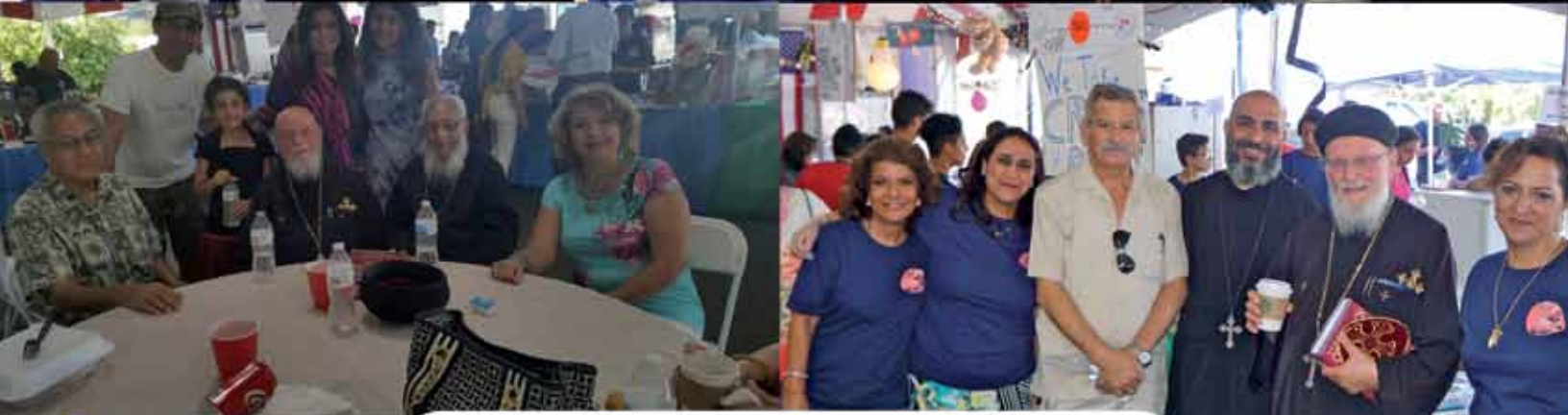


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*Verse
of the Month*



"Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting,
rend your heart and not your garment."
(Joel 2:12)

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**SCHEDULE of MEETINGS and EVENTS
for the MONTH of September & October 2015**

SUNDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
+ English Liturgy 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.	+ Liturgy 8:00 -10:00 a.m.	+ Liturgy 8:00 - 10:00 a.m.	+ Liturgy from 8-10 am
* * *	+ Thursday Morning + Senior Citizen Club 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.		+ Women's Meeting 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.
+ Arabic Liturgy 8:00 - 11:15 a.m. (In the Old Church)			+ Vespers; Bible Study 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. + Beginners' Deacons- Meeting 5: 30 p.m. + Elementary Meeting 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Servants' Meeting + 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. 2 nd & 4 th Sunday. + Boy Scouts 12 pm	+ THURSDAY Family Meeting 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. Fr. Augustinos	+Arabic Youth Meeting 8:00 - 10:00 p.m. Fr. Gawargious	+ College & High School English Bible Study by Fr. Youhanna after vespers. 7:00- 9:00 p.m.
			High School & J. High Meetings 7:15 - 9:00 p.m.

Email your articles/comments/requests to Frhanna @mystjohn.org

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1. Thanksgiving Day (Thursday, NOV. 22):

+ On Thursday, November 22, America celebrates the National Thanksgiving Day. St. John Church celebrates this Day with a Liturgy in the morning from 8:00 to 10:00, and a breakfast with Senior Citizens' Fellowship.

+ The church Social Committee will celebrate it on Saturday, Nov. 17 from 11:30 a.m. with the turkey dinner for the new comers and the homeless. May the spirit of thanksgiving abide in us all-over our life.



2. The Nativity Fast (Sunday, NOV. 25):

On Sunday, Nov. 25, the Nativity Fast starts, until Christmas Eve on January 6, 2019. May the Lord grant us a blessed fast (see Isaiah 58 and Matthew 6). We need to pray much during this fast for the salvation and safety of America, Egypt, the Middle East and the entire world.



3. Kiahk's Vigil:

The four week-vigil of the Coptic month "Kiahk" starts on Saturday, December 15, 2018. In this month we celebrate the Virginal Birth of Christ and praise St. Mary. The praises and vigils start every Saturday after the Vespers until midnight.



4. Celebrating New Year's Eve (2018/ 2019)

On Monday, December 31, 2018 St. John Church celebrates New Year's Eve from 7:30 p.m. until after Mid-night.

The program starts with the vespers and contains spiritual talks, praises and hymns (choir), candle-light prayers, Santa's gifts for children, and contests. There will be two Liturgies, the first ends after midnight and the second (Tuesday, January 1, 2019) from 8:00 – 10:00 A.M.



5. Feast of Evangelist St. Luke's Martyrdom:

On Thursday, November 1st, the church commemorates the feast of St. Luke's martyrdom. "The Torch Bearer"; he enlightened the world with his two great works, St. Luke's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. St. Luke was a physician, artist, and historian (there is a new book about him and his gospel by Fr. Augustinos Hanna at the Church Book-Store.)



6. Feasts of other Famous Saints in Nov/Dec:

- 1) Tuesday, Nov. 21 (12 Hatour), Remembrance of Archangel Michael.
- 2) Saturday, Nov. 24: Martyrdom of St. Mina.
- 3) Monday, Nov. 26: Departure of St. John Chrysostom
- 5) Nov. 27: Martyrdom of St. Philip the Apostle.
- 6) Dec. 4: Martyrdom of St. Philopater Abu-Sefein.
- 7) Dec. 13: Martyrdom of St. Andrew the Apostle.
- 8) Dec. 19: Departure of St. Nicholas, Bishop of Mora



6. H.H. Pope Tawadros:

+ On Sunday, November 18, 2018, the Coptic Church celebrates two occasions: (1) The 6th Anniversary of H.H. Pope Tawadros' Enthronement. (2) The first Ecumenical Council of Nicea in the year 325 A.D.

+ St. John Church in Covina, California Congratulates His Holiness, praying the Lord to grant him health, strength and long life filled with the Holy Spirit and His Divine guidance.

+ The Pope had a Pastoral trip to America that extended to one month and included New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Florida and San Francisco.



7. H.E. Metropolitan Serapion:

+ Metropolitan Serapion and the two auxiliary Bishops, Anba Abraham and Bishop Kirolos, travelled to Japan during September for a confrance with our Australian youth.

9. Fr. Augustinos' 29th Anniversary:

By God's grace, on Nov. 14, 2018, Fr. Augustinos R. Hanna completes 29 years in priesthood, serving St. John Church in Covina, CA, her congregation and St. John Magazine. Your prayers for him are greatly needed and appreciated.



10. The Egyptian Bible Society Meeting:

On Saturday, September 29, 2018, The Egyptian Bible Society held a banquet meeting at Azusa Pacific University. Fr. Augustinos Hanna started the opening prayer and Fr. Bishoy Aziz gave a speech about the Holy Bible, followed with a talk by Mr. Reda Bishay and dinner, along with other talks and videos and a closing prayer by Rev. Dr. Safwat El-Bayadi, the former head of the Evangelical Church. The goal was mainly a fund raising for encouraging the Society in its message of translating and spreading the Bible.

11. News Agencies announce a great discovery:

On October 5, 2018, some News' agencies announced the discovery of a historical manuscript of the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John traced back to the 10's century and now kept in the Greek Museum in Athens.

