks towards heaven hoping to find the good God who will ease his pain. And when he thinks that the Lord is not listening, he cries where is the Divine justice? Why does the Lord isolate Himself in His heaven and leaves us on this earth with endless suffering? Why doesn't He feel our weaknesses and share our burdens? Why does he leave things to happen without any guidance and lets fate and mere chance control our lives and makes us live as puppets in the hands of cruel events?

The secret behind man's cries is the fact that there is a tremendous difference between man's ways and the Lord's ways in looking at event, evaluating them and measuring them. The human being has limited capabilities and a limited amount of time to live on this earth. Therefore, he is totally absorbed by his limited life in this world as an existence that he cannot overlook. Consequently, he will seek every temporary satisfaction and worldly happiness saying

"let us eat and drink, we will die tomorrow." But the Lord with His unlimited wisdom and unconfined existence looks at man as his most favorite, above all other creatures. He considers him as far more valuable than to live temporarily, then die and vanish. Man is the son of God and God wants to elevate him to live in heaven with his heavenly Father beyond the limits of time. God also wants man to live the endlessly mutual divine love and to share the eternally filling heavenly glories.

The Lord created man as a body and soul to live on earth satisfying his bodily and spiritual needs in a real, but temporary manner. He leads him to an eternal life through which he acquires heavenly glories for his body and spirit to enjoy. Through this realistic eternal view, no matter how severe our sufferings are, they become passing moments that prepare us to the eternal glory. Therefore, when St. Paul was talking about faith as the desire for the heavenly kingdom (Hebrews 11: 16), he said "By faith when, Abraham was tested, he offered Isaac...." (Hebrews 17) and "By faith when Moses became of age, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin" (Hebrews 11: 24, 25). As though looking for heavenly rewards, the pain and suffering were replaced with joy and happiness.

Through the material views that prevail in the world nowadays, heaven is hidden from the human vision. Thus, the whole world became so tight and men became so bitter and desperate that they could not compensate the pain with the spirit of power and victory; rejoicing deeply above all timely and painful