12. St. John's Festival was very successful:

St. John's Annual Festival and Book Fair held last September, was great success, spiritually, socially and financially. The church thanks God for the service of 170 servants who worked hard in harmony in all departments. May the Lord reward them richly and reward all who gave generous donations (the pictures inside).



Consecrate A Fast

By H.H. Pope Shenouda III

During the Transfiguration on the Mountain, and with great glory and dazzling light, the Lord Jesus, Who had fasted for forty days, appeared with two prophets who had also fasted for forty days, namely, Moses and Elijah.

The Lord Jesus fasted for forty consecutive days in a way which is beyond our ability. This was a period of retreat and private fellowship with God the Father, which gives us an idea about the spiritual approach to fasting; as the Bible says, "Consecrate a fast" (Joel 2:15).

FASTING AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

Fasting is not merely a commandment given by God, it is a gift and a blessing. God knows that we need to fast, and that our spiritual life is never upright without fasting. Thus He gave us the commandment of fasting for the sake of our spiritual growth and our eternal life.

It is wrong to consider fasting only from the materialistic point of view, as merely abstaining from food for a certain period, followed by a meal which is free of animal fat. We have to take into consideration the spiritual dimensions of fasting. Nevertheless, even from the physical point of view, fasting has several advantages which lead to spiritual benefits.

Fasting is known in all religions. It is even present in a more severe and ascetic form in some religions such as Buddhism, Yoga and Brahmanism, in which people come out of the exercise of fasting with better health and stronger will. Some of the yogis can reach great spiritual heights which Christians can even surpass through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Too much food exhausts the body in several ways. The proverb says that the stomach is the mother of all ailments, and that is why fasting has been prescribed as a cure. Excessive fats and grease, excessive energy and sedimentation, and obesity, with its harmful ef-

fects on the heart, veins, blood pressure and the level of cholesterol, have their bad effects both on physical and spiritual health. This is why many people try to keep fit by following strict diets.

It is strange that some people fast in order to have slim and beautiful bodies, whereas they refuse to fast for the sake of their spiritual growth and becoming closer to God. Fasting is useful as it allows the stomach, the intestines, the liver, the gallbladder, and the other organs responsible for digestion and assimilation of food, to rest.

Fasting is also associated with vigilance and wakefulness, as the person who fasts is alert, whereas the one who eats a lot suffers from sleepiness, indigestion and laziness because a great part of his blood runs towards the veins that surround the digestive organs, and consequently, the amount of blood decreases in other places in the body, thus causing that person to feel sleepy.

Our forefathers, the monks, used to have light bodies that helped them in moving, walking and kneeling with briskness, as they did not suffer from the heaviness of the body. They could walk for several miles in the mountains without feeling tired, just like backs and deer. In the same way, their spirits were light as they were not hindered by the heaviness of the body or veiled by its dimness. The devil deceives you when he tells you that fasting weakens your health. I have read a very interesting book on vege-tariannism and vegetarians and this book proves the healthiness and strength of the vegetarians by giving several examples. I have also read another book on fasting as a therapy. This book explains how fasting an astonishing cure for ailments. There are also several books that I have read which emphasize the benefits of fasting scientifically. Therefore, do not worry about fasting, and beware of associating fatness with healthi-ness.

History gives us examples of children who have fasted and whose health was not affected:

* Saint Shenouda the Archmandrite fasted until sunset from the time that he was a child. His health did not deteriorate and he lived to the age of 120.

* Saint. Mark, the hermit who dwelt on the Mountain of Saint Anthony used to fast in his childhood.

* We also read about Daniel and the three young men that when they fasted, their health was better and they appeared better than all the other young men.

THE SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF FASTING

Fasting must be accompanied with repentance, prayer, worship and humility before God. It is also associated with strong will.

Fasting is associated with repentance because it is not permissible for man to fast and live in sin. Repentance is also associated with humility and the confession of sin, as the Ninevites did when they wore sackcloth and sat in the dust. Moreover, fasting is associated with worship because abstinence from food is not enough, as it is a passive act. In the meantime, the spirit must be given its food, as this is a positive act, and the true reason that lies behind fasting. This is why the Church always links prayer with fasting.

In the fraction prayer for the holy Lenten fast, the phrase "through prayer and fasting" is repeated several times as these are the means through which God's blessings for man are attainable. We cannot forget what the Lord Him-self has said about the "demons that they do not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Some people fast without performing any spiritual work; no prayers, no meditation, no reading, no hymns, no confession and no attending liturgies. That is why fasting is, for them, heavy, tiresome, and without spiritual fruit. If you have fasted, and yet you have not started any spiritual activity, it is time to arrange a full spiritual schedule that includes all channels of grace. If you do not perform any spiritual activity, then how can you distinguish your fast from that of the Buddhists and Yogis? The difference between Christian fasting and other kinds of fasting lies in associating the human effort with the work of God.

In the book of Joel (2:15), the Bible says, "Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly". When the Lord Jesus Christ fasted, He lived for forty days in seclusion on the

mountain, and in fellowship with God the Father.

Fasting is also associated with kneeling (metania). When total abstinence from food is not allowed, as in the case of the fifty day period between the feasts of the Resurrection and Pentecost, Saturdays, Sundays and the holy feasts, metaonias are also not allowed.

From the point of view of what is healthy, kneeling is more practical while the stomach is empty, as it fatigues the full stomach, and it is not accompanied by any spiritual feelings when performed with a full stomach. Besides, this, fasting is associated with seclusion which is suitable for meditation and prayer. The fast is a period in which one is fully devoted to God and not to people. One should make use of one's time in examining oneself and performing works of repentance and spiritual activities, things which are detained by the continual contact with people. Thus, try to make use of free time and dedicate it to the LORD.

In all the famous fasts of the Bible, as in the fast of Nehemiah, the fast of Ezra, the Ninevite fast and the fast of Esther, we find that fasting is accompanied with prayer, crying to God, the confession of sin, and humility.

Fasting is not merely a physical activity; it is a spiritual activity as well. For the Ninevites, fasting was an act of repentance, and when the Lord saw their repentance, He had mercy on them (Jonah 3:10). When king Darius fasted for the sake of Daniel, he "spent the night in fasting; and no musicians were brought before him" (Dan. 6:18). When Daniel the prophet fasted, he mingled his fast with prayer and supplications, with sackcloth and ashes and with confession of sins (Dan. 10:2, 3).

The period of the fast is a period of humility before the Lord, during which the soul submits, repents, and confesses its sins. That is why fasting which is accompanied by pride is not fasting at all. When the body is humbled through fasting, the soul is humbled with it. Hunger is a very important factor in fasting. When the Lord Jesus Christ fasted, it was said that He was finally hungry (Matt. 4:2). It was also said about Peter that "he became very hungry and wanted to eat" (Acts 10:10). Hunger makes man feel his weakness, helplessness and triviality, and thus he is no longer vain.

Try hunger, and whenever the time for meals comes, put off eating, even if for a short time. During the time of hunger, kneel in prayers, as prayer becomes much deeper with hunger.

THE LIFE OF Thanksgiving blessings



By Fr. Yohanna Maurice

Our teacher St Paul advises us to **“give thanks always for all things.”** (Ephesians 5:20)

Also St. Pope Kyrillos has a great quote that says: **“thanksgiving makes the burden of life be lighter, and the soul that gives thanks receives blessings.”**

Let us learn to give thanks always for all things.

For thanksgiving gives joy, hope and blessings.

As St Isaac the Syrian said, **“There is no gift without abundance, but the one without thanksgiving!”**

Giving thanks **always** is the reason of blessings and abundance.

That is why also our beloved church teaches us to start every prayer with thanksgiving!

“We thank You our merciful God, **for everything, concerning everything, and in everything**, for You have covered us, helped us, guarded us, accepted us unto You, spared us, supported us, and brought us to this hour.”

Thanksgiving abounds in true faith.

Faith that God is in control; He is Almighty, able to sustain all our needs according to His richness; protect us from every evil and deliver us from every hardship.

Let us learn to give **thanks for everything** that we have and for the things that we don't have, the things that we have received and the things that we still have not received!

We thank you O' Lord the lover of mankind, for your mercies and blessings are countless.

Thank you O' Lord, thank you O' Lord, thank you O' Lord, thank you O' Lord, thank you O' Lord....

And the soul that **always** gives thanks receives blessings.

Grant us O Lord the life of thanksgiving; teach us to give thanks always for all things. For thine is the kingdom, the power, the glory forever! Amen.

THEY FASTED (POEM)



On Sinai's Mount, with radiant face,
To intercede for heaven's grace,
Upon a stubborn, wayward race,
He fasted.

Once lifted from the miry clay,
When opposition came his way
This soldier-king would often pray
With fasting.

A seer, possessed of vision keen,
Who told the troubled king his dream,
Had light on God's prophetic scheme,
Through fasting.

The prophetess in temple court,
Beheld the Babe the two had brought;
For Him she long had prayed and sought,
With fasting.

He came to break the yoke of sin,
But here His mission could begin
He met the foe and conquered him
With fasting.

“Set these apart,” the Spirit bade.
A spring, that soon vast rivers made,
Broke ope by men who as they prayed
Were fasting.

“So shall they fast when I am gone”;
Was this no word to act upon?
Ask countless saints who fought and won
With fasting.

When we shall stand on that great day
And give account, what shall we say,
If He should ask us, “Did you pray
With fasting?”

What do you choose?



*Many years ago, on a Easter Day, a very Rich Man who had no wife, no children, no other family members, decided to invite all the employees of his Mansion for dinner.

*He called the staff and asked them to sit at the table.

In front of everyone there was a BIBLE and a small sum of MONEY.

*After everyone was installed, the Rich Man asked:

"What would you prefer to receive as a gift: this BIBLE or this MONEY?

Do not be shy, you can choose what you want."

*THE GUARDIAN WAS THE FIRST TO REACT:

"Sir, I would love to receive the Bible, but since I have not learned to read, the money will be more useful to me."

*THE GARDENER WAS THE SECOND TO SPEAK:

"Sir, my wife is very sick and that's why I need more money, otherwise I would choose the Bible for sure!"

THE THIRD WAS THE COOK:

"Sir, I like reading to tell the truth, it's one of the things I like to do, but I work so hard that I never find time to flip through a magazine, let alone the Bible. I will take the money. "

*IN THE END, IT WAS THE turn OF THE BOY WHO TAKES CARE OF THE ANIMALS OF THE MANSION.

And as the Rich Gentleman of the villa knew that the boy's family was very poor, he stepped forward and said:

*"Surely you too want the money, do you not?" So that you can buy food to have a good dinner at home and buy new shoes? "

BUT THE BOY, as for his, surprised everybody with his answer:

"It would not hurt to buy a turkey and other tasty food to share with my Parents and Siblings. I also need a pair of new shoes because mine are very old. Even so, I will choose the Bible because I have always wanted one. My mother taught me that the Word of God is worth more than gold and that it is tastier than a honeycomb."

*After receiving the Bible, the boy immediately puffed it out and found TWO ENVELOPES inside.

*In the first, there was a CHECK that was 10 TIMES higher than the money on the table.

*In the second, there was a DOCUMENT (Will) that made (whoever would choose the Bible), the heir to the wealth of the Rich Man!

*Faced with the Boy's emotion and the astonishment of the other servants, the

Rich Gentleman opened one of the Bibles and read aloud so that everyone could hear:

***Psalm 19:7-10:**

The law of the LORD is perfect, it restores the soul;

*The testimony of the Lord is true, he makes wise the ignorant.

*The ordinances of the LORD are righteous, they rejoice the heart.

*The commandments of the Lord are pure, they light up the eyes.

*The fear of the Lord is pure, it subsists forever;

*The judgments of the Lord are true, they are all just.

*They are more precious than gold, than a lot of fine gold; they are sweeter than honey, than the one that pours rays.

*May God give us Wisdom and help us always make the Right Choice.

So, what do you choose?

Did you read this pamphlet? 100 Benefits and Blessings

from reading the Bible, according to its Divine Verses? By Fr. Augustinos Hanna. It is available in English and Arabic at St. John Church Book Store:



So, Please:

(1) Read the Bible everyday as you breathe and eat and drink.

(2) Study the Bible.

(3) Memorize the golden verses of the Bible.

(4) Do the commandments of the Bible.

(5) Spread the Bible as much as you can everywhere.

A TRIBUTE TO HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN BISHOP (1942-2018)

By Father Matthew Atya

"Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Matthew 13:43).

1. The Early Years - Born Makram Iskander Nicola, on 19th July 1942, His Eminence Metropolitan Bishop graduated from the Faculty of Engineering from the University of Alexandria in 1963 and successfully completed a Masters Degree in Engineering and was appointed as a lecturer at University.

2. The Monastic Life - He took monastic vows in El Sourian Monastery and was ordained monk on 16th February 1969, by Bishop Theophilous and given the name Thoma.

3. The Bishop of Demayatt - On 24th September 1972, His Holiness Pope Shenouda III ordained Reverend Father Thoma El Souriany as Bishop of Demayatt and Kafr El Sheik and head of St. Dimiana's Convent. As the ministry of the diocese expanded, His Holiness Pope Shenouda ordained Bishop Paula as Auxiliary Bishop in May 1977.

4. The Imprisonment - On 7th September 1981 Metropolitan Bishop was imprisoned by former President Sadat, together with various bishops, priests and laypersons and was released on 12th February 1982.

5. Ecumenical Relations - Pope Shenouda delegated His Eminence Metropolitan Bishop to chair various ecumenical commissions including:

a- International Commission between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox.

b- International Commission between Oriental Orthodox and Catholic Church.

c- International Commission between Oriental Orthodox and Anglican Church.

d- International Commission between Oriental Orthodox and the World Alliance of Reformed of Churches.

Moreover, His Eminence represented the Church at the World Council of Churches and Executive Committee of the Middle Eastern Council of Churches.

His Eminence served in the following in-



ternational committees:

a- World Council of Churches Executive Committee from 2006-2013.

b- World Council of Churches Central Committee from 2013-2018.

c- World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission from 1991-2018.

The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Reverend Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit said: "His Eminence Metropolitan Bishop contributed to the work of the World Council of Churches in many committees and positions. He offered leadership from his Church and his Church family, with a strong passion and heart for the ecumenical work of unity and common witness. His friendship and his presence I will remember and miss. He always reminded us that we should carry the cross of Christ together."

The Moderator of the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission, Reverend Dr. Susan Durber, said: "Amongst the community of those involved in Faith and Order at the World Council of Churches, we grieve the loss of His Eminence Metropolitan Bishop of Demayatt, a member of the Faith

and Order Commission from 1991 until the day of his death. He brought to our work a steadfast commitment to ecumenism and the determination that does not give up on the task of calling one another to unity. He brought to the ecumenical movement a faithful advocacy of his tradition and a powerful witness to Christian faith in demanding contexts and times. He always brought gifts to the table, and was someone ready to surprise us not only with theological insight, but with stories from long experience in faith, witness and leadership. He will be missed in many places and certainly in Faith and Order. We give thanks for him, in the name of Jesus Christ, and trust in the resurrection faith which he, with us, proclaimed."

Carla Khijoyan, program executive for the Middle East, said: "Metropolitan Bishoy was a spiritual father, a leader, and a friend. His wisdom on difficult issues related to our Churches and the Middle East would always guide our meetings. We will deeply miss his passion and commitment to our region, the enriching and deep conversations that would always end with a prayer, a smile and a gift carried all the way from his beloved monastery. His contributions to different ecumenical dialogues, locally, regionally or globally have paved the way for our Churches to move forward on the journey of unity and love in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. May he find eternal peace in the arms of the One he lived and worked for."

6. Books - His Eminence was the author of various books and booklets in a variety of theological, doctrinal and biblical topics including:

- a- The Holy Grail - Response to the Da Vinci Code
- b- St. Severius of Antioch - His Life and Christology
- c- The Second Coming of Christ

7. The Theologian and Lecturer - As an astute theologian, Metropolitan Bishoy was lecturer in theology at the Coptic Seminary in Cairo and head of the Department of Theology at the Institute of Higher Coptic Studies. He also lectured in Ecumenism and chaired several PhD dissertations.

8. The Secretary of the Holy Synod (1985-2012) - In June 1985, Metropolitan Bishoy was elected General Secretary of the Holy Synod, a position he held until the departure of His Holiness Pope Shenouda in 2012. During this time he was convened of a number of

synodical committees including:

- a- The Committee for Faith and Education.
- b- The Committee for Diocesan Affairs.
- c- The Committee for Church Relations.

9. Communication the Living Faith - Metropolitan Bishoy was very proactive in conducting a number of biblical and theological series on various Christian media channels including:

- a- Simplifying the Faith
- b- Everlasting Words
- c- One Hour Live (on ME Sat)

10. Head of St. Dimiana's Convent - His Eminence transformed the monastic life at St. Dimiana's Convent and made it a centre of Coptic Monasticism. His Holiness Pope Shenouda consecrated its Church and opened the new building for the cells of the nuns and the retreat house. Several of Metropolitan Bishoy's disciples were chosen to establish convents outside of Egypt including 3 in Australia.

11. Church Laws - Metropolitan Bishoy was instrumental in guiding and advising the legal representative of the Coptic Church in USA, Australia and Germany in drafting the constitution of the Churches and the by laws to ensure all the laws are consistent with the canons and heritage of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria.

12. Coordination of the Meeting of Patriarchs - His Eminence invested considerable effort to coordinate the Annual Meeting of the three Oriental Orthodox Patriarchs of the Middle East and served on the standing committees that were established through these meetings. Since 1997 the meetings rotated between Cairo, Damascus and Beirut, enhanced the unity between the Alexandrian, Syrian and Armenian Churches in the Middle East.

13. Compassionate Shepherd - Metropolitan Bishoy was noted for his immense love, care and kindness extended to the poor, the needy, the widows, the orphans and the neglected. Not only ensuring all their material needs are met but also ensuring that their spiritual, pastoral and social well being was addressed totally and holistically in fulfillment of the words of the Bible, "The generous soul will be made rich and he who waters will also be watered himself." (Proverbs 10:25).



MAKE YOUR MARRIAGE SUCCESSFUL

by Fr. Gawargious Kolta



If you want to build a successful marriage that lasts happy and divorce-proof, you have to consider the following tips:

1- Your Christian marriage is a covenant between you, your spouse, and God, for God the Holy Spirit jointed you and your spouse, in the holy sacrament of matrimony and you become one. What God had joined let no one separate.

2- The main goal in your marital life is to enter the heavenly kingdom with your spouse and their children. Both husband and wife must strive to live together in harmony pleasing God all their life. It is difficult for any spouse to enter the heavenly kingdom without his/her spouse.

3- Let the Lord Jesus Christ be in your home always, and don't let sun set on your wrath. Otherwise, you will give place to Satan, because he will take advantage of your wrath. It is very important to have a family altar, where you pray and read the word of God together.

4- Share with your spouse all spiritual activities; daily prayers, Bible study, fasting, confession and taking Holy Communion. It is better for the couple to have the same father of confession.

5- The spouses must keep the privacy of their life and expect that without privacy they may suffer many problems. It is preferable that no one may share their free time or their vacations, especially in the early years of marriage.

6- Any marital conflicts or disputes must not be discussed when the couple are tired. Conversation and good communication must be preceded by prayers. If they could not solve the conflict, they must seek the advice of a priest or of a Christian counselor. They must not take the advice of relatives or friends, because they may be biased or unexperienced.

7- The spouses must care for each other. This care in marriage should be unconditional, because husband and wife should love and accept each other as they are. They

must know that Christian marriage is based on sacrifice. One of the principles for successful relations between people is to give more than to take; i.e. giving without looking for a reward. Real love begins when nothing is expected in return.

8- Besides care, the spouses should be honest and reveal to each other complete information about themselves; their thoughts, feelings, habits, personal history, daily activities, and plans for the future. This can be achieved when they consider that they are one not two anymore.

9- Spouses must not hurt each other emotionally, behaviorally verbally, or in any way that causes disrespect, pain or discomfort. They must not lose their temper in any occasion, calling each other degrading or humiliating names. They must not punish each other when any one of them commits any mistake, because love suffers long, does not behave rudely and never falls.

10- When one of the spouses tells the other that his/her habits or activity is annoying, the other must change it, to accommodate the feelings of the other, in order to avoid hurting the other, or causing discomfort to her/him.

11- Both husband and wife must learn to meet the other spouse's most important marital needs. They must consider that the marital needs of men and women are often different. They can help each other to identify these needs and should learn to fulfill them.

12- Both husband and wife must keep relatives and friends away from interfering in their marital affairs. Relatives and friends may be a source of serious marital conflict if the couples don't keep the privacy of their life.

13- Both husband and wife must avoid the conflicts that are caused by improper financial planning. Both must make a realistic budget and learn how to stick to it. They must spend money with mutual agreement. With credit cards in hand, some wives have a habit of buying without the agree-

ment of their husbands, who discover the purchase only when the bills arrive, and that usually causes problems.

14- Don't let your children come between you and your spouse for that may destroy your marriage. Conflicts may arise between a husband and a wife over how their children should be raised and treated. The wife must not give her husband an impression that their children are more important than him. The husband must take an active role in raising their children. The wise woman must be a good wife and a good mother.

15- Parents must teach their kids the Christian faith, the Orthodox doctrine, and the church traditions, knowing that their children today face challenges from the media and the society. They must give their children, in different ages, suitable information about their faith and about God; His presence, His power, His love, His care and His justice.

They can teach their children about the Bible stories, the church prayers, the church feasts and the church history. The parents must be a good example for their children in living a real and honest Christian life. When the parents correct their children, they (the Children) will give their parents rest, comfort, and they will delight their souls.

16- Husbands and wives should share the sexual relation that gives them pleasure and satisfaction and build a strong love relationship between them. They must work together to keep sex away from destroying their marriage, because unsuccessful sex relation is a very important agent of marital problems and destruction.

This is a very important issue in both fulfilling sexual needs and raising a family. In many marriages, one spouse or both are more ignorant of these sexual needs or the degree of the satisfaction of the other. Honesty is essential for the development of sexual compatibility, particularly for the newly married couples. Thus, it is important to learn this issue before marriage, in a premarital education course; otherwise they have to see a Christian sex therapist after marriage.

17- Husbands and wives should keep their work away from destroying their marriages. There are some spouses who are so workaholic that they have no time to spend with their spouses in order to meet their marital needs. Such spouses fail to give protection for their spouses and for their children. Both our spouses and our children are talents given to us from God.

18- Faithfulness in marriage is a biblical commandment, because marriage is a covenant between the spouses and

God. Marriage must be honorable but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. Infidelity is the most destructive, painful and cruel action to the other spouse and it is against honesty and care. This is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, our sanctification that we should abstain from sexual immorality.

There is no excuse for any spouse to have any affair outside marriage, even if her/his marital needs are not met, or due to lack of appreciation by his/her spouse. Each spouse must learn to be honest and faithful all her/his marital life. Marriage must be honorable and the bed undefiled.

19- Husbands and wives should be careful that their hobbies would not destroy their marriages. Usually TV shows, sports and internet addiction cause marital arguments, problems and disputes. Many women complain that their husbands stay many hours in front of TV watching basketball games, other sporting events or news.

Also many wives spend too much time in stores in shopping for their clothes, their makeup and different stuff. Such people waste the time which should be shared with their spouses.

Without spending quality time together in sharing their feelings, hobbies, and romance, real love between them would not be satisfied. They can create activities that will meet some of their most important marital needs; conversation, affection and recreational companionship.

20- Husbands and wives should keep drugs, alcohol, smoking, gambling and other addictions, from destroying their marriage. This is more destructive than other problems. It is a great marital problem because not only the spouse but also the whole family will be seriously hurt. Children usually tend to be attracted to the addicts. For the sake of keeping their marriage successful, the addict spouse should be admitted to a treatment program.

21- Husbands and wife should abstain from anger, because the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. The angry person stirs up strife, and causes transgression. Anger darkens the mind and makes people commit foolishness. Thus, Husband and wife should be patient, because love does not parade and endures all things.

Finally, I may ask the spouses to walk circumspectly with each other and to be wise, and understand the will of the Lord in their lives. Both, the couple should keep all God's commandments, which can be easily achieved if they love the Lord from all their hearts, all their souls and all their minds.



WAS JESUS EXCLUSIVE?

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; No one comes to the Father but by Me." (Jn. 14:6)



By Dr. Emil Goubran



Once I was listening to a debate between a panel of atheists and Muslims. A Somalian woman, who renounced Islam and adopted atheism, stated that "In all religions it is us versus them ideology". What she is saying is that believers in every religion claim to be the only way to heaven and everybody else is doomed if they don't follow their faith.

While this statement is true, the real question here is whether or not the claim made by any of these religions is true. If we apply the principles of logic, it is not possible that all claims are true. There can only be one true claim and the rest are false, or all of them are false.

Let us examine the Christian claim. In order to understand why the Lord said "No one comes to the Father but by Me", and to verify the truth behind it, we need to ascertain a couple of points:

First is the credibility of the bible: The credibility of the bible has been the subject to a lot of research based on two criteria, namely; integrity and reliability. Integrity pertains to content stability over time without any change, e.g., additions, deletions or modifications. Reliability pertains to authenticity and truthfulness of biblical accounts. Both have been proven through historical and archeological evidence to be true, as published in a lot of apologetic books.

Second is the divinity of Jesus Christ: This is based on biblical accounts relating to what Jesus Christ said about Himself, e.g., "the Father is in Me, and I in Him" (John 10:38), "I and the Father are one!" (Jn. 10:30), "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9). The bible also refers to Christ as the Word of God and creator of everything that exists: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and without Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being." (Jn. 1:1-3) With the above two points in mind, was Jesus Christ exclusive when he said that "No one comes to the Father but by Me"? According to the Bible, God is offering salvation to everybody without exclusion "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2:3-4). If so, how do we reconcile God's will for everybody to be saved with the truth that "No one comes to the Father but by Me." Here we have to look at two components in this situation; first is God's will and the second is the truth about the process of salvation. To understand, we have to go to the beginning and ask the question "what was God's

purpose in creating humans? What did He really want to achieve? According to the bible God wanted us to be one with Him as mentioned by Christ Himself when He was praying to the father saying "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us" (John 17:21).

In order for this to be achieved, God created us in His likeness, "And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." (Gen 1:25). While likeness here refers to a number of qualities including intelligence, logic, free will, creativity,...etc., the most important part was to be of the same nature as God "Holy". We cannot be one with God if this nature gets tainted with sin or evil, which makes us lose compatibility with God. And this is exactly what happened when Adam and Eve got contaminated with the knowledge of evil despite the commandment of God. This outcome necessitated their separation from God (spiritual death). Death was not the only consequence but also included their bondage to the devil, slavery to sin, and imprisonment in hell. In order for humans to become one with God again, their sinful nature must be restored to its original holy condition. The only one capable of achieving this outcome is the creator Jesus Christ Himself. This is the truth about the process. That explains why the Lord said "No one comes to the Father but by Me", since He is the one who is going to restore our nature back to its holy condition and reconcile us with God the Father.

In addition, all the consequences of the fall of man must be reversed in order to liberate mankind from its bondage to the devil, slavery to sin, imprisonment in hell and the power of death over humanity. This is when the love of God comes to save humanity: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (Jn 3:16)

Once man becomes free again to reconcile with God through the grace of salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the final goal to reunite with God becomes a matter of man's free will and choice to accept or reject the invitation of God to be one with Him. So even though God's will is for everybody to be saved, the truth about how this could be accomplished remains exclusive through our Lord Jesus Christ who said "No one comes to the Father but by Me"

In conclusion, it is man's free will that will decide his eternal destiny since God will honor man's free will in whatever direction man wants to go. This reminds me with a statement by C.S. Lewis in which he said "at the end of days there will be two groups of people; those who said to God Thy will be done, and those to whom God will say your will be done."

Bible Contest



1. Who said...?

1. "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears."
2. "You shall NOT surely die."
3. "Blessed is giving more than receiving."
4. "I am the voice of one crying in the wilder-ness, make straight the way of the Lord."
5. "If I perish, I perish."
6. "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."
7. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanks-giving, let your request be made known to the God; and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
8. "Give attention to My words; for they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh."
9. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation."
10. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all His benefits."

2. What was the occasion of the following signs and wonders and why?

- 1) The rainbow.
- 2) A brass serpent.
- 3) A rod that changed to a serpent.
- 4) A donkey that spoke and rebuked a prophet.
- 5) The sun and moon stopped still?
- 6) A chariot of fire took a man to heaven.
- 7) An iron ax head that floated?
- 8) A fish that paid the taxes?
- 9) A babe wrapped in swaddling clothes?

10) An Egyptian mountain moved by prayer to prove the truthfulness of Christ's saying, "If you have faith, you can move mountains".

3. Say it with a smile (choose a biblical character)

- 1) Strong as ()?
- 2) Patient as ()?
- 3) Wise as ()?
- 4) Short as ()?
- 5) Wicked as ()?
- 6) Stubborn as ()?
- 7) Traitor as ()?

4. **Objects:** There are many interesting objects in the Bible around which a story or event takes place. See if you can fill in each space with the name of a Bible character who goes with each object listed.

- (1) A sling.....
- (2) A scarlet rope.....
- (3) A coat of many colors.....
- (4) A golden calf.....
- (5) A whale.....
- (6) A pillar of salt.....
- (7) A sycamore tree.....
- (8) A sheet full of animals.....
- (9) Twenty pieces of silver.....
- (10) Thirty pieces of silver.....

5. What do these Biblical symbols refer to?

1- Apple ?



2- Butterfly ?

3- Circles (Trefoil) ?



4- Crown of Thorns ?

5- Dove (Descending) ?



6- Fire, Flames ?

7- Heart ?



8- Lamb - ?

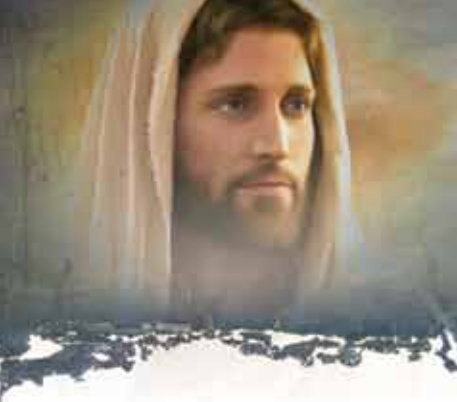


9- Menorah ?



10- Palm Branches?





God's Answer to

By Mark M. Hanna



Often when God does something that is unexpected and unplanned in our lives we think, "God, what are you doing?" This same thing St. Peter did when Christ bent down to wash his feet before the Passover supper (Jn. 13). St. Peter saw his master, teacher, God, as he had come to know Christ, bending down attempting to wash his feet. "What are you doing Lord?!" But Christ's response was, "what I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know later" (Jn. 13:7) (Emphasis mine).

Conceivably we could all ask God about a number of things. We wonder why He allows churches to be burned and missionaries proclaiming His name killed. We wonder why He allows suffering to go on in many parts of the world. We wonder why His own followers encounter difficulties of various kinds. We wonder why He allows scientists – "wisemen" to question His creation of the world. We wonder why He allows His creatures to blaspheme His name or question if He, God, is even living.

When it comes to our personal lives, we often wonder why God did or allowed this or that. Why did You allow me to become ill? Why did You let my loved one die? Why did You allow me to fall or fail? Why did You allow other people to discriminate against me or cheat me? Why did You not get me into medical school, pharmacy school, or law school? Why did You not get me that job? Why did You create me . . . ? Why? Why? Why?

To all these questions I personally do not propose an explanation on behalf of God. However, St. Paul told us that Christ is familiar with our human frailties, "for we do not have a High Priest [The Lord Jesus] who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). When a loved one passes away, we humanly look to God and in bitterness ask, "Why?" Undoubtedly, God Himself feels our pain at such times. At the tomb of Lazarus when "Jesus wept," we saw how God Himself was

grieved and groaned in the Spirit as a result of the occurrence of His friend's death, and the mourning of his family and friends. This example demonstrates how God does in fact sympathize with our weakness. More so, the Prophet Isaiah, by the Holy Spirit prophesied, that Christ was "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3) (Emphasis mine). So He knows firsthand the weakness of humanity!

When, Joseph's brothers tried to kill him and sold him as a slave, Joseph must have asked, "why?" When he worked faithfully in the house of Potiphar, was wrongly accused of trying to attack his master's wife and was thrown for a number of years in prison, he must have wondered, "why?" But God must have been whispering to him during all those years, "what I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know later." In fact, the years did pass and 13 years later Joseph finally did understand when he was taken from prison and elevated from his prison rags to the court of Pharaoh. He undoubtedly reflected on how God allowed all those misfortunes of his past to be a gateway, for not only God's purpose, but for his own glory. Joseph understood later.

We have God's assurances throughout the Bible, His word, that although we do not now understand why, He nonetheless is making things work out for our best. This is His famous promise, "in all things God works for good to those who love Him" (Rom. 8:28). He promises that even though it seems like our lives are miserable He will not only turn this seeming misery into joy but will be with us throughout. Wasn't this what happened when the three Jewish Youth were thrown into the fiery furnace (Dan. 3)?

In the mean time we may not understand what is happening, in faith we must know that God is working. What He is doing that we may not understand now, we

must be assured that it is for our best interest and we will understand later why He allowed it. This is what St. Paul meant by, “we walk by faith not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7).

It is inconsequential how things may appear, but it is extremely important how they actually are. If God is in the furnace with us, does it really matter how hot the fire is. “If God is for us, who can be against us?” He who did not spare His own Son . . .” (Rom. 8:31-32). Christ’s promise, “I am with you always,” (Matt. 28:20) was not limited to the joyful times only but also the not-so-joyful-times — our difficulties. Only through our eyes of faith can we be capable of seeing that promised “later.”

As to the difficult questions we would like to pose to God, His answer is still, “what I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know later.” Only the passage of time could perhaps explain why we went through a certain difficulty. Certainly, while we are here in the body and wrestle to make sense of any kind of difficulty, God’s gentle assurance is, “what I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know later.” While God does understand our inability to readily see things from His perspective, He still calls us to in-faith believe in His ability to not only give the most profound meaning to what we call ‘difficulty,’ but to be with us during and also make it work out for our ultimate good.

Readers’ Corner

Dear FR AUGUSTINE,

Finding answers to «Whys» of life



“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” (Romans 8:18)

The Boston Globe newspaper carries a daily column dedicated to answering questions from its readers. Some years ago, the paper listed the top ten unanswerable questions it had received. Among them was one from a 9-year-old boy, who wrote,

“I have a cat that eats regularly and needs to go on a diet. He also eats mice when he is out. How many calories are in a mouse?”

There are some questions to which we simply don’t know the answer. This is most definitely true when asking questions about God, who is so immense and powerful that man could never dream of fully understanding Him.

We see examples of this all around us today. When parents take a child to the doctor to be vaccinated, the child doesn’t understand what’s going on. All he understands is that he’s being stuck with a needle and it hurts. But the parents know more... and they let the child experience a bit of pain today because, in the grand scheme of things, it’s better for him!

There will come a day when we’ll be able to ask any question we want. But until that day, we may not get answers to the “whys” of the Christian life. So we wait... and we trust God to work everything out for our good!

Ask God to give you patience to trust in Him when it comes to waiting for His answers to your questions.

With love & prayers

Mona & Bhupinder Singh

ZACCHAEUS...

the dwarf who became a giant

*(A sermon by Fr. Augustinos
on Sunday, Sept. 30, 2018)*



The Story of Zacchaeus (in Luke 19) is one of the very pleasant and popular stories in the New Testament to all ages. It tells us that Jesus passed through Jericho; and beholds there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, rich; but he was a dwarf. He desired to see Jesus, who He was, but he could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."

Then Zacchaeus stood and said, to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold. And Jesus said to him, "Today, salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Lk. 19:1-10).

This short story is full of great teachings:

1. The meaning of the name Zacchaeus is the pure or the innocent. But Zacchaeus did not live up to his name. He was a sinner, a thief by his own admission and by the opinion of all who got to know him. So, do you live up to your name as a Christian bearing the Holy name of Christ? Do people see Christ in you, in your words and in your works?

2. Zacchaeus caught the opportunity:

Jesus passed that way, from Jericho to Jerusalem to be crucified. It was the last time to pass through it. If Zacchaeus had missed this chance of his life, he would have lost it forever; he would have lost the opportunity

to meet with the Lord and to have Him a guest in his house and to lose his salvation. It was an opportunity of life or death, eternal life or eternal hell.

It is said, "Three cannot return: an arrow you throw, and a word you say, and an opportunity you miss".

That is why the Bible says, "**Behold, is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation**" (2 Cor. 6:2).

The Lord Jesus is passing NOW by you; do you open your heart and welcome Him in? Do not postpone this great opportunity, or else you may lose it forever.

There are millions of people whom their lives were ended suddenly by an accident or a heart attack and found themselves in hell and cried out, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved"! (Jer. 8:20).

3. Overcoming the obstacles:

Zacchaeus overcame at least three obstacles:

(1) the problem of the crowds and multitudes that surrounded Jesus.

(2) He also overcame his bad reputation and that he was hated as a traitor who gathered taxes from his people to give to the Romans their enemies.

(3) He overcame his short stature by climbing the sycamore tree, despite the difficulties. Zacchaeus climbed the tree of history and became a giant and famous to all generations at all times!

We heard about Helen Keller, who was blind, mute and deaf; and could gain five PhDs, and became the miracle of the 20th century.

We read about Beethoven, the great German musician who lost the most precious sense he had and became stone-deaf! Despite that, he could compose 9 great symphonies, 5 piano concertos, and a violin concerto, a mass and an opera and be-

came the greatest musician in history and a miracle! Those people, Zacchaeus, Helen and Beethoven, have overcome their huge obstacles and shortcomings and reached their goal and became great and brave giants.

How about you? Do you surrender and raise the white flag because someone has said a bad word about you, which made you say, "I will not going to go to church anymore"?! You should be ashamed of yourself... you have to learn how to be strong and not easily defeated.

It is a matter of life or death and you have to fight the good fight and to be patient, because "He who endures to the end will be saved" (Mark 13:13).

4. Salvation and its fruits:

Zacchaeus, no one asked him of money, yet he offered to give half of his goods to the poor, and restore fourfold to anyone he had taken from him by false accusation. He was rich, greedy and a money-lover, but since He met with the Lord, everything has changed. And that is what St. Paul said, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold all things have become new." (2 Cor. 5:17). Giving generously to the poor is one of signs and fruits of Zacchaeus' salvation.

5. Salvation and its three stages:

Salvation has three times, past, present and future.

(1) The past: When the Lord Jesus said, "Salvation has come" or in the example of the Prodigal Son, when the father said, "**My son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.**" (Lk. 15:24; 32). He meant by salvation here, accepting the repentance of Zacchaeus and the prodigal son. This is justification.

(2) The present: The word of God also talks about salvation in present time as in the verses: "Work out (complete) your salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12); and "He who endures to the end shall be saved" (Matt. 24:13 & Mark 13:13). Salvation in this present time is meant to be living the holy Christian daily life. This is called sanctification.

(3) The future: St. Paul says, "To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation" (Heb. 9:28). It is the last stage of salvation, which means that God will honor his faithful who were honest to the end and crowns them in His eternal kingdom, and the Lord Jesus will come again to reward those who loved Him and kept His command-

ments (Matt. 25:34-40 & Rev. 2:10). Salvation in the future time means **glorification**.

6. Haste and its role in spiritual life:

Speeding in driving or in speaking, are bad and harmful. But it is recommended in spiritual life, at least in these following fields:

(1) In repentance:

Jesus said, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for TODAY I must stay at your house. So he made haste and came down and received Him joyfully" (Lk. 19:5, 6).

(2) Reconciling with others:

Jesus said, "Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer and you be thrown into prison" (Matt. 5:25). "Do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (Eph. 4:26).

(3) In serving others:

We have the wonderful example of St. Mary as soon as she heard from the angel that Elizabeth her relative is pregnant in sixth month, she arose and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah to help her (Lk.1:36-40). St. Jude says, "Save others with fear, pulling them out of the fire" (Jude: 23).

It is an emergency service like the ambulance and the fire department that need much speed to save the lives of others.

(4) In listening to others:

St. James says, "My beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (Jam. 1:19). Some people need someone just to listen to them; they want to complain their fears, sorrows and needs, and this gives them relief and comfort. So train yourself to be a good listener and then you will be a good speaker and it is a service itself. When the Lord Jesus asked the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda, "Do you want to be made well?" The answer was expected to be one word "Yes or no". But he said neither and burst screaming in anger, "Sir, I have no man!" (Jn.5:7). No man, despite the crowds around him, he felt lonely! No one cares; no one feels his suffering and pain for 38 years! No one listened to him or wanted to offer a helping hand. That why Jesus, the Son of Man Himself came to him directly and healed him.

TYPES OF CHRIST; INDIVIDUALS

9. David and Christ

Fr Augustinos Ragheb Hanna



Typology is an interesting and useful subject for studying the Holy Bible and strengthening faith and spiritual life. These types in the Old Testament are usually presented in the form of persons, things, or events.

The Prophet Moses is an important type of Christ. His five books (the Pentateuch) are the richest books with regard to these types. We discussed Moses in an earlier article. In this article, we are going to discuss another type through individuals, David and Christ.

David	Christ
1- David was born in Bethlehem, which was called "The city of David".	1- "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Mic. 5 : 2, Matt. 2 : 5, Luke 2 : 11)
2- The name David means "the beloved."	2- "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3 : 17)
3- David was good-looking, with a fair complexion and beautiful eyes.	3- It was said about Jesus Christ that "He is fairer than the sons of men" (Psalm 45), and "the brightness of God's glory." (Hebrews 1 : 3)
4- David was a keeper of sheep. He wrote the wonderful Shepherd Psalm, No 23.	4- Christ said, "I am the good shepherd." (John 10 : 11)
5- David was of Judah's tribe.	5- Christ was of Judah's tribe, and of David's offspring.
6- David achieved victory over the mighty Goliath, who humiliated the men of Israel forty days, and cut off his head. ((1 Samuel 17)	6- Jesus Christ achieved victory over the Devil, who humiliated mankind, in the battle of the trial in the wilderness, and smashed his head by the Cross.
7- David, the writer of the Psalms, was described as "prudent in speech" (1 Sam. 16: 18)	7- Jesus spoke and taught with great authority. It was said about Him, "No man ever spoke like this Man!" (Jn. 7: 46)
8- David used to drive the evil spirit out of Saul, by taking a harp and playing the Psalms on it. Then Saul would become refreshed and well. (1 Samuel 16: 23)	8- Christ healed all those who were sick with various diseases and drove unclean spirits out." (Luke 4: 40,41)
9- David suffered a lot and was persecuted at the hands of king Saul, who tried several times to kill him. (1 Samuel 19:27)	9- Christ suffered a lot and was persecuted at the hands of kings and rulers; Herod, Pilate and the Jewish chiefs, who actually crucified and killed him in the end.
10- David fled from Saul and the priests did not tell Saul where David was, so he	10- Christ fled, in His childhood, from the face of Herod, who committed a massacre

committed a massacre and killed eighty-five priests of the LORD with the edge of the sword during the service, in addition to killing hundreds of men, women, and children in Nob, the city of the priests.	and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts ". (Matt. 2: 16 - 18)
11- David was ordained a king, by God's order, at the hands of prophet Samuel. However, he did not take over kingdom, and remained homeless and rejected for years.	11- Jesus Christ is the King of Kings. However, He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. The Jews ridiculed and rejected Him.
12- David was king and prophet.	12- Christ had the three functions of the Messiah: king, priest and prophet.
13- David loved God's word very much. He was always meditating on it and praising it. He mentioned more than a hundred blessings and benefits of it in Psalms 19 and 119.	13- Christ Himself is God's word incarnated. All His sayings have become the readable word of God.
14- David loved his enemies and forgave them. He wept over Saul and lamented him pathetically when he died. (2 Samuel 1)	14- Christ loved His enemies and forgave them. He wept over them and died for them. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."
15 David met his enemies' wrong doings with charity, and said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?" (2 Samuel 9)	15- Christ met His enemies' wrong doings with charity. He issued the immortal precept, "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you." (Matt. 5 : 44)
16- David was a man of prayer, who had such a constant relationship with God that he said, "But I give myself to prayer." (Psalm 109: 4)	16- The LORD Jesus Christ, preacher of prayer, sometimes spent the whole night in prayer. (Luke 6: 12, Mark 1: 35)
17- David was a man of fasting, "My knees are weak through fasting, And my flesh is feeble from lack of fatness." (Psalm 109: 24)	17- Jesus fasted forty days in the wilderness. (Matt. 4)
18- - David was so humble that he once described himself saying, "seeing I am a poor and lightly esteemed man?" (1 Samuel 18 : 23), and once as "A dead dog? A flea? " (1 Samuel 24 :14)	18- Christ said, " Learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart" (Matt. 11: 29) , and being in the form of God, made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant for our salvation.
19- David was zealous over the house of God and His glory, and he said, "Zeal for Your house has eaten me up" (Psalm 69: 9), and "Rivers of water run down from my eyes, Because men do not keep Your law." (Psalm 119: 136)	19- Jesus was more zealous over the house of God and His glory than David. He purged the temple and poured the threats of His anger over the hypocrites. (Jn. 2, Matt. 23)
20- Many false witnesses rose against David. (Psalm 35:11)	20- The chief priests brought many false witnesses against Christ.
21- 15 David said about many people,	21- Christ, too, said, "They hated Me

"who hate me without a cause. (Psalm 35: 19)	without a cause." (Jn. 15 : 25)
22- Everyone who was in distress, was outcast, or was discontented gathered around David in the cave of Adullam. So he became captain over them. (1 Samuel 22 : 1, 2)	22- All the tired and overburdened, the sick, the oppressed, the sinners and the tax-collectors gathered around Christ who offered them salvation and comforted them.
23- David was so faithful in fulfilling God's will and said, "I delight to do Your will, O my God". (Psalm 40: 8)	23- Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work". (Jn 4: 34)
24- One of David's sons, Absalom, with his advisor Achithophel, rebelled against David seeking to kill him.	24- Judas, One of Christ's disciples, rebelled against Him and betrayed Him. He delivered Him to His enemies to kill Him.
25- The fate of traitors was the same; Absalom was killed, and Achithophel committed suicide.	25- Judas committed suicide, too.
26-. Shimei the son of Gera, cursed king David and rejoiced at his distress.	26- The Jews invoked accusations and provocations against Christ in His time of distress.
27- David walked through the Valley of Kidron weeping, while fleeing from Absalom.	27- Christ, too, walked through the Valley of Kidron, feeling sad, on the night before He was crucified. .
28- The Spirit of the LORD came upon David, and David behaved wisely in all his ways. (1 Samuel 16:13 /18 : 15)	28- The Holy Spirit came upon Christ in baptism and anointed Him with divine power for preaching, healing and redemption. (Luke 4 : 16)
29- David was exposed to envy and wars from many because of his talents.	29- Christ was exposed to envy and resistance from His enemies because of His perfection.
30- David achieved tremendous victories over all his enemies.	30- The Lord Jesus Christ achieved the greatest victories over the worst enemies of mankind, such as sin, Satan, death and Hades.
31- David, as a king, honored Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson who was lame in his feet, and adopted him and had him eat bread at his table continually." (2 Samuel 9)	31- The Lord Jesus Christ invited to the wedding feast of the king's son the repentant sinners, whom He adopted and seated at His table in the celestial Jerusalem. (Luke 14)
32-- David had his bitter weaknesses and pitfalls as a human being, but his heart, which acted according to God, made him set an example in repentance.	32- Christ is the perfect holy God, who is without sin and who became incarnate to save mankind from their sins.
33- David's Psalms abound in prophecies about Christ in His attributes, His sufferings and His glories.	33- The Lord Jesus Christ came in fulfillment of the prophecies, as David's son (in humanity), and as David's Lord God (in divinity), Who sits upon His throne.

Egypt's Islamized 'Hippocratic Oath!

By Raymond Ibrahim July 19, 2018

[Originally published under the headline "Egypt's 'Hippocratic Oath' Could Force Christian Doctors to Become Unintentionally Muslim"]

"Egypt's version of the Hippocratic Oath, which all of the nation's doctors -- both Muslim and Christian -- are required to take, contains wording that is not unlike the Islamic confession of faith."

This new reporting comes from Coptic Solidarity, a human rights organization dedicated to ameliorating the plight of Egypt's Christian minority. The significance of this development is significant: critics are arguing that anyone required to recite the oath -- including Christian physicians -- will be compelled to become de facto Muslims.

Whereas much of the oath is salutary-sounding and makes mention of Allah -- which is standard for Arabic-speaking Christians who also refer to "God" as "Allah" -- at the very end of the oath (published in full on the Arabic site Masrawy), reciters acknowledge "Allah and His Messenger." The Islamic contour of the oath is evident in other ways; for instance, it refers to "the Believers," which is synonymous with "the Muslims."

Excerpt of the text of Egypt's 'Hippocratic Oath' according to Masrawy. The oath explicitly mentions "Allah and His Messenger" and "the believers" (i.e. Muslims).

For a Christian to confess Muhammad as the Prophet of God is problematic on several levels. For starters, such wording is not unlike the shahada, the Islamic proclamation of faith: "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." **Sharia law dictates that any non-Muslim who recites this simple sentence before Muslim witnesses becomes Muslim -- with no turning back, no "apostatizing," without penalty (of death).** It is for this reason that Christians and other monotheists living under Muslim authority have been willing (sometimes grudgingly) to recite the first part of the shahada -- that "There is no god but Allah" -- but have been adamantly unwilling to recite its latter half, that Muhammad is God's prophet or messenger. Whoever acknowledges that Muhammad did indeed deliver God's message to mankind -- via the Koran and Sunna - must, by logical extension, also follow it. That is, must be considered Muslim. Past and present, there have been many Christians who, for whatever reason -- from fiscal and social inducements to mere threats -- have uttered "the words"



(as the shahada is colloquially known), and then tried to return to Christianity, only to be killed.

According to Coptic Solidarity's Adel Guindy, an expert on the history of Christian/Muslim relations in Egypt:

This Islamized Oath, required to accredit new doctors, was introduced in the 1980s when the Doctors Syndicate was overtaken by the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamists. Christian doctors vehemently complained, but Mubarak's regime turned a deaf ear, in order to placate the Islamists. **More recently, and more problematic for Christians, Egypt's Minister of Health Dr. Hala Ziyad -- newly appointed by president Sisi -- has just "issued a decree that requires doctors in all health establishments (hospitals, clinics, etc.) to recite the oath on a daily basis, so that all hospitalized Egyptians hear it."**

Not only is this even more objectionable for Christian doctors, but it will increase the chances of Christian doctors falling afoul of more zealous Muslim colleagues or patients, who, on hearing a Christian professes Muhammad as Allah's apostle, will no doubt harass the physician to follow through and embrace Islam.

Only those unacquainted with the fanaticism that permeates Egyptian society -- where rumors of churches being built or just repaired often prompt mass upheavals and deadly riots -- will deem such a scenario as unbelievable.